

No.P-11099/16/2011-HRD

**Government of India  
Planning Commission  
HRD Division**

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Circular: Dated 28 February 2012

**Subject: Request for Proposal (RFP) for External Consultancy Services for Preparing a Database on Higher Education in India**

**Background**

- 1) The HRD Division of the Planning Commission is developing a comprehensive database on higher education in India. As is well known, there are many problems with accessing data on Indian higher education. These include, but are not limited to, non-availability of critical information, datedness, gaps, poor quality, changing definitions, inability to obtain details at various levels of disaggregation, reporting and measurement biases, imprecise reporting, etc. The proposed database aims to provide key current data on Indian higher education and is intended to be a concise reference for policymakers and administrators.

**Request for Proposal**

- 2) Joint Advisor (HRD Division), Planning Commission, for and on behalf of the President of India, hereby invites proposals from individuals, academic institutions, registered consultancy firms, reputed non-profit organisations, etc. with proven expertise and know-how in producing a comprehensive database on higher education.

**Validity of Proposal**

- 3) The proposal should be valid for a period not less than sixty (60) days from the due date for receiving the proposal.

**Objective and Scope of the Assignment**

- 4) The objective is to put together an objective, comprehensive and high quality data document on Higher Education in India. Such a document is expected to

improve access for researchers and policymakers of the best possible data on higher Education in India. What should be the characteristics of the information/data included, whether data with known biases and flaws would be included, etc. would need to be suggested by the bidding parties and also how to ensure that the database is accepted and used by the intended users.

### **Terms of Reference**

- 5) The data compendium is expected to be a minimum of 100 pages long with various sections and sub-sections. Those selected shall be required to carry out the tasks in consultation with the Planning Commission.

### **Eligibility**

- 6.1) Individuals, academic institutions, registered consultancy firms, reputed non-profit organisations etc. with proven expertise and know-how in producing a comprehensive database on higher education only need to apply. The Planning Commission will be in touch with the team leader alone. The members of the team may come from one organization or they may come from more than one organization.
- 6.2) The team leader must be a PhD degree holder and have at least fifteen years' experience in research, data collection and data analysis.
- 6.3) All the members of the team should be postgraduates with at least five years' experience in socio-economic research, data compilation and policy analysis, monitoring and evaluation surveys, etc.
- 6.4) The Planning Commission reserves the right to relax any of the eligibility criteria in deserving cases.

### **Brief Description of the Selection Process**

- 7) A two stage selection process will be adopted in evaluating the Proposals. In the first stage, a technical evaluation will be carried out. In the second stage, a financial evaluation will be carried out. Proposals will finally be ranked according to their combined technical and financial scores. The first ranked proposal shall be selected while the second ranked proposal will be kept in reserve.

### **Timeframe**

- 8) The consultancy shall be for a period of 24 weeks at the end of which a final report shall be submitted to the Planning Commission for publication.

## **Right to reject any or all Proposals**

- 9) Notwithstanding anything contained in this RFP, the Planning Commission reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal and to annul the Selection Process and reject all proposals, at any time without any liability or any obligation for such acceptance, rejection, or annulment, and without assigning any reasons thereof.
- 10) The Planning Commission reserves the right to reject any Proposal if:
  - a) at any time, a material misrepresentation is made or uncovered; or,
  - b) the Team does not provide, within the time specified, the supplemental information sought by the Planning Commission for evaluation of the Proposal.

## **Submission of Proposals**

- 11) The Proposal shall be typed or written in indelible ink and signed by the Team Leader, who shall initial each page, in blue ink. All the alterations, omissions, additions, or any other amendments made to the proposal shall be signed by the authorised person(s). The proposals must be properly signed as detailed below:

While submitting the Technical Proposal, the Team Leader shall, in particular, ensure that:

- a) CVs have been submitted;
  - b) applicant meets the Conditions of Eligibility;
  - c) the CVs has been recently signed in blue ink by the individual and the Team Leader. Photocopy or unsigned / countersigned CVs shall be rejected;
  - d) the CV shall contain an undertaking from the Team about his/her availability for the entire period of report preparation; and,
- 12) Failure to comply with the requirements spelt out in Clause 11 above shall make the Proposal liable to be rejected.
  - 13) If a Team makes an averment regarding his or their qualification, experience, or other particulars and it turns out to be false, or his commitment regarding availability for the Project is not fulfilled at any stage after signing of the Letter of Acceptance, all the members of the Team shall be debarred for any future assignment of the Planning Commission for five years.
  - 14) The Technical Proposal shall not include any financial information relating to the Financial Proposal.

- 15) The Planning Commission reserves the right to verify all statements, information, and documents, submitted by the Applicant in response to the RFP. Failure of the Planning Commission to undertake such verification shall not relieve the Team of its obligations or liabilities hereunder nor will it affect any rights of the Planning Commission thereunder.
- 16) In case it is found during the evaluation or at any time before issue of Letter of Acceptance (LOA) that one or more of the eligibility conditions have not been met by the Team or the Team has made material misrepresentation or has given any materially incorrect or false information, the Team shall be disqualified forthwith if not yet appointed as the Consultant. If the Team has already been issued the LOA the same shall, notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained therein or in this RFP, be liable to be terminated, by a communication in writing by the Planning Commission without the Planning Commission being liable in any manner whatsoever to the Applicant.
- 17) The Proposal shall be submitted by the Team with each page of the submission signed in blue ink. In case the proposal is submitted on the document downloaded from website of the Planning Commission, the Team shall be responsible for its accuracy and correctness as per the version uploaded by the Planning Commission and shall ensure that there are no changes caused in the content of the downloaded document. In case of any discrepancy between the downloaded or photocopied version of the RFP and the original RFP issued by the Planning Commission, the latter shall prevail.
- 18) The Proposal will be sealed in an outer envelope, which will bear the address of the Planning Commission, RFP Notice No., Consultancy name, and the name and address of the Team Leader. It shall bear on top, the following:

**“Do not open, except in presence of the Authorized Person”**

If the envelope is not sealed and marked as instructed above, the Planning Commission assumes no responsibility for the misplacement or premature opening of the contents of the Proposal submitted.

- a) The aforesaid outer envelope will contain two separate sealed envelopes, one clearly marked **“Technical Proposal”** and the other clearly marked **“Financial Proposal”**. The envelope marked **“Technical Proposal”** shall contain the Application in the prescribed format along with relevant Forms and supporting documents.
- b) The envelope marked **“Financial Proposal”** shall contain the financial proposal in the prescribed format.

- 19) The Technical Proposal and Financial Proposal shall be typed or written in indelible ink and signed by the Team Leader. All pages of the original Technical Proposal and Financial Proposal must be numbered and signed by the team leader (on behalf of the team).
- 20) The completed Proposal must be delivered on or before the specified time on the due date. Proposals submitted by fax or e-mail shall not be entertained.
- 21) The Proposal shall be made in the Forms specified in this RFP. Any attachment to such Forms must be provided on separate sheets of paper and only information that is directly relevant should be provided. This may include photocopies of the relevant pages of printed documents.
- 22) The rates quoted shall be firm throughout the period of performance of the assignment up to and including acceptance of the Report by the Planning Commission and discharge of all obligations of the Consultant under the Agreement.

### **Financial Proposal**

- 23) Applicants shall submit the financial proposal in the Forms at Annex 3 clearly indicating the total cost of the Consultancy in both figures and words, in Indian Rupees, and signed by the Team Leader. In the event of any difference between figures and words, the amount indicated in words shall be taken into account. In the event of a difference between the arithmetic total and the total shown in the Financial Proposal, the lower of the two shall be taken into account.
- 24) While submitting the Financial Proposal, the Team shall ensure the following:
  - a) All the costs associated with the assignment shall be included in the Financial Proposal. These shall normally cover remuneration for all the Personnel, accommodation, airfare, printing of documents, taxes etc. The total amount indicated in the Financial Proposal shall be without any condition attached or subject to any assumption, and shall be final and binding. In case any assumption or condition is indicated in the Financial Proposal, it shall be considered nonresponsive and liable to be rejected.
  - b) The Financial Proposal shall take into account all expenses and tax liabilities. For the avoidance of doubt, it is clarified that all taxes shall be deemed to be included in the costs shown under different items of the Financial Proposal. Further, all payments shall be subject to deduction of taxes at source as per applicable laws.
  - c) Costs (including break down of costs) shall be expressed in INR.

### **Proposal Due Date**

25) The proposals should be submitted on or before 11.00 hours on March 28, 2012 to:

Dr. Pitam Singh  
Joint Advisor (HRD),  
Planning Commission,  
Room 301, Yojana Bhawan,  
Sansad Marg,  
New Delhi – 110 001

For any further queries please contact: [pitam@nic.in](mailto:pitam@nic.in)

### **Late Proposals**

26) Proposals received by the Planning Commission after the specified time on the due date shall not be considered.

27) Any alteration / modification in the Proposal or additional information or material supplied subsequent to the due date, unless the same has been expressly sought for by the Planning Commission, shall be disregarded.

### **Evaluation Process**

28) The Planning Commission shall open the Proposals at 11.30 hours on the due date, in the presence of the Applicants who choose to attend. The envelopes marked "Technical Proposal" shall be opened first. The envelopes marked "Financial Proposal" shall be kept sealed for opening at a later date.

29) Prior to evaluation of Proposals, the Planning Commission will determine whether each Proposal is responsive to the requirements of the RFP.

30) The Planning Commission reserves the right to reject any Proposal, which is non-responsive and no request for alteration, modification, substitution, or withdrawal shall be entertained by the Planning Commission in respect of such Proposals.

31) The Technical Evaluation will be in the following format.

<b>Details</b>	<b>Marks</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
Relevant experience of the Team Leader and	40 %	Knowledge and experience in data collection and compilation, socio-economic research, policy analysis, monitoring and evaluation surveys.

other Members	30 %	Level of responsibility, especially of the team leader.
	30 %	Nature of work. More weightage will be given for preparation of strategy.
Total	100 %	

32) After the technical evaluation, the Planning Commission would prepare a list of pre-qualified Applicants for opening of their Financial Proposals. The opening of Financial Proposals shall be done in presence of applicants who choose to be present. The Planning Commission will not entertain any query or clarification from Applicants who fail to qualify at any stage of Selection Process.

### **Clarifications**

33) To facilitate evaluation of Proposals, the Planning Commission may, at its sole discretion, seek clarifications from any Applicant regarding its Proposal. Such clarification(s) shall be provided within the time specified by the Planning Commission for this purpose. Any request for clarification(s) and all clarification(s) in response thereto shall be in writing. If a Team does not provide clarifications sought above within the specified time, its Proposal shall be liable to be rejected. In case the Proposal is not rejected, the Planning Commission may proceed to evaluate the Proposal by construing the particulars requiring clarification to the best of its understanding.

### **Evaluation of Technical Proposals**

34) In the first stage, the Technical Proposal will be evaluated on the basis of the experience of the Team. Only those Applicants whose Technical Proposals score 70 marks or more out of 100 shall qualify for further consideration, and shall be ranked from highest to the lowest on the basis of their technical score (ST).

35) The scoring criteria to be used for evaluation shall be based on the number of years of experience and its relevance to the proposed Terms of Reference.

### **Evaluation of Financial Proposal**

36) In the second stage, the financial evaluation will be carried out and each Financial Proposal will be assigned a financial score (SF).

37) For financial evaluation, the total cost indicated in the Financial Proposal will be considered.

38) The Planning Commission will determine whether the Financial Proposals are complete, unqualified and unconditional. The cost indicated in the Financial Proposal shall be deemed as final and reflecting the total cost of services. Omissions, if any, in costing any item shall not entitle the Team to be compensated and the liability to fulfil its obligations as per the TOR within the total quoted price shall be that of the Consultant. The lowest financial proposal (FM) will be given a financial score (SF) of 100 points. The financial scores of other proposals will be computed as follows:

$$S_F = 100 \times F_M / F$$

(F = amount of Financial Proposal)

### **Combined Technical and Final Evaluation**

39) Proposals will finally be ranked according to their combined technical (ST) and financial (SF) scores as follows:

$$S = S_T \times T_w + S_F \times F_w$$

Where S is the combined score, and  $T_w$  and  $F_w$  are weights assigned to Technical Proposal and Financial Proposal that shall be 0.80 and 0.20 respectively.

40) The Selected Team shall be the first ranked Team (having the highest combined score). The second ranked Team shall be kept in reserve in case the first ranked Team withdraws, or fails to comply with the requirements as the case may be.

### **Award of Consultancy**

41) After selection, a Letter of Award shall be issued, in duplicate, by the Planning Commission to the Selected Team Leader and the Selected Team Leader shall, within 7 (seven) days of the receipt of the LOA, sign and return the duplicate copy of the LOA in acknowledgement thereof. The LOA shall constitute the Agreement for the purpose of this consultancy assignment.

### **Proprietary data**

42) All documents and other information provided by the Planning Commission or submitted by a Team to the Planning Commission shall remain or become the property of the Planning Commission. Teams are to treat all information as



strictly confidential. The Planning Commission will not return any Proposal or any information related thereto. All information collected, analyzed, processed, or in whatever manner provided by the Consultant to the Planning Commission in relation to the Consultancy shall be the property of the Planning Commission.

### **Deliverables and Payment**

Billing and payments in respect of the Services shall be made as follows:

<b>Installment</b>	<b>Stage</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Payment (Per cent to Total)</b>
1	Activities leading to an inception report.	6 weeks	30 %
2	Activities leading to the completion of data collection, compilation and submission of draft report	20 weeks	50 %
3	Acceptance of final report	24 weeks	20 %
	Total		100 %

- 43) The Planning Commission shall cause the payment due to the Team to be made within 30 (thirty) days after the receipt by the Planning Commission of duly completed bills with necessary particulars.
- 44) All payments under this Agreement shall be made to the bank account specified by the Team Leader as may be notified to the Planning Commission by the Consultant.

### **Performance Security**

- 45) The Planning Commission shall retain by way of performance security 5 % (five per cent) of all the amounts due and payable to the Team, to be appropriated against breach of this Agreement or for recovery of liquidated damages. The balance remaining out of the Performance Security shall be returned to the Team at the end of three months after the expiration of the contract.

### **Liquidated Damages for error/variation**

- 46) In case any error or variation is detected in the reports submitted by the Team and such error or variation is the result of negligence or lack of due diligence on the part of the Team, the consequential damages thereof shall be quantified by the Planning Commission in a reasonable manner and recovered from the Consultant by way of liquidated damages, subject to a maximum of 10 % (ten percent) of the Contract Value.

### **Liquidated Damages for delay**

47) In case of delay in completion of Services, liquidated damages not exceeding an amount equal to 0.2 % (zero point two percent) of the Contract Value per day, subject to a maximum of 10 % (ten percent) of the Contract Value will be imposed and shall be recovered by appropriation from the Performance Security or otherwise. However, in case of delay due to reasons beyond the control of the Consultant, suitable extension of time shall be granted.

### **Appropriation of Performance Security**

48) The Planning Commission shall have the right to appropriate the Performance Security, in whole or in part, without notice to the Team in the event of breach of Agreement or for recovery of liquidated damages.

### **Miscellaneous**

49) The Selection Process shall be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the laws of India and the Courts at Delhi shall have exclusive jurisdiction over all disputes arising under, pursuant to and/or in connection with the Selection Process.

## Annex 1

### Particulars of the Team

1	Title of Consultancy:
2	Name, designation, and contact details of the Team Leader: Name: Designation: Currently employed(name of institution with address): Address: Phone No.: E-mail address:
3	Name, designation, and contact details of all the other members of the Team: Name: Designation: Currently employed: Address: Phone No.: E-mail address:
3	a) Number of Years in experience in collection, compilation and publication of data. b) Details of major assignments and achievements. c) Details of employment in chronological order. d) Details thereof (not more than 200 words).
4	For the Applicant, state the following information: a) Has the Applicant been penalized by any organization for poor quality of work or breach of contract in the last five years? Yes/No b) Has the Applicant ever failed to complete any work awarded to it by any public entity/ Planning Commission in last five years? Yes/No c) Has the Applicant been blacklisted by any Government department/Public Sector Undertaking in the last five years? Yes/No d) Has the Applicant, suffered bankruptcy/insolvency in the last five years? Yes/No

## **Annex 2**

### **Curriculum Vitae (CV) of Members of the Team**

- 1) Name of Personnel:
- 2) Date of Birth:
- 3) Nationality:
- 4) Educational Qualifications:
- 5) Membership with Professional Associations/ Bodies:
- 6) Other Training:
- 7) Countries of Work Experience:
- 8) Employment Record:  
(Starting with present position, list in reverse order every employment held.)
- 9) Details of the strategy-related projects that Members of the Team have worked on.

### **Certification:**

- 1) I am willing to work on the consultancy and I will be available for entire duration of the assignment as required.
- 2) I, the undersigned, certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief, this CV correctly describes me, my qualifications and my experience.

(Signature and name of the Team Member)

Place:

(Signature and name of the Team Leader)

### Annex 3

#### Financial Proposal

##### Form 1: Covering Letter

(On Applicant's letter head)

(Date and Reference)

To,

... ..

... ..

Dear Sir,

Subject: Appointment of Consultant for preparing a database on higher education in India.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Applicant's name) herewith enclose the Financial Proposal for above.

I agree that this offer shall remain valid for a period of 60 (sixty) days from the due date or such further period as may be mutually agreed upon.

Yours faithfully,

(Signature, name and designation of the Team Leader)

Note: The Financial Proposal is to be submitted strictly as per forms given in the RFP.

##### Form 2: Financial Proposal

No.	Description	Amount (Rs.)
A.	<b>Personnel and Miscellaneous Costs</b>	
1.	Remuneration for Personnel (inclusive of all personal allowances and traveling costs within Delhi only)	
2.	Miscellaneous Expenses	
	<b>Total, including taxes, (in Rs.)</b> In Indian Rupees in words: _____	

**Note:**

- 1) The financial evaluation shall be based on the above Financial Proposal.
- 2) The reimbursement of cost and expenses shall be limited to the amounts indicated above.
- 3) No escalation on any account will be payable on the above amounts.
- 4) All payments shall be made in Indian Rupees and shall be subject to applicable Indian laws, withholding taxes if any.