

**Request for Proposal (RFP)**

**For:** **Digital Agency**

**Date:** 28 September 2020

**1 Overview of the British Council**

1.1 The British Council is the United Kingdom’s international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. Its purpose is to promote a friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and people worldwide; making a positive contribution to all the countries we work with; and making a lasting difference to the UK's security, prosperity and influence. It seeks to achieve its aims by working in education, science, governance, English and the arts.

1.2 The British Council was established in 1934 and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1940. It is registered as a charity in England and Wales (charity no. 209131) and Scotland (charity no. SCO37733). It is also an executive non-departmental public body, with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as its sponsoring department.

1.3 Its primary charitable objects are set out in the Charter and are stated to be to:

* Promote cultural relationships and the understanding of different cultures between people and peoples of the United Kingdom and other countries;
* Promote a wider knowledge of the United Kingdom;
* Develop a wider knowledge of the English language;
* Encourage cultural, scientific, technological and other educational co-operation between the United Kingdom and other countries; and
* Otherwise promote the advancement of education.

1.4 The British Council works in more than 110 countries around the world and employs over 7000 staff worldwide. It has its headquarters in the UK, with offices in London, Manchester, Belfast, Cardiff and Edinburgh. Further information can be viewed at [www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org).

1. **Introduction and Background to the Project / Programme**

2.1 A Digital Agency is required by British Council Services Nepal Private Services Ltd. (BCSNPL) to work as a strategic partner supporting the British Council marketing team to develop marketing initiatives to target and utilise market opportunity.

2.2 The purpose and scope of this RFP and supporting documents is to explain in further detail the requirements of the BCSNPL and the process for submitting a proposal in response to this RFP (“Proposal”).

**3 Tender Conditions and Contractual Requirements**

This section of the RFP sets out the BCSNPL’s contracting requirements, general policy requirements, and the general tender conditions relating to this procurement process (“**Procurement Process**”).

**3.1 Contracting requirements**

3.1.1 The contracting authority is the British Council which includes any subsidiary companies and other organisations that control or are controlled by the British Council from time to time (see: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/structure/status>).

3.1.2 The appointed supplier will be expected to deliver the services at the BCSNPL offices in Lainchaur Kathmandu and its venue locations within Kathmandu Valley as mentioned in Annex-4 goods and service specification.

3.1.3 The BCSNPL’s contracting and commercial approach in respect of the required services is set out at Annex 1 (Terms and Conditions of contract) (“**Contract**”). By submitting a tender response, you are agreeing to be bound by the terms of this RFP and the Contract without further negotiation or amendment.

3.1.4 The Contract awarded will be for duration of 2 years with an option for an extension for 1 year under agreement of both signing parties upon writing.

3.1.5 In the event that you have any concerns or queries in relation to the Contract, you should submit a clarification request in accordance with the provisions of this RFP by the Clarification Deadline (as defined below in the Timescales section of this RFP). Following such clarification requests, the BCSNPL may issue a clarification change to the Contract that will apply to all potential suppliers submitting a tender response.

3.1.6 The BCSNPL is under no obligations to consider any clarifications / amendments to the Contract proposed following the Clarification Deadline, but before the Response Deadline (as defined below in the Timescales section of this RFP). Any proposed amendments received from a potential supplier as part its tender response shall entitle the BCSNPL to reject that tender response and to disqualify that potential supplier from this Procurement Process.

**3.2 General Policy Requirements**

3.2.1 By submitting a tender response in connection with this Procurement Process, potential suppliers confirm that they will, and that they shall ensure that any consortium members and/or subcontractors will, comply with all applicable laws, codes of practice, statutory guidance and applicable BCSNPL policies relevant to the goods and/or services being supplied. All relevant BCSNPL policies that suppliers are expected to comply with can be found on the British Council website (<https://www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/transparency/policies>). The list of relevant policies includes (but it is not limited to): Anti-Fraud and Corruption, Child Protection Policy, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, Fair Trading, Health and Safety Policy, Environmental Policy, Records Management, and Privacy.

**3.3 General tender conditions (“Tender Conditions”)**

3.3.1 Application of these Tender Conditions – In participating in this Procurement Process and/or by submitting a tender response it will be implied that you accept and will be bound by all the provisions of this RFP and its Annexes. Accordingly, tender responses should be on the basis of and strictly in accordance with the requirements of this RFP.

3.3.2 Third party verifications – Your tender response is submitted on the basis that you consent to the BCSNPL carrying out all necessary actions to verify the information that you have provided; and the analysis of your tender response being undertaken by one or more third parties commissioned by the British Council for such purposes.

3.3.3 Information provided to potential suppliers – Information that is supplied to potential suppliers as part of this Procurement Process is supplied in good faith. The information contained in the RFP and the supporting documents and in any related written or oral communication is believed to be correct at the time of issue but the BCSNPL will not accept any liability for its accuracy, adequacy or completeness and no warranty is given as such. This exclusion does not extend to any fraudulent misrepresentation made by or on behalf of the BCSNPL.

3.3.4 Potential suppliers to make their own enquires – You are responsible for analysing and reviewing all information provided to you as part of this Procurement Process and for forming your own opinions and seeking advice as you consider appropriate. You should notify the British Council promptly of any perceived ambiguity, inconsistency or omission in this RFP and/or any in of its associated documents and/or in any information provided to you as part of this Procurement Process.

3.3.5 Amendments to the RFP – At any time prior to the Response Deadline, the BCSNPL may amend the RFP. Any such amendment shall be issued to all potential suppliers, and if appropriate to ensure potential suppliers have reasonable time in which to take such amendment into account, the Response Deadline shall, at the discretion of the BCSNPL, be extended.

3.3.6 Compliance of tender response submission – Any goods and/or services offered should be on the basis of and strictly in accordance with the RFP (including, without limitation, any specification of the BCSNPL’s requirements, these Tender Conditions and the Contract) and all other documents and any clarifications or updates issued by the BCSNPL as part of this Procurement Process.

3.3.7 Format of tender response submission – Tender responses must comprise the relevant documents specified by the British Council completed in all areas and in the format as detailed by the BCSNPL in Annex 2 (Supplier Response). Any documents requested by the BCSNPL must be completed in full. It is, therefore, important that you read the RFP carefully before completing and submitting your tender response.

3.3.8 Modifications to tender response documents once submitted – You may modify your tender response prior to the Response Deadline by giving written notice to the BCSNPL. Any modification should be clear and submitted as a complete new tender response in accordance with Annex 2 (Supplier Response) and these Tender Conditions.

3.3.9 Rejection of tender responses or other documents – A tender response or any other document requested by the BCSNPL may be rejected which:

* contains gaps, omissions, misrepresentations, errors, uncompleted sections, or changes to the format of the tender documentation provided;
* contains hand written amendments which have not been initialled by the authorised signatory;
* does not reflect and confirm full and unconditional compliance with all of the documents issued by the BCSNPL forming part of the RFP;
* contains any caveats or any other statements or assumptions qualifying the tender response that are not capable of evaluation in accordance with the evaluation model or requiring changes to any documents issued by the BCSNPL in any way;
* is not submitted in a manner consistent with the provisions set out in this RFP;
* is received after the Response Deadline.

3.3.10 Disqualification – If you breach these Tender Conditions, if there are any errors, omissions or material adverse changes relating to any information supplied by you at any stage in this Procurement Process, if any other circumstances set out in this RFP, and/or in any supporting documents, entitling the BCSNPL to reject a tender response apply and/or if you or your appointed advisers attempt:

* to inappropriately influence this Procurement Process;
* to fix or set the price for goods or services ;
* to enter into an arrangement with any other party that such party shall refrain from submitting a tender response;
* to enter into any arrangement with any other party (other than another party that forms part of your consortium bid or is your proposed sub-contractor) as to the prices submitted; or
* to collude in any other way
* to engage in direct or indirect bribery or canvassing by you or your appointed advisers in relation to this Procurement Process; or
* to obtain information from any of the employees, agents or advisors of the BCSNPL concerning this Procurement Process (other than as set out in these Tender Conditions) or from another potential supplier or another tender response,

the BCSNPL shall be entitled to reject your tender response in full and to disqualify you from this Procurement Process. Subject to the “Liability” Tender Condition below, by participating in this Procurement Process you accept that the BCSNPL shall have no liability to a disqualified potential supplier in these circumstances.

3.3.11 Tender costs – You are responsible for obtaining all information necessary for preparation of your tender response and for all costs and expenses incurred in preparation of the tender response. Subject to the “Liability” Tender Condition below, you accept by your participation in this procurement, including without limitation the submission of a tender response, that you will not be entitled to claim from the BCSNPL any costs, expenses or liabilities that you may incur in tendering for this procurement irrespective of whether or not your tender response is successful.

3.3.12 Rights to cancel or vary this Procurement Process - By issuing this RFP, entering into clarification communications with potential suppliers or by having any other form of communication with potential suppliers, the BCSNPL is not bound in any way to enter into any contractual or other arrangement with you or any other potential supplier. It is intended that the remainder of this Procurement Process will take place in accordance with the provisions of this RFP but the BCSNPL reserves the right to terminate, amend or vary (to include, without limitation, in relation to any timescales or deadlines) this Procurement Process by notice to all potential supplier in writing. Subject to the “Liability” Tender Condition below, the BCSNPL will have no liability for any losses, costs or expenses caused to you as a result of such termination, amendment or variation.

3.3.13 Consortium Members and sub-contractors – It is your responsibility to ensure that any staff, consortium members, sub-contractors and advisers abide by these Tender Conditions and the requirement of this RFP.

3.3.14 Liability – Nothing in these Tender Conditions is intended to exclude or limit the liability of the BCSNPL in relation to fraud or in other circumstances where the BCSNPL’s liability may not be limited under any applicable law.

**4 Confidentiality and Information Governance**

4.1 All information supplied to you by the BCSNPL, including this RFP and all other documents relating to this Procurement Process, either in writing or orally, must be treated in confidence and not disclosed to any third party (save to your professional advisers, consortium members and/or sub-contractors strictly for the purposes only of helping you to participate in this Procurement Process and/or prepare your tender response) unless the information is already in the public domain or is required to be disclosed under any applicable laws.

4.2 You shall not disclose copy or reproduce any of the information supplied to you as part of this Procurement Process other than for the purposes of preparing and submitting a tender response. There must be no publicity by you regarding the Procurement Process or the future award of any contract unless the BCSNPL has given express written consent to the relevant communication.

4.3 This RFP and its accompanying documents shall remain the property of the BCSNPL and must be returned on demand.

4.4 The BCSNPL reserves the right to disclose all documents relating to this Procurement Process, including without limitation your tender response, to any employee, third party agent, adviser or other third party involved in the procurement in support of, and/or in collaboration with, the BCSNPL. The BCSNPL further reserves the right to publish the Contract once awarded and/or disclose information in connection with supplier performance under the Contract in accordance with any public sector transparency policies (as referred to below). By participating in this Procurement Process, you agree to such disclosure and/or publication by the BCSNPL in accordance with such rights reserved by it under this paragraph.

4.5 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“FOIA”), the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (“EIR”), and public sector transparency policies apply to the BCSNPL (together the “**Disclosure Obligations**”).

4.6 You should be aware of the BCSNPL’s obligations and responsibilities under the Disclosure Obligations to disclose information held by the BCSNPL. Information provided by you in connection with this Procurement Process, or with any contract that may be awarded as a result of this exercise, may therefore have to be disclosed by the British Council under the Disclosure Obligations, unless the BCSNPL decides that one of the statutory exemptions under the FOIA or the EIR applies.

4.7 If you wish to designate information supplied as part of your tender response or otherwise in connection with this tender exercise as confidential, using any template and/or further guidance provided at Part 2 (Submission Checklist) of Annex 2 (Supplier Response), you must provide clear and specific detail as to:

* the precise elements which are considered confidential and/or commercially sensitive;
* why you consider an exemption under the FOIA or EIR would apply; and
* the estimated length of time during which the exemption will apply.

4.8 The use of blanket protective markings of whole documents such as “commercial in confidence” will not be sufficient. By participating in this Procurement Process you agree that the BCSNPL should not and will not be bound by any such markings.

4.9 In addition, marking any material as “confidential” or “commercially sensitive” or equivalent should not be taken to mean that the BCSNPL accepts any duty of confidentiality by virtue of such marking. You accept that the decision as to which information will be disclosed is reserved to the BCSNPL, notwithstanding any consultation with you or any designation of information as confidential or commercially sensitive or equivalent you may have made. You agree, by participating further in this Procurement Process and/or submitting your tender response, that all information is provided to the British Council on the basis that it may be disclosed under the Disclosure Obligations if the BCSNPL considers that it is required to do so and/or may be used by the BCSNPL in accordance with the provisions provision of this RFP.

4.10 Tender responses are also submitted on the condition that the appointed supplier will only process personal data (as may be defined under any relevant data protection laws) that it gains access to in performance of this Contract in accordance with the BCSNPL’s instructions and will not use such personal data for any other purpose. The contracted supplier will undertake to process any personal data on the BCSNPL’s behalf in accordance with the relevant provisions of any relevant data protection laws and to ensure all consents required under such laws are obtained.

**5 Tender Validity**

5.1 Your tender response must remain open for acceptance by the BCSNPL for a period of 60 days from the Response Deadline. A tender response not valid for this period may be rejected by the BCSNPL.

**6 Payment and Invoicing**

6.1 The BCSNPL will pay correctly addressed and undisputed invoices within 30 days in accordance with the requirements of the Contract. Suppliers to the BCSNPL must ensure comparable payment provisions apply to the payment of their sub-contractors and the sub-contractors of their sub-contractors. General requirements for an invoice for the BCSNPL include:

* A description of the good/services supplied is included.
* The BCSNPL Purchase Order number is included.
* It is sent electronically via email in PDF format to “To be confirmed later” or by post to:

The British Council, Lainchaur, Kathmandu, Nepal (P O Box 640)

**7 Specification**

It shall be as specified in Annex 4 separately attached to this request for proposal.

**8 Mandatory Requirements / Constraints**

8.1 As part of your tender response, you must confirm that you meet the mandatory requirements / constraints, if any, as set out in the British Council’s specification forming part of this RFP. A failure to comply with one or more mandatory requirements or constraints shall entitle the BCSNPL to reject a tender response in full.

**9 Qualification Requirements**

9.1 See Annex 4

**10 Key background documents and further information**

10.1 Further relevant background documents / information may be provided to potential suppliers as set out below, as an Annex to this RFP and/or by way of the issue of additional documents / links to additional information / documents. Where no such information / documents are provided, this Section of the RFP will not apply.

**11 Timescales**

11.1 Subject to any changes notified to potential suppliers by the BCSNPL in accordance with the Tender Conditions, the following timescales shall apply to this Procurement Process:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Date / time** |
| RFP Issued to bidding suppliers | 2 October 2020 |
| Deadline for clarification questions (**Clarification Deadline**) | 06 October 2020 |
| British Council to respond to clarification questions | 08 October 2020 |
| Deadline for submission of RFP responses by potential suppliers (**Response Deadline**) | 11 October 2020 |
| Final Decision | 14 October 2020 |
| Contract concluded with winning supplier | 18 October 2020 |
| Contract start date | 01 November 2020 |

**12 Instructions for Responding**

12.1 The documents that must be submitted to form your tender response are listed at Part 2 (Submission Checklist) of Annex 2 (Supplier Response) to this RFP. All documents required as part of your tender ***response should be submitted no later than 5:00 PM on 6 October 2020 via email to*** [***Julen.Pradhan@britishcouncil.org***](mailto:Julen.Pradhan@britishcouncil.org) ***and*** [***Sanjog.Dhakal@britishcouncil.org***](mailto:Sanjog.Dhakal@britishcouncil.org) in PDF format with email subject as **“Request For Proposal\_Digital Agency\_British Council Services Nepal Pvt. Ltd**”.

12.2 The following requirements should be complied with when summiting your response to this RFP:

* Please ensure that you send your submission in good time to prevent issues with technology – late tender responses may be rejected by the BCSNPL.
* All attachments/supporting documentation should be provided separately to your main tender response and clearly labelled to make it clear as to which part of your tender response it relates.
* Unless otherwise stated as part of this RFP or its Annexes, all tender responses should be in the format of the relevant BCSNPL requirement with your response to that requirement inserted underneath.
* Where supporting evidence is requested as ‘or equivalent’ you must demonstrate such equivalence as part of your tender response.
* Any deliberate alteration of a BCSNPL requirement as part of your tender response will invalidate your tender response to that requirement and for evaluation purposes you shall be deemed not to have responded to that particular requirement.
* Responses should concise, unambiguous, and should directly address the requirement stated.
* Your tender responses to the tender requirements and pricing will be incorporated into the Contract, as appropriate.

**13 Clarification Requests**

13.1 All clarification requests should be submitted to [sanjog.dhakal@britishcouncil.org](mailto:sanjog.dhakal@britishcouncil.org) or [jebin.gautam@britishcouncil.org](mailto:jebin.gautam@britishcouncil.org.np) by the Clarification Deadline, as set out in the Timescales section of this RFP. The British Council is under no obligation to respond to clarification requests received after the Clarification Deadline.

13.2 Any clarification requests should clearly reference the appropriate paragraph in the RFP documentation and, to the extent possible, should be aggregated rather than sent individually.

13.3 The BCSNPL reserves the right to issue any clarification request made by you, and the response, to all potential suppliers unless you expressly require it to be kept confidential at the time the request is made. If the BCSNPL considers the contents of the request not to be confidential, it will inform you and you will have the opportunity to withdraw the clarification query prior to the BCSNPL responding to all potential suppliers.

13.4 The BCSNPL may at any time request further information from potential suppliers to verify or clarify any aspects of their tender response or other information they may have provided. Should you not provide supplementary information or clarifications to the BCSNPL by any deadline notified to you, your tender response may be rejected in full and you may be disqualified from this Procurement Process.

**14 Evaluation Criteria**

14.1 You will have your tender response evaluated as set out below:

**Stage 1:** Tender responses will be checked to ensure that they have been completed correctly and all necessary information has been provided. Tenders responses correctly completed with all relevant information being provided will proceed to Stage 2. Any tender responses not correctly completed in accordance with the requirements of this RFP and/or containing omissions may be rejected at this point. Where a tender response is rejected at this point it will automatically be disqualified and will not be further evaluated.

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**Stage 2:** The completed Qualification Questionnaire *(if used)* will then be reviewed to confirm that the potential supplier meets all of the qualification criteria set out in the questionnaire. Potential suppliers that meet the qualification criteria will proceed to Stage 3. Potential suppliers that do not meet the qualification criteria set out in the Qualification Questionnaire *(if used)* may be excluded from the Procurement Process at this point. Where a potential supplier is excluded at this point, its tender response will be rejected in full and not evaluated further and the supplier will automatically be disqualified from this Procurement Process.

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**Stage 3:** If a bidder succeeds in passing Stages 1 and 2 of the evaluation, then it will have its detailed tender response to the BCSNPL’s requirements evaluated in accordance with the evaluation methodology set out below. Information provided as part of Qualification Questionnaire *(if used)* responses may also be verified as part of this stage.

14.2 Award Criteria – Responses from potential suppliers will be assessed to determine the most economically advantages tender using the following criteria and weightings and will be assessed entirely on your response submitted:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Weighting** |
| Quality (Technical specification/support) | 30% |
| Methodology and Approach (includes but not limited to after sales service) | 25% |
| Commercial | 35% |
| Value Areas (Child protection, Equality Diversion and Inclusion, Environment friendliness, Information Governance and Risk Management) | 10% |

14.3 Scoring Model – Tender responses will be subject to an initial review at the start of Stage 3 of the evaluation process. Any tender responses not meeting mandatory requirements or constraints (if any) will be rejected in full at this point and will not be assessed or scored further. Tender responses not so rejected will be scored by an evaluation panel appointed by the BCSNPL for all criteria other than commercial using the following scoring model:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Points** | **Interpretation** |
| **10** | **Excellent** –Overall the response demonstrates that the bidder meets all areas of the requirement and provides all of the areas evidence requested in the level of detail requested. This, therefore, is a detailed excellent response that meets all aspects of the requirement leaving no ambiguity as to whether the bidder can meet the requirement. |
| **7** | **Good** –Overall the response demonstrates that the bidder meets all areas of the requirement and provides all of the areas of evidence requested, but contains some trivial omissions in relation to the level of detail requested in terms of either the response or the evidence. This, therefore, is a good response that meets all aspects of the requirement with only a trivial level ambiguity due the bidders failure to provide all information at the level of detail requested. |
| **5** | **Adequate** –Overall the response demonstrates that the bidder meets all areas of the requirement, but not all of the areas of evidence requested have been provided. This, therefore, is an adequate response, but with some limited ambiguity as to whether the bidder can meet the requirement due to the bidder’s failure to provide all of the evidence requested. |
| **3** | **Poor** –The response does not demonstrate that the bidder meets the requirement in one or more areas. This, therefore, is a poor response with significant ambiguity as to whether the bidder can meet the requirement due to the failure by the bidder to show that it meets one or more areas of the requirement. |
| **0** | **Unacceptable** –The response is non-compliant with the requirements of the RFP and/or no response has been provided. |

14.4 Commercial Evaluation – Your “Overall Price” (as calculated in accordance with requirements of Annex 3 (Pricing Approach) for the goods and/or services will be evaluated by the evaluation panel for the purposes of the commercial evaluation. Prices must not be subject to any pricing assumptions, qualifications or indexation not provided for explicitly by the BCSNPL as part of the pricing approach. In the event that any prices are expressed as being subject to any pricing assumptions, qualifications or indexation not provided for by the BCSNPL as part of the pricing approach, the BCSNPL may reject the full tender response at this point. The BCSNPL may also reject any tender response where the Overall Price for the goods and/or services is considered by the BCSNPL to be abnormally low. A maximum offer score of 10 will be awarded to the tender response offering the lowest “Overall Price”. Other tender responses will be awarded a mark by application of the following formula: (Lowest Overall Price/Overall Price being evaluated) x 10 (rounded to two decimal places) = commercial score.

14.5 Moderation and application of weightings – The evaluation panel appointed for this procurement will meet to agree and moderate scores for each award criteria. Final scores in terms of a percentage of the overall tender score will be obtained by applying the relevant weighting factors set out as part of the award criteria table above. The percentage scores for each award criteria will be amalgamated to give a percentage score out of 100.

14.6 The winning tender response – The winning tender response shall be the tender response scoring the highest percentage score out of 100 when applying the above evaluation methodology, which is also supported by any required verification evidence.

**List of Annexes forming part of this RFP (issued as separate documents):**

**Annex 1 - Terms and Conditions of Contract (Separately attached)**

**Annex 2 – Supplier Response (Separately attached)**

**Annex 3 – Pricing Approach (Separately attached)**

**Annex 4 – Goods and services specification /Agency Brief (Separately attached)**