

**Period Offer  
Evaluation Services**

**Generic Debrief to Tenderers**

**1. Overview**

1.1 AusAID thanks all who tendered for the Period Offer.

1.2 The tender attracted a total of 284 individual candidates. 7 tendered as individuals and the remainder represented a total of 60 firms. 72 nominated for Work Category A, 195 for Work Category B, 122 for Work Category C, 211 for Work Category D and 204 for Work Category E.

1.3 It was a very high standard field, both in terms of technical competence and relevant background, providing AusAID with a valuable opportunity to identify much needed expertise in evaluation. AusAID, with the assistance of the Technical Assessment Panel (TAP), was able to rank the individual candidates on the basis of their potential to provide the best quality expertise in each category.

1.4 Period Offer Deeds have been offered to around fifteen individuals in each category. These individuals are those who were ranked most highly by the TAP in each category. As a result of the strong field, the cut-off point for the offering of tenders was at a high standard in all categories.

**2. About the Technical Assessment Panel**

2.1 The TAP comprised an appropriately qualified AusAID representative, a qualified representative of another development agency and an independent external specialist. The TAP members assessed and ranked the individuals nominated for each category on the basis of their technical merit against the tender content, in particular the Selection Criteria set out in Section 5.7 of Part 1 of the Request for Tender (RFT) and the Scope of Services set out in Schedule 1 of Part 2 of the RFT.

2.2 In the RFT, AusAID advised that it would provide tenderers with a generic debriefing within 30 days of tenderers being notified of the outcome of the tender process. Accordingly, the following summary of the common strengths and weaknesses of the tenders received (as identified by the TAP) is provided to assist tenderers to formulate future AusAID tenders.

### 3. Inclusions which Strengthened or Weakened Tenders

#### General Comments

##### Stronger Tenders

- Addressed all the tender requirements in a clear and logical manner.
- Put most effort into addressing the most heavily weighted selection criteria.
- Stressed experience with evaluation and closely related activities (e.g. setting performance indicators) as distinct from general experience with project design and management.
- Showed clearly in the experience data sheets and in responses to the selection criteria how claimed experience was related directly to the services required, as set out in Section 3 of Schedule 1 to Part 2 of the RFT.
  - Significant detail was provided in this schedule and the better tenders were able to cite experience that matched at least two to three points of detail provided in the relevant category – without being unduly verbose or repetitive.

##### Weaker Tenders

- Made assertions but did not provide specific relevant examples to support them.
- Did not demonstrate skills with evaluation per se or associated skills.
- Failed to make strong connections between general project design and management experience and genuine expertise with review and evaluation techniques.

#### **Comments against the Selection Criteria**

- a. Demonstrated high level oral and written communication skills, including the ability to produce timely lucid, concise reports.**

##### Stronger Tenders

- Were clearly and succinctly written and well set out.
- Clearly and convincingly, but briefly, cited examples of relevant experience with oral and written communication.
- Had responses that were well referenced to CVs but did not unnecessarily repeat information.

##### Weaker Tenders

- Did not provide convincing examples of high level abilities in oral/written communication (this was quite rare)
- Displayed lack of judgment in examples cited, e.g. it was clear the candidate was not the major author of the report cited.

**b. Relevant technical skills, qualifications and experience.**

Stronger Tenders

- Showed directly relevant formal qualifications and/or directly relevant experience.
- For categories B, C, D and E, put most effort into responding to this criterion, in recognition of the weight assigned to it.
- Linked experience to the detail set out in Section 3 of the Scope of Services (Schedule 1 to Part 2 of the RFT).
- Demonstrated a balance between experience with activity or research, design and management and the practical application of evaluation techniques.

Weaker Tenders

- Provided limited detail in the response to this criterion and/or failed to back up claims in the CV or Experience Data Sheets.
- Had inadequate or inappropriate detail in the Experience Data Sheets
  - In many cases, even some of the stronger ones, experience cited in the Experience Data Sheets was not linked in any way to the detail provided in the Scope of Services.
- Described experience that demonstrated only limited amounts of time spent on the tasks cited.

**c. Demonstrated understanding of overseas development issues.**

Stronger Tenders

- Connected experience to a demonstrated understanding of at least two or three of the more important and current development issues, e.g. sustainability, capacity building etc.

Weaker Tenders

- Did not demonstrate understanding of development issues either through experience or background study or reading.
- Merely cited experience in developing countries without demonstrating how this leads to an understanding of development issues.
- Placed undue emphasis on cultural sensitivity – this is covered under criterion g.

**d. Demonstrated understanding of the services required under this period offer.**

Stronger Tenders

- Demonstrated an understanding of the role of evaluation in program management, especially for AusAID programs.
- Demonstrated a capacity to deliver evaluation services that fulfilled this role (in many proposals this was done in response to other selection criteria).

Weaker Tenders

- Merely reiterated information provided in the Background section of the RFT.
- Demonstrated no understanding, in responses to this criterion or others, of the context in which evaluation services are required.

**e. Capacity to identify, select, recruit and manage appropriately skilled personnel for evaluation teams (applies to work category A only).**

Stronger Tenders

- Put significant effort into responding to this criterion in recognition of the weight assigned to it for category A.
- Cited relevant experience with recruiting and managing teams of consultants, especially, but not only, for evaluations.
- Demonstrated knowledge of and access to a range of relevant expertise.

Weaker Tenders

- Merely claimed capability in this area without demonstrating it through the use of relevant, practical examples.
- Did not demonstrate experience that provided sufficient knowledge of and access to the full range of expertise that may be required.

**f. Systems to provide quality assurance (applies to work category A only).**

Stronger Tenders

- Described credible systems for checking quality.
- Cited examples of quality work produced.

Weaker Tenders

- Merely stated that work would be checked for quality.
- Did not provide convincing examples of ways in which their work is checked for quality.

**g. Strong interpersonal skills and cultural sensitivity, including cross cultural awareness and the ability to interact sympathetically and effectively with people at all organisational levels in partner countries (does not apply to work category A).**

Stronger Tenders

- Addressed the issue of general interpersonal skills as well as those needed in cross-cultural contexts.
- Provided convincing examples of successful work that depended on interpersonal skills, cross-cultural sensitivity and ability to work with people across a range of organisational levels.

Weaker Tenders

- Merely cited experience in developing countries without demonstrating how this had lead to improved interpersonal skills in cross-cultural contexts.
- Listed claimed skills and sensitivities without demonstrating how their application had contributed to improved outcomes in design, review or assessment work.