



OPEN CALL OR PROPOSALS

for the award of Framework Partnership Agreements concerning
four European Topic Centres on

1. Air pollution and climate change mitigation 2011-2013 – EEA/ACC/10/001
2. Climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation 2011-2013 – EEA/NSV/10/001
3. Inland, coastal and marine waters 2011-2013 – EEA/NSV/10/002
4. Spatial information and analysis 2011-2013 – EEA/NSV/10/003

Information briefing

3 February 2010, 14.00-17.00

EEA Conference Room (0.32)

Summary record and additional information

1. Introduction

As foreseen in the Terms of Reference (ToR) published on the EEA website¹, an information briefing took place at the EEA with representatives of interested bodies who had previously registered.

Following an introduction on the purpose of the meeting and a few words on the mandate and role of the EEA, the following timetable was specified and confirmed:

Final date for submission of proposals	20 April 2010 at 16:00 CET ²
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¹ <http://www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/tenders/call-for-proposals/openproposal.html>

² In case of hand delivery.

Opening of proposals	27 April 2010 at 11:00 CET
Representatives of applicants (one per applicant) are allowed to participate in the opening session at their own expenses. They are requested to inform in advance the EEA's procurement services by e-mail at procurement@eea.europa.eu or by fax at number +45 33 36 72 74.	
Evaluation of proposals	As from 12 May 2010
Based on the recommendations of the evaluation committees, the EEA Management Board will designate the selected ETCs	16 June 2010
Notification of the evaluation results to applicants	2 nd half of June 2010

2. Requests for Additional information

As already indicated in the invitation letter to submit proposals it was stressed that, with the exception of the information briefing, requests for additional information were allowed provided they were made exclusively in writing to procurement@eea.europa.eu and addressed before the final date for submission of proposals. All clarifications provided will be published on the EEA website <http://www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/tenders/call-for-proposals/openproposal.html>.

After the opening of the proposals, additional information would be provided solely at the initiative of the EEA if clarification is required or if obvious clerical errors in the proposal need to be corrected.

3. The Framework partnership and specific agreements at a glance

A brief presentation of key contractual provisions was provided by the Head of Legal services group³.

³ Please refer to the presentation on the EEA website <http://www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/tenders/call-for-proposals/openproposal.html>.

4. Common and specific issues raised and clarified during the Information briefing

4.1. Common issues (all four calls for proposals)

1	Question	ToR for the calls for proposals EEA/ACC/10/001 and EEA/NSV/10/001 available on the EEA website are not complete (ETC ACM and WTR).
	Answer	The problem has been rectified; a new version is now available on website
2	Question	Is it allowed to charge to the project cost for durable equipment used outside the partner's office?
	Answer	Yes, but the costs need to be budgeted and comply with the provisions of Article II.17.4 FPA
3	Question	Will the proposals be assessed on the basis of their price / estimated budget?
	Answer	No, the proposals will solely be assessed for their technical merit on the basis of the award criteria specified in the ToR.
4	Question	In Annex 1 – Model proposal attached to the ToR, which documents relating to 6.5 (award criteria) shall be submitted?
	Answer	As such, there is no specific document to be provided. This section is the core part of the proposals where applicants are invited to elaborate on each award criterion specified in the ToR in order to score as many points as possible.
5	Question	In the ToR, Section 6.4 Selection criteria, c) Technical and professional capacity, point 2, what do the words public and private mean?
	Answer	Applicant shall provide a brief account of work considered relevant and carried out by the partners forming the consortium in the past five years, indicating the amount, dates and the nature of the recipients of the work, whether public or private legal entities.
6	Question	In the ToR, Section 6.4 Selection criteria, c) Technical and professional capacity, points 5 and 6, what kind of evidence shall be provided?
	Answer	Applicants shall provide a brief account of any relevant adopted policies supported with copies of certificates or equivalent documents where applicable.
7	Question	In the ToR, Section 6.4 Selection criteria, b) Economic and financial capacity, second bullet point, are private partners requested to provide both the profit & loss accounts and an audit report?
	Answer	Yes, both are required; however when the consortium includes any public bodies, the audit report is not required.

8	Question	In addition to the partners forming the consortium, is it possible to include in the proposal participation of subcontractors?
	Answer	<p>A proposal may include subcontractors. However, pursuant to Article II.10 FPA, partners shall be able to demonstrate that they have sought competitive tenders from potential contractor with a view to obtaining best value for money and in doing so they have respected the principles of transparency, proportionality, non-discrimination and equal treatment.</p> <p>Besides, the recourse to subcontracting may only cover the execution of a limited part of the annual implementation plan, and the tasks concerned as well as the corresponding costs shall be set out in detail in the annual implementation plan and the estimated budget.</p>
9	Question	In the invitation to submit a proposal, point 2, do all five copies of the proposal need to be signed?
	Answer	No, only one signed original shall be submitted accompanied by 4 copies.
10	Question	on the letters of confirmation from the respective member of the EEA Management Board, see in the ToR, Section 6.4 Selection criteria, c) Technical and professional capacity, point 4.
	Answer	Since EEA depends heavily on flow of official national data, partners need to be recognized within their countries as capable of working with the national Eionet partners.

4.2. Specific issues – Air Pollution and climate change mitigation (ETC ACM)

1	Question	With the present development in energy policy we would expect a lot of emphasis on energy assessment. It is however, unclear how much is within the ETC call. Please clarify.
	Answer	EEA has a framework contract with a consortium for support in the area of energy assessments and also one for transport assessments. These contracts have just been renewed. We do not expect the balance of work to shift significantly between ETC work and framework contract work.

2	Question	With reference to work area 1 (Page 6) how deep IT knowledge is required when reference to 'assist with collection, maintenance and review of relevant EU greenhouse gas, air pollutant and industrial emissions datasets, in conjunction with associated SEIS principles and Air and Climate Change Data Centre activities' is being made?
	Answer	Key focus is less on pure IT capacity but rather to bridge user requirements with IT needs. In addition there is also an expectation that ETC IT expertise will be used to also support non-ETC IT developments at the EEA and specifically referred to work area 3 (page 8): 'supporting the move towards integrated data flows required under the air quality directive (2008/50/EC) with rules and guidance for integrated QA/QC within countries as well as at the European level, and supporting non-ETC IT developments at the EEA in this regard'. What's needed is IT knowledgeable people rather than IT developers as more and more of the IT development part of the work is being done within the EEA.

4.3. Specific issues – Climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation (ETC CCA)

1	Question	What is the link between ETC CCA work and the Clearinghouse (CH) on CC impacts, vulnerability and adaptation?
	Answer	The European Commission mentioned in the White Paper on Climate Change Adaptation (April 2009) that the CH should be in place by end of 2011. The EEA is much involved in the development and subsequent maintenance of the CH and in this context the ETC is expected to contribute from its start in 2011.
2	Question	How should the ETC work with JRC and WHO?
	Answer	The EEA has working agreements with both JRC and WHO Europe. In particular with JRC, EEA has a coordinated work programme. The ETC is expected to work with JRC and WHO in the context of these agreements and under guidance by EEA.
3	Question	Should ETCs finalise their products by the end of each year?
	Answer	Indeed annually EEA and ETCs agree on an implementation plan in which products and services are defined that must be finalised by the end of each year.
4	Question	What amount of funding can be expected for ETC CCA?
	Answer	The ToR for ETC CCA mentions an indicative amount of 700 keuro per year as a subvention from EEA, while the consortium will need to ensure a minimum of 10% in addition.
5	Question	Why is expertise on technological hazards needed in ETC CCA?
	Answer	Technological hazards may increase in intensity and frequency in future due to climate change (e.g. industrial accidents or toxic spills in river floodplains)

4.4. Specific issues – Inland, coastal and marine waters (ETC WTR)

1	Question	Regarding models and modelling tools, what is the main role envisaged for the ETC?
	Answer	The EEA is primarily a user of existing models and related tools. What is expected from ETC support lies more on analyzing model outputs as input data to EEA assessment work thus providing at the same time feedback to the modelling community. This will require capacity within the ETC to identify, use and comment on relevant existing models.
2	Question	How is the link between WISE and the clearinghouse for CC adaptation to be further understood?
	Answer	EEA is obliged to produce fully integrated assessments and needs for this data on impacts as well as adaptation measures. The data aspects sitting in between the water and CC/adaptation theme are exactly those data related to CC/adaptation measures in the now upcoming River Basin Management Plans. The collection, dealing with and exchange of this information has to be organised through an appropriate link between the Clearinghouse and the existing WISE structures.
3	Question	In terms of policy support how far is it foreseen that ETC partners are also chairing working groups under the implementation processes coordinated by European Commission?
	Answer	ETC water used to represent EEA in the past years in several working groups under the WFD common implementation strategy (CIS). This is likely to be continued. However it is important to recognize that participation of ETC partners in EU working groups happens in an EU context and should not be mixed up with Member States representation in the very same working groups.
4	Question	Use of data under the WFD reporting and development of additional data flows.
	Answer	It is understood that the combined amount of Eionet and WFD data-reporting gives a very broad and useful basis for the assessments EEA is planning to perform with help of the ETC, which are described in the Terms of Reference. As EEA has full access to data reported under the WFD and is in very close and fruitful cooperation with the Commission, additional data reporting would rather relate to data sources outside the legal or other established Eionet reporting (e.g. research data).

4.5. Specific issues – Spatial information and analysis (ETC SIA)

1	Question	Regarding models and modelling tools, what is the main role envisaged for the ETC?
	Answer	The EEA is primarily a user of existing models and related tools. What is expected from ETC support lies more on analyzing model outputs as input data to EEA assessment work thus providing at the same time feedback to the modelling community. This will require capacity within the ETC to identify, use and comment on relevant existing models.
2	Question	Developments in coastal areas, both in state-of-environment and information tools & systems, are many. Will EEA and ETC play an active role in this area?
	Answer	The EEA, with the support of ETCs, will keep providing a direct and active support to EU policies in this area, namely Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the wider context of Maritime Integrated Policy as well as water and nature management policies and legislation. EEA intends to maintain a relevant indicator-based assessment approach and a direct involvement in the related information system discussions.
3	Question	Important European initiatives in spatial information are the Inspire Directive and the GMES programme. How will EEA respond to these initiatives in dealing with its requirements for spatial data sets?
	Answer	EEA follows the implementation of the Inspire Directive very closely with the view to securing an Inspire-compliant approach for its use of geospatial data sets. EEA, with ETC support, will enhance work on the proper metadata formatting and description of data sets. EEA is much involved in the GMES developments; from placing direct services requirements, participating in providing data and services to coordinating user communities; ETC will support EEA in these activities.
4	Question	Terms of reference document refers to developments towards a Spatial Data Infrastructure for the EEA; how different is it from the Inspire implementation?
	Answer	As indicated above, EEA is taking part in the implementation of the Inspire Directive and, together with the services of the European Commission, participates in the developments towards the corresponding European Spatial Data Infrastructure. EEA requirements are being addressed within this SDI.

