

RFP No. Berne/Cons/415/01/2025 dated 07.02.2025 for Outsourcing of CPV Services

Response to the queries recieved from the Bidders

SL No	RFP reference	Clarification Required	Reply
1	Chapter I	<p>The award of the Contract will be, as per provisions indicated in the succeeding paragraphs, on the L1 basis of Financial Bids in the two-tier tender process consisting of Technical Bids and Financial Bids.</p> <p>Please advise how will the Authority ensure that the price quoted by any bidder is viable?</p>	RFP provision for selection of SP is minimum technical qualification score and L1 criteria only.
		<p>The proposal of the bidding company will constitute an offer to enter into a contract with the Mission, based on the terms and conditions stated in this RFP. The proposal may form part of the final contractual documentation if the bidding company is invited by the Mission to enter into an Agreement. The Agreement inter alia will include provisions for the SP to adhere to all local laws applicable to the operation of</p>	Yes.SP is required to adhere to all local laws applicable to the operations of ICAC.

		<p>the ICAC, including on employment of staff and their remuneration, banking operations, environment, safety, insurance, privacy, payment of local taxes, etc.</p> <p>Does this clause indicate that the SP should ensure that for staff employment and remuneration, banking operations, environment, safety, insurance, privacy, and local tax payments strict adherence to all local laws and requirements be a mandatory condition when quoting the Single Service Fee?</p>	
		<p>The clause stating that full services at the Indian Consular Application Centre (ICAC) shall commence within one month of signing the agreement, along with the operational ICAC. The timelines mentioned are a bit unrealistic for the setup of Indian Consular Application centers and needs to be re-evaluated by the ministry and the mission. A minimum of 45 days is required for a proper uninterrupted setup.</p>	<p>SP shall adhere to the timelines mentioned in the RFP</p>
		<p>The Mission handled approximately 19,800 no. of services/ transactions during the three years from Jan-2022 to Dec-2024 (equivalent to 28</p>	<p>Numbers are already provided in RFP (Page No. 6)</p>

		<p>transactions/services per working day, assuming 240 working days in a year.</p> <p>Kindly provide the breakup of services with count for last three years for each of the Miscellaneous consular service.</p> <p>In addition to above mentioned miscellaneous services, we further request you to kindly provide the list of documents, which needs attestation from the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), along with the last three years count for each category of document.</p>	
		<p>As we have seen that over 15 Indian Mission across the geography has come with the tenders for outsourcing of CPV Services with the similar timeline for tender submission and presentation schedule. Since the core operations and technical team manage the demo and presentation session in any organization, it is technically not possible for them to be present in 5-6 different countries on same day. Therefore, we kindly request to provide revised schedule for bid submission and technical bid presentation session.</p>	<p>Technical bid presentation in virtual mode is also allowed if any bidder formally requests for the same. Virtual meeting platform, time, and other details will be intimated to the bidder in advance.</p>
		<p>Dispatch and return document(s)/passport/PCC back to applicants via Courier service, in a secured manner as per standards prescribed by the Mission/Posts.</p>	<p>Courier service is a mandatory deliverable to be provided by the SP, with the option for applicant to collect passport/document from ICACs</p>

		<p>Does this imply that passports will not be returned over the counter? Additionally, in cases where an applicant chooses not to utilize the courier service, what responsibilities will the Service Provider (SP) be required to fulfill.</p>	
		<p>In the event of the rollout of chip-enabled e-passport services by the Ministry – Please confirm, Is the SP allowed to consider the significant increase in volumes due to the rollout of chip enabled passports during the period of the contract.</p> <p>Will the SP be allowed to provision the increase in number of applications for its financial calculations to determine the service fees.</p>	<p>Bidders to make their own calculations to quote a singular Service fee as per annexure-K of the RFP.</p>
2	Chapter III	<p>Please clarify whether Bidding companies which have received a Show cause notice for levying of penalties/notice demanding penalties are eligible to bid in the present RFP if the Bidding company in question has responded to the Show cause notice for levying of penalties/notice demanding penalties and a final communication qua said penalties has not been received from the Mission/Post MEA.</p>	<p>The proposal of Bidding companies that have outstanding penalties levied by any Indian Mission/Posts, irrespective of its current status, shall not be considered and summarily be rejected.</p>

		Please clarify whether Bidding companies who have challenged the levying of any particular penalties against them whether before Mission/Post MEA or before a court or before an arbitral tribunal are eligible to bid?	The proposal of Bidding companies that have outstanding penalties levied by any Indian Mission/Posts, irrespective of its current status, shall not be considered and summarily be rejected.
		Please be kind to clarify whether the penalties that are contested by the Bidding Company including but not limited to for lack of proof and a reply from the Mission is awaited, will be considered as outstanding penalties for the purpose of Chapter III, clause (vi)	
		Details of the Embassy Bank account duly mentioning Account No / Address of Bank / Details of swift / IBAN	Details of the bank account will be shared through email with companies who have shared their organizational profile with the Mission
3	Chapter V	Please be kind to clarify about the external audit agency which will be acceptable to the Mission.	An external audit agency in the country where the company is registered.
		The Bidding Company must provide certification that its operations are compliant with local labour laws and the relevant tax regime and shall continue to be compliant with such regime.	The OSPs will have to submit self-certification in this regard.

		Kindly clarify from whom the said certificate is to be provided?	
		<p>“The Bidding Company must provide certification that its operations are compliant with local labour laws and the relevant tax regime and shall continue to be compliant with such regime.”</p> <p>As the operations of the bidding company would only stand initiated post the award of the tender, would a bidder whose bid is unable meet viability standards based on local labour laws read with labour requirements as stipulated in the present RFP, stand to be declared as non-responsive. Further, what would be the procedure for such determination?</p>	<p>The only criteria for selection of SP is minimum technical qualification as per provisions of RFP and L1 criteria.</p> <p>SP will have to submit a Self-certification in this regard.</p>
4	Chapter VII	The Tender specifies the turnaround time for 30 minutes and as per our understanding, the turnaround time will be only for submitting the application and a separate time would be allotted for form filing, photocopy, photograph services.	30-minute turnaround time is the standard requirement for the processing of applications, which includes capturing photographs and providing photocopies as well. Separate time could be considered for Form filling if required.
		Please be kind to clarify if the courier service is mandatory or optional?	Courier service is a mandatory deliverable to be provided by the SP, with the option for applicant to collect passport/document from ICACs

		Please be kind to clarify the total revenue of photocopy, photograph, form filing and courier services availed by the applicants in the last three years for the purpose of calculation of the financial bid.	Information not available
		Please share an estimate or indication as to how many counters and staff will be required.	Details are given in Chapter VII (Page No. 22)
		Kindly share details of applications received in person and received by post / courier at each ICAC.	Approx. 60% of the applications are received by Courier.
		Please provide number of calls / emails received for planning of call center.	The numbers vary and cannot be quantified.
		How many consular camps will be conducted during a calendar year.	Number of Consular Camps and applications cannot be predicted. SP will be informed in advance of anticipated applications for planning manpower and hardware logistics for a camp.
		“The SP is required to set up a new Indian Consular Application Center (ICAC) in prominent locations as specified in the following table under the jurisdiction of Mission/Post, in well-connected commercial complexes with ample parking facilities for applicants. The proposed locations for the ICACs should have an area of minimum office space as specified in the table below sufficient for Reception	<p>The selection criteria as defined in the RFP is as per L1 basis only.</p> <p>The bidder is required to submit its financial bid, strictly as per the Annexure-K of the RFP.</p> <p>Quality of implementation and technical solution offered will be measured against service level metrics as defined in the RFP.</p>

		<p>desk/counters/workstation/walk-in applicants, seating of waiting people, space for smooth movement of incoming and outgoing visitors, separate exit/entry to ensure smooth flow of people, etc.”</p> <p>Are the bidders required to advance documents/calculations supporting the financial viability of any ‘service fee’ so submitted by the bidder, to show that the same is sufficient to finance not only the market rental values for the requisite ICACs and meet the specified requirements? If there are no such documents to be provided by the prospective bidders, how will the tendering authority determine this aspect?</p>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We understand that the scoring matrix provided under the RFP is highly subjective and purely depend upon the bidder’s responses. However, there is no fixed number of mandatory parking, counters, manpower and other details are provided. • This may lead to a confusion for new bidders who wish to participate in the tendering process. We request Hon’ble Mission to provide the equal and fair opportunity to all bidders and provide accurate figures to achieve highest scoring under each section of bid evaluation Performa (page 114-119). 	<p>The RFP provision and the evaluation criteria on location of ICAC is self-explanatory. Evaluation will be done based on relative quality of offers of various bidders as per Technical Evaluation Proforma, Part-III, Annexure-J</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SP shall operate, on a regular basis, an exclusive submission counter at the Mission with adequate number of staff, for processing the applications of special cases. <p>Kindly confirm if this task be completed by the Messenger of OSP sent to the mission.</p>	Yes, Messenger of the OSP will do.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SP should mandatorily provide 4 SMS updates, at no additional cost/charges to applicants <p>This service has not been added as a part of service determination. Kindly confirm.</p>	This is in the scope of work with no additional cost. Bidders may bid accordingly.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If an applicant opts for the collection of documents/passport/PCC from ICAC, the SP shall ensure that the document/passport has been handed over / delivered to the applicant or his/her authorized representative – In this scenario if the applicant insist on claiming a refund on the courier charges what is the SP supposed to inform the applicant. This clause is a conflict to the clause in Chapter 1 clause 8 (Viii). Kindly review and provide appropriate information. 	SP shall provide courier service mandatorily to applicants at no additional cost. There will be no refund of the Service Fee, if the applicant decides to collect the documents directly from the ICAC
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SP is required to set up a new Indian Consular Application Center (ICAC). <p>We understand that the successful bidder has to setup entirely new Indian Consular Application Center in the country of operation.</p>	The SP is required to set up an entirely new ICAC having new civil infra (including chairs, tables & furnishings) and IT infrastructure (including desktops, workstations, POS, Token machines, etc.) and

		<p>Considering the confidentiality of data and the ease of expects coming to ICAC, we request you to kindly do not consider the setting up of ICAC in a facility where there is any other Visa Application center is operating as joint Visa Center as this will leads to confusion and kiosk for Indian Citizens and other visa applicants who seek quality service with friendly sand safe ICAC environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We request you to kindly consider that the incumbent service provider in the region will not be allowed to propose the same infrastructure for setting up of ICAC as this will leads to a drastic change in the cost incurred by the other bidders for setting up of ICAC including deployment of civil infra in that region. 	<p>other necessary equipment / facilities / utilities.</p> <p>The marks for the proposed ICAC will be assigned as per the Technical Evaluation Proforma – Part-III of the Annexure-J.</p>
6	Chapter X	The SP shall provide a Bank Guarantee in Swiss Franc for the Govt funds held by SP. Kindly advise the amount for the same.	Details will be provided to the bidder who is awarded the contract, at the time of signing of Agreement.
7	Chapter XI	<p>Please advise purging policy for Personal data for the applicant.</p> <p>Collection of unauthorized amounts from the applicants</p> <p>There is no mention of further violations or termination of contract. Does this mean that the SP will only be charged equivalent to double the unauthorized amount collected or</p>	<p>Data handling and storage requirements are explicitly mentioned in the RFP. Please refer.</p> <p>The penalties up to Swiss Franc 1000 will be imposed on SP for each violation in this category.</p>

		Swiss Franc 1000 whichever is higher, in each such case. Kindly clarify.	
8	Chapter XIV	Kindly advise how many original and copies of technical bid are required	One copy of the technical bid should be original and three copies could be in duplicate
		Can the BID docs be signed by DSC or physical signatures are reqd.	Physical signatures are required.
9	Chapter XV	<p>“The Lowest Financial Bid (L1) will be determined based on the Service Fee quoted by the bidders, as per Annexure-K of this RFP. The bidder who has quoted the lowest ‘Service Fee’ will be ranked as L1 and the contract will be awarded to the L1. In the case of a tie, where more than one company has quoted the same Service Fee, the Bidding Company graded higher in the evaluation of Technical Bids will be declared L1.”</p> <p>On the date on which the financial bids are opened, is the bidder with the lowest financial bid automatically ranked as “L1” and resultantly automatically the bidder to whom the award/contract shall be granted? Are no viability studies/analysis to be conducted by the MEA/Mission against the financial bids of the technically responsive bidders, to ensure that the lowest financial bid is a value which can validly and viably provide the services</p>	Opening of Financial Bids shall not construe to be declaration of “L1”. Results of Financial Bids will be declared subsequently after necessary internal process, based on L1 criteria only.

		<p>stipulated in the RFP and meet the quality stipulations of the same, as also defined in the RFP</p>	
		<p>Before the opening of the Financial Bids, the marks obtained by the various bidders in the Technical Bid stage will be communicated by email.</p> <p>For the sake of transparency, will the Mission also provide the scores provided to the bidder for each of the respective items in the technical bid?</p>	<p>The total cumulative marks obtained by the bidders at the technical bid stage will be communicated to the respective bidders only.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We request you to kindly provide the basis of the financial bid Evaluation as there is no criteria mentioned nor a scoring format or any formulae to determine L1. • It is essential that a detailed breakdown of all facilitation services, including SMS, be provided to determine the final service fee. This will help ensure that there is no predatory pricing. We kindly request that the Mission and Ministry consider this approach to ensure a level playing field for all participating companies. • We request you to please clarify the basis for removing the financial viability clause from the tender. This change could potentially lead to predatory pricing and negatively impact service standards. service standards. 	<p>The selection criteria as defined in the RFP is as per L1 basis only.</p>

10	Part III: Technical Bid Evaluation	<p>Please be kind to clarify, what is the maximum number of parking slots to be considered as adequate slots in ICAC.</p>	<p>Exclusive Parking means Parking space exclusively reserved for applicants visiting ICAC.</p> <p>Bidders are to arrive at the number of parking slots as per the number of applicants anticipated to visit ICAC and based on existing local norms.</p> <p>Marks under Technical bid evaluation will be awarded based on the information/presentation provided by the bidder.</p>
		<p>Please be kind to clarify what explanation/solution for the provision of Application Facilitation Services is expected from the Service provider. This will enable us to incorporate the necessary details into our Technical Bid accordingly.</p>	<p>Necessary counter, hardware and manpower facilities have to be provisioned for Application Facilitating services such as Photograph, photocopy, form filling etc. Refer to Chapter VII, Para (3)</p> <p>As regards Courier service, Bidder has to provide information regarding the courier despatch process, the courier company to be hired, etc., in its technical bid.</p> <p>Technical Bid evaluation marks will be awarded, based on the solution/explanation provided by the bidder, as per Annexure J (Part-III) of the RFP</p>

		Please be kind to clarify the Reference Letters provided to the bidding company by foreign client governments will be considered in assessing market reputation	Reputation will be assessed based on past association with corporate and non-GOI clients including foreign governments.
11	Annexure-H	Since the BG can be furnished through SWIFT (including e-Bank guarantee) hence affixing of bank seal is not possible. Pls clarify on the same.	e-BG and SWIFT transactions will be accepted as per banking norms.
		Since the BG can be furnished through SWIFT (including e-Bank guarantee) hence Stamp paper requirement does not exist. Pls clarify on the same.	e-BG and SWIFT transactions will be accepted as per banking norms.
12	Annexure-K	Please be kind to clarify how the charges for the courier services to be computed given they vary based on distance and local circumstances.	Bidders need to factor in courier charges, variability of distances amongst other factors to offer a singular all inclusive service fee
		Please be kind to clarify whether an average of the courier rates is to be taken or a separate disclosure is to be made qua the differential courier rates and ultimately differential service fees.	
		If the Service Fee has multiple components including digitization and indexation of documents, enrolment of fingerprint biometrics, facial Biometric capture, and provision of four Application Facilitating Services viz, photocopying, photographs, Form	A singular all-inclusive service fee has to be quoted as per Annexure K, regardless of applicant availing any or all of the application facilitation services.

		filling, and Courier Services, please clarify how is the service fee to be quoted if for instance an applicant does not avail any or all of the 4 Application Facilitation Services.	
		Proforma of Service Fee is to be filled correctly, without any omission. Any vague details /no response may lead to rejection of the bid. If there is just one consolidated Service Fee to be quoted by the bidder. Please advise what specific details are considered under vague here. And what are mandatorily required to be shared.	Service Fee proforma should be filled completely and correctly without leaving any information, which may lead to rejection of the bid.
13	General Query	Will there be a single Service fee for Consular / Passport / Visa / OCI / PCC / Surrender Certificate / GEP Verification Services / Misc Attestation.	The service fee for all the CPV services will be the same
		Mission has provided the application count category wise for past three years. Mission has provided us the volumes for past three years, can the mission provide the guidelines on the projected application volume for the next three-year alia contractual period	Bidders are requested to refer only to past application numbers and make their own assessment of projections.