

FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT

RES/PRO/GBACH/RB(2014)00547
Thessaloniki, 11/03/2014

OPEN INVITATION TO TENDER

AO/RES/SAN/ICTNetSS/003/14 - "ICT Network Support Services"

REFERENCE: *Contract notice – 2014/S 049-080630 of 11/03/2014*

Dear Sir/Madam,

We thank you for the interest you have shown in this tender.

The purpose of this tender and additional information necessary to present a tender can be found in the attached Tender Specifications. You should note however the following important points concerning the submission of a tender and its implications.

1. Tenders (and documents included in them) should be submitted preferably in English, but in any case in one (or in any) of the official languages of the European Union.
2. Tenders may be submitted exclusively in one of the following ways:
 - (a) **by post** to be dispatched **not later than the date and time specified in the timetable in point 8 below**, in which case the evidence shall be constituted by the date of dispatch on the postmark or the date of the deposit slip, to the following post address of Cedefop :

**European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop),
Procurement Service, Attention of Mr G. Paraskevaïdis
PO Box 22 427
GR – 55102 Thessaloniki, Greece**

Important:

If using a postal service, tenderers must use a registered, reliable one. If no postmark has been stamped or if the postmark is not legible, Cedefop will accept deposit slip issued by the postal service, provided that this clearly indicates the date as filled in by the post office and not by the tenderer.

Tenderers shall inform Cedefop by e-mail (c4t-services@cedefop.europa.eu) or fax (+30 2310 490028)

- ✓ that they have submitted an offer in time, and
- ✓ that they request Cedefop to confirm receipt of the e-mail or fax.

Tenderers should not attach their offer to any of the above informative e-mail or fax.

or

(b1) **by courier service** to be dispatched not later than **the date and time specified in the timetable in point 8 below**, in which case the evidence shall be constituted by the date of dispatch to the address below or the date of the deposit slip,

or

(b2) **delivered by hand** not later than **the date and time specified in the timetable in point 8 below**, in which case a receipt must be obtained as proof of submission, signed and dated by the official in the above mentioned Service who took delivery,

to the following address (for points (b1) and (b2) above):

**European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop),
Procurement Service, Attention of Mr G. Paraskevaïdis
123, Europe Str,
GR-57001 Thessaloniki-Pylea, Greece
Tel: +30 2310 490111 / 490 064**

Please note that Cedefop is open from 09h00 to 17h00, Monday to Friday. It is closed on Saturday, Sunday and Cedefop holidays.

3. Tenders must be submitted strictly adhering to the following.

Tenders must be submitted in a sealed envelope itself enclosed within a second sealed envelope. If self-adhesive envelopes are used, they must be sealed with adhesive tape and the sender must sign across this tape.

The **outer envelope**, addressed simply to Cedefop (address depending on the means of submission, see point 2 above), should only bear additionally **the name and address** of the sender.

The **inner envelope**, addressed to the Procurement Service as indicated under point 2 above, must bear a self-adhesive label with the indication **“Open Invitation to tender – Not to be opened by the internal mail service”** and all the necessary information, as shown below:

OPEN INVITATION TO TENDER CEDEFOP No: AO/RES/SAN/ICTNetSS/003/14 ‘ICT Network Support Services’ Name of tenderer: NOT TO BE OPENED BY THE INTERNAL MAIL SERVICE

The inner envelope must also contain three sealed envelopes, namely, **Envelope A – “Supporting Documents”**, **Envelope B – “Technical Proposal”** and **Envelope C – “Financial Proposal”**. The content of each of these three envelopes is described in **point 6** of the attached Tender Specifications.

Tenderers should not disclose their financial offer in any part of their tender other than the sealed envelope C, not even disclose the total amount of their financial offer on the cover letter.

4. Tenderers must ensure that their tenders are signed by an authorised representative and that tenders are legible. **It is mandatory to include in the offer a Cover Letter, signed by the person/s that is/are authorised to sign the contract in case of contract award, stating that the tenderer accepts in full and without restriction the requirements of these Tender Specifications, and the Special and General conditions governing this contract as the sole basis of this tendering procedure** (see also point 1 of the Tender Specifications).
5. **Submission of a tender implies acceptance of all the terms and conditions set out in this Invitation to Tender, in the specifications and in the draft contract and**, where appropriate, waiver of the tenderer's own general or specific terms and conditions. It is binding on the tenderer to whom the contract is awarded for the duration of the contract.
6. The opening of tenders will take place at Cedefop on the date and time specified in the timetable in point 8 below. Each tenderer may be represented at the opening of tenders by one person. The name of the person attending the opening must be notified in writing by fax (Fax No +30 2310 490 028) or by e-mail (C4T-services@cedefop.europa.eu) at least two working days prior to the opening session.
7. Contacts between the contracting authority (Cedefop) and tenderers are prohibited throughout the procedure save in exceptional circumstances and under the following conditions only:

7.1 Contacts before the final date for submission of tenders:

- At the request of the tenderer, the Cedefop Procurement Service may provide additional information solely for the purpose of clarifying the tender documents. Any request for additional information must be made in writing by e-mail (C4T-services@cedefop.europa.eu) or by fax (fax No +30 2310 490 028).

Requests for additional information/clarification (if any) from potential tenderers should preferably be written in English and should be received by the date and time as specified in the timetable in point 8 below. No such requests will be processed after that date.

- Cedefop may, on its own initiative, inform interested parties of any error, inaccuracy, omission or any other clerical error in the text of the call for tenders.

The Answers/Clarifications of Cedefop to the requests for additional information/clarification of the tenderers, including that referred to above, will be published on Cedefop's website under the same link where this Open Tender Procedure is announced (<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/working-with-us/public-procurements/calls-for-tenders.aspx>). **Tenderers must ensure that they visit regularly the site for updates up to the closing date for receipt of tenders.**

7.2 Contacts after the final date for submission of tenders and before opening:

- Tenderers should not contact the Contracting Authority (i.e. Cedefop) on their own initiative.
- Tenderers are not allowed to amend their offers, e.g. by completing the documents they sent, replacing them with amended ones or sending new documents initially not included in the tender, as this may lead to rejection of the tender at a later stage. Any such need for additional information/document identified by the Evaluation Committee during the evaluation process will be notified to the tenderer concerned at Cedefop's initiative, providing for a reasonable deadline for response (see also the provisions under the heading below).

7.3 Contacts after the opening of tenders:

- Tenderers should not contact Cedefop on their own initiative at that stage.
- If clarification on the compliance with the Eligibility and/or Selection Criteria is required or if obvious clerical errors in the tender need to be corrected Cedefop may contact tenderer/s in writing to obtain further clarification or documents on specific points of the tender or to correct obvious clerical errors.
- If the necessary information and/or supporting documents for the assessment of an award criterion are missing, these may not be requested as clarification if this might alter the proposal. Any requests for clarification in that regard should not lead to amendment of the terms of the tender. Tenderers must not modify their tender or add any new elements to it. The reply must therefore make clear reference to the relevant information already present in the file. This will serve solely the purpose to provide the Evaluation Committee with a clarification regarding the technical proposal provided the terms of the tender are not modified as a result.
- In regards to possible clarifications on obvious clerical errors in the Financial Offer, tenderers must not add any new prices, but only explain the quotation on the basis of elements and prices already present in the offer. In case a tenderer alters his financial offer during a clarification (beyond the correction of any obvious clerical/calculation errors), this offer will be automatically rejected.
- Tenderers should be prepared to reply to such requests for clarification within a short reasonable deadline as it will be stated in the request for clarification.

8. Timetable:

	DATE	TIME
Deadline for request for any clarifications from the Contracting Authority (Cedefop)	05/05/2014	17h00
Last date on which clarifications are issued by Cedefop	as soon as possible	N/A
Deadline for submission of tenders (hand delivered)	15/05/2014	17h00
Deadline for submission of tenders by post / courier	15/05/2014	N/A
Validity of the tenders	15/11/2014	N/A
Tender opening session	29/05/2014	11h00
Estimated contract signature date	September 2014	

9. Tenderers must maintain the validity of their tender for at least 6 months following the deadline of submission of tenders.

In exceptional cases, before the period of validity expires, Cedefop may ask the tenderers to extend the period for a specific number of days, which may not exceed 40.

The selected tenderer must maintain his tender for a further period of 60 days from the date of notification that his tender has been recommended for the award of the contract. The further period of 60 days is added to the initial period of 6 months irrespective of the date of notification.

10. All costs incurred in preparing and submitting tenders should be borne by the tenderers.
11. Up to the point of signature, the contracting authority may either abandon the procurement or cancel the award procedure, without the candidates or tenderers being entitled to claim any compensation. If such decision is taken, the tenderers will be notified accordingly.
12. This invitation to tender is in no way binding on Cedefop. Cedefop's contractual obligation commences only upon the signature of an Order Form under the Framework Contract, whereby signature of the Framework Contract alone does not commit Cedefop to order.
13. Evaluating your tender and your possible subsequent replies to questions in accordance with the specifications of the invitation to tender, will involve the recording and processing of personal data (such as your name, address and CV). Unless indicated otherwise, such personal data will be processed by Cedefop's Finance and Procurement Service solely for that purpose and pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of data by the Union institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. Details concerning the processing of your personal data are available on the privacy statement at:

http://ec.europa.eu/dataprotectionofficer/privacystatement_publicprocurement_en.pdf.

You have the right of recourse at any time to the European Data Protection Supervisor for matters relating to the processing of your personal data.

14. Your personal data (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form, registration number and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control, if legal person) may be registered in the Early Warning System (EWS) only or both in the EWS and Central Exclusion Database (CED) by the Accounting Officer of the Commission, should you be in one of the situations mentioned in:
 - the Commission Decision 2008/969 of 16.12.2008 on the Early Warning System (for more information see the Privacy Statement on http://ec.europa.eu/budget/info_contract/legal_entities_en.htm), or
 - the Commission Regulation 2008/1302 of 17.12.2008 on the Central Exclusion Database (for more information see the Privacy Statement on http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/sound_fin_mgt/privacy_statement_ced_en.pdf).
15. All tenderers will be informed in writing of the results of this tender procedure.

16. Once Cedefop has opened the tender, the document shall become the property of Cedefop and it shall be treated confidentially.
17. You will be informed of the outcome of this procurement procedure by e-mail. It is your responsibility to provide a valid e-mail address together with your contact details in your tender and to check it regularly.

Yours sincerely,

signed G. Paraskevaïdis
Head of Finance and Procurement

Attached: Tender Specifications

OPEN INVITATION TO TENDER

AO/RES/SAN/ICTNetSS/003/14

“ICT Network Support Services”

Tender Specifications

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Introduction to Cedefop: Europe's agency for training policy

Source: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/about-cedefop.aspx>

To provide people with the skills they need, vocational education and training systems (VET) need to adapt quickly to changing demands. European VET policy's central aim is to promote excellence through VET. To make it both an attractive learning option for the brightest and best young people and adults and an effective way of helping those with low levels of qualification to develop their skills.

Cedefop (the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training), founded in 1975 and based in Greece since 1995, is a European Union (EU) agency. It supports the European Commission, Member States () and social partners by helping design VET policies that promote excellence and social inclusion and strengthen European cooperation in VET.

Cedefop's objective and priorities for 2012-14

Cedefop's activities are guided by its strategic objective and medium-term priorities for 2012-14. Cedefop's strategic objective is to contribute to designing and implementing policies for an attractive VET, that promotes excellence and social inclusion and to strengthening European cooperation in developing, implementing and analysing European VET policy. This objective is supported by three priorities:

- **Supporting modernisation of VET systems**

Modern VET systems must be relevant to individual and labour market needs. They should take into account learning acquired in different ways (for example through work experience) and at different times, and allow people to move between countries and sectors.

Member States decide national VET policies and Cedefop monitors and reports on the reforms and changes they make to their systems. Cedefop also works to improve international VET statistics.

European cooperation in VET, led by the European Commission working with Member States and social partners, has agreed shared objectives. As part of this cooperation, Cedefop has helped develop, and is now working to implement, common European tools and principles which aim to make it both easier to work and study abroad and move between different parts of a national education and training system (for example between general and vocational education).

Careers and transitions – Continuing VET, adult and work-based learning

Today, people are likely to change jobs more often. Cedefop is looking at how continuing training and work-based learning for adults can help people to manage their careers better and improve their job prospects. Cedefop is also examining how work-based learning for adults can help enterprises to deal with technological change, generate innovation and increase competitiveness. New demands are also being made of VET teachers and trainers and Cedefop is looking at their changing roles and their skill and learning needs.

- **Analysing skills needs to inform VET provision**

Europe's growth and competitiveness will be held back if people's skills do not meet job requirements. Unemployment currently coexists with skill shortages. Understanding and anticipating the skills required helps ensuring that training meets labour market needs. It helps to promote a better match between individuals' potential and jobs' requirements.

Cedefop's skill needs analysis provides insights into the trends that influence skill supply and demand and the imbalances that may arise both in the EU and individual Member States. Cedefop is also finding out more about sectoral and occupational developments, such as the demand for 'green' skills for sustainable growth and, as the population ages, the potential for jobs creation and impact of skill needs of the 'silver' economy.

Cedefop's information

Cedefop shares its expertise through its publications, networks, conferences, seminars and web portal www.cedefop.europa.eu. The web portal provides news on Cedefop's major themes "Identifying skills needs", "Understanding qualifications", "Analysing policy" and "Developing lifelong learning". All Cedefop publications are available for download. Cedefop hosts and organises conferences and events throughout the year. Cedefop also coordinates the study visits programme for the European Commission. Study visits are short-term visits of three to five days for a small group of 10 to 15 specialists to examine a particular aspect of lifelong learning.

In addition to its web portal www.cedefop.europa.eu, Cedefop's work can be followed on Facebook at www.facebook.com/cedefop and Twitter at www.twitter.com/cedefop.

1. OVERVIEW OF THIS TENDER PROCEDURE

In submitting his tender in response to this tender procedure, the tenderer accepts in full and without restriction the requirements of these Tender Specifications, and the Special and General conditions governing this contract as the sole basis of this tendering procedure, whatever his own conditions of sale and terms of business may be, which he hereby waives. No account can be taken of any reservation or disclaimer expressed in the tender as regards the tender dossier's Tender Conditions and Specifications and the Contract's Special and General Conditions. If necessary, clarification may be requested by the potential tenderer concerned while the tender submission phase is open – see point 7 of the Invitation to tender. Any reservation or disclaimer may result in the rejection of the tender without further evaluation on the grounds that it does not comply with the conditions of the Tender Dossier.

Tenderers are expected to examine carefully and comply with all instructions, forms, contract provisions and specifications contained in this tender dossier. Failure to submit a Technical and Financial Proposals containing all the required information and documentation may lead to the rejection of the tender.

1.1. Description and type of the contract

- a) Title of the contract: **"ICT Network Support Services"**
- b) Short description of content of this contract: The purpose of this open invitation to tender is to conclude a framework contract with a Service Provider for ICT Network Support Services. The services will be acquired in the form of person-days, categorised in different profiles. A detailed description of the services and profiles required can be found in Chapter 2 below (Technical Specifications).
- c) Type of contract: Framework Service Contract. The tasks /services will be performed by the selected Contractor upon signature of separate Order Forms issued by Cedefop within the context of the Framework contract and throughout its validity. The number and content of Order Forms will depend on the needs of Cedefop. Each Order Form will be prepared in line with the tender and shall stipulate the tasks/ services to be performed by the Contractor, the deliverables, the timetable and the budget.

1.2. Place of delivery or performance

The place of provision of support services will be mainly at Cedefop's premises (hereafter: **on-site**, intra-muros) and partly at the contractor's premises (hereafter: **off-site**, extra-muros).

The decision on which of the tasks and services should be performed on-site or off-site will be made by the ICT Service based on the needs, on efficiency considerations and on the elements of the offer of the successful tenderer, and will be agreed with the selected Contractor.

Some on-site services might exceptionally require presence of contractor's staff on weekends or public holidays. It is estimated that weekend/holidays services will be needed no more than 4 times per year.

1.3. Division into lots

This tender procedure is not divided into lots.

1.4. Variants

Tenderers **may not** offer variant solutions to what is requested in the tender specifications. Cedefop will disregard any variants described in a tender, and reserves the right to reject such tenders without further evaluation on the grounds that they do not comply with the tender specifications.

1.5. Value or quantity of purchase

The estimated volume of services (ICT Network Support Services) in person-days is expected to be: **272 days over 4 years**.

The Order Forms and the person-days volumes might not be distributed evenly over the duration of the contract.

Tenderers should be aware that the estimated volume is purely indicative, shall not be binding on Cedefop and should not be considered as a warranty as to the final value of the contract. The sum of the amounts of the successive Order Forms to be issued after the Framework Contract is signed may not reach the aforementioned estimated volume. Cedefop will be contractually bound only by the amounts effectively entered in the successive signed Order Forms. The total value of the Framework contract will ultimately depend on the number and value of the Order Forms.

1.6. Duration of the contract

The framework contract shall enter into force on the date of signature of the last contracting party; it shall be valid for a period of 1 year, and may be renewed up to three (3) times, each for an additional period of one (1) year, covering a total maximum period of four (4) years (1+1+1+1).

1.7. Main terms of financing and payment

Payments will be made within 30 days of submission of invoices and at the conditions set out in the draft contract.

2. TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

The services of this tender procedure are mainly permanent activities requiring high level of technical expertise to ensure the good functioning of the ICT infrastructure; they should re-source, complement (in terms of workload), further develop, support and back-up the activities of Cedefop's ICT staff.

Assignments shall often be of a complex nature requiring technical knowledge and experience to develop and implement solutions. Different levels of expertise are categorized into a technical expert profile.

In delivering the services, all oral and written communication shall be in English; therefore textual deliverables (reports, technical documentation, briefs, mails etc.) shall be drafted and delivered in English.

For a detailed description of Cedefop's ICT environment please refer to Annex K.

2.1. ICT Network Support Services

Typical tasks are listed below (indicative list):

2.1.1. *Tasks to be performed*

1. Installation of services on physical or virtual equipment and devices which should be performed ensuring minimum downtime of the ICT offered services (after working hours, or early in the morning, or weekends or holidays).
2. Configuration of services on physical or virtual equipment or devices in order to be in conformity with the operational requirements and interoperable with the existing network infrastructure.
3. Management and troubleshooting of TCP-IP version 4 and version 6 running on the ICT infrastructure of the Centre.
4. Optimization of the infrastructure services to ensure simplicity, security and the highest efficiency.
5. Training of the new functionalities of the proposed networking equipment to the relevant ICT Staff.
6. Reconfiguration (house-keeping) of running services and distribution closets by rearranging the patch cords according to the instructions and needs of Cedefop.
7. Backup of configuration files of all related equipment.
8. Configuration of Access lists and rules on services running on virtual or physical equipment or devices.
9. Configuration of BGP, OSPF, VPN connections and other related services.
10. Assistance in the ICT Service as regards the business continuity and recovery configuration and Disaster site configuration.
11. Assistance to the IT staff as required within the abovementioned tasks.

2.1.2. *Profile*

Services will be acquired in the form of person-days, shall engage one (1) profile and shall involve off- or on-site work. In details:

- Technical support on-site.
- Technical support off-site.

- Technical support on-site on weekends.

In order to meet the requirements of the tasks, specific Certifications will be asked. Details will be found under Selection Criteria.

2.2. Additional Requirements

- 2.2.1.** The contractor should be able to ensure the availability and to provide the proposed team within one (1) month following the signature of the Framework Contract (expected signature September 2014).
- 2.2.2.** The selected Contractor should always keep Cedefop updated about the names and qualifications of all people participating in each Order Form, including all subcontractors (if any).
- 2.2.3.** On-site person-days will be calculated on an 8-hour presence or 4-hour presence (for half-day). In each full person-day a 30 minutes break is mandatory and not calculated to the billable hours. Overtime will be counted as extra person-day time and will be invoiced / reimbursed only if overtime has been pre-approved by ICT Service. If any of the members of the contractor's team is unable to perform his/her duties, Cedefop should be informed within two working days. For his/her replacement the Contractor has to submit compliant CV(s) within maximum 5 working days. Cedefop will grant approval for the replacement and appointment of a new individual (other than those originally set out in the proposal), to work on the tasks set out in the Order Form(s) only after the CV(s) and copies of the professional qualifications of the individual(s) proposed are carefully examined and accepted in accordance with the selection criteria.
- 2.2.4.** The contractor should replace within 10 working days a person involved in implementation of the Framework Contract:
1. Whose conduct and behaviour are considered to be unsatisfactory
 2. Whose abilities and/or performance are considered to be unsatisfactory
- 2.2.5.** The contractor will be able to connect remotely to Cedefop server(s) as appropriate, in agreement with Cedefop information and network security rules and policies.
- 2.2.6.** The ICT Service of Cedefop is responsible for the contract and will assign one Project Manager to its execution.
- 2.2.7.** The tenderer shall identify a Project Manager within his organization who will represent the single contact point for all administrative and operational communication in regards to contract implementation.
- 2.2.8.** The contractor will always provide timesheets and reports on each project's progress plus full documentation on the completed work performed during each Order Form. Reports must follow proper Project Management principles such as Prince2, RUP. These reports are considered prerequisites for approval of any invoice payment.
- N.B.:** Please note, items in this section are binding and will be integral part of the future contract. Non-conformance to the tenderer's commitments under this section during the performance of the contract could constitute a ground for Cedefop to terminate the contract.

2.3. Meetings

Upon signature of the contract a kick-off meeting between Cedefop's ICT staff and the Contractor shall be organised.

Cedefop will not pay any costs associated with meetings whether for the kick-off or during the execution of the contract. The contractor is invited to reflect in his financial offer (in the price per person-day) the costs of meetings related with the management of the contract.

During the execution of each Order Form and depending on the nature of each allocated project several technical meetings may take place. It is preferable that such meetings are realised using web/video/tele-conferencing.

Cedefop reserves its right to convene meetings with the contractor in case of problematic execution of the contract, at no cost for Cedefop.

3. SPECIFIC INFORMATION CONCERNING PARTICIPATION TO THIS TENDER PROCEDURE

3.1. Exclusion criteria

Participation to this tender procedure is only open to tenderers who are in a position to subscribe in full to the Declaration on Exclusion criteria and Absence of conflict of interest, given in Annex C. Therefore all tenderers, all group (consortium) members (if any) and any subcontractor/s (identified as per the two bullet-points in the fourth paragraph of point 4.2 below) **MUST** provide the self-declaration found in Annex C duly signed and dated. The exclusion criteria will be assessed in relation to each company individually.

Cedefop reserves the right to check the situations described in points c) and f) of the declaration.

3.2. Selection criteria

The selection criteria concern the tenderer's capacity to execute similar contracts.

The tenderers must submit documentary evidence (or statements, where required) of their economic, financial, technical and professional capacity to perform this contract.

Each and all requirements for economic and financial capacity should be fulfilled by the tenderer - alone (in the case of single tenderers) or as a whole (in case the tenderer is a grouping/consortium). Participation in tendering is open to all legal persons bidding either individually or in a grouping (consortium) of tenderers.

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 he has with them. He must in that case prove to the contracting authority that he will have at his disposal the resources necessary for performance of the contract, for example by producing an undertaking on the part of those entities to place their resources at his disposal. This obligation may be fulfilled by presenting signed statements from those entities. Please note that natural persons (individuals, freelancers) are also considered 'entities' for this purpose.

3.2.1. *Economic and Financial capacity*

The tenderer must be in a stable financial position and have the economic and financial capacity to perform the contract.

Requirements

- The average annual turnover of the tenderer for the last *three* (3) financial years should be at least **150.000 € AND** the average annual turnover of the tenderer for the last *three* (3) financial years concerning the type of services covered in this call for tenders should be at least **100.000 €**
Proof of economic and financial capacity **must** be furnished by the following document:
- Signed Statement (Please fill-in and sign your Statement in Questionnaire 2 of Annex G) of the tenderer's turnover for the last three financial years and the turnover concerning the type of services similar in nature to those making the subject of this call for tenders.

In case of a consortium (grouping) or subcontracting each member of the consortium and all sub-contractors (in line with points 4.1 or 4.2 below) must provide the required statement for the economic and financial capacity, **but the assessment of whether the minimum requirement is met will bear on the consortium as a whole or the tenderer together with his subcontractors.**

In the event of recommendation for contract award the winning tenderer (single tenderer or in the case of a consortium (grouping) each member of the consortium) will be requested to prove the above by submitting Audited Financial Statements (Audited Profit and Loss Account/ Statement or equivalent) if these are foreseen by the respective national legislation. Should total subcontracting exceed 40% of the work by value, Cedefop reserves the right to request audited financial statements also from the subcontractors. For sub-contractors (identified as per any of the two bullet-points in paragraph 4 of Art. 4.2 below) who are natural persons / freelancers, a tax declaration and tax clearance statement for the last three financial years will be requested.

If, for some exceptional reason the winning tenderer (or any consortium member or sub-contractor) is unable to provide one or other of the above documents, he will be required to justify the non-provision and may prove his economic and financial capacity by any other document which Cedefop considers appropriate. Cedefop reserves the right to request any other document enabling it to verify the tenderer's economic and financial capacity.

3.2.2. Technical and professional capacity

The Tenderers are required to have sufficient technical and professional capacity to perform the contract. They must demonstrate qualifications, knowledge, skills and the ability to perform the tasks outlined in the technical specifications.

3.2.2.1. Requirements for technical and professional capacity:

- Enrolment in the relevant professional register;
- Adequate structure and resources (trained and certified technical staff) of the tenderer to perform the services described in 2.3;
- The tenderer's profile **Technical Support Engineer**, whose involvement will be crucial for the implementation of the contract, must fulfil the requirements as described below.
- At least 3 contracts performed in the past three (3) years similar to the scope, size and nature of the services provided as those required in this call for tenders.

Proofs / Evidences of technical and professional capacity

The following documents or information **must be presented** by the tenderer to prove his technical and professional capacity to perform the proposed contract:

- Document for enrolment in the relevant professional register, as prescribed by the laws of the Member State, where the tenderer is established;
- Brief company profile (**please fill-in Questionnaire 4 in Annex G**) indicating the respective tenderer's organigramme;
- List of at least **3** contracts performed in the past **three (3)** years similar to the scope, size and nature as those required in this call for tenders, describing the contracting authorities, the subjects, the amounts, the dates, the percentage and the specific tasks performed by the tenderer (**please fill-in Questionnaire 3 in Annex G**); contracts must be of the following nature:
 - Internet connectivity with multiple ISPs and BGP implementation
 - Multi VLAN installations with backbone (10Gbps) and access switches (1Gbps)
 - Network Access Control software
 - High Availability Firewall installations
 - Public and private Wi-Fi infrastructures
 - VPN over Internet
 - ICT/Network security hardening of devices
 - ICT/Network security audits

The set of contracts shall cover all the above fields.

- The CVs of the Technical Support experts **whose involvement will be crucial for performing the contract**. Minimum number of CVs requested:

Profile	Number of CVs
Technical Support engineer	2

- Detailed requirements of requested profile – Technical Support Engineer:

Each team member must have:

- A level of education which corresponds to completed secondary level or equivalent;
- Minimum 5 years of experience, following completion of secondary education, in the systems described above in section 2.3;
- Very good knowledge of English (speaking/reading/writing), level B2 as determined in "Language levels of the Common European Framework of Reference CEF or equivalent."¹

¹ For more information see the European language levels in Cedefop's website,

Important Note: The tenderer is asked to submit CVs of a team that should cover all the certifications as specified below **as a whole**. In other words, each certification from the list below **should be fulfilled by at least two CVs** (main person and backup person).

1. Attendance of the course “IPv6 Fundamentals, Design and Deployment (IP6FD) V3.0”
2. Check Point Certified Security Expert certificate
3. CCNP certificate or higher.

In the case of a consortium or subcontracting, the consortium or the tenderer with all subcontractors together have to provide evidence of technical and professional capacity as a whole (please see also 4.1 and/or 4.2 below).

3.3. Legal Position

Tenderers may choose between submitting a joint offer (see 4.1) as a Consortium / Grouping or introducing a bid as a single tenderer, in both cases with the possibility of having one or several subcontractors (see 4.2). Whichever type of bid is chosen, the tender must stipulate the legal status and role of each legal entity in the tender proposed (see also 5th bullet of point 4.1. below). To identify himself (and any other participating entities, if applicable), the tenderer must complete **Questionnaire 1 in Annex G**. Tenderers are also requested to complete a **Legal Entity Form** found in **Annex D**, accompanied by all documents and information indicated in the form.

The Legal Entity Form should be completed and signed by the representative(s) of the tenderer (who sign(s) the cover letter as per point 4 of the Invitation to tender) authorised to sign contracts with third parties.

The Legal Entity Form should not be submitted by sub-contractors (if any).

4. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONCERNING PARTICIPATION TO THIS TENDER PROCEDURE

Participation in Cedefop tendering procedures is open on equal terms to all natural and legal persons or groupings of such persons (consortia) falling within the scope of the Treaties. It includes all economic operators registered in the EU and all EU citizens. Pursuant to Article 119 of the general Financial Regulation the participation is also open to all natural and legal persons from non-EU countries that have a ratified agreement with the European Union in the field of public procurement on the conditions laid down in that agreement. Cedefop can therefore accept offers from and sign contracts with tenderers from 34 countries, namely: the 28 EU member States, 3 EEA Countries (Lichtenstein, Norway, Iceland) and 3 SAA Countries (FYROM, Albania and Montenegro).

The procurement (tender) procedures of Cedefop are **not** open to tenderers from GPA countries.

A natural or legal person can take part (as an individual tenderer or as a member of a consortium submitting a tender) in only one tender. In the opposite case all tenders in which that person has participated may be excluded from the evaluation.

4.1. Joint Offers/ Groupings (Consortia)

- Groupings (consortia), irrespective of their legal form, may submit a tender on condition that it complies with the rules of competition. A consortium may be a legally-established permanent grouping, or informally constituted group of tenderers submitting an offer (joint offer) for a specific tender procedure.
- Cedefop does not require consortia (if any) to have a given legal form in order to submit a tender, but reserves the right to require a consortium to adopt a given legal form before the contract is signed (if this change is necessary for proper performance of the contract). This can take the form of an entity with or without legal personality but offering sufficient protection of the contractual interests of Cedefop.
- If awarded the contract, the tenderers of the group (consortium) will have an equal standing towards Cedefop in executing it.
- A grouping (if any) of firms must nominate one party to be responsible for the receipt and processing of payments for members of the grouping, for managing the service administration, and for coordination.
- Tenders submitted by consortia of firms must specify the role, qualifications and experience of each member or of the group (please fill-in the respective Questionnaires in Annex G).
- Each member of the group (consortium) must provide the required evidence for the exclusion and selection criteria. Concerning the selection criteria, the evidence provided by each member of the group (consortium) will be checked to ensure that the consortium as a whole fulfils the criteria.

- The offer has to be signed by all members of the group (consortium). However, if the members of the group so desire they may grant an authorisation to one of the members of the grouping (consortium). In this case they should attach to the offer a power of attorney (see model in Annex I) authorising this company or person to submit a tender on behalf of the grouping (consortium). For groupings not having formed a common legal entity, Annex I, model 1 should be used and separate legal entity forms (see point 3.3 and Annex D) should be completed and signed by all members. For groupings with a legal entity in place, Annex I, model 2 and one legal entity form (see point 3.3 and Annex D) should be completed and signed only by the single representative of the consortium.

The contract will have to be signed by all members of the group (consortium). If the members of the group (consortium) so desire, they may grant authorisation to one of the members of the grouping by signing a power of attorney. The same model as above duly signed and returned together with the offer (Annex I) is valid also for signature of the contract.

Partners in a joint offer assume joint and several liability towards Cedefop for the performance of the contract as a whole.

4.2. Subcontracting/Subcontractors

Subcontracting is defined as the situation where a contract has been or is to be established between Cedefop and a contractor and where the contractor, in order to carry out that contract, enters into legal commitments with other entities for performing part of the service. If awarded, the contract will be signed by the selected Tenderer (the Contractor), who will be vis-à-vis Cedefop the only contracting party responsible for the performance of this contract. Cedefop has no direct legal commitment with the subcontractor(s).

The contractor retains full liability towards Cedefop for performance of the contract as a whole. Cedefop will treat all contractual matters (e.g. payments) with the contractor, whether or not some tasks are performed by a subcontractor. Under no circumstances can the contractor avoid liability towards Cedefop on the grounds that the subcontractor is at fault. Any subcontracting/subcontractor must be approved by Cedefop, either by accepting the bidder's tender, or, if proposed by the Contractor after contract signature, in writing by an exchange of letters. In the latter case subcontracting/subcontractor will be accepted only if it is judged necessary and does not lead to distortion of competition.

Tenderers are free to choose their subcontractors from both eligible and non-eligible countries. Thus, in principle all economic operators can act as subcontractors of eligible tenderers.

The tenderer must clearly indicate the identity of each Subcontractor and the percentage of work by value that he will perform for this contract (please fill in Annex G).

Only in cases when:

- a Subcontractor undertakes between 10% and 40% of the work by value,
- the total subcontracting is above 40% of the work by value, independently of the individual Subcontractor's contribution to the work by value,

the tenderer should submit with the offer:

1. the Declaration on exclusion criteria and absence of conflict of interest (Annex C) filled-in and signed by the respective Subcontractor;
2. the required documents related to the economic/financial and technical/professional capacity of the Subcontractor as described in points 3.2.1 and 3.2.2;
3. the Form in Annex J (Model of Letter of Intent for Subcontractor/s) duly filled-in and signed by each respective Subcontractor, stating his unambiguous undertaking to collaborate with the tenderer if the latter wins the contract. Also should be stated the roles, activities and responsibilities of the subcontractor(s) and the extent of the resources that the respective subcontractor will put at the tenderer's /contractor's disposal for the performance of the contract.

N.B. The subcontractor(s) (if any) have to provide the documents to prove their capacity only for the parts of the contract that are relevant to them. The evidence provided will be checked to ensure that the tenderer with the subcontractor(s) altogether fulfil the criteria.

5. AWARD OF THE CONTRACT

Only the tenders meeting the requirements of the non-exclusion and selection criteria will be evaluated in terms of quality and price.

In order to guarantee a minimum threshold of quality, offers that:

- do not reach a minimum of **50%** of the possible score for each award (evaluation) criterion, and/or
- obtain an overall total score (Total Quality value) of less than the total **65** (of a maximum of 100) points against the award (technical) criteria,

will not be considered acceptable and will be eliminated from further (financial) evaluation.

The contract shall be awarded to the tenderer submitting the tender that offers the best-value-for-money as represented by the highest Total Score (TS) out of 100.

The Total Score (TS), comprising quality + price score, will be calculated for each tender by applying the formula below:

Total Score (TS) = $X \cdot (TQV/100) + Y \cdot (\text{Cheapest TFO} / \text{TFO})$

Whereby:

TQV = Total Quality Value of the tender (as per points 5.1.1-4);

TFO = Total Financial Offer of the tender (as per point 5.2);

X is the weighting for quality score (TQV) and for this tender procedure it is fixed to **(60)**;

Y is the weighting for price (TFO) and for this tender procedure it is fixed to **(40)**.

Cheapest TFO is the Cheapest Tender Price of a technically compliant tender (i.e. among those having achieved a minimum of 50% of the possible score for each award (evaluation) criterion and in total a minimum of **65** out of 100 points (TQV) in the technical evaluation – see above).

5.1. Technical evaluation

5.1.1. Award Criteria

The assessment of the technical quality will be based on the ability of the tenderer to meet the purpose of the contract as described in the tender specifications. The following Award Criteria for the technical evaluation will be applied to this tender procedure:

No	Award	Max. Points	Supporting Documentation / Information to be provided in the Technical proposal
1	Cedefop's Information systems as described in detail in ICT Profile found in Annex K are vital for its day-to-day operation, its service to the clients and stake holders. What elements covered by services described in 2.1 would you consider to ensure continuous operation?	50	Description of a) methodology proposed, b) procedures involved, c) tools *. Your proposal should address the following factors: Existing knowledge and know-how, automation and ICT Service staff involvement, Security, accessibility (onsite / off-site), remote management, "Cloud-readiness".
2	Quality of the Change Control System Appropriateness (quality, proportionality, credibility) of the proposed team for the contract and procedures for staff back-up and replacement: Degree of direct involvement of senior staff, appropriateness of team proposed, quality of the procedures followed in order to provide backup and replacement of any staff when needed	30	Description of the methods and tools* to establish a change control system for managing on-going change demands. (1) Description of the composition of the proposed team, allocation of tasks, and the degree of direct involvement of the proposed human resources; (2) Description of how will be ensured: (a) that changes in staff will have no negative impact on the execution of the services (in terms of quality, deadlines and costs); (b) that all project/service knowledge is documented, organised and shared so it is accessible at all times; (c) a proper organisation of the transfer of responsibilities, knowledge and expertise in case of staff replacement; (3) Include a description of how you ensure that technical staff is properly trained and that their knowledge and expertise is kept up to date for all aspects of the services required in this call for tenders.
3	Availability of proposed individual team members for the tasks assigned by Cedefop, response to emergencies	20	Definition of availability of each member (CV) with the requested profile, taking into consideration the estimated person-days mentioned in point 1.5 and in the Financial Form – Evaluation Scenario.
	Total Quality Value (TQV)	100	

*Any tools proposed shall be either freeware or with no additional cost for Cedefop (be provided for free if they are suggested).

5.2. Financial evaluation

Only tenders scoring in total **65 points** or more (of a maximum of 100 points) against the technical award criteria and 50% or more of the possible maximum score for each award criterion will have their financial proposal evaluated. The evaluation will be made on the basis of the **Total Price** offered (**Total Financial Offer TFO**) in the Price schedule table (see point 5.3).

The tenders are awarded points for the Total Price offered by using the following formula:

Financial score = (cheapest Financial Proposal / Financial Proposal of the tender considered) Y.*
Where Y = price weighting (see the complete formula under point 5 above)

Information concerning price

- The prices quoted must be fixed and not revisable for the first (two) year(s) of the contract. For the remaining years Article I.3.3 of the Contract shall apply (see draft Framework Contract at Annex B).
- Prices must be quoted in EURO and include all expenses.
- Under Articles 3 and 4 of the Protocol on the Privileges and Immunities of the European Communities, Cedefop is exempt from all charges, taxes and dues, including value added tax (VAT). Such charges shall therefore not be included in the calculation of the price quoted.

[For contractors based in Greece, invoices will include VAT which is paid by Cedefop and later reimbursed by the State.

[For contractors established in other countries exemption is direct (invoices are submitted without VAT), subject to fulfilling as necessary the requirements of Article 151 of Council Directive 2006/112/EC.]

5.2.1. Evaluation of abnormally low prices

If any tender's price appears to be abnormally low in relation to the services offered, and in order to check if the tender can be considered valid, the evaluation committee will, before it may reject this tender, send a request for clarifications to ask for explanations on the components of the tender which it considers relevant to the presumed abnormally low price and shall verify those constituent elements taking account of the explanations received. If in that relation the tenderer cannot explain his price on the basis of the economy of the services or supplies offered, or the method used, or the technical solution chosen, or the exceptionally favourable conditions available to the tenderer, the tender will be rejected.

A price will be considered abnormally low if the financial offer of any tenderer is lower with more than the acceptable margin of deviation from the average price of the other technically acceptable offers (please note that definition of which offers are technically acceptable/ compliant is given in points 5 and 5.2 above). The actual deviation will be calculated as % as follows:

The difference between the average price of the other technically acceptable offers and the value of the presumably abnormally low financial offer will be divided by the average price of the other technically acceptable offers.

The acceptable margin of deviation is set to **50%**.

The approach of the Evaluation Committee to identify and eliminate abnormally low tenders will be the following:

- a) apply the acceptable margin of deviation from the average price of the other technically acceptable offers and set aside the offers that go beyond it;
- b) check if specific notes or specific items included in the offer justify to some extent the deviation; if not, or if inadequate, send relevant request for explanation(s) to the tenderer concerned;
- c) decide on the acceptability of the offer on the basis of the notes in the tender and/or the clarification reply received.

5.3. Financial Proposal / Financial Scenario

The financial offer must be clear and in compliance with the tender specifications. The tenderers must fill-in the Price schedule table (Annex H) and present a detailed breakdown of the price offered.

The VAT amount must be indicated separately at the bottom of the table (this applies to tenderers established in Greece only): ... EUR.

The Financial Offers will be checked for any arithmetical errors in computation and summation. Errors will be corrected by the evaluation committee as follows:

- where there is a discrepancy between a unit price and the total amount derived from the multiplication of the unit price and the quantity, the unit price as quoted will be the price taken into account (*not applicable for global price contract*). Tenderers will be requested to confirm in writing the corrected calculation so that it may eventually be included in the contract.

Please note that Cedefop estimates for quantities are indicative and do not constitute any kind of legal obligation for the Centre.

6. INFORMATION ON PRESENTATION AND CONTENT OF TENDER

It is important that tenderers provide all documents necessary to enable the evaluation committee to assess their tender. Tenderers should fully respect the instructions indicated under points 2, 3 and 4 of this open invitation to tender.

In addition, below you will find details of the required documentation.

6.1. Envelope A - Supporting documents

One original and one copy of:

- cover letter, signed by the person/s (name and position) that is/are authorised to sign the contract in case of contract award
- the exclusion criteria declaration requested in point 3.1 and standard template found in Annex C
- the selection criteria documents as requested in points 3.2, 4.1, 4.2
- Questionnaires 1 – 4 as found in Annex G
- Power of Attorney (Model 1 or 2), as required in point 4.1 (if applicable) and found in Annex I
- Model of Letter of Intent for Subcontractor/s as required in point 4.2 (if applicable) and found in Annex J
- the Legal Entity Form as requested in point 3.3 and found in Annex D
- the Financial Identification Form as found in Annex E
- the checklist found in Annex F

In the case of tenders submitted by groupings (consortia) or involving contribution by subcontractors, envelope A should also contain all relevant documentation as requested in points 4.1 and 4.2 respectively (with reference to points 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3).

6.2. Envelope B – Technical proposal

One original signed version and three copies of:

- the Technical Proposal providing all information requested in point 5.1, including information relevant to subcontracting, if any, as requested in point 4.2.

6.3. Envelope C – Financial proposal

One original signed version and three copies of:

- the Financial Proposal containing all information requested in point 5.3 and in Annex H.

ANNEX A

Contract Notice

(Given as a separate file in *.pdf format)

ANNEX B

Draft Contract

(Given as a separate file in *.pdf format)

ANNEX C

**Declaration of honour with respect to
the Exclusion Criteria and absence of conflict of interest**

(Given as a separate file in *.doc format)

ANNEX D

Legal Entity Form

Legal Entity Form to be downloaded, depending on the nationality and legal status of the tenderer, from the following website:

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm

Legal Entity Form to be completed and signed by a representative of the tenderer (group leader in case of consortium, with indication of entity, name and function) authorised to sign contracts with third parties. It should not be signed by sub-contractors (if any).

ANNEX E

Financial Identification Form

To be downloaded, depending on the nationality of the tenderer, from the following website:

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/financial_id/financial_id_fr.cfm

and completed and signed by an authorised representative of the tenderer (group leader in case of consortium, with indication of entity, name and function), but not by subcontractors.

PLEASE NOTE:

Please indicate the BIC (Bank Identification Code) in the REMARKS box of the downloaded form.

ANNEX F

CHECK LIST OF MANDATORY DOCUMENTS

The checklist must be used to ensure that you have provided all the documentation for this tender and in the correct way. This checklist should be included as part of your offer.

Please Tick ✓ the boxes provided

Mandatory documents to be included as part of the tender	Reference paragraph	Included		If the document is not included, please provide an explanation for the reason
		Yes	No	
<u>Envelope 'A' must contain</u>				
one original and one copy of:	6.1	☐	☐	
- Cover letter, signed by the person/s that is/are authorised to sign the contract in case of contract award (name and position of the individual(s) entitled to sign contract)	Art. 4 of Invitation to tender; 6.1	☐	☐	
- Exclusion Criteria Declaration (including those of consortium members and subcontractors, if applicable)	3.1 & Annex C	☐	☐	
- selection criteria documents (If applicable, including those of consortia and subcontractors)	3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 6.1	☐	☐	
- Questionnaires 1-4 (Annex G)	3.2, 3.3, 4.1 & Annex G	☐	☐	
- Power of attorney of partners in joint bid / Consortium (if applicable)	4.1 & Annex I (model 1 or 2)	☐	☐	
- Letter of intent of subcontractor (if applicable)	4.2 & Annex J	☐	☐	
- Legal Entity Form	3.3 & Annex D	☐	☐	
- Financial Identification Form	6.1 & Annex E	☐	☐	
- this Checklist	6.1 & Annex F	☐	☐	
<u>Envelope 'B' must contain</u>				
one original and three copies of:	6.2	☐	☐	
- the Technical Proposal	5.1	☐	☐	
<u>Envelope 'C' must contain</u>				
one original and three copies of:	6.3	☐	☐	
- the Financial Proposal	5.3 & Annex H	☐	☐	

The tenderers should also ensure that:

☐	the offer is formulated in one of the official languages of the European Union.
☐	both the technical and financial proposals of the offer are signed by duly authorised agent.
☐	the offer is perfectly legible in order to rule out any ambiguity.
☐	the offer is submitted in accordance with the envelope system as detailed in the invitation to tender point 3.
☐	the outer envelope bears the information mentioned in the invitation to tender point 3.

ANNEX G

Questionnaires 1-4

(Given as a separate file in *.doc format)

ANNEX H

Financial Proposal

(Given as a separate Excel file)

ANNEX I

Models of power of attorney

(Given as a separate file in *.doc format)

ANNEX J

Model of Letter of Intent for Subcontractor/s

(Given as a separate file in *.doc format)

ANNEX K

Cedefop's ICT Profile

(Given as a separate file in *.pdf format)