



International Foundation
for Electoral Systems

**INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ELECTORAL SYSTEMS
(IFES)**

Request for Proposal (RFP) for software solutions in North Macedonia

Solicitation # RFP-21-003

November 17, 2020

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to invite prospective contractors (“Bidders”) to submit a written response (“Response”) for the procurement of software solutions in North Macedonia. The solicitation provides Bidders with the relevant operational and performance requirements.

1.2 Coverage & Participation

IFES reserves the right to reject any and all offers, to add, delete or modify any element of the solicitation at any time without prior notification and without any liability or obligation of any kind. This RFP does not obligate IFES to enter into a contract nor does it obligate IFES to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of submission of any Response.

1.3 Zero Tolerance for Fraud

IFES has zero tolerance for fraud. Fraud is any act or omission that intentionally misleads, or attempts to mislead, to obtain a benefit or to avoid an obligation. If you have concerns about potential fraud in any way related to IFES projects, contracts, or activities, please contact IFES’ Compliance Hotline at compliance@ifes.org or at +1 202-350-6791.

2 GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1 The Organization

IFES is an independent, non-governmental organization providing professional support to electoral democracy. IFES supports citizens’ rights to participate in free and fair elections. Our independent expertise strengthens electoral systems and builds local capacity to deliver sustainable solutions.

As the global leader in democracy promotion, we advance good governance and democratic rights by:

- Providing technical assistance to election officials
- Empowering the underrepresented to participate in the political process
- Applying field-based research to improve the electoral cycle

Since 1987, IFES has worked in over 145 countries – from developing democracies, to mature democracies.

2.2 Schedule of Events

The following, tentative schedule will apply to this solicitation. The dates may change in accordance with IFES’ needs or unforeseen circumstances. IFES will communicate changes to the schedule.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| • Issuance of RFP | November 17, 2020 |
| • Technical Questions/Inquiries Due | November 19, 2020 17:00 North Macedonia time |
| • Answers/Addenda from IFES | November 23, 2020 |

- RFP Closes

December 5, 2020 17:00 North Macedonia time

3 PROPOSAL PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS

3.1 Bidders' Understanding of the Solicitation

Bidders are responsible for understanding the solicitation in its entirety and each of its elements and should make inquiries to IFES as necessary to ensure such understanding. IFES reserves the right to disqualify any Bidder that it determines, at its sole discretion, does not understand the solicitation or any of its elements. Such disqualification shall be at no fault, cost, or liability whatsoever to IFES.

3.2 Information from IFES

All information provided by IFES in this solicitation is subject to change at any time. IFES makes no certification as to the accuracy of any item, and is not responsible or liable for any use of or reliance on the information or for any claims asserted therefrom.

3.3 Communication

All communications related to the RFP must be in writing. Verbal communication shall not be effective unless formally confirmed in writing by the procurement official listed in 3.3.1. In no case shall verbal communication govern over written communication.

- 3.3.1 Point of Contact:** The sole point of contact for all communication related to this solicitation is listed below.

Ian Swank
iswank@ifes.org

and

Sajia Tokhi
stokhi@ifes.org

- 3.3.2 Formal Communications** shall include, but are not limited to the following:

- Questions concerning this solicitation must be submitted in writing to the point of contact identified in 3.3.1.
- Errors and omissions in this solicitation, as well as enhancements. Bidders should notify IFES of any discrepancies, errors, or omissions that may exist within this solicitation. Bidders should recommend to IFES any enhancements to the work described in the solicitation which might be in IFES' best interests.
- Inquiries about technical interpretations must be submitted in writing to the point of contact identified in 3.3.1.

- 3.3.3 Addenda:** IFES will make a good-faith effort to provide a written response to the questions or requests for clarifications in the form of written responses or addenda in accordance with the *Schedule of Events*.

- 3.3.4 Posting Online:** Copy of this solicitation, Amendments and or Q&A will be available online at: www.ifes.org/procurement-notices.

3.4 Submission

It is mandatory for Bidders to send proposals in electronic copy via e-mail to the point of contact identified in 3.3.1 on or prior to the closing date and time shown in the *Schedule of Events*.

3.5 Criteria for Selection

The evaluation of each Response to this solicitation will be based on the criteria outlined below. The purpose of this solicitation is to identify responsible Bidders that have the interest, capability, and financial strength to supply IFES with the product and/or service identified in the Scope of Work.

Evaluation Criteria:

IFES will evaluate responsive offers based on the following criteria:

1. EXPERIENCE 60 points
Evaluated based on description of previous experience and knowledge providing similar services. The expertise of the entity submitting the proposal (30 points) and the expertise of the team leader (30 points) will be evaluated.

2. PRICE 40 points
The financial proposal must be reasonable and show efficient use of resources, and additional costs, if any, must be clearly identified. Offers will be compared amongst responsive bidders meeting technical requirements.

3.6 Selection and Notification

IFES will evaluate Responses to identify responsible Bidders and responsive offers. Finalists will be selected to move into the negotiation phase of this process. Written notification will be sent to finalists via email.

4 SCOPE OF WORK/GOODS/SERVICES

I. Background

The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) in North Macedonia has provided technical assistance and support in the organization of elections since 2016, with funding from USAID and more recently Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). A significant portion of the support was dedicated to software solutions/applications for various aspects in the electoral process: registering diaspora for voting during parliamentary, presidential elections or referendum; tracking election complaints; generating voters' lists, etc.

II. Objective

Under the current programming, IFES in North Macedonia is planning to continue supporting various electoral stakeholders - mainly public institutions - in the development of software solutions that will increase their effectiveness, transparency, accountability and interaction with citizens in general. Such software solutions may refer (but are not limited) to using of biometrics and other voting technologies in elections, financial management, project management, e-learning, document management systems etc.

In this sense, IFES is looking to identify potential service providers/companies that will provide necessary expertise to develop documentation for solicitation process including specific terms of reference, scope of work, technical specifications and/or other related documents (concept papers and other knowledge products) needed to procure the services from third party (different software development company) for products/applications such as web applications, mobile phone applications, etc depending on the defined task and identified needs.

Also, the selected company may be asked to be part of the procurement evaluation process of companies which will apply for future software development opportunities that IFES launches.

The development of all documentation requested within the framework of this ToR should be done in close collaboration and partnership with the direct beneficiaries /institutions.

Selected companies that meet the requirements of this solicitation will become part of a roster which IFES will reach out to, once specific needs for software development are identified. IFES reserves the right to contract one, multiple, or none of the bidders.

When specific needs arise, IFES will send a detailed description of the tasks and request offer which will need to include details about the level of effort, price (staff/hourly rates) estimates, timeframe for realization of the tasks.

Upon IFES request, the company will need to provide CVs of consultant(s) that meet(s) the requirements for the realization of specific tasks, confirming his/her availability.

III. Required Experience

IFES is looking for an experienced company represented by the Team Leader, to work with IFES team in implementing the objective specified above. Applying companies' Team leader should fulfil following criteria:

1. Proven knowledge and experience in software development and consultancy, software design and development requirements, software security, engineering, stability, IT structure and development platforms and environments in at least three similar projects.
2. Proven knowledge and experience in the local, regional, and global IT development requirements, with the ability to develop detailed software requirements, language requirement, as well as other contextual software development requirement in North Macedonia (for example, local requirement, internet speed and bandwidth challenges, text encoding requirement, local servers versus international servers, etc.) in at least three similar projects in nature and size.
3. The ability to develop software and hardware specifications, estimate software development cost, resources needed, and implementation timelines.
Previous experience in working with public institutions is a definite advantage.

IV. Conflict of Interest

Neither the company, nor any of its affiliates, subsidiaries, branches, sister, or otherwise affiliated companies can apply for software development funding opportunities for which the TOR (and other consequent documents which may provide comparative advantage in bidding process), developed by the company. The company will play a consultancy role for IFES and will agree to not disclose any details about IFES' solicitations' status, winners, awarded amounts, and other related confidential details. IFES will sign a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) with the selected company (See point 7, Section IX - General Terms and Conditions).

V. Application Requirements:

Companies that are interested in applying to this opportunity should submit:

- A cover letter (1-page max.), summarizing the capacity and relevant qualification of a Team Leader. Please organize the CV of the Team Leader proposed by the company in line with the requirements under section III and include reference contacts for the implemented projects. The company is encouraged to submit the CVs of other available experts however these will not be a subject of evaluation (please refer also to a part below on cost structure, second bullet).
- Incorporation documentation (in English, or original with translation to English).
- A proof of an up-to-date tax reporting status.
- Past performance and proof of expertise:
 - The company's profile and/or company's website, social media channels (including LinkedIn, if applicable).
 - Description of at least three projects of the Team Leader to prove the Required Experience (See Section III-Required Experience) that Team Leader implemented, along with letter(s) of reference (if any) and reference contacts;
 - Prospective contractor must possess all licenses, permits and government approvals necessary for performance of the work.
 - All responses shall be in the English language.
- Availability and Cost Application:
 - The company should clarify its availability to engage in working with IFES, and if there is any advance notice that IFES should give to the company before issuing assignments to the company.
 - The company should clarify the cost structure in the below format:
 - Staff / Hourly rates in MKD and without VAT as IFES North Macedonia is VAT exempt: The company should specify how many staff/consultants it has at the disposal and available for engagement, and the cost of each staff per hour. The proposed hourly rate must be inclusive of all costs associated with the payment to the individual (personal income tax, allowances, benefits, fees or similar costs) as the Project will cover the costs expressed in the offer and the signed contract.
 - The company should also indicate if different staff would participate in bid evaluation (if requested by IFES) from the staff who normally develop categories of the aforementioned products, and if so, indicate the cost of bid evaluation staff.

5 FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Timeline

Bidders must submit a timeline in the Response showing the time required to produce and consolidate the products and/or deliver services.

5.2 Geographic Code (applicable to USAID funding only)

IFES' project in North Macedonia is funded by United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under Source and Nationality (S/N) Geographic Code 937 (please refer to [22 CFR 228.03](#) for more information). A waiver request may apply to certain offers. If IFES determines a waiver would be necessary, the estimated time required to obtain the waiver will be considered within the "Timeline" in the Evaluation Criteria. IFES encourages all Bidders to consider products that fall under S/N Geographic Code 937 whenever possible.

5.3 License, Clearance and Approvals

The Bidders will include in the timeline any time needed to obtain any licenses, clearances, and/or approvals required under local legal requirements to produce or deliver the products and/or services described in the Scope of Work.

6 QUALIFICATIONS & REFERENCES

Bidders must provide the following information for their Response to be considered:

1. A brief outline of the company and services offered, including:
 - Full legal name and address of the company
 - Corporate and tax registration documents
 - Year business was started or established
 - Full name of the legal representative (president or managing director) of the company
 - Name of any individuals or entities that own 50% or more of the company
 - U.S. companies must indicate if they are a registered Small Business (Woman owned, veteran-owned, Minority-owned, Disabled, Service Disabled Veteran-owned)
 - No subcontracting is allowed under this solicitation.
2. Evidence of successful completion of a project of a similar size and complexity.
3. References: Contact information for no less than three references from projects similar in size, application, and scope and a brief description of their implementation (including location and year). IFES reserves the right to request and check additional references.
4. Bidders must be legally registered under the laws of the country in which they are organized and possess all licenses, permits and government approvals necessary for performance of the work. Scope of Work.
5. A certification signed by an officer or authorized representative that the Bidder has sufficient financial, technical and managerial resources and facilities to complete the Scope of Work.

7 PRICING

Bidders must complete the following cost breakdown for the implementation of their solution for IFES' project as described in this solicitation. Bidders must agree to keep these prices valid for the entire period of the contract (one year, with the possibility of extension).

Pricing must be in Macedonian denars (MKD). Unit prices are required and in the case of discrepancies between unit prices and the total price, the unit price will be taken as reference basis in the evaluation. Technical specifications must be shown for each item.

No.	Item Description	Technical Specifications	QTY	Unit	Unit Price MKD	Total Price MKD
Group 1						
1.						
2.						
	Subtotal Group 1					
Group 2						
3.						
4.						
	Subtotal Group 2					
Group 3						
5.						
6.						
	Subtotal Group 3					
Total					MKD	
Taxes (if applicable)					MKD	
Grand Total					MKD	

8 ADDITIONAL TERMS & CONDITIONS

8.1 Non-Disclosure Agreement

IFES reserves the right to require the Bidder to enter into a non-disclosure agreement.

8.2 No Collusion

Collusion is strictly prohibited. Collusion is defined as an agreement or compact, written or oral, between two or more parties with the goal of limiting fair and open competition by deceiving, misleading, or defrauding a third party.

8.3 Companies Owned or Controlled by Government

The Bidder must disclose in writing with its Response if a government, its agents, or agencies, have an ownership or managerial interest in the company. Failure to disclose a government ownership or managerial interest in the company will result in the Bidder's offer being removed from consideration.

8.4 Subcontracting

No subcontracting is allowed under this solicitation.

8.5 Costs

The solicitation does not obligate IFES to pay for any costs, of any kind whatsoever, which may be incurred by a Bidder or third parties, in connection with the Response.

8.6 Intellectual Property

Bidders may not use any intellectual property of IFES including, but not limited to, all logos, trademarks, or trade names of IFES, at any time without the prior written approval of IFES.

8.7 Bidders' Responses

All accepted Responses and supporting documentation shall become the property of IFES, subject to claims of confidentiality in respect of the Response and supporting documentation.

8.8 Partial Awarding

IFES reserves the right to accept all or part of the Response when awarding a contract.

8.9 No Liability

IFES reserve the right to accept or reject any Response or to stop the procurement process at any time, without assigning any reason or liability. IFES shall not be liable to any Bidder, person, or entity for any losses, expenses, costs, claims, or damages of any kind.

8.10 Entire Solicitation

This solicitation, any addenda to it, and any attached schedules, constitute the entire solicitation.

[End of Solicitation]