**Description:** Explosive Threat Mitigation (ETM) Services Global Pre-qualification (PQ) Process for the Peace and Security Cluster (PSC)

**Ref No:** PQ/2024/52035

**Date:** 7 August 2024

Dear Applicants,

Please find below the minutes for the pre-bid conference held at 10am NY time on 7 August 2024 at the UNOPS Peace and Security Cluster for guidance and clarification on the PQ process for ETM Services.

**Attendees:**

| **No** | **Organization** | **Name of Representative** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | UNOPS Peace and Security Cluster | Sylvia Owor, Procurement Specialist |
| 2 | Gregory Robin, Global Technical Advisor |

| **No** | **Name of Representative** | **Vendor Name** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Oleksandr Romaniuk | Ukrainian Demining Services (UDS) |
| 2 | Anna Zhelnovach | Ukrainian Demining Services (UDS) |
| 3 | Serhii Kryvohuz | Ukrainian Demining Services (UDS) |
| 4 | Michael Kennedy | Artios Global Limited |
| 5 | Rory Edwards | Artios Global Limited |
| 6 | Andy Gleeson | Damasec |
| 7 | Dmytro Myronenko | Safe Ground Solutions |
| 8 | Michael Montoya | Invictus Global Response |
| 9 | Stuart Miller | Invictus Global Response |

**Minutes:**

**A. PQ Process Overview**

The Procurement Official began by greeting the attendees and introducing the UNOPS representatives listed in the above table.

The Procurement Official explained the purpose of the pre-bid conference was to provide vendors with:

* An overview of what the pre-qualification process is, why and how it is run, and what the objective of the PQ process is
* General guidance on how to prepare submissions to this PQ process
* An overview of the PQ evaluation criteria and points to consider when applying
* To allow vendors the opportunity to ask any questions about the process that they needed clarity on

Vendors were reminded that there would be a final set of minutes of the pre-bid conference posted to the PQ notice which would include the questions asked and clarifications provided.

The Procurement Official reviewed the PSC PQ process explaining how the process results in a roster of vendors who will be invited exclusively to bid/tender for specific PSC contracts. This process is a way for PSC to mitigate risks associated with high value or complex contracts and to facilitate tender evaluation processes.

Vendors were reminded that some tenders may be openly advertised and if so pre-qualified vendors may be waived from submitting background documentation such as those under legal/formal requirements, gender and diversity policies or financial information because this would already have been assessed as part of the PQ.

**Additional note:** With reference to the ‘Particulars’ section of the tender, please be reminded that **PQ vendors are expected to participate regularly in our tenders for ETM services**. **Where vendors do not submit a bid/proposal within 2 years after receiving pre-qualification, PSC may consider revoking your PQ status.** A lot of time and effort is invested in this process and part of the objective of this PQ is to improve competition in our tenders and so your participation in our processes will be expected.

The procurement official also summarised the type of evaluation criteria that would be used to assess applications and reminded the attendees that **audited financial statements are mandatory and must be submitted**. This is because audited statements provide assurance of the accuracy with which the financial information has been prepared. The procurement official briefly went over the financial criteria highlighting the differences for those that will apply to commercial companies and NGOs and organisations operating for less than 2 years.

The procurement official went over how to apply to the PQ notice reminding the attendees that successful applicants will be issued with a PQ certificate. These organizations will then be invited to limited competition RFPs or ITBs if they are pre-qualified in all the technical categories that will apply to the tender.

**Additional note: Please also be reminded that in granting PQ status UNOPS will consider dates of PQ already issued to vendors as PSC seeks to align the PQ dates e.g. if you have been granted PQ status for the process PQ/2022/44853 and are successful in this process for new technical categories, your PQ status for these new categories may be valid until the same expiry date that applies to your PQ status under the previous process.**

*Attached for your reference are the ‘****PQ Process Overview for Vendors****’ slides for the presentation given on the PQ process.*

**B. ANNEX IV Returnable Forms and Annex III Evaluation Criteria**

The procurement official went over the various forms reminding vendors to fill in, sign (where applicable) and submit the forms as part of their applications.

**B.1 Annex III Evaluation Criteria (Stage 1)**

The evaluation criteria (Annex III) were reviewed next. The criteria are divided in 2 stages. The Stage 1 criteria are ‘pass/fail’ and vendors will be assessed for compliance against the legal/formal requirements, financial capacity and DRiVE sustainability criteria.

Vendors were reminded to review the guidance notes in Annex III for each criteria which covers the types of documents or information that shall / can be submitted to demonstrate compliance with the requirement. **Vendors must complete Annex III and upload the excel version of the form to the placeholders for the tender as this document facilitates review of your submission allowing the evaluation panel to identify what information/document has been submitted in response to each criteria.**

The procurement official reviewed the financial criteria and how conditional pre-qualification would be granted if audited financial statements are submitted for 2022 and 2021 instead of 2023 and 2022, and that submission of compliant 2022 audited financial statements by applicants will be needed to extend their PQ status.

For start ups or organisations that have been operating for less than 2 years evidence that they have access to lines of credit with a minimum value of $1.5 million must be demonstrated.

The sustainability criteria were also reviewed with vendors reminded to review the guidance notes on what documents are to be submitted in order to comply with the requirements.

Please be reminded that **in order to proceed to Stage 2 of the evaluation, vendors must pass all the criteria stipulated under Stage 1**.

**B.2 Annex III Evaluation Criteria (Stage 2)**

Vendors were then taken through the evaluation criteria in Stage 2 which will be scored. A total of 100 points is available for this section which is broken down into two parts which cover organizational capability (60 Points ) and technical capacity (40 Points). Vendors were reminded to indicate the filenames for the supporting documents that will be submitted for each Technical Category in the sheet as this will enable the PQ evaluation panel to locate relevant information quickly and therefore facilitate the evaluation process. The passing threshold for stage 2 is 70 points. Applicants that obtain 70 points or more will then be considered pre-qualified.

Vendors were encouraged to review all the evaluation criteria carefully and to ensure that they provide the required documentation. Failure to submit any documentation needed may render your applications invalid.

The Global Technical Advisor reminded vendors to ensure documents are submitted in English.

The below is a summary of the Stage 2 criteria, please refer to Annex III PQ Evaluation criteria for the details of the evaluation criteria and guidelines on how to comply with them:

**D1 (Organizational Experience)**: vendors can submit any relevant document to demonstrate past experience for the category they are applying to such as a copy of a past contract. Start up organisations can, alternatively, submit CVs for key personnel/senior management in their organization that have at least 10 years of relevant experience in the category they are applying to.

**D2 (SOPs)**: when submitting SOPs, ensure that the document contains information that is relevant to the category you are applying to and is not a generic SOP or contains a lot of irrelevant information with many pages which can complicate the evaluation. In addition to submitting SOPs relevant to the categories, applicants must develop their own standards and not just reference relevant international best practice in their documents or copy/paste information from documents available on the internet.

**D3 (Accreditation)**: where an organisation does not have this, they may expand on the experience of their key personnel and how that experience will enable them to successfully pass future accreditation.

Under **Section E criteria**, vendors were reminded to review the guidelines carefully and submit documents that are relevant for the category they are applying to including CVs which must clearly show experience of the personnel that is relevant to the specific category.

**C. Annex II Instructions to ETM PQ Applicants**

The procurement official and the Global Technical Advisor then reviewed the instructions document Annex II which provides guidance on how to submit to the PQ process and Annex III Evaluation Criteria. The Instructions document covers general presentation of the submission such as labeling of files and also discusses how documents submitted must clearly reference the name and/or logo of the organisation applying for prequalification.

Vendors were reminded to make their submissions in English and that if there are any documents that are submitted, that are in another language, please make sure that they are accompanied with a certified translation.

Vendors must submit evidence relating to their organization and activities only. Any documents submitted in relation to another organization should be clearly explained. The documents submitted must clearly show the name and letterhead of your organization, especially SOPs and that you make every effort to develop your own documented standards as well. Vendors were reminded again to avoid copy/pasting information from IMSMA and SOPs on the internet.

Vendors must make all efforts necessary to develop their own documented standards (i.e. operating procedures), based on existing standards and best practices.

Vendors that would like to have a debrief on their applications can request this from UNOPS after the PQ process is complete. This will be an opportunity for vendors to receive guidance on how they can improve future applications.

**Additional note: The UNGM account used to apply for pre-qualification must match the name of the applicant i.e. if a Vendor B is a subsidiary of Vendor A, but Vendor B is applying for PQ status, Vendor B needs to use a UNGM account that reflects their name and not the name of the parent company.**

**D. Pre-Bid Questions and Answers:**

The Procurement Official thereafter opened the floor to questions which are recorded in the below table with UNOPS’ clarifications.

| **No** | **Question** | **Answer** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. | Is there any strict condition to have relevant international experience? | International and national experience for organisations will be acceptable as long as it is relevant to the technical category you are applying for.  With reference to Annex III criteria D.1, where organisations have been operating for less than 2 years you can submit resumes to show the professional experience of key personnel that demonstrates a minimum of 10 years relevant experience in the technical category you are applying to. |
| 2. | Can we submit resumes for personnel using our own format? | We encourage applicants to use ‘Form D: Format for Resume’ when preparing and submitting resumes for your personnel as this will facilitate the evaluation of your applications.    Please also ensure technical certificates are attached and translated into English. |
| 3. | In Annex III, criteria C.1.1, it states that *‘The organization has completed the DRiVE Questionnaire under the 'Forms' tab of the PQ notice’*. However we can’t find this form | Within the eSourcing tender, there are several tabs you should see. The ‘Supplier Forms’ tab under the ‘Vendor Submission’ tab is where you should see the DRiVE questionnaire.  The DRiVE questionnaire is not a separate document within the returnable bidding forms and doesn’t have a placeholder where a document needs to be uploaded as the questionnaire is already built into the eSourcing tender. |
| 4. | We already have a PQ status until next year but we would like to add new technical categories to our PQ. Do we need to submit all the documents/information for Stage 1 of Annex III PQ Evaluation Criteria? | Yes, vendors who are already pre-qualified with UNOPS PSC need to submit all the required documents/information in Stage 1 of Annex III PQ Evaluation Criteria.  This will ensure that the documentation for our PQ vendors reflects any changes since the last PQ process. |
| 5. | For english translated documents do we need approval of notary?  Is this required for all documents? | Yes, approval of a notary or equivalent that confirms that the document provided is a certified translation into English is needed.  The English translation is needed for any document that is in a different language. |
| 6. | How are the UN going to use this PQ going forward where UNMAS uses UN Procurement Division. Will there be a change in how UNOPS uses this ETM PQ going forward? | UNMAS and UNOPS are separate organisations and UNOPS can only speak to activites that fall within UNOPS PSC projects.  UNOPS will use the PQ the same why it has for Explosive Threat Mitigation services that need to be implemented within UNOPS PSC projects. Please refer to the slides ‘PQ Process Overview for Vendors’ on how PSC uses the PQ process. |
| 7. | Concerning liquid assets in Annex III PQ evaluation criteria B.2, should it be a credit line or cash or moveable property? What kind of liquid asset should we show we have access to? | The type of liquid assets organisations operating for less than 2 years should show should be assets that can be easily converted into cash in a short time (less than a year). This may include cash, money market instruments, marketable securities, bank accounts etc.  Vendors may submit financial statements to show what is included in their net current assets to show they have access to cash/liquid assets valued at $1.5m or any other relevant reports/ documentation. |

**E. Closing remarks**

The procurement official reminded vendors about the deadline for submissions to the PQ notice and that vendors can continue to post any questions they may have to eSourcing.

**Additional note: Vendors are reminded to monitor the eSourcing PQ notice closely for any clarifications and amendments that may be issued. If any amendments are made to the evaluation criteria sheet (Annex III) or returnable forms (Annex IV), vendor submissions should incorporate the updated forms and criteria sheet into their submission to avoid rendering their application invalid.**

The attendees were thanked for their participation after which the meeting was concluded.

**END OF MINUTES**

Please be guided accordingly.