



Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Administrative Office of the President

National Procurement Authority

اداره تدارکات ملی

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (REOI)
(CONSULTING SERVICES – FIRMS SELECTION)

Country: Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Project: Digital CASA Afghanistan Project

Project ID: P156894

Grant No: IDA-D2820-AF

Reference No. NPA/MCIT/98/CS-2680/QCBS

Contract Duration: 9 Months

Date of Issuance: September 12, 2019

Date of Closing: October 05, 2019

Assignment Title: Technical Advisory for Establishment/Enhancement of Cloud Based Data Center and Disaster Recovery Data Center (DRDC)

1. Background

The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), Islamic Republic of Afghanistan has received Project Grant from the World Bank for implementation of Digital CASA Afghanistan Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds to hire a qualified Consultancy Firm to carry out Technical Feasibility Study for the Enhancement of Government Cloud and Disaster Recovery Data Center.

The aim of the Digital CASA Afghanistan Project is: (i) to Strengthen the Regional and Expand National level broadband connectivity based on Optical Fiber Networks;(ii) to boost up digital society and economy through e-Governance initiatives and (iii) to prepare an enabling environment and Regulations for the growth of ICT Sector in Afghanistan. The project will do so by: (a) expansion and strengthening of broadband connectivity in Central Asia and South Asia Regions; (b) expansion and strengthening of national broadband connectivity in Afghanistan; (c) Commissioning of a Network called “GovNet” to connect most of the Government Offices at Central and Provincial Government levels in Afghanistan; (d) Automation of citizen-centric services through e-Governance initiatives of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan; (e) Automation of

e-Governance mechanisms and strengthening of e-Delivery Platforms in Afghanistan; (f) framing up of Regulations, Policies, Strategies and Procedures for growth of ICT Sector of Afghanistan.

2. Objectives of the assignment

On Government/Commercial Cloud

The Firm will carry out two reviews, the first review would be on Afghanistan's National Data Center and the second review would be on Commercial Cloud Service Offerings. The intent of the two reviews is to assess the optimal approach to introducing "Cloud Computing" services to the Line Ministries and other major Government Organizations.

Under the first review, an in-depth analysis will be conducted on the systems, networking elements, hardware, software along with licenses as installed in Afghanistan National Data Center (ANDC) at MCIT's main building, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) as per international standards such as ITIL, legal and regulatory framework to ascertain the viability of Augmentation / enhancement of the ANDC into a Disaster Recovery Data Centre (DRDC) and Government Cloud.

The Firm will be required to suggest measures to implement "Cloud Computing", with the aim to mainstream the services to Line Ministries and other major Government Organizations. The intent is to reduce costs and time taken for commissioning of ICT infrastructure by separate line Ministries and government agencies for their ICT systems and new digital services.

Under the second review, the Firm will also be required to review Commercial Cloud Service Offerings (including international best practices) as an alternative option to introduce "Cloud Computing". The commercial cloud service offerings could be based in Afghanistan or elsewhere. The Firm shall assess if the commercial cloud service providers are able to fulfill the functional, technical and security requirements set out by the Government of Afghanistan.

Based on the in-depth analysis of the first review i.e. ANDC and the second review i.e. Commercial Cloud Service Offerings, the Firm shall evaluate and recommend the optimal pragmatic approach for the Government of Afghanistan to establish/enhance the Government/Commercial Cloud.

The Firm shall identify a set of Common Digital Service Enablers that are essential for digital service implementations. The essence of a Common Digital Service Enabler is to facilitate and accelerate the digital service implementations. The Common Digital Service Enablers are required by multiple line ministries for digital service implementation and would be more efficiently provisioned as a common service for the ministries to utilize.

The Firm shall identify a suite of suitable migration services to the Government Cloud.

On Disaster Recovery Data Center (DRDC)

The Firm will suggest options to establish/enhance a Disaster Recovery Data Center (DRDC). These may include a full-fledged backup National Level Data Center located either in Afghanistan or elsewhere in the region.

For both Government/Commercial Cloud and DRDC

Both Government/Commercial Cloud and DRDC will be developed by leveraging a variety of PPP approaches between local data center companies, international data center companies and respective governments in the region or through a commercial cloud service provider.

Various options of Government/Commercial cloud and DRDC along with the pros and cons will be presented in the report to the government; government will select the option for implementation in Afghanistan. For the selected option, prepare the relevant documents including Technical Specifications and Bill of Quantities (BOQ) required for preparation of bidding document/s for Government/Commercial Cloud and DRDC.

1. Scope of Services

Task 1:

- A. Submission of inception report. The firm shall develop an inception report consisting of the following components:
 - i. Detailed implementation methodology
 - ii. Work Plan (Project Implementation Plan)
 - iii. Project Governance Structure
- B. A workshop session/s to increase awareness of different cloud options for different levels of leadership and technical staff should be arranged in Kabul.

Task 2: Evaluate options for Government/Commercial Cloud including DRDC.

On Government/Commercial Cloud

- The consultancy firm will do assessment of existing Afghanistan National Data Center (ANDC) including Disaster Recovery Data Center (DRDC) and local data centers in some ministries including cyber security provisions.
- Based on their assessment the firm will evaluate the possibility of usage of existing data center facilities in various options being suggested for government/commercial cloud and the approach to enhance cyber security provisions.
- The consultancy firm shall study International best practices for usage of Government/Commercial Cloud specifically for public service delivery and Government applications. Consultant shall analyze suitability of appropriate practices with the perspective of scenarios in Afghanistan.
- Out of the International best practices studied above; the consulting firm shall review in details at least 3 international Government/Commercial Cloud services which may be relevant to Afghanistan.
- The consultancy firm should propose various options for example: government cloud, commercial cloud and/or hybrid approach taking into account legal and regulatory framework in Afghanistan, based on above assessment and evaluation of existing facilities and on the basis of selected international practices.

- The Firm shall assess if the Government/Commercial cloud service providers are able to fulfill the legal and regulatory framework along with technical and security requirements that are being set by the Government of Afghanistan. In case these requirements are not available at the time of finalization of TOR, the consultant shall help MCIT in setting up of technical and security requirements as per international best practices.
- The consultancy firm should identify a set of Common Digital Service Enablers e.g. online authentication/ digital signature, notification alerts, e-payments that are essential for digital service implementations and include them in the bid document.
- The consultant shall, in discussion with Government stakeholders, identify a suite of suitable and prioritized services for migration to the Government/Commercial Cloud.
- The consultant will engage with the government to assess the demand for government/commercial cloud services over short, medium and long term requirements.
- Based on the in-depth analysis of the ANDC and commercial cloud service offerings, the consultancy firm to recommend the most optimal approach for the Government of Afghanistan to establish/enhance the Government/Commercial Cloud.

On Disaster Recovery Data Center (DRDC)

- The consultant shall assess the needs for (1) Disaster Recovery Data Center and (2) business continuity of government arrangements and provide respective recommendations.
- The consultant shall propose thorough recommendations and approaches to establish/enhance the DRDC.

For Both Government/Commercial Cloud and DRDC

- Various options of Government/Commercial cloud and DRDC along with the pros and cons will be presented in the report to the government. Both Government/Commercial Cloud and DRDC will be developed by leveraging a variety of PPP approaches between local data center companies, international data center companies and national or regional governments. Government will select the option for implementation in Afghanistan.

For further information on the scope of the services, you can access the draft ToR under the above mentioned assignment title and reference number from the NPA website: www.ageops.net.

National Procurement Authority on behalf of Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (MCIT) now invites eligible consulting firms (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

4. Qualification Requirements/Short listing Criteria:

The short listing criteria are:

- a) The Consultancy Firm should be registered as a legal entity in the relevant field and should be in existence for at least last 5 years.
- b) The Consultancy firm to demonstrate having a sound financial capacity of annual turnover at least USD 600,000 in any one of the last 3 years. The firm is required to submit audited financial reports or any other credible financial documents as a proof.
- c) The consultant shall provide proven experience of having executed at least one contract of similar nature and complexity during last 5 years with the total value of USD 500,000. The consultants are required to provide copy (ies) of the contract along with clients' certificate towards completion of such assignments with their EOI .The Consultant while describing the assignment(s) for similar experience should furnish the following details:
 - Consultant should explain in what way the executed assignment(s) was/were similar in nature to the current assignment.
 - The Consultant should explain the exact role played by the Consultant in the assignment if the assignment was carried out in association with other firms as JV or in sub-consultancy for carrying out the assignment.
- d) The requirements for Consultants who intends to associate with other firm(s) in the form of a Joint Venture (JV) or sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications are indicated as under:

I. The lead partner is required to be identified clearly and state the composition and nature of their association (JV/ sub-consultant) in their EOI. In case of JV, the following minimum requirements shall be fulfilled:

- a) Lead Partner: Shall meet at least 60% of the shortlisting criteria for annual turnover and experiences requirement defined under Part 4 above (Qualification Requirements/Short listing Criteria), paragraphs (b) and 100% of the requirement for (c) respectively.
- b) JV Partner: Shall meet at least 25% of the shortlisting criteria for annual turnover requirement defined under Part 4 above (Qualification Requirements/Short listing Criteria), paragraphs (b).
- c) When fulfilling the above minimum requirements, in aggregate, the lead member and JV partner(s) shall meet at least 100% of the short listing criteria referred to above. In the case of a joint venture, all the partners in the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract, if selected.

II. The short listing criteria provided under Part 4 above (Qualification Requirements/Short listing Criteria), paragraphs (b) and (c) will not be applied for sub-consultant.

- e) The Consultant should furnish only true and factual information in the EOI (for itself, its partners and sub-consultant(s), if any). By an act of submission of an EOI against this REoI, the Consultant shall be deemed to be aware that for any misrepresentation by the Consultant

in regards to its EOI including any qualification documents/information about the consultant itself, its partner and/or sub-consultant detected at any stage of selection process or during execution of the resultant contract, if successful, the Consultant will be prosecuted under the Laws of Afghanistan.

5. Eligibility requirements in compliance with the **Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers – July 2016 revised November 2017 and August 2018** the consultants should also provide a copy of the certification of incorporation/business license.

A consultant firm will be selected through **QCBS** following open international market approach method as defined in **Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers – July 2016 revised November 2017 and August 2018**.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours, i.e. 08:00 to 16:00 hours Kabul standard time. Electronic queries will be entertained.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, by mail, or by e-mail) by **October 05, 2019 15:00 Hrs (Kabul Local Time)** duly quoting the case's reference number i.e. **NPA/MCIT/98/CS-2680/QCBS**

The EOI with all details should, preferably, not exceed 40 pages in total and information may be provided as per annexure 1.

For EOI submission purpose only:

Attention: Safiullah Alokozai
Head of Secretary (Bids/ Proposals Opening Committee)
National Procurement Authority (NPA), AOP
Pashtunestan Wat, Kabul, Afghanistan
Phone Number: +93(0)202147556
Email: safiullah.alokozai@npa.gov.af (copy to Mirwais.Rahimi@npa.gov.af, ahmad.naqshbandi@npa.gov.af)
Web site: www.ageops.net

For Clarification purpose only:

Attention: Nasir Ahmad Mohammadi, Procurement Specialist, Project Analysis and Project Development Directorate, National Procurement Authority (NPA), AOP
Pashtunestan Wat, Kabul, Afghanistan
Phone Number: +93(0)202147554
Email: nasir.mohammadi@npa.gov.af (copy to Aziz.obaidi@npa.gov.af, wais.rahimi@npa.gov.af)
Web site: www.ageops.net

Annexure 1: Format for Expression of Interest

The expression of interest must be submitted as per the following format:

{Note: In case documents submitted are in any language other than English, the consultant should submit a self-certified copy of the translated document in English (along with originals).}

SECTION 1: Organization Details (In case the EoI is being submitted as a Joint Venture, the information has to be submitted for the Lead Partner as well as other members of the Joint Venture separately.)

Part 1: Organisation Detail			
I.	Name of the Organization		
II.	Details of the Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Address of the Registered Office:• Telephone:• Facsimile:• Website:	
III.	Information about Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year of Establishment: (copy the incorporation certificate shall be provided)• Status of the Organization: (Public Ltd./Private Ltd./LLP etc.)	
IV.	Name and designation of the person authorized	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name• Designation• E-mail• Contact Number	
V.	Annual Turnover for any of the last three (3) Financial Years	Financial Year	Annual Turnover (USD)
		2016	
		2017	
		2018	
VI.	Number and qualifications of Personnel		
Part 2		EOI Respondent firm needs to mention its core business areas and any other relevant details / experience in a descriptive format. EOI Respondent firm needs to mention its Technical and managerial capability for executing the scope of services.	
Please provide a response with details in not more than 2 pages			

SECTION 2: Documents to be submitted

	Information to be provided	Documentary Evidence to be Provided	Page number as part of Annexure
a	The Consultancy Firm should be registered as a legal entity in the relevant field and should be in existence for at least last 5 years.	Copy Certificate of Incorporation issued by relevant authority in country of establishment	
b	The Consultancy firm to demonstrate having a sound financial capacity of annual turnover at	Statutory Auditor's certificate (i.e. FY 2016, FY 2017, FY 2018) that provides	

	Information to be provided	Documentary Evidence to be Provided	Page number as part of Annexure
	<p>least USD 600,000 in any one of the last 3 years. The firm is required to submit audited financial reports or any other credible financial documents as a proof.</p>	<p>the information explicitly as per the specific requirement of the criterion. OR Financials statements duly certified by the Chartered Accountant OR Self-certification by the authorized signatory of the EoI mentioning the Annual Turnover for any of the last Three (3) years supported by financial statements or Annual Auditor Reports (for FY 2016, FY 2017, FY 2018) clearly indicating the annual turnover.</p> <p>Please note: The annual turnover quoted must be the annual turnover of the EoI Respondent firm/Lead Partner/JV and not its parent/child company The contact detail (email and phone number with address) for the auditors shall be provided for verification purposes.</p>	

	Information to be provided	Documentary Evidence to be Provided	Page number as part of Annexure
c	<p>The consultant shall provide proven experience of having executed at least one contract of similar nature and complexity during last 5 years with the total value of USD 500,000. The consultants are required to provide copy (ies) of the contract along with clients' certificate towards completion of such assignments with their EOI</p> <p>The consultant should provide proven similar nature indicating the duration, value, years of performance, which should showcase the expertise/strength of the consultant for the undertaking such assignments. The Consultant while describing the assignment(s) for similar experience should furnish the following details:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Consultant should explain in what way the executed assignment(s) was/were similar in nature to the current assignment.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The Consultant should explain the exact role played by the Consultant in the assignment if the assignment was carried out in association with other firms as JV or in sub-consultancy for carrying out the assignment.</p>	<p>Details of the experience should be submitted as per format in Section 3.</p> <p>Please note: <i>The credentials cited under this must have been executed by the EoI Respondent or the Lead/JV partner and not its parent/child company</i></p>	
d	<p>Consultant having some regional experience is desirable.</p>	<p>Details of the experience should be submitted as per format in Section 3.</p>	

	Information to be provided	Documentary Evidence to be Provided	Page number as part of Annexure
		<p>Please note: <i>The credentials cited under this must have been executed by the EoI Respondent or the Lead/JV partner and not its parent/child company</i></p>	
e	<p>The requirements for Consultants who intends to associate with other firm(s) in the form of a Joint Venture (JV) or sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications are indicated as under:</p> <p>I. The <u>lead partner is required to be identified clearly</u> and state the composition and nature of their association (JV/ sub-consultant) in their EOI. In case of JV, the following minimum requirements shall be fulfilled:</p> <p>a) Lead Partner: Shall meet at least 60% of the shortlisting criteria for annual turnover and experiences requirement defined under Part 4 above (Qualification Requirements/Short listing Criteria), paragraphs (b) and 100% of the requirement for (c) respectively</p> <p>b) JV Partner: Shall meet at least 25% of the shortlisting criteria for annual turnover and experiences requirement defined under Part 4 above (Qualification Requirements/Short listing Criteria), paragraphs (b).</p> <p>When fulfilling the above minimum requirements, in aggregate, either the lead member and/ or JV partner(s) shall meet at least 100% of the short listing criteria referred to above.</p> <p>II. The short listing criteria provided under Part 4 above (Qualification Requirements/Short listing Criteria), paragraphs (b) and (c) will not be applied for sub-consultant.</p>		

SECTION 3: Format for furnishing details of Credentials / Past Experiences for projects in undertaking related or similar assignment as at Sl. No. 3 of Section 2. The information need to be furnished as per the Format below for each credential.

The project citation should be a maximum of 2 pages per credential/project along with documents as mentioned under Sl. No. 3 of Section 2 (above). The citation need to be furnished for each credential.

Assignment name:	Country: Location within the country
Name of Client:	Address: Email and Phone No.
Name of the Legal Entity in whose name the contract is:	Duration of assignment (months):
No. of man month of the assignment:	Start date (Month/year): Completion date (Month/year):
Approx. value of the overall contract (in USD):	Approx. value of the services provided by your firm under the contract (in USD):
Name of associated organizations, if any:	Role of Consortium member:
Narrative description of the Project:	
Detailed Scope of services, coverage of the project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Consultant should explain in what way the executed assignment(s) was/were similar in nature to the current assignment</i> • <i>The Consultant should explain the exact role played by the Consultant in the assignment if the assignment was carried out in association with other firms as JV or in sub-consultancy for carrying out the assignment.</i> • <i>Key-person inputs provided by the Consultant in executing the assignment giving particulars such as qualification and experience of Key staff provided for the assignment (CVs of such key staff are not required to be attached)</i> 	
Relevance of Project to the current scope (i.e. relevant project components in detail)	
Details of the impact of the project for the client:	