



Request for Proposals for appointment of the Statutory Auditors
(including the Terms of Engagement)

NATURE OF ENGAGEMENT

1. Introduction

The South Centre is the inter-governmental policy research institution of developing countries, with a current membership of 54 developing countries from Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. The South Centre promotes more effective South-South cooperation and coordination, supports developing countries in participating in and voicing their development interests and priorities more effectively in various multilateral and regional development policy-related issues and fora, and provides policy advice and technical assistance to governments on their national development-related policies.

The main activities of the Centre constitute policy research and analysis, convening meetings and conferences for developing country delegations to share views and experiences, and conducting technical assistance and capacity building activities. The issues taken up by the Centre include international and regional trade policy, global macroeconomic and finance issues, global public health, innovation and intellectual property policy, climate change, environment and sustainable development, international economic issues including tax policy, external debt and international investment policy; human rights policy; global governance perspectives in order to improve South-South cooperation, North-South relations, and global governance for development. The South Centre has three major institutional pillars: The Council of Representatives in which the Member States are represented; the Board comprising a Chairperson and members who act in their individual capacities and provide guidance to the Secretariat; and the Secretariat headed by the Executive Director which implements the activities of the South Centre. The Secretariat is accountable to and works under the guidance of the Board and the Council. The registered address is 17-19, Chemin du Champ d'Anier, 1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland.

The South Centre is a small intergovernmental organization hosted in Switzerland, with an annual budget of between US\$ 5-7 million. The South Centre financial statements are prepared in compliance with prudent and generally acceptable accounting policies, which are consistently applied in line with the nature and size of the institution. In the future, the South Centre hopes to move towards an internationally accepted accounting standard regime and shall in due course move forward. The financial statements are presented in Swiss Francs, the South Centre's functional currency.

On an annual basis the South Centre prepares its consolidated financial statements. The financial statements cover the activities of the South Centre in Switzerland and the countries where the activities of the South Centre are conducted. The South Centre is also required to conduct project audits on an as and when basis.

The Provident Fund, which holds the employee benefits plan of the South Centre, is a reporting entity and not a separate legal entity; hence its results are incorporated rather than consolidated into the financial statements.

2. Scope of services

The audit will be conducted in accordance with the International Standards of Audit. The scope of the external audit engagement will include:

- Opinion on the annual statutory financial statements;
- Confirmation of existence of internal control systems over financial reporting; and
- Opinion on the South Centre Provident Fund annual financial statements.

The external auditors are a key assurance service provider to the South Centre, extending to an on-going business advisory support in determining the accounting and reporting obligations due to changes in operational policies, internal control environment or as necessitated by the changes in accounting policies as well as any other applicable statutory obligations. To that effect, the external auditor will issue a management letter including recommendations for improvements in controls and procedures.

By virtue of the audit engagement, the external auditors will report to the Finance Committee and, if needed, to the Board on an annual basis. Other ad-hoc attendance at the Audit and Ethics Committee and the Board may also be required.

3. Terms of engagement

The external auditor is appointed by the Board of the South Centre upon the recommendation of its Finance Committee. The appointment will be for an initial period of **three years** with the scope of an annual extension subject to the decision of the Board.

Once appointed, the external auditor reports to the Board, through the Finance committee of the Board.

The detailed terms and conditions of the audit and assurance services are formalized and approved under an annual engagement letter.

4. General conditions

The external auditor will be bound by professional secrecy and not divulge to third parties any confidential information which they acquire during the term of their engagement. Any such sharing of information, as required by law or other regulatory agencies, will be pre-approved in writing.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluations are assessed considering both technical and cost factors. These factors will be evaluated relative to each other as described herein.

In assessing each proposal, the South Centre will allocate importance to technical approach **as well as** the cost proposals, owing to the small size of the institution.

Your two-part proposal must include the following elements:

Part I: Technical Proposal

The technical component of your proposal should be concisely presented and structured, and should explain in detail your ability, capacity and resources to provide the requested services. In this regard please provide us with:

1. Technical Approach:

- a. Technical approach and methodology,
- b. Work schedule,
- c. Team structure,
- d. CVs of proposed key personnel.

CVs of proposed personnel must not exceed three pages in length and shall be in chronological order starting with the most recent experience and summarizing relevant experience and qualifications.

2. Company Presentation:

A presentation of the company including explanation of the customer service procedures, number of employees, organizational structure and any information that you may consider essential.

3. Past Performance: Two to three past projects relevant to the work requested, highlighting the challenges encountered and outcomes achieved.

Part II: Cost Proposal

The cost proposal should be separate to the technical proposal and all costs should be shown in Swiss Francs (CHF).

The cost proposal should include the daily rates of the proposed team members, together with the respective level of effort.

Any associated other direct costs should also be clearly identified. Any other direct costs shall be agreed prior with the South Centre.

PROPOSAL DUE DATE:

Proposals must be received **by 24.00 hrs (CET) on 7 December 2018.**

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

The auditing firms shall confirm that there are no Conflicts of Interest or danger of compromising their independence in the performance of the audit engagement.

The proposal should clearly disclose any engagement undertaken for the South Centre Secretariat, directly or indirectly, by the applicant audit firm in the past 4 years (2014-2017). This would include all engagements in the nature of audit, advisory and assurance service, management consultancy and research case studies, along with the remuneration for each category of service.

Also, please indicate whether your organisation have been selected or intend to bid for any material engagements for financial year 2018, then that disclosure should also be included in the overview

Please check one box below, as appropriate:

<input type="checkbox"/>	The Offeror hereby declares that it has read and understood the Conflict of Interest rules set forth in the Request for Proposals (RFP) and warrants that no Conflict of Interest exists on the part of the Offeror or an Affiliate of the Offeror, with regard to the services to be performed under the RFP. The Offeror hereby agrees to comply with the Conflict of Interest rules set forth in the Request for Proposals (RFP).
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Offeror wishes to disclose a real or potential Conflict of Interest situation(s) and propose mitigating action(s). <i>Note: if this box is checked, please describe, in detail, the situation and present a proposed mitigation plan / arrangement for consideration by the South Centre.</i>

Requested information for the disclosure of a real/potential Conflict of Interest (CoI):

The Offeror has a responsibility to **fully disclose** all relevant details relating to real and/or potential CoI situations that may occur in case the Offeror was awarded a contract to provide Services for the South Centre in Switzerland.

If conflicting work was performed in the past, please provide all relevant information pertaining to such work performed after 1 January 2014 (please also describe any significant work performed before 1 January 2014 if it was of an on-going nature which could present an actual or possible conflict of interest in the present day).

For the purpose of disclosing any CoIs, please answer the below questions and add any relevant information, as required, and attach this written analysis as an appendix to the signed and completed form

As part of disclosing a CoI situation, and based on the facts of the situation, the Offeror must clearly provide its assessment of the CoI situation.

Where a CoI situation is identified, the Offeror must propose **realistic** and **effective** mitigation measures. Please note that not all CoIs can be mitigated. The South Centre therefore requests the

Offeror to carefully evaluate the risk and/or the scope of the CoI before proposing mitigating measures.

Conflict of Interest questions: information to be provided by the Offeror

- Who is the entity or Consultant selected to undertake the Services work in the country?
- Who is the entity/client with whom the contract for performing the work causing the real/potential conflict of interest (referred to as 'the work') has been signed?
- Who has been asked to bid or is already performing the work?
- What is their relationship to the Offeror?
- What is the nature and scope of the work, including Terms of Engagements?
- What is the entity for which the work will be/is being/has been performed? What is its relationship to the South Centre?
- Who is paying for the work, and how much?
- If the work is an audit, is the audit being performed as part of the fiduciary arrangements of The South Centre and if so, are program funds being used to pay for it?
- Does the Offeror think that there is a conflict? Why? (Or why not?)
- If there appears to be a conflict, does the Offeror think it can be mitigated? If so, please set out a mitigation plan for consideration by The South Centre.

Offeror:

By: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

GUIDANCE FOR SUPPLIERS

1. General Instructions :

The South Centre may, at its discretion, change the closing date, cancel the RFP, or revise the terms of Engagement, by issuing an amendment to this solicitation. All Amendments to this RFP will be posted on the South Centre website: www.southcentre.int. It is the Supplier's responsibility to consult the South Centre website to ensure that they are aware of amendments to this RFP.

The South Centre may (a) reject any or all proposals, (b) accept for award a proposal other than the lowest cost proposal, (c) accept more than one proposal, (d) accept alternate proposals, (e) accept part of a proposal, (f) waive informalities and minor irregularities in proposals received, and (g) cancel this RFP.

The South Centre may award one or more contracts on the basis of initial proposals received, without discussions or negotiations. Therefore, each initial proposal should contain the Supplier's best terms from a cost and technical standpoint. The South Centre reserves the right (but is not under obligation to do so) to enter into discussions with one or more Suppliers in order to obtain clarifications or additional detail, to suggest refinements in the technical proposal or other aspects of the proposal, or negotiate the cost proposal.

The South Centre will be under no obligation to reveal, or discuss with any Suppliers, how a proposal was assessed, or to provide any other information relative to the selection process. Suppliers whose proposals are not selected will be notified in writing of this fact, and shall have no claim whatsoever for any kind of compensation.

This RFP shall not be construed as a contract or a commitment of any kind. This request for proposals in no way obligates the South Centre to award a contract, nor does it commit the South Centre to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the proposal.

Suppliers are solely responsible for their own expenses, if any, in preparing and submitting an offer to this Request for Proposal. This would include any costs incurred during functional demonstrations and subsequent meetings and negotiations.

In addition to the written proposal, the South Centre may request suppliers to make oral presentations in English or to participate in a pre-proposal conference. The date, time, and place for such (if any) will be communicated to all eligible suppliers. Information obtained through oral presentations will be considered in the overall evaluation process.

All submissions and any other questions concerning this RFP must be submitted in writing via email to: pachauri@southcentre.int

2. How to best develop your proposals

The technical component of your proposal should be concisely presented and structured, and should explain in detail your ability, capacity and resources to provide the requested services.

When assessing your proposal, we will look for work experience and qualifications which correspond directly to the requirements set out in the scope of work. Although not an exhaustive list, specifics regarding, information on the company, years of experience with respect to the company/organization and its personnel, geographical and field experience, Information Technology capabilities and software expertise, information regarding your availability - are some exemplar areas which should be clearly highlighted in your proposal, where appropriate.

Proposals which are incomplete or non-responsive may not be considered in the review process.