



Thessaloniki, 18/09/2009

RS/PRO/2009/763

OPEN INVITATION TO TENDER**AO/ECVL-RES/PHT-LT/Europass/011/2009***‘Software and website development and support services for Europass’***REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATIONS (4) – QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

Dear Madam/Sir,

In regards to the above mentioned open Tender Procedure please find below the Answers of Cedefop to the Questions, which were raised by one potential tenderer.

Question 1

In the profile ‘Web and database developer’ could you please specify exactly how many years minimum experience a candidate must have in javascript/Ajax and database development (one or two years)?

Answer of Cedefop to Question 1

As specified under par. 4.6.1: “Additional minimum 2 years work experience as developer in Java/JSP/J2EE and experience in javascript/Ajax and database development” a reasonable quantification of having “experience in javascript/Ajax and database development” shall be considered minimum 1 year.

Question 2

Regarding the document for award criteria 1e, could you clarify if the 3 page limit is an absolute maximum or could the tenderer exceed this page limit? It is our opinion that the requested information could not be satisfactorily covered in only 3 pages without compromising the quality and clarity of the document.

Answer of Cedefop to Question 2

The criterion 1e concerns the general “overall quality assurance and methodology” for the performance of the services under the contract. The sentence under 7.2.5a, which asks for “the means he intends to deploy to manage, monitor and control the quality of outputs and services that are required;” refers to the general services as described under 4.2 and relates also to “4.5 Deliverables’ quality”.

The description should describe the key points of the methodology proposed, concerning quality control policy and quality levels against the issues and challenges at stake. These points should be covered in 2-3 pages max, including 7.2.5c.

Documentation for the work-plan and methodology of the specific works under 1a to 1d should be provided directly under the corresponding items, since they are different in nature and may have their own special requirements for methodology, quality and control.

Question 3

Regarding the presentation and content of the tender, should the original of Envelope A be unbound as it is for Envelopes B and C?

Answer of Cedefop to Question 3

It is up to the tenderer to decide how to submit the Original Documents of Envelope A as Cedefop does not have specific requirement on that issue.

Question 4

In the Invitation Letter, Article 4 it is indicated *that “Tenderers must ensure that their tenders are signed by an authorized representative...”*. We understand that Tenderers’ authorized representative should only sign the documents it is explicitly requested to do so such as the Cover Letter, the various Forms, the Financial Proposal, etc. and not the whole proposal. Could you please confirm that our understanding is correct?

Answer of Cedefop to Question 4

Please refer to the provisions specified in point 8 (page 35) of the Tender Documents and note that the Technical Proposal should also be signed (point 8.2, page 35).

Question 5

We understand that an electronic copy of the offer (Supporting Documents, Technical Proposal and Financial Proposal) is not required for submission. Could you please confirm that our understanding is correct?

Answer of Cedefop to Question 5

Please note that the Financial Proposal should be submitted in electronic copy and on paper. No electronic copies of the Supporting Documents and the Technical Proposal are required to be submitted.

Question 6

On page 27, section 5.3.2, of the Tender Specifications, we understand the phrase ‘The Legal Entity Form should be completed by the **tenderer** only, not by the Consortium

member....’ implies that only the Leader of the consortium needs to complete this form. Please confirm that our understanding is correct.

Answer of Cedefop to Question 6

Yes, we confirm that your understanding is correct.

Question 7

In case the tenderer is a consortium should the Financial Identification Form be submitted by the Leader only or also by the other members of the consortium?

Answer of Cedefop to Question 7

The Financial identification form should be completed by the tenderer only (i.e in case of a consortium to be completed by the Leader, and not by the Consortium member/s and /or sub-contractors (if any)).

Question 8

Regarding the profile ‘Technical support, service administrator and help-desk’, could you please clarify the term ‘Senior Engineer’ to which profile it is referred to?

Answer of Cedefop to Question 8

The term “Senior Engineer” refers to the profile “Senior analyst, engineer and consultant”.

Question 9

With regards to the confidentiality and protection of personal data:

- a) Should the CVs be anonymous?
- b) For the document addressing award criteria 2, should the names of the project personnel be indicated?

Answer of Cedefop to Question 9

- a) CV should not be anonymous. Personal Data contained in tenders will be treated in accordance with the standard provisions on data protection for all calls for tender (pleased refer to paragraphs 12 and 13 in the Invitation Letter of the published on the Cedefop web-site Tender Documents).
- b) Award criteria 2 is formulated as follows: “Appropriateness of the proposed project team for the contract and procedures for staff back-up and replacement: qualification and level of experience of proposed staff, procedures followed to provide backup and replacement of any staff when needed (see 7.2.6)”.

Also, par. 7.2.6. (Documentation for Award Criterion 2) specifies that the tenderer should “Provide a description of the project organization structure and the composition of the actual project team proposed, listing project personnel placement in the project structure, their function, title, qualifications, experience, the level and degree of direct involvement of the most experienced (senior staff) of the company. Demonstrate the suitability of the proposed project team to provide the services requested (see sections 4.2 and 4.6). Project team will include only staff that will be actively involved in the project.”

Therefore, the name of the project members shall be indicated.

Question 10

Regarding the documentation requested in section 5.2.2.3, we understand that the requested ‘CVs’ refer to the evidence CVs provided for section 5.2.2.2. Could you please confirm?

Answer of Cedefop to Question 10

Yes, we confirm.

Question 11

- a) In case the tenderer provides 11 CVs, and a CV is rejected, but the fields of expertise are still covered, will the offer be rejected anyway?
- b) If the tenderer provides extra CVs than the minimum 11, and an extra CV is rejected but the fields of expertise are still covered, will the offer be rejected?

Answers of Cedefop to Question 11

- a) Selection criterion 5.2.2.2 (1) mentions that “The tenderer must provide at least the following number of CVs:”, which sum-up to 11. In order for this selection criterion to be fulfilled, at least 11 valid CVs must be provided, otherwise the tender shall not be selected.
- b) No, it will not be rejected, provided that the expertise required is clearly demonstrated by other CVs.

Question 12

Regarding the note of section 5.2.2.2 could you please clarify the following:

- a) It is indicated that “Concerning the profile “Senior analyst, engineer and consultant” and “Developer”, the various CVs might address different fields of expertise within the profile”. Tenderers are requested to submit as a minimum 3 CVs for the “Senior analyst, engineer and consultant” and 2 CVs for the “Web and Database Developer”. Could you please clarify the following issues:
 - i. Does ‘Developer’ refer to the profile of section 4.6.1?

- ii. Does the term ‘fields of expertise’ refer only to the ‘Experience’ paragraphs of the profile descriptions?
 - iii. We understand that each one of the 3 CVs submitted for the “Senior analyst, engineer and consultant” profile can cover different fields of expertise specified under chapter 4.6.2 and it is not a mandatory requirement for each CV to cover ALL fields of expertise NOR for these three CVs to cover as a whole all fields of expertise. Could you please confirm that our understanding is correct? If not, please elaborate in detail on this issue.
 - iv. We understand that each one of the 2 CVs submitted for the “Web and Database Developer” profile can cover different fields of expertise specified under chapter 4.6.1 and it is not a mandatory requirement for each CV to cover ALL fields of expertise NOR for these two CVs to cover as a whole all fields of expertise. Could you please confirm that our understanding is correct? If not, please elaborate in detail on this issue.
 - v. We understand that 5 CVs (3 CVs for the Senior Analyst, Engineer and Consultant + 2 CVs for the Web and Database Developer) should cover as a whole some and NOT ALL fields of expertise indicated under chapters 4.6.1 and 4.6.2. Could you please confirm that our understanding is correct? If not could you please specify in detail which fields of expertise should be covered by which CVs?
- b) It is indicated that “However, the proposed set of at least 11 CVs should cover all fields of expertise”. Does this requirement mean that the CVs submitted for each Profile should cover as a whole the fields of expertise of the respective profile? Could you please specify in detail the “fields of expertise” indicated in the above requirement and the CVs and Profiles from which should be covered?
 - c) If an expertise in the ‘Developer’ profile is not covered by the ‘Developer’ CVs, but is covered by the ‘Senior analyst, engineer and consultant’ or other profile, will the offer be rejected? Please generalise your answer.

Answer of Cedefop to Question 12a i

Yes

Answer of Cedefop to Question 12a ii

Yes, as mentioned at 5.2.2.2 (1): “The CVs must show evidence of staff qualifications as requested in the description of section 4.6 Profiles, paragraph Experience, satisfying the requirements in terms of: educational background, length and scope of experience.”

Answers of Cedefop to Questions 12 a (iii, iv, v), b, c

For the profiles “Technical support, service administrator and helpdesk”, “Project manager”, “Usability Expert”, “XML and Interoperability Expert” and “Onsite technical manager” it is mandatory that each one of the submitted CV(s) should cover all the requirements of paragraph “Experience” of the corresponding section at “4.6 Profiles”.

As mentioned at the note of 5.2.2.2 (1): ‘Concerning the profile “Senior analyst, engineer and consultant” and “Developer”, the various CVs might address different fields of expertise within the profile. However, the proposed set of at least 11 CVs should cover all

fields of required expertise'. If a CV of these profiles is lacking part of the required expertise, it shall not be rejected if and only if the missing required expertise is covered by another submitted CV, regardless of profile. In this case, it would be good to have an explicit mention of which other CV(s) is complementing the missing required experience.

Question 13

It is requested that tenderers should include in their bid “a list of at least 3 major contracts (up to a maximum of 5) performed during the past 3 years similar to those described in this call for tenders in terms of scope, size and technological nature.

- a) We understand that projects involved web development activities based on different market’s available web technologies are considered as “of the same technological nature” with the Cedefop project in subject. Could you please confirm that our understanding is correct? If not, could you please elaborate further on the “technological nature” of the project references to be submitted by the Tenderers?
- b) Could you please specify the minimum “*size*” of the requested project references?
- c) We understand that projects/contracts involved the implementation of a web based system are considered as “of the same scope” with the Cedefop project in subject. Could you please confirm that our understanding is correct? If not, could you please elaborate further on the “scope” of the project references to be submitted by the Tenderers?

Answer of Cedefop to Question 13

- a) Yes, and more specifically, the technological nature of the services of the call for tenders (4.2) is described for example at 3.5, 4.4 and 4.6
- b) The project references should be “similar in terms of size” with the call for tenders, which is “approximately 740 person-days per year”. A specific minimum size for the project references has not been specified at the call for tenders text but we consider that 200 person-days is the minimum acceptable.
- c) Projects “similar in terms of scope” would have for example one or more of the following attributes: e.g. web-based projects with high public visibility; involving the public sector; using a combination of technologies rather than being just simple websites; involving a larger team with diverse skills rather than just a web developer.

Question 14

In the Contract Notice “GR-Thessaloniki: software and website development and support services for Europass 2009/S 153-222591” Section III, paragraph III.2.3 page 4/6 there is a reference to “...at least 13 CVs”. We understand that this is a clerical mistake and that the requested total CVs to be submitted as a minimum are 11. Please confirm.

Answer of Cedefop to Question 14

Yes, it is a clerical (typo) mistake. We confirm that the requested minimum number of CVs to be submitted is eleven (11), which is in line with point 5.2.2.2 (1) of the Tender Document (page 26).

Question 15

In the Award Criterion 1 a), p.30 and more specifically under chapter 7.2.1 p.31 Tenderers' are requested to present "A full, detailed and convincing technical proposal for the implementation of the specific tasks under section 4.3.2... fulfilling the functional and technical requirements of each task. The proposal should include: (1) A detailed justification of the proposed architecture and the choice of technologies (hardware, operating system, web application server, web server, programming languages, development frameworks, libraries, including the list of any software tools and licences needed)".

- a) Due to the fact that the current environment of CEDEFOP includes diverse system configurations and technologies e.g. both open source and COTS, could you please elaborate further on CEDEFOP's preference on technologies and frameworks to be used for the envisaged Europass Portal?
- b) In the case where a Tenderer based on specific justification proposes a COTS based solution, we understand that the costs of the needed licences should not be included in his financial offer and to this end not taken into account in the Financial Evaluation of the offers. Could you please confirm that our understanding is correct? If our understanding is not correct and the costs of the licences of a COTS based solution should be included in the Tenderer's Financial Offer, thus increasing the total Financial Offer of the specific Tenderer, it is obvious that Tenderers offering COTS based solutions have an enormous disadvantage against the ones offering Open Source Solutions in the overall Evaluation of the Tenders. Could you please elaborate on this issue?
- c) Towards calculating the licences costs, could you please specify in detail the respective number of users per function type?

Answer of Cedefop to Question 15

- a) The Europass portal has been built using open-source and platform-independent technologies, as described at 4.4, but not further preference was expressed in the text of the Tender Documents.
- b) All costs should be included in the financial offer, including software licence costs. See Row 10 of the excel file "4642-att3-1-Annex_K_-_Financial_offer_form.060809.xls", which mentions "*Other costs, if any (e.g. small software licences - indicate exactly what this involves, giving explicit breakdown)*". If the tenderer submits an offer which includes a COTS-based solution, this could imply less person-day costs for custom development of the solution, thus balancing the overall cost.
- c) Statistics about the public usage of the Europass portal are available at <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/statistics>, as mentioned at 3.3. The users who are

managing/adding content are about 5. The “Europass Mobility management tool” is a completely custom-developed software, so the use of COTS is not applicable here.

Question 16

Further to question 15 we would like you to clarify the following:

- a) The recommended Server Operating System;
- b) The recommended Web Server (Apache? IIS?) and RDBMS Server (Microsoft SQL? Oracle?);
- c) The recommended Server and Storage vendor;
- d) Are there non-functional requirements that the new proposed infrastructure should meet? (availability – nines, web site response time or backup window time);
- e) Should the tenderers include in their proposal a new design and offer for the networking and telecoms infrastructure?
- f) please clarify if tenderers should include in their offer a document presenting in detail a new infrastructure architecture for hosting the Europass web site (including bill of materials and brochures for hardware, system and platform software and development tools).

Answer of Cedefop to Question 16

- a) This is up to the tenderer.
- b) This is up to the tenderer
- c) The current server and storage profile of Cedefop is based on HP Proliant G4 and G5 servers
- d) See requirements of 4.3.2 (e.g. 4.3.2.2(9))
- e) No such requirement is mentioned in the Call for tenders text
- f) The tenderers may provide whatever they feel is supporting their offer, and in the case of criterion 1a, the requested “full, detailed and convincing technical proposal” including “a detailed justification of the proposed architecture and the choice of technologies (hardware, operating system, web application server, web server, programming languages, development frameworks, libraries, including the list of any software tools and licences needed)”.

Question 17

In the tender specifications document paragraph 4.6.1 page 16 (“Task Profile: Web and database developer (off-site and on-site)”), Nature of tasks we read the following: “– Assistance in migrations/upgrades to other operating systems and/or servers”. Could you please give us an estimation about the size, type and structure of the data and the average number of migration tasks that should be completed during the validity of the contract? Who is going to provide the tools and the corresponding licenses (if needed) for the data

migration? Are there migration tools developed by Cedefop that will be available to the contractor?

Answer of Cedefop to Question 17

The information requested is not known at this early time point, it will depend on factors that come up during the lifetime of the contract. Additionally, it does not play any significant role for the preparation of the tenderer's offer.

Question 18

With reference to the 'Financial offer' Form to be filled in by the Tenderers could you please elaborate on the following issues:

- a) In "1" Tenderers are requested to provide effort per profile for the activities described in section 4.3.2 of the text where in "2" Tenderers are requested to provide effort per profile for the activities described in section 4.3.2.1 which is a sub-activity of 4.3.2 (the effort of which is requested under "1"). Could you please elaborate on this issue?
- b) In "4" and in "5" Tenderers are requested to provide effort per profile for activities that are not clearly defined by the Tenderer specifications and for which the outcome of the activities described under 4.3.1 will have a significant impact on the definition of the exact 'software tools' or the exact "web services" to be developed by the Contractor. Furthermore, in section 4.3.5 only specific examples are presented and Tenderers are requested to propose more which means that Tenderers who proposes more web services will have a significant disadvantage in terms of the respective total cost of "5" against the Tenderers who does not propose additional web services. Could you please elaborate in detail on the above issues?

Answer of Cedefop to Question 18

- a) In "2", it is mentioned "*Expert review –Usability Assessment as described in section 4.3.2.1 (should be quoted separately than 1 above)*" (note: highlighting was not originally in the text).
- b) The exact software tools that are expected to be implemented are specifically defined under 4.3.4, and are completely independent from the activities under 4.3.1, but depend only on the PDF+XML format schema.

About 4.3.5, the tenderers are expected to quote on the performance of task 4.3.5, which includes to "**Propose** list of other web services (SOAP and JSON based) that could be made available to the public and **implement** them". They are not expected to propose or to implement them for the purposes of the tender. The technical quality of this item is not evaluated anywhere and does not affect the offer. The tenderers should only quote a) for the proposal of other web services b) for the implementation of the specific web services given as example.