

SERVICE CONTRACT NOTICE

Improving the quality of education by introducing examinations at the end of secondary education

Location – Republic of Serbia

1. Publication reference

EuropeAid/138188/DH/SER/RS

2. Procedure

Restricted

3. Programme title

Annual Action Programme for Serbia IPA 2015

4. Financing

Financing agreement

5. Contracting Authority

European Union, represented by the European Union Delegation to the Republic of Serbia on behalf of and for the account of the partner country, Republic of Serbia.

CONTRACT SPECIFICATION

6. Nature of contract

Fee-based

7. Contract description

Improve the quality of the secondary education system in the Republic of Serbia by reviewing, updating and/or introducing national final examinations in order to contribute building a knowledge-based society.

This will be done through strengthening the capacities of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development and other relevant national stakeholders (notably the Institute for Evaluating the Quality of Education, the Institute for Improvement of Education, the National Education Council, the Council for Vocational and Adult Education, the National Council for Higher Education – among others) and education institutions (faculties and schools), developing exam materials, promotion and piloting of final examinations at the end of the four-year and at the end of the three-year secondary education.

8. Number and titles of lots

One lot only

9. Maximum budget

EUR 4,000,000.00

10. Scope for additional services

The Contracting Authority may, at its own discretion, extend the project in duration and/or scope subject to the availability of funding up to the estimated amount of approximately EUR 2,000,000.00. Any extension of the contract would be subject to satisfactory performance by the Contractor.

CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

11. Eligibility

Participation is open to all natural persons who are nationals of and legal persons (participating either individually or in a grouping – consortium - of tenderers) which are effectively established in a Member State of the European Union or in a eligible country or territory as defined under the Regulation (EU) N°236/2014 establishing common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for external action (CIR) for the applicable Instrument under which the contract is financed (see also heading 29 below) . Participation is also open to international organisations.

12. Candidature

All eligible natural and legal persons (as per item 11 above) or groupings of such persons (consortia) may apply.

A consortium may be a permanent, legally-established grouping or a grouping which has been constituted informally for a specific tender procedure. All members of a consortium (i.e., the leader and all other members) are jointly and severally liable to the Contracting Authority.

The participation of an ineligible natural or legal person (as per item 11) will result in the automatic exclusion of that person. In particular, if that ineligible person belongs to a consortium, the whole consortium will be excluded.

13. Number of applications

No more than one application can be submitted by a natural or legal person whatever the form of participation (as an individual legal entity or as leader or member of a consortium submitting an application). In the event that a natural or legal person submits more than one application, all applications in which that person has participated will be excluded.

14. Shortlist alliances prohibited

Any tenders received from tenderers comprising firms other than those mentioned in the short-listed application forms will be excluded from this restricted tender procedure unless prior

approval from the Contracting Authority has been obtained (see Practical Guide – PRAG - 2.4.3.). Short-listed candidates may not form alliances or subcontract to each other for the contract in question.

15. Grounds for exclusion

As part of the application form, candidates must submit a signed declaration, included in the standard application form, to the effect that they are not in any of the exclusion situations listed in Section 2.3.3 of the PRAG.

16. Sub-contracting

Subcontracting is allowed up to a maximum of 15% of the contract value.

17. Number of candidates to be short-listed

On the basis of the applications received, between 4 and 8 candidates will be invited to submit detailed tenders for this contract. If the number of eligible candidates meeting the selection criteria is less than the minimum of 4, the Contracting Authority may invite the candidates who satisfy the criteria to submit a tender.

PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

18. Provisional date of invitation to tender

July 2017

19. Provisional commencement date of the contract

October 2017

20. Initial period of implementation of tasks

36 months

SELECTION AND AWARD CRITERIA

21. Selection criteria

The following selection criteria will be applied to candidates. In the case of applications submitted by a consortium, these selection criteria will be applied to the consortium as a whole unless specified otherwise. The selection criteria will not be applied to natural persons and single-member companies when they are sub-contractors.

- 1) **Economic and financial capacity of candidate** (based on item 3 of the application form). In case of candidate being a public body, equivalent information should be provided. The reference period which will be taken into account will be the last three years for which accounts have been closed.
 - a) The average annual turnover of the candidate for the last three years for which accounts have been closed must be at least EUR 1,300,000.
- 2) **Professional capacity of candidate** (based on items 4 and 5 of the application form). The reference period which will be taken into account will be the last three years from submission deadline.

a) At least five permanent staff currently work for the candidate in the field of education.

3) Technical capacity of candidate (based on items 5 and 6 of the application form). The reference period which will be taken into account will be the last five years from submission deadline.

a) The candidate has provided services under at least two contracts (with a value of the activities in the contract carried out by the candidate being at least EUR 1,000,000) in the field of support to education reforms and

b) The candidate has provided services under at least one contract (with a value of the activities in the contract carried out by the candidate being at least EUR 500,000) in the field of developing and/or implementing national examination systems.

This means that the project the candidate refers to could have been started or completed at any time during the indicated period (starting five years before the submission deadline up to the deadline for submission of applications) but it does not necessarily have to be stated and completed during that period, nor implemented during the entire period. Candidates/tenderers are allowed to refer either to projects completed within the reference period (although started earlier) or to projects not yet completed. In the first case the project will be considered in its whole if proper evidence of performance is provided (statement or certificate from the entity which awarded the contract, proof of final payment). In case of projects still on-going only the portion satisfactorily completed during the reference period although started earlier will be taken into consideration. This portion will have to be supported by documentary evidence (similarly to projects completed) also detailing its value. If a candidate/tenderer has implemented the project in a consortium, the percentage that the candidate/tenderer has successfully completed must be clear from the documentary evidence, together with a description of the nature of the services provided if the selection criteria relating to the pertinence of the experience have been used.

Previous experience which caused breach of contract and termination by a Contracting Authority shall not be used as reference.

An economic operator may, where appropriate and for a particular contract, rely on the capacities of other entities, regardless of the legal nature of the links which it has with them. It must in that case prove to the Contracting Authority that it will have at its disposal the resources necessary for performance of the contract, for example by producing a commitment on the part of those entities to place those resources at its disposal. Such entities, for instance the parent company of the economic operator, must respect the same rules of eligibility - notably that of nationality - and must fulfil the same relevant selection criteria as the economic operator. With regard to technical and professional criteria, an economic operator may only rely on the capacities of other entities where the latter will perform the works or services for which these capacities are required. With regard to economic and financial criteria, the entities upon whose capacity the tenderer relies, become jointly and severally liable for the performance of the contract.

If more than 8 eligible candidates meet the above selection criteria, the relative strengths and weaknesses of the applications of these candidates must be reexamined to identify the eight best candidates. The only factors which will be taken into consideration during this re-examination are:

1) The total number of the reference projects found eligible under 21.3 (a) and in case of equality on this criterion, then

2) The total number of the reference projects found eligible under 21.3 (b), and in case of equality on this criterion, then

3) The highest value of the projects found eligible under criteria 21.3

22. Award criteria

Best price-quality ratio.

APPLICATION

23. Deadline for receipt of applications

06 July 2017, 15:00 CET

Any application received by the Contracting Authority after this deadline will not be considered.

24. Application format and details to be provided

Applications must be submitted using the standard application form, the format and instructions of which must be strictly observed. The application form is available from the following Internet address:

<http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/annexes.do?chapterTitleCode=B>

The application must be accompanied by a declaration of honour on exclusion and selection criteria using the template available from the following Internet address:

<http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/annexes.do?chapterTitleCode=A>

Any additional documentation (brochure, letter, etc.) sent with an application will not be taken into consideration.

25. How applications may be submitted

Applications must be submitted in English exclusively to the Contracting Authority in a sealed envelope:

- EITHER by recorded delivery (official postal service) to :

The Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia
Vladimira Popovica 40, 19a Avenue building
11070 – Belgrade, Serbia

In this case, the delivery record makes proof of compliance with the time-limit for receipt.

- OR hand delivered (including courier services) directly to the Contracting Authority in return for a signed and dated receipt to:

- The Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia
Vladimira Popovica 40, 19a Avenue building
 - 11070 – Belgrade, Serbia

In this case, the acknowledgment of receipt makes proof of compliance with the time-limit for receipt.

The Contract title and the Publication reference (see item 1 above) must be clearly marked on the envelope containing the application and must always be mentioned in all subsequent correspondence with the Contracting Authority.

Applications submitted by any other means will not be considered.

By submitting an application candidates accept to receive notification of the outcome of the procedure by electronic means. Such notification shall be deemed to have been received on the date upon which the contracting authority sends it to the electronic address referred to in the application.

26. Alteration or withdrawal of applications

Candidates may alter or withdraw their applications by written notification prior to the deadline for submission of applications. No application may be altered after this deadline.

Any such notification of alteration or withdrawal shall be prepared and submitted in accordance with Item 25. The outer envelope (and the relevant inner envelope if used) must be marked 'Alteration' or 'Withdrawal' as appropriate.

27. Operational language

All written communications for this tender procedure and contract must be in English.

28. Date of publication of prior information notice

28 June 2016

29. Legal basis¹

Regulation (EU) N°236/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action and Regulation (EU) No 231/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II).

30. Additional information

Opening hours of the Contracting Authority: 9:30-16:00 CET

Email address of the Contracting Authority: Delegation-Serbia-FCS@eeas.europa.eu

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¹ Please state any specificity that might have an impact on rules on participation (such as geographic or thematic or long/short term).