



Tender Specifications
Framework Contract for travel agency services to the
European Environment Agency
Open call for Tenders EEA/ADS/07/002

1. Background

The European Environment Agency, hereinafter called “the EEA”, is a Community body, established by Council Regulation (EEC) No 1210/90 (EC) as last amended by Regulation (EC) No 1641/2003. Its offices are located at Kongens Nytorv 6 and 28, DK-1050 Copenhagen K, Denmark.

The EEA aims at supporting sustainable development and to help achieve significant and measurable improvement in Europe's environment through the provision of timely, targeted, relevant and reliable information to policy-making agents and the public.

At present the EEA has approximately 160 staff members (working language is English). The EEA's travel policy for staff is based on the Mission Guide of the European Commission. A separate travel policy has been adopted for external experts and other invited persons.

The total annual travel volume of the EEA is currently estimated at 2200 travels of which equal parts concern EEA staff and external persons. Both categories concern destinations world wide of which 90% are trips within Europe, including Central and (South-)Eastern Europe.

The EEA's estimated annual travel budget amounts to approximately 1 MEUR per year of which the largest part is spent on flight tickets.

2. Description of the services required

The purpose of this call for tenders is to conclude a framework contract with a travel agency capable of providing the services and handling the number of travel arrangements - mainly flight tickets - for both EEA staff and external persons as stated above.

More particularly, provision of the following services is required (mandatory requirements):

1. Handling of ticketing requests to the Travel Agency sent by e-mail or fax, concerning and respecting the following:

- a) Air, train, ferry tickets, etc., car rental and accommodation reservations or equivalent
 - b) Reservations shall be made in Economy class, always at the lowest fare available, including Apex, crossed tickets, etc. Flexible Economy class tickets may be reserved in case the total price is lower or at least equal to the one for a reservation in Economy Class.
 - c) Business class may only be quoted against separate written confirmation by EEA provided that no Economy/low-fare class is available.
 - d) Itineraries shall be presented in English and with two itinerary options indicating the times of departure/arrival (always local time), a price quotation including fare + taxes and the deadline for issuing the ticket. In addition, the flight miles and an estimate of CO₂ emissions for the proposed itinerary (expressed in kg/passenger/flight) shall be stated.
 - e) Reservations are to be kept on hold for the period the airlines are offering.
 - f) Pre-paid tickets (PTAs) are to be provided for destinations worldwide.
 - g) Airport tax on unused flight coupons shall be refunded.
 - h) Upon request, the Travel Agency shall provide the lowest price quotations for destinations worldwide.
 - i) The use of E-tickets shall be standard whenever feasible. Delivery of paper tickets on demand shall be made in good time to the EEA office or placed at the airport desk for pick-up before departure.
2. Tenderers shall quote a total (all-inclusive) price (fee per issued ticket) as indicated in the scenario in Annex 3 – Price list. The financial offers will be compared on the basis of this scenario (average fee). Costs incurred in preparing and submitting tenders are borne by the tenderers and cannot be reimbursed. Travel time and costs incurred during the journey to the EEA offices are not reimbursed to the contractor. The price tendered must be all-inclusive and expressed in euros, including for countries that are not part of the euro zone, the price quoted may not be revised in line with exchange rate movements. It is for the tenderer to select an exchange rate and assume the risks or the benefits deriving from any variation.
 3. Reservation & ticketing services are to be provided during EEA working hours 9.00h to 17.00h Monday to Friday (response time: below 2 hours). Extended service hours (up to 24/7) will be taken into account at award stage as one of the aspects under the second award criterion (see 6.). Travel Agency staff shall have a good working knowledge of English.
 4. The future contractor is expected to respond to reporting requests from the EEA relating to the financial management of the framework contract.
 5. EEA staff shall be in a position to make reservations for private purposes on equal terms which are to be invoiced directly to staff concerned for payment.
 6. The Account Manager of the Travel Agency or equivalent shall be the EEA's contact person.

7. The Travel Agency shall on a regular basis provide the EEA with information on:
 - a) Overview of current air market situation, mainly in Europe (airlines' new destinations, discount fares, special offers, promotions, etc).
 - b) Airlines' fare policy changes.
 - c) Monthly statistics on travel expenses; breakdowns provided in alignment with the needs of EEA
 - d) Upcoming strikes, disruptions etc whenever possible

3. Location for provision of services

The services will be provided from the contractor's premises.

4. Scope and duration of the contract

The EEA will conclude framework contract for a period of **48 months** from the date of its entry into force.

As to the terms and conditions of the framework contract reference is made to the draft contract which forms part of the tender documents.

The EEA is in no way bound to make use of the framework contract which will exclusively be implemented through Order Forms (= Reservations and Ticketing Requests by email or fax) which become binding with receipt by the EEA of electronic invoices per issued ticket as described in the following paragraph.

The future contractor shall submit a separate electronic invoice per issued ticket to two separate e-mail addresses at the EEA. This invoice shall indicate the total amount in EUR and the references as specified by the EEA. The only purpose of this electronic invoice is to signal completion of the transaction.

All individual electronic invoices will be consolidated in one monthly invoice based on which the EEA will pay on a monthly basis.

5. Prices

Prices shall be fixed and not subject to revision for implementation during the first year of duration of the Contract.

From the beginning of the second year of duration of the Contract, each price may be revised upwards or downwards each year, where such revision is requested by one of the contracting parties by registered letter no later than three months before the anniversary of the date on which it was signed. The Agency shall purchase on the basis of the prices in force on the date on which orders or specific contracts are signed. Such prices shall not be subject to revision.

This revision shall be determined by the trend in the harmonised consumer price index EEAIKP published for the first time by the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities in the Eurostat Database <http://epp.eurostat.ec.eu.int/> (Theme 2 - Economy and Finance; Prices; HICP – Harmonized Indices of Consumer Prices; HMIDX – Monthly data (index 2005=100), COICOP - CP00).

Revision shall be calculated in accordance with the following formula:

$$Pr = Po \left(0,2 + 0,8 \frac{Ir}{Io} \right)$$

where:

Pr = revised price;

Po = price in the original tender;

Io = index for the month in which the validity of the tender expires

Ir = index for the month corresponding to the date of receipt of the letter requesting a revision of prices

The European Environment Agency is exempt from all charges, taxes and dues, including value added tax pursuant to Article 3 and 4 of the Protocol on the Privileges and Immunities of the European Communities and the Headquarters Agreement between the Agency and the Government of Denmark of 17 August 1995; such charges may not therefore be included in the calculation of the price quoted; the VAT amount must be indicated separately.

6. Criteria

6.1 Exclusion Criteria

Candidates or tenderers shall be excluded from participation in a procurement procedure if:

(a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulation

(b) they have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of *res judicata* .

(c) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify;

(d) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed

(e) they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interest

(f) following another procurement procedure or grant award procedure financed by the Community budget, they have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations

Tenderers must provide a declaration on their honour, duly signed and dated, stating that they are not in one of the situation listed above (see Annex 1).

The tenderer to whom the contract will be awarded must provide evidence confirming the declaration referred to in the previous point.

The contracting authority shall accept as satisfactory the following evidence:

i) For points (a), (b) and (e) a recent extract from the judicial record, or failing that, a recent equivalent document issued by a judicial or administrative authority in the country of origin or provenance showing that those requirements are satisfied.

ii) For point (d) a recent certificate issued by the competent authority of the State concerned.

Where the document of certificate referred above is not issued in the country concerned and for other cases of exclusion, it may be replaced by a sworn or, failing that, a solemn statement made by the interested party before a judicial or administrative authority, a notary or a qualified professional body in his country of origin or provenance.

Contracts may not be awarded to candidates or tenderers who, during the procurement procedure:

- a) are subject to a conflict of interest;
- b) are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in the contract procedure or fail to supply this information.

6.2 Selection Criteria as stated in III.2 (Conditions for participation) of the Contract notice

6.3 Award Criteria

The contract will be awarded to the most economically advantageous tender in terms of the following criteria:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Price | 50 points (max.) |
| 2. Quality of Services and Support | 50 points (max.) |

Ad 1. The financial offers will be evaluated on the basis of the following formula:

Lowest financial offer / financial offer being considered x 50.

Ad 2. The following aspects will be considered in the evaluation of the technical offers against the award criterion on quality of services and support:

geographical coverage (offices available in airports of European capitals), availability outside EEA working hours (up to 24/7), response time (below two hours), environmental considerations relating to the EEA's EMAS reporting obligations.

7. Environmental considerations

The EEA runs a certified environmental management system (EMAS) and aims to minimise the environmental impact of all its activities, including those carried out under contract. The future contractor will, therefore, be requested to consider the EEA environmental management guidelines in the implementation of the contract, in particular, those relating to business travel/electronic means of communication, paper and energy consumption. Further information on the EMAS system can be found on the EEA homepage: <http://www.eea.europa.eu/documents/emas>.

Moreover, it is strongly recommended that tenders are submitted in an environmentally friendly way, e.g., by choosing a simple and clear structure (list of contents and consecutive page numbering), double-sided printing, limiting attachments to what is required in the technical specifications (no additional material) and avoiding plastic folders or binders.

8. Further information

Submitting an offer implies acceptance by the tenderer of all terms and conditions of the draft contract and its annexes.