

GENERAL AUDIT SERVICES PERIOD OFFER GENERIC DEBRIEF

1. Overview

1.1 AusAID thanks the 18 firms who tendered for the period offer. One tender was not considered because the firm was awarded the associated contract for the Audit Services Strategic Alliance Period Offer.

1.2 Most firms tendered for all categories of work.

1.3 The quality of the field was generally very high, with several outstanding bids.

1.4 The quality of the documentation did vary. Some provided excellent documentation because significant effort was made to prepare all the requested documents correctly and to address all the sub selection criteria.

1.5 However, some firms did not provide all the relevant documents (for example, some experience data sheets and curriculum vitae were missing) and/or did not address all sub selection criteria, particularly by work categories. Some firms did not collate the material under personnel responses in the order requested. There were also some inconsistencies between work categories nominated in the Personnel Matrix and in the individual personnel responses. . These shortcomings resulted in the Technical Assessment Panel (TAP) marking down the scores for the firms involved. Some tenders also included material additional to that sought in the Request for Tender (RFT) (e.g. Company Profiles) which were removed to make them conforming tenders.

1.6 Period Offer Deeds have been offered to 3 firms:

- Stantons International Pty Ltd
- Horwath (Vic) Pty Limited; and
- Duesburys Nexia

2. About the Technical Assessment Panel

2.1 The TAP comprised appropriately qualified people with previous audit experience or experience as Chairman/Member of audit committees.

2.2 The TAP members assessed each firm under each sub criteria under Selection Criteria A and assessed each individual for each nominated work category under each sub criteria under Selection Criteria B as set out in Section 5 of the Request for Tender (RFT).

2.3 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 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

- Provided all the requested documentation for the firm and for each individual (in a minimum of two work categories) in a clear and logical way in the correct order.

- Addressed sub criteria (i) to (iii) under Selection Criteria A and, for each individual, sub criteria (i) to (v) under Selection Criteria B - for each nominated work category.
- Showed clearly in the curriculum vitae, experience data sheets and responses to sub criteria B (I) to (v) how qualifications and experience could be related directly or indirectly to each nominated work category.

Weaker Tenders

- Failed to provide all the requested information in the correct order and within the page limits specified. Some people were nominated in only one work category.
- Failed to relate, or to relate adequately, the qualifications and experience of people to nominated work categories.

Comments against the Selection Criteria

Selection Criteria A

(i) Demonstrated capacity to respond quickly (within three (3) working days of receipt of tasking) to AusAID requests for personnel or team (included those with expertise in related areas not specifically covered by the Period Offer).

Stronger Tenders

- Explained the size of the firm and links nationally and internationally, including in the Asia/Pacific region, to other people, including contractors and people working in government, in requested and related (with examples) work areas.
- Provided examples of speedy responses.
- Explained the process involved in responding quickly, for example, tasking the lead Partner to co-ordinate resource requirements.
- Explained recruitment and personnel practices to give an indication of skill and experience base.

Weaker Tenders

- Asserted the capacity to respond quickly without explaining how.

(ii) Demonstrated capacity to provide appropriate office, administrative and financial support to contracted personnel.

Stronger Tenders

- Explained the firms support arrangements in place.

Weaker Tenders

- Asserted the capacity to provide appropriate support without giving details.

(iii) Demonstrated capacity to prepare and produce high quality documents.

Stronger Tenders

- Explained application of or consistency with audit and accounting standards, quality control procedures in place such as work check lists, report templates, review of working documents and draft reports by an independent partner and/or AusAID and formal annual reviews with stakeholders, and training policies and practices in report writing.

Weaker Tenders

- Asserted the capacity to prepare and produce high quality reports without providing information on processes in place. Some tenders addressed the quality of the printed

document but not the quality of the content.

Selection Criteria B

(i) Appropriate formal qualifications in the nominated work categories

- Nearly all people nominated had or were obtaining formal qualifications in accounting and/or auditing. Where people had formal qualifications in other areas, their appropriateness was not addressed or not addressed adequately in the nominated work categories.

(ii) Up-to-date professional skills and knowledge in the nominated work categories

Stronger Tenders

- Explained how professional skills were being updated, for example, by undertaking further specialized study, by undertaking the requirements of membership of professional associations, institutes etc, and by in-house training.
- Explained how professional knowledge was being developed and kept up-to-date through work experience, with particular reference to the nominated work categories and/or related areas.

Weaker Tenders

- Failed to explain or did not explain adequately how professional skills and knowledge were being kept up-to-date. Many tenders did not relate the nominated people's experience to the nominated work categories at all or did so in an unconvincing way.

(iii) Demonstrated capacity to provide sound and appropriate advice in the context of conditions prevailing in developing countries. (Professional experience in developing countries or in developing situations in Australia would be an advantage, but is not a prerequisite for selection.)

Stronger Tenders

- Directly addressed the requirement to provide advice 'in the context of conditions prevailing in developing countries' across nominated work categories. Some did so by explaining experience in developing countries and/or in remote aboriginal communities. Others discussed the kind of issues they believed would be involved and then explained how their personal attributes and experience would help them address such issues.

Weaker Tenders

- Failed to address or address adequately the requirement in relation to developing countries.
- Failed to address or address adequately the sub criteria across nominated work categories.

(iv) Excellent oral and written communication skills, including the ability to produce timely, lucid, concise reports

Stronger Tenders

- Addressed all the documentation requirements of the tender in a clear and concise way.
- Provided examples of relevant experience and training in oral and written communications including the timely preparation of lucid, concise reports.

Weaker Tenders

- Asserted that the nominated people had excellent/good/developing oral and written skills

without providing examples of experience and/or training.

(v) Demonstrated capacity to provide leadership and/or participate as a team member in design, monitoring and evaluation teams

Stronger Tenders

- Gave examples of experience in leadership of and/or participation in audit and review teams.
- Stated the role of each nominated member in the team and explained their experience in such roles.

Weaker Tenders

- Failed to explain the role of nominated members and their experience in leadership of and/or participation in teams.