

Instructions to Consultancy firms/NGOs

1. General

1.1. Scope

The Request for Proposal (RfP) document is for the **Firm/NGO** of the **(SAFE) Project** under United Nations Development Programme in partnership with the **Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology** as specified in the Data Sheet (Annex II). Consultancy firms must comply fully with the requirements set out in this document.

1.2. Source of Funds

Funding for this consultancy service will be made available from the **Safeguarding Solomon Islands endemic and globally threatened biodiversity and ecosystem services from key threats, particularly invasive alien species and unsustainable land use practices (SAFE) Project** Budget.

1.3. Eligibility

Participation in this tender process is restricted to the invited short list, subject to the limitations below.

1.4. Restrictions to Eligibility

Firm/NGOs who are prohibited from participation by any act taken in compliance with a decision of the UN Security Council, or those blacklisted by a “watchdog” committee of the Solomon Islands Government, or any international development agency will not be considered.

Any consultancy services who attempts to influence the outcome of the selection process by discrediting competing applications, or by threatening any member sitting on the selection panel, the Client (Purchaser) or any of its staff, or transfers gifts, payments or other benefits to the Client, any staff member, or any member sitting on the selection panel, will be automatically disqualified from consideration.

If information provided by the consultancy firm to support an application, especially regarding past performance and references is falsified, such application will be disqualified from consideration.

1.5. Conflict of Interest

A Conflict of Interest arises from any event influencing the capacity of a Tenderer from performing in an objective and impartial professional manner, or preventing him, at any moment, from giving priority to the interests of the Client. A Conflict of Interest also arise from any consideration relating to possible contracts in the future or conflict with other commitments, past, present, of a Tenderer, or any conflict with his own interests. There is a conflict of interest if compromised for reasons involving family, emotional life, political or national affinity, economic interest or any other shared interest with the beneficiary.

1.6. Request for clarification

The minimum requirement in SIG Procurement Manual is 7 days and 3 days the deadlines in this clause must reflect the value and complexity of the requirements

Any request for clarification must be received by the Client in writing at least 7 days before the deadline for submission of proposals. The Client will reply to consultancy firms' questions at least 4 days before the deadline for submission of proposals. If the Client, either on its own initiative or in response to a request from a consultancy firm, provides additional information on the proposal document, such information will be sent in writing to all consultancy firms who have indicated their intention to submit a proposal.

1.7. Amendment to RFP Documents

At any time prior to the deadline for submission of proposals, the Client, for any reason, whether at its own initiative or in response to a clarification requested by a prospective consultancy firm, may modify the RFP documents by amendment. All prospective consultancy firms will be notified of the amendment in writing and it will be binding on them. The Client may, at their discretion, extend the deadline to allow consultancy firms reasonable time to take the amendment into account.

The Client may call a pre bid conference as indicated in the BDS, attendance at such a conference is not mandatory.

Tenderers however, are advised to ensure their familiarity with the requirements, location and project for this RfP.

1.8. Ethics

It is a requirement that both the Client and prospective consultancy services observe the highest standards of ethics during the procurement and execution of contracts.

In pursuance of this policy, the Client requires that all consultancy firms concerned take measures to ensure that no transfer of gifts, payments or other benefits to public officials and/or procurement /management staff with decision making responsibility or influence, occur.

The Client reserves the right to suspend or cancel a proposal if corrupt practices of any kind are discovered at any stage of the award process. For the purpose of this provision, the terms set forth below shall have the following meaning:

"fraudulent practice" means a misrepresentation of facts in order to influence a procurement process or the execution of a contract to the detriment of the SIG, and includes collusive practices among consultancy firms (prior to or after submission of tenders) designed to establish prices at artificial, non-competitive levels and to deprive the Client of the benefits of free and open competition.

"corrupt practice" means the offering, giving, receiving or soliciting of anything of value to influence the action of any officer involved in the procurement of goods and/or services, or the threatening of injury to a person, property or reputation in connection with the procurement process or in contract execution, in order to obtain or retain business or other improper advantage in the conduct of business; and

Any attempt by a candidate or consultancy firm to obtain confidential information, enter into unlawful agreements with competitors or influence the committee or the Client during the process of examining, clarifying, evaluating and comparing proposals will lead to the rejection of his candidacy or proposal and may result in administrative penalties (e.g. suspension).

The contract shall govern the contracting parties' use of all reports and documents drawn up, received or presented by them during the execution of the contract.

The consultancy firm shall refrain from any relationship likely to compromise his independence or that of his staff. If the consultancy firm ceases to be independent, the Client may, regardless of injury, terminate the contract without further notice and without the contractor/consultancy firm having any claim to compensation.

All proposals will be rejected or contracts terminated if it emerges that the award or execution of a contract has given rise to unusual commercial expenses.

2. Preparation of Proposals

2.1. Language

All proposals together with all correspondences and documents and those exchanged by the consultancy firm and the Client, must be written in **English**.

2.2. Procurement Law Compliance

The tender process shall be conducted under the Solomon Islands Government Procurement and Contract Administration Manual, Public Financial Management (Procurement) Regulations 2021, SIG Financial Instructions 2010 together with the UNDP Policy and Procedure on Procurement of Goods and Services.

2.3. Technical Proposal

In tendering a proposal, the candidate should demonstrate a clear understanding of the Terms of Reference (TOR) as set out, with appropriate explanatory comments, proposed methodology, work plan and timeline for completion of the entire scope of work.

The SAFE PMU Standard Conditions for Contract are not negotiable.

The technical proposal shall include the following information:

- i.** The consultancy firm shall submit a letter indicating interest in the assignment with detailed on page 20 of this document.
- ii.** The proposal shall include a two-to-three-page narrative indicating the firm's/NGO's understanding of the assignment and how it will deliver the stipulated outputs including methodological approach.

The technical proposal must not include any financial information. Financial proposals must be submitted in a separate sealed envelope. The envelope containing technical proposals must not contain any financial proposal or financial information.

2.4. Financial Proposal

The financial proposal should be submitted as a separate document and not included as part of the technical proposal. The financial bid only covers professional fees and excludes any other costs related to execution of this task, which will be met by the SAFE Project. The estimated time required for the consultancy is around sixty (60) days.

2.4.1. Currency of Proposals

All prices in the proposal must be presented in Solomon Islands Dollar. Any resultant contract will be placed in the currency of the proposal and a consultancy firm will not be allowed to amend the currency of the proposal once it has been submitted.

Proposals in any other currency will not be considered.

2.5. Period of validity of Proposals

2.5.1. Proposals shall remain valid for forty-five (45) days after the date of submission prescribed by SAFE PMU, pursuant to the deadline clause. A Proposal valid for a shorter period may be rejected by SAFE PMU on the grounds that it is non-responsive.

2.5.2. In exceptional circumstances, SAFE PMU may solicit the bidder's consent to an extension of the period of validity. The request and the responses thereto shall be made in writing. A bidder granting the request will not be required nor permitted to modify their Proposal.

2.6. Signature of Proposal

The proposals shall be typed or written in indelible ink and signed by the authorised signatory consultancy firm. Any alterations or erasures shall only be validated if initialled by the person or candidate signing the proposal.

2.7. Proposal Pricing

The consultancy firms will be deemed to have satisfied themselves, before submitting their proposal, as to its correctness and completeness and to have taken account of all that is required for the full and proper performance of the contract and to have included all costs in the rates and prices.

2.8. Cost of Proposals

All costs incurred by the consultancy firm in preparing and submitting the proposals will not be reimbursed.

2.9. Submission of Proposals

2.9.1. Date for Submission of Proposals

Proposals should be hand delivered at the SAFE Project PMU Office (Advance Technology Limited Building, Level 1, MECDM Headquarter, Point Cruz, Honiara, Solomon Islands); with the subject line heading **“SAFE Project Diversified Resilient Livelihood Consultancy firm RFP No: MTB -CSC-03-2025** . All proposals must be received by SAFE Project PMU before 4.30pm (GMT+11), Friday 17th October 2025

2.9.2. Late Submission of Proposals.

Any proposal received after the deadline for the submission of proposals will be rejected by the Client and returned unopened to the consultancy firm. No liability can be accepted for late delivery of proposals.

However, SAFE PMU may, at its discretion, extend the deadline for the submission of proposals by notifying all prospective bidders in writing. The extension of the deadline may accompany a modification of the solicitation documents prepared by SAFE PMU on its own initiative.

3. Output required

A suitably qualified and experienced consultancy firm/NGO is expected to deliver the following outputs:

Assessments:

- 3.1. Review of Ongoing Livelihood and Conservation Activities in the identified landscapes/seascapes
- 3.2. Identification of biodiversity-friendly Blue/Green Enterprise Opportunities in the identified landscapes/seascapes
- 3.3. Mapping and Analysis of the Value Chains in the identified landscapes/seascapes
- 3.4. Development and Implementation of Capacity Building Plan for the identified landscapes/seascapes (including detailed reports on training conducted as a result of the assessment)

Implementation

- 3.5. Sustainable Finance and Infrastructure Development Support Extended to Communities in the identified landscapes/seascapes
- 3.6. Marketing Strategies Developed & Implemented for Community-based Blue/Green Enterprises in the identified landscapes/seascapes
- 3.7. Interventions to Support Diversification of Livelihoods in the identified landscapes/seascapes
- 3.8. Establishment of a Blue/Green Livelihoods Network

4. Submission and Sealing of Proposals

All consultancy firms must submit their proposals (clearly separating technical and financial proposals) by hand and deposited in the tender drop-box; the number of copies required is specified in the Data Sheet. The original and the copies of the proposals must be sealed in separate envelopes marked "**original**" and "**copy**" and these envelopes enclosed in one single envelope.

The original and all copies of the Technical Proposal shall be placed in a sealed envelope clearly marked **“Technical Proposal,”** and the original and all copies of the Financial Proposal in a sealed envelope clearly marked **“FINANCIAL PROPOSAL”** and warning: **“DO NOT OPEN WITH THE TECHNICAL PROPOSAL”**.

Both envelopes shall be placed into an outer envelope and sealed. This outer envelope shall bear the submission address and other information indicated in the Data Sheet and be clearly marked, **“DO NOT OPEN, EXCEPT IN PRESENCE OF THE EVALUATION COMMITTEE.”**

All proposals can be submitted by hand delivery and email.

5. Ownership of Proposals

The Client retains ownership of all proposals received and consultancy firms have no right to have their proposals returned, unless the proposal was received after the deadline for submission of proposals.

6. Modification and Withdrawal of Proposals

A consultancy firm may modify or withdraw its proposal after the proposal's submission, provided that written notice of the modification, including substitution or withdrawal of the proposal, is received by the Client prior to the required deadline for submission of proposals. A withdrawal notice may also be sent by email, but must be followed by a signed confirmation copy, postmarked no later than the deadline for submission of proposals.

7. Proposal Opening

The technical proposals will be opened at the time and date specified in the Proposal Data Sheet, by the committee appointed for the purpose, to determine whether the proposals contain all of the required documents and have been properly signed. Any envelopes marked "Withdrawal" or received after the deadline shall not be opened but shall be returned to the consultancy firm(s). The Financial Proposals shall be opened at a date and time after the completion of the Technical Evaluation and the approval of the Technical Evaluation Report. Consultancy firms who have scored 70 points out of 100 and over in the Technical Evaluation shall be invited to quote financial proposals.

8. Evaluation of the Proposal

From the time the bids are opened to the time the contract is awarded, if any consultancy firm/NGO wishes to contact the Client on any matter related to its proposal, it should do so in writing at the address indicated in the Data Sheet. Any effort by the consultancy firm to influence the Client in the Client's proposal evaluation, proposal comparison or contract award decisions may result in the rejection of the consultancy firm's proposal.

Evaluation of the bids will be carried out by a team of not less than three and not more than five persons including Technical, Financial and Administrative Representative(s) of the Client.

The evaluation committee, appointed by the Client as a whole, and each of its members individually, evaluates the proposals on the basis of their responsiveness to the Terms of Reference, applying the evaluation criteria and point system specified in the Data Sheet. Each

responsive proposal will be given a technical score (St). A proposal shall be rejected at this stage if it fails to meet the minimum requirements as spelled out in the Terms of Reference, or it does not respond to important aspects of the Terms of Reference or if it fails to achieve the minimum technical score indicated in the Data Sheet.

After the evaluation of quality is completed, the Client shall notify those consultancy firms whose proposals did not meet the minimum qualifying mark or were considered nonresponsive to the RFP and Terms of Reference, indicating that their Financial Proposals will be returned unopened after completing the selection process. The Client shall simultaneously notify the consultancy firms that have secured the minimum qualifying mark, indicating the date and time set for opening the Financial Proposals.

The Financial Proposals shall be opened publicly in the presence of the consultancy firms' representatives who choose to attend. The name of the consultancy firm, the quality scores, and the proposed prices shall be read aloud and recorded when the Financial Proposals are opened. The Client shall prepare minutes of the public opening.

The evaluation committee will determine whether the Financial Proposals are complete (i.e., whether they have costed all items of the corresponding Technical Proposals

9. Evaluation Criteria

A two-stage evaluation procedure (Quality and Cost Based Selection-QCBS) will be used in evaluating the proposals, with evaluation of the technical proposal being completed prior to any price proposal reviewed and compared. The financial proposal will only be reviewed for submissions that have passed the minimum technical score of 20% of the total obtainable score in the technical proposals. The technical proposal is evaluated based on its responsiveness to the competency requirements as detailed in Part 1-Technical Evaluation (Annex 24 of SIG Procurement and Contract Administration Manual).

The criteria normally used in the technical evaluation of proposals are:

- (i) the consultancy firm's specific experience for the assignment (usually between 0 and 15% of the score);
- (ii) the quality of the methodology proposed (20-50%), and;
- (iii) the qualifications of the key experts proposed (30-70%).

The weighting of the criteria may be adjusted to suit the particular requirements of the RFP, but should be kept within the recommended ranges.

The minimum technical qualifying score is generally between 70% and 80%. Those consultancy firms not meeting this minimum score will be informed and their financial submissions will be returned unopened. The financial submission meeting the minimum Technical Qualifying Score will be opened in accordance with the SIG Procurement and Contract Administration Manual.

The financial evaluation of financial proposal is carried out using Part 2 of the Tender Evaluation Summary – Consulting Services (Annex 24). The proposal with the lowered offered price will be given a score of 100 and other proposals given financial scores that are inversely proportional to their prices.

The final evaluation of quality and cost is carried out in Part 3 of the Tender Evaluation Summary – Consulting Services (Annex 24). The total score is obtained by weighting the technical and financial scores and adding them. The weighting will be determined in the RFP - cost will normally be 20% and quality 80%.

In the Second Stage, the financial proposal of all bidders, who have attained a minimum of 20% score in the technical evaluation, will be compared. The recommended consultancy firm will be the one with the highest score after applying the weightings against the technical and financial scores, and that demonstrates or offering the best value for money taking into account the cumulative scores of technical and financial evaluations.

In summary, by means of QCBS, the lowest Financial Proposal (Fm) will be given a financial score (Sf) of 100 points. The financial scores (Sf) of the other Financial Proposals will be computed as indicated in the Data Sheet. Proposals will be ranked according to their combined technical (St) and financial (Sf) scores using the weights (T = the weight given to the Technical Proposal; P = the weight given to the Financial Proposal; T + P = 1) indicated in the Data Sheet:

The individual consultancy firm achieving the highest combined technical and financial score will be invited for negotiations.

10. Award of Contract

The award of the contract should be made to the individual consultancy firm or NGO whose offer has been evaluated and determined as:

- a) Responsive/compliant/acceptable, and;
- b) Having received/achieved the highest combined technical and financial score.

The consultancy firm will be contacted by the Client in writing requesting opening of negotiations on the proposed contract. The actual location and time of these negotiations will be decided and agreed by both parties at the opening of the negotiations. If these negotiations are successful then contract documents shall be processed and passed to the Client and any other necessary body for processing at the earliest opportunity.

SAFE Project PMU reserves the right to accept or reject any Proposal, and to annul the solicitation process and reject all Proposals at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected tenderer (s) or any obligation to inform the affected tenderer (s) of the grounds for such action.

SAFE Project PMU reserves the right at the time of award of contract to vary any item specified in the RFP without any change in price or other terms and conditions.

11. Payment Modality

The financial bid submitted by the selected firm/NGO shall be all-inclusive, covering all costs associated with the assignment. This includes, but is not limited to, professional fees, logistics, venue hire, catering, daily subsistence allowance (DSA), accommodation, transportation, and any other expenses incurred during field activities. No additional costs related to the execution of this assignment shall be borne by the SAFE project or MECDM outside the agreed contract amount.

Upon signing of the contract, an advance payment—the percentage of which will be decided by SAFE PMU and MECDM prior to contract finalization—will be released to enable the firm/NGO to mobilize resources and undertake necessary preparatory activities. The balance payment will be made upon successful completion and submission of all agreed deliverables, subject to formal review and written certification of satisfactory completion by the concerned authority within MECDM in consultation with Chief Technical Advisor (CTA). Payments will only be processed after official acceptance of the deliverables.

Taxation Implication: There will be taxation implication on the fees payable to consultancy firm excluding expenses. It is the responsibility of the SAFE Project PMU and the Ministry to withhold the tax from the individual at the source of raising payment through a payment certificate. The selected candidate must submit his or her TIN and other IRD registration details to SAFE Project PMU and MECDM for onward submission to MoFT.

12. Notification

The name of the winning tenderer will be publicized on the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM) SIG Portal website.