

B-Brussels: Support for the running of assessment centres and provision of test content for EU staff selection procedures

OJ S 52/2013 14/03/2013

Contract notice

Services

Directive 2004/18/EC

Section I: Contracting authority

I.1. Name and addresses

Official name: European Commission, European Personnel Selection Office — EPSO 01 — e-Selection

Postal address: avenue de Cortenbergh 25

Town: Brussels

Postal code: 1049

Country: Belgium

E-mail: hr-contrats-marches@ec.europa.eu

Fax: +32 22991924

Additional information can be obtained from:

the abovementioned address

Specifications and additional documents (including documents for competitive dialogue and a dynamic purchasing system) can be obtained from:

the abovementioned address

Tenders or requests to participate must be submitted: the abovementioned address

I.2. Type of the contracting authority

European institution/agency or international organisation

I.3. Main activity

General public services

I.4. Contract award on behalf of other contracting authorities

The contracting authority is purchasing on behalf of other contracting authorities: no

Section II: Object of the contract

II.1. Description**II.1.1. Title attributed to the contract by the contracting authority**

Support for the running of assessment centres and provision of test content for EU staff selection procedures.

II.1.2. Type of contract and place of performance or delivery

Services

Service category No 27: Other services

Main site or place of performance: Contractor's premises and delivery in EPSO's premises in Brussels and Luxembourg.

NUTS code

II.1.3. Information about a framework agreement or a dynamic purchasing system

The procurement involves the establishment of a framework agreement

II.1.4. Information about framework agreement

Framework agreement with a single operator

Duration of the framework agreement

Duration in years: 4

II.1.5. Short description of the contract or purchase(s)

The European Personnel Selection Office (hereinafter referred to as 'EPSO') wishes to enter into a framework service contract to receive support for the running of assessment centres as the final step of the selection procedure of staff for the institutions and other bodies of the European Union.

Results to be achieved by the contractor:

- delivery of a coherent set of exercises, as specified by EPSO, for roll-out within the prearranged testing period, suitably validated according to prevailing best practice in assessment centre models, as well as a sufficient number of variations and updates throughout the duration of the contract; advice/assistance concerning the management of the existing database of exercises and adaptation of existing exercises,
- delivery of detailed written reports to EPSO relating to the performance of the tests delivered,
- delivery of the electronic template for all standard reports, including the competency passport for candidates, manuals on the use of the IT tool(s) for EPSO staff and assessors, as well as observation and evaluation forms for assessors (in English and French),
- provision of certification training for permanent and training for non-permanent selection board members, as well as training sessions for markers and — occasionally — EPSO support staff,
- provision of advice to EPSO on further strategic development plans regarding the extension /adaptation of the assessment centre model to selections in all grades, new forms of testing methods, alternative sets of behavioural anchors for the competency framework, and any appropriate tools for achieving this desired outcome,
- provision of IT tools, support and services linked with the informatics tools used by EPSO,
- IT tools (hardware and software) that the tenderer deems necessary to support services covered by his offer should be compatible with the European Commission's architecture. Any server-based solution proposed by the tenderer using technologies other than those already in use at EPSO will have to adhere to the appropriate European Commission data centre requirements,
- provision of a planning tool for test session scheduling for assessors and candidates.

Tasks:

Task 1A: development of new test material (and test variations) and accompanying documentation (marking grids, manuals, guidelines):

The contractor will develop and fine-tune specific test material for the different models of assessment centre (including manuals and marking grids with explanations and documentation on how to assess the various exercises). The exercises will consist of a tailor-made suite of selection instruments, based on EPSO's competency framework.

The contractor will develop test material, as required, for the various exercises included in the 4 AC models and for parallel versions of the various exercises to ensure security and avoid over-exposure of the exercises.

Types of exercises should at least include the following:

exercise 1: comprehensive case studies (for administrators, assistants and specialists), either of a general nature or related to the field of expertise for which the candidates applied, in order to also test professional skills and knowledge;

exercise 2: oral presentation (for administrators and linguistic administrators) on a topic related

to their field of expertise;

exercise 3: group exercise and/or role play (for administrators, linguistic administrators, assistants and specialists) based on a general (not field of expertise specific) scenario.

exercise 4: e-tray/in-tray exercise (for administrators and assistants).

Other exercises (e.g. practical linguistic tests, professional skills tests) might be used in some assessment centres. The contractor will not develop such exercises, but will provide advice on how to integrate them into the overall marking/assessment of all exercises if needed.

Task 1B: adaptation of pre-existing tests and provision of off-the-shelf exercises:

The contractor will provide advice about the reuse of existing exercises from the EPSO database and will rework exercises according to input from EPSO and the selection board(s). Each exercise will test more than 1 competency and normally each competency will be tested by more than 1 exercise.

Candidates are requested to sit the exercises either in English, French or German, as long as it is not the candidate's main language. The exercises will normally be developed in English and translations into the 2 other languages will — in principle — be provided by the European Commission. The exercises must be designed in such a way that their translation into French or German (or any other official EU language) is possible.

Reports on test performance: for some new tests, reports on their psychometric performance may be requested by EPSO.

Task 2: training of permanent and non-permanent selection board members, markers and EPSO support staff.

Task 3: provision of advice to EPSO on further development of the assessment centre.

Task 4: provision of IT tools, support and services linked with the informatics tools used by EPSO:

The contractor must achieve the following objectives, as far as support is concerned:

- provision of back-up systems in case of data corruption, power failures or other computer or system failures to ensure business continuity,

- provision and guarantee of secure maintenance and storage of candidates' data, in compliance with applicable EU data protection rules (EC Regulation 45/2001),

- provision of an appropriately trained team to deal with any IT problem cases, including SPOC(s) for technical and non-technical issues, questions and information exchange.

There is an in-house IT platform of bespoke tools to support all selection processes. The EPSO software platform is based on service-oriented architecture. To ensure compliance with this, all data interfaces used by the software application must use Web services.

II.1.6. CPV code(s)

79635000 Assessment centre services for recruitment

II.1.7. Information about the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: yes

II.1.8. Lots

This contract is divided into lots: no

II.1.9. Information about variants

Variants will be accepted: no

II.2. Scope of the procurement

II.2.1. Total quantity or scope

Tenderers must be fully aware that the volume of the contract will depend on the recruitment needs of the institutions and on EPSO's annual budget. The figures below are therefore only

given as an indication and do not constitute a guarantee of purchase on the part of EPSO:
development of new test material: between 25 and 30 exercises per year
adaptation of pre-existing exercises: around 100 days of development per year
training of selection board members: between 30 and 40 training days per year
consultancy: advice to selection board: approx. 40 meetings of 2 hours per year; advice to
EPSO on assessment centres and their roll-out: approx. 42 days per year

provision of IT tools, support and services:

— assessment centre management tool: 24/24 availability,

— interaction with the EPSO markers' module: in all competitions where a case study is
involved,

— reporting: for all candidates who have been through the assessment centre,

— planning tool: for all competitions,

— IT support: 2 meetings per month.

This information on volume is purely indicative.

Under Article 134(1)(f) and Article 134(3) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268
/2012 of 29.10.2012 on the rules of application of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of
the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general
budget of the Union, the contracting authority may use a negotiated procedure to award new
services consisting of repetition of services similar to those entrusted to the contractor
awarded the original contract. The negotiated procedure may be used only during the 3 years
following conclusion of the original contract.

II.2.2. Information about options

Options: no

II.2.3. Information about renewals

This contract is subject to renewal: no

II.3. Duration of the contract or time limit for completion

Section III: Legal, economic, financial and technical information

III.1. Conditions related to the contract

III.1.1. Deposits and guarantees required

III.1.2. Main financing conditions and payment arrangements and/or reference to the relevant provisions governing them

Financing conditions and payment arrangements will be detailed in the tender specifications.

III.1.3. Legal form to be taken by the group of economic operators to whom the contract is to be awarded

III.1.4. Contract performance conditions

The performance of the contract is subject to particular conditions: no

III.2. Conditions for participation

III.2.1. Suitability to pursue the professional activity, including requirements relating to enrolment on professional or trade registers

List and brief description of conditions: Requests to participate shall be sent by one of the following methods:

— by registered letter, as evidenced by the postmark, to the following address:
European Commission, DG Human Resources and Security, Unit HR R.3, Office SC-11 6/28,
1049 Brussels, BELGIUM,

— by delivery (in person or by a representative of the candidate, or a courier service) to the following address:

European Commission, DG Human Resources and Security, Unit HR R.3, Office SC-11 6/28, avenue du Bourget 1, 1140 Brussels (Evere), BELGIUM. This department is open 8:00–17:00 Monday to Thursday, and 8:00–16:00 on Fridays. It is closed at weekends and on Commission holidays. If delivery is made via a courier service, the valid date of dispatch will be the date on the courier's delivery receipt. If the application is delivered by the candidate himself, or by a representative of his, a delivery receipt will be issued, dated and signed by the official from the Commission's Central Mail Department who takes delivery of the documents.

Candidates may make use of the capacities of other bodies irrespective of the legal nature of the connection between themselves and said bodies. In such an event, they must provide the contracting authority with proof that they will have the resources needed to carry out the contract by, for example, producing a written commitment by said bodies to make such resources available.

Candidates (individual candidates or groupings) must (NB: groupings must provide the requested documents and information separately for each member):

- quote reference 'EPSO/01/PR/2013/010' in their request to participate,
- enclose the documents and information requested in points III.2.1 to III.2.3,
- enclose a detailed identity sheet (groupings shall provide these separately for each member and state which is the lead company) as follows: name, legal status, nationality, address, telephone and fax numbers, contact name and e-mail address, VAT number, legal registration number (where applicable) and bank details.

Legal position — means of proof required: name of the country in which candidates have their head office or are domiciled, along with the corresponding attestations, in accordance with the law in their country of residence (groupings must provide these documents separately for each member).

Candidates' requests to participate must include a duly dated and signed solemn declaration stating that they are not in any of the cases which would disqualify them from participating in the contract. This document is available from the following address: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/human-resources/markets_en.htm

For groupings, this declaration must be provided separately for each member.

Applications submitted by consortia, groupings, or associations of companies must contain:

- a) a document detailing the composition and constitution of the entity or legal form of this cooperation should they be awarded the contract;
- b) a letter signed by each grouping member, stating that they undertake to perform the work and specifying their role, qualifications and experience.

Candidates who fail to provide this document may be automatically excluded.

In the case of consortia or groupings, 1 grouping member must be designated lead member and must take full responsibility for the contract, should he be awarded it, vis-à-vis the European Commission. The framework contract will be signed between the EPSO and the designated main contractor.

III.2.2. Economic and financial ability

List and brief description of conditions: The candidate must demonstrate sufficient economic and financial resources to be able to execute the tasks summarised in this contract notice.

Where the candidate wishes to subcontract or otherwise rely on the capacities of other entities, it must in that case prove that it will have at its disposal the resources necessary for

performance of the contract by producing an undertaking on the part of those entities to place those resources at its disposal.

The following additional documents must also be provided in evidence of economic and financial capacity:

- appropriate statements from banks or evidence of professional risk indemnity insurance,
- the presentation of balance sheets or extracts from balance sheets and profit and loss accounts for at least the last 3 years for which accounts have been closed, where publication of the balance sheet is required under the company law of the country in which the economic operator is established. The profit and loss accounts shall show before-tax profits for the last year for which accounts have been closed,
- a statement of overall turnover and turnover concerning the services covered by the contract during the last 3 financial years,
- if, for some exceptional reason which the contracting authority considers justified, the candidate is unable to produce the references requested by the contracting authority, evidence of their economic and financial capacity may be provided by any other means which the contracting authority considers appropriate.

III.2.3. Technical and professional ability

List and brief description of conditions:

The tenderer must comply with the following criteria:

1. have previous experience with the creation and delivery of assessment centres and with providing psychometric analysis and expertise on test and exercise developments (has set up at least 2 assessment centres);
2. have the organisational infrastructure to organise assessment centres;
3. have at its disposal experienced managerial staff, with a proven track record and, in particular, extensive experience and knowledge in the uses and application of assessment centres in the selection and recruitment process (at least 2 persons with 5 years of professional experience);
4. have at its disposal appropriate knowledge and skills to develop competency-tailored tests for efficient, reliable and valid exercises of different types and formats, guaranteeing equal test conditions for all candidates;
5. have an effective quality control system in place;
6. be in a position to ensure the probity, integrity and discretion of all personnel engaged in work associated with the contract or having access to related data;
7. have the ability, corresponding expertise and adequate staffing to provide rigorous training and professional support to selection board members, assessors and EPSO staff;
8. have the ability to develop assessment centre exercises in English, including adapted software and supporting documentation, and to provide translations in French and German if needed;
9. have the experience to create standardised competency reports and structured feedback mechanisms for the attention of both candidates and the recruiting services;
10. have an IT management tool satisfying the conditions set out under point II.1.5 above;
11. demonstrate the fulfilment of quality certification standards according to an international standard certification body or according to a national standard certification body from one of the EU Member States.

All experts having a crucial role in implementing the contract are referred to as key experts. The profiles of key experts will meet at least the requirements set out below. It is not necessary that each of these profiles correspond to a single individual. 1 expert may have the skills and experience required to cover more than 1 role in the project. Equally, 1 role may be divided between 2 or more experts if the tenderer believes that this will be the most effective

way to achieve the desired results.

All the key experts must be fluent in at least 1 of the working languages of the EU institutions (English, French and German).

Key expert 1 — team leader:

- strong organisational ability, to respond appropriately and efficiently to EPSO's needs (i.e. experience in working with public bodies),
- professional experience of at least 3 years in running assessment centres,
- experience with multicultural and multilingual environments,
- will be the main contact person for EPSO, redistributing tasks on the contractor's side.

Key expert 2 — professional expertise in assessment centres:

- professional experience (minimum 2 years in organising and managing assessment centres),
- ability to ensure full process flow and optimal coordination of all actors,
- experience in tailoring the available HR resources to best implement the organisational framework.

Key expert 3 — professional expertise in test development:

- experience of at least 2 years in designing competency-based assessment instruments to best practice standard,
- proven expertise in psychometrics and statistical methodology to ensure high predictive validity and the minimum adverse impact on specific populations (e.g. ethnic background, age, gender),
- expertise in test validation and design of all supporting documentation, including marking grids, in-depth competency reports, candidate feedback reports,
- appropriate language skills (in addition to the fluent command of one of the working languages, he/she must be able to work adequately in at least 1 more of the 3 working languages).

Key expert 4 — training and certification of assessors:

- experience in developing and running training courses in the field of HR selection (at least 2 years of training experience),
- ability to establish tailored training and development requirements and derived documentation,
- excellent communication skills,
- appropriate language skills (in addition to the fluent command of one of the working languages, he/she must be able to work adequately in at least 1 more of the 3 working languages).

Amongst key experts 1 and 4, 2 must hold a master's degree in psychology (or equivalent).

Key expert 5 — IT technical support:

- experience of at least 2 years in adapting test content into electronic formats appropriate for on-screen delivery,
- ability to ensure efficient transfer, delivery and processing of tests on to EPSO's platform,
- ability to ensure efficient IT services to meet the technical requirements of report-making and delivery in electronic format.

The following documents must be presented as evidence of compliance with the above technical and professional criteria:

- (i) the professional qualifications of the candidate and/or those of the firm's managerial staff providing the services; CVs of key experts participating in the process must also be provided;
- (ii) references: list of the principal contracts carried out over the past 5 years, which were similar in nature to the contract in this invitation to tender. Candidates must give a detailed description of the 3 references in this list which they feel are the most relevant with regard to their application. Said description must give details of the nature and volume of services

provided, the beneficiary, the start and end dates of the contract, the staff resources used (including their qualifications) and the organisational structure set up. For these 3 references, candidates will provide the full name and particulars of the person responsible for the contract at the customer company;

(iii) a description of the technical equipment, including hardware and software systems, to be employed by the contractor in the performance of the contract; including the solutions proposed to exchange data between EPSO and the contractor, and measures in case of data corruption;

(iv) a description of the measures employed to ensure a high quality of services including procedures to guarantee integrity and competence of staff;

(v) an indication of the proportion of the contract which the service provider intends possibly to subcontract.

III.2.4. Information about reserved contracts

III.3. Conditions specific to services contracts

III.3.1. Information about a particular profession

Execution of the service is reserved to a particular profession: no

III.3.2. Information about staff responsible for the performance of the contract

Obligation to indicate the names and professional qualifications of the staff assigned to performing the contract: no

Section IV: Procedure

IV.1. Type of procedure

IV.1.1. Type of procedure

Restricted

IV.1.2. Information about the limits on the number of candidates to be invited

IV.1.3. Information about reduction of the number of solutions or tenders during negotiation or dialogue

IV.2. Award criteria

IV.2.1. Award criteria

The most economically advantageous tender in terms of Price is not the only award criterion and all criteria are stated only in the procurement documents

IV.2.2. Information about electronic auction

An electronic auction will be used: no

IV.3. Administrative information

IV.3.1. File reference number attributed by the contracting authority

EPSO/01/PR/2013/010.

IV.3.2. Previous publication concerning this procedure

no

IV.3.3. Conditions for obtaining specifications and additional documents or descriptive document

IV.3.4. Time limit for receipt of tenders or requests to participate

15.4.2013

IV.3.5. Estimated date of dispatch of invitations to tender or to participate to selected candidates

IV.3.6. Languages in which tenders or requests to participate may be submitted

Any EU official language

IV.3.7. Minimum time frame during which the tenderer must maintain the tender

IV.3.8. Conditions for opening of tenders

Section VI: Complementary information

VI.1. Information about recurrence

This is a recurrent procurement: no

VI.2. Information about European Union funds

The procurement is related to a project and/or programme financed by European Union funds:
no

VI.3. Additional information

(1) The attention of interested parties is drawn to the aim of this notice, i.e. to select candidates who will receive the specifications and be invited to tender.

(2) NB: interested parties are requested to observe strictly the conditions stated in point III.2 when submitting their request to participate, namely:

— to send their application by post before the deadline in point IV.3.4,

— to enclose all the documents and information requested in points III.2.1 to III.2.3.

Incomplete applications may be automatically discarded.

(3) Interested parties are requested to refrain from seeking further information at this stage.

(4) Data protection: the appropriate technical and organisational measures to ensure a level of security of personal data shall be agreed between the successful tenderer (and each individual member of consortia and each subcontractor) and EPSO in writing or in another equivalent form.

(5) If processing your reply to this contract notice involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as name, address and CV), such data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. Unless indicated otherwise, replies to the questions and any personal data requested are required to evaluate your application in accordance with the contract notice and will be processed solely for that purpose by the contracting authority mentioned in heading I.1.

Details concerning the processing of your personal data are available on the privacy statement at: http://ec.europa.eu/dataprotectionofficer/privacystatement_publicprocurement_en.pdf

Your personal data 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/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm), or

— the Commission Regulation No 1302/2008 of 17.12.2008 on the central exclusion database (for more information see the privacy statement on http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm#BDCE).

VI.4. Procedures for review

VI.4.1. Review body

Official name: General Court of the European Union

Postal address: rue du Fort Niedergrünwald

Town: Luxembourg

Postal code: 2925

Country: Luxembourg

E-mail: cfi.registry@curia.europa.eu

Telephone: +352 4303-1

Fax: +352 4303-2100

Internet address: <http://curia.europa.eu>

VI.4.2. Review procedure

Precise information on deadline(s) for review procedures: Within 2 months of the notification of the plaintiff, or, in absence thereof, of the day on which it came to the knowledge. A complaint to the European Ombudsman does not have as an effect either to suspend this period or to open a new period for lodging appeals.

VI.4.3. Service from which information about the review procedure may be obtained

VI.5. Date of dispatch of this notice

4.3.2013