

# **Phoenix Pay Stabilization Challenge**

**Invitation to Qualify  
(ITQ)  
No. EN920-190988/K**

**for**

**Stream 7 - Accelerator Services**

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## ITQ No. EN920-190988/K

### Phoenix Pay Stabilization Challenge

## 1. General Information

### 1.1 Introduction

- a) **Procurement Process:** This Invitation to Qualify (ITQ) is part of the procurement process by Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) for the Phoenix Pay Stabilization Challenge (the “**Project**”). Suppliers are invited to qualify in accordance with the terms and conditions of this ITQ in order to become “**Qualified Respondents**” for any later phases of the procurement process, for Stream 7 – Accelerator Services. Only Qualified Respondents will be permitted to bid on any subsequent solicitation phases issued as part of the procurement process.
- b) **Further Evaluation of Qualified Respondents:** Even though certain suppliers may be qualified by Canada as a result of this ITQ, Canada reserves the right to re-evaluate any aspect of the qualification of any Qualified Respondent at any time during the procurement process. As well, Canada reserves the right to open any subsequent procurement process to any interested Bidder.

### 1.2 Overview of the Project

- a) **Overview of Project:** Canada is releasing this ITQ in conjunction with the various RFI Challenges, previously released on Buy and Sell, all under file Number EN920-190988. Participation in previous RFI Challenges or the previous ITQ process, is not required. Canada may release subsequent Request for Proposals (RFP) individually for each Phoenix Pay Stabilization Challenge categories, either as a multi-line RFP or as separate RFPs, or any other variation thereof.
- b) **Scope of Procurement:**
  - i) **Potential Client Users:** This ITQ is being issued by PWGSC. It is intended that the contract(s) resulting from any subsequent solicitation would be used by PWGSC to provide shared services to one or more of its clients. PWGSC's clients include PWGSC itself, those government institutions for whom PWGSC's services are mandatory at any point during the life of any resulting instrument(s), and those other organizations for whom PWGSC's services are optional at any point during the life of any resulting instrument(s) and that choose to use those services from time to time. This process will not preclude PWGSC from using another method of supply for any of its clients with the same or similar needs, unless a subsequent solicitation for this Project expressly indicates otherwise.
  - ii) **Number of contracts:** PWGSC may award one or multiple contracts.
  - iii) **Term of contract:** PWGSC will identify the term of any resulting contract and any options associated, once the procurement progresses to the RFP phase.

- c) **Applicable Trade Agreements:** The following trade agreements apply to this procurement process:

Trade Agreements
<i>Agreement on Internal Trade</i>
<i>North American Free Trade Agreement</i>
<i>World Trade Organization Agreement on Government Procurement</i>
<i>Canada-Chile Free Trade Agreement</i>
<i>Canada-Colombia Free Trade Agreement</i>
<i>Canada-Peru Free Trade Agreement</i>
<i>Canada-Panama Free Trade Agreement</i>
<i>Canada-Honduras Free Trade Agreement</i>
<i>Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement</i>

### 1.3 Overview of Procurement Process

This ITQ is the first phase in the procurement process for Stream 7 – Accelerator Services. Although the procurement process remains subject to change (and even to cancellation, in accordance with PWGSC's Standard Instructions), Canada anticipates that the procurement process will be conducted in the following phases:

- a) **Notice of Proposed Procurement (NPP):** PWGSC issued an NPP on August 24, 2018 as the first step of engaging Industry and indicating the next steps in both working towards a new solution and stabilizing the current pay system.
- b) **Request for Information (RFI) Phase:** PWGSC commenced its industry engagement on September 17, 2018, by launching the first of six planned RFIs. The objective of the RFI phase was to obtain feedback from Industry on Canada's preliminary requirements for various Phoenix Pay Stabilization Challenge categories.
- c) **ITQ Phase 1:** An Invitation to Qualify (ITQ) was published on BuyandSell.gc.ca on October 30, 2018, to establish a list of Qualified Suppliers for the first six streams under the Phoenix Pay Stabilization Initiative.
- d) **ITQ Phase 2:** This ITQ will be used to qualify Respondents to participate in any subsequent phases of the procurement process.
- e) **Request for Proposals (RFP) Phase:** Canada anticipates releasing RFP(s) to those Qualified Respondents who remain qualified at the time an RFP is released.

### 1.4 Conflict of Interest or Unfair Advantage

As set out in the provisions of the Standard Instructions - Goods or Services - Competitive Requirements 2003 (2018-05-22), a response can be rejected due to an actual or apparent conflict of interest or unfair advantage.

## 2. Instructions for Respondents

### 2.1 Standard Instructions, Clauses and Conditions

- a) PWGSC Standard Instructions - Goods or Services - Competitive Requirements 2003 (2018-05-22), are incorporated by reference into and form part of the ITQ, as though they were expressly set out here in full. PWGSC Standard Instructions can be found in the Standard Acquisition Clauses and Conditions Manual, (<https://buyandsell.gc.ca/policy-and-guidelines/standard-acquisition-clauses-and-conditions-manual>) issued by Public Works and Government Services Canada.
- b) If there is a conflict between the provisions of this document and any documents that are incorporated into it by reference as set out above, this document prevails.
- c) By submitting a response, the Respondent is confirming that it agrees to be bound by all the instructions, clauses and conditions of the ITQ.

### 2.2 Questions and Comments

Questions and comments about this ITQ can be submitted in accordance with provisions of the Standard Instructions - Goods or Services - Competitive Requirements 2003 (2018-05-22), no later than 5 calendar days prior to the closing date.

### 2.3 Submission of Only One Response

- a) A Respondent can be an individual, a sole proprietorship, a corporation, a partnership, or a joint venture.
- b) Each Respondent (including related entities) will be permitted to qualify only once under the Stream 7 – Accelerator category. If a Respondent or any related entities participate in more than one response (participating means being part of the Respondent, not being a subcontractor), Canada will provide those Respondents with 2 working days to identify the single response to be considered by Canada. Failure to meet this deadline may result in all the affected responses being disqualified or in Canada choosing, in its discretion, which of the responses to evaluate.
- c) For the purposes of this Article, regardless of the jurisdiction where any of the entities concerned is incorporated or otherwise formed as a matter of law (whether that entity is an individual, corporation, partnership, etc.) an entity will be considered to be “related” to a Respondent if:
  - i) they are the same legal entity as the Respondent (i.e., the same natural person, corporation, partnership, limited liability partnership, etc.);
  - ii) the entity and the Respondent are “related persons” or “affiliated persons” according to the Canada *Income Tax Act*;
  - iii) the entity and the Respondent have now or in the two years before the ITQ closing had a fiduciary relationship with one another (either as a result of an agency arrangement or any other form of fiduciary relationship); or
  - iv) the entity and the Respondent otherwise do not deal with one another at arm’s length, or each of them does not deal at arm’s length with the same third party.

- d) A Respondent may act as a subcontractor to another Respondent.
- e) Any individual, sole proprietorship, corporation, or partnership that is a Respondent as part of a joint venture cannot submit another response on its own or as part of another joint venture.

Example 1: Supplier A does not itself have all the experience required by the ITQ. However, Supplier B has the experience that Supplier A lacks. If Supplier A and Supplier B decide to team up to submit a response together as a joint venture, both entities are together considered the Respondent. Neither Supplier A nor Supplier B can team up with another supplier to submit a separate response, because each is already part of a Respondent.

Example 2: Supplier X is a Respondent. Supplier X's subsidiary, Supplier Y, decides to team up with Supplier Z to submit a response as a joint venture. Suppliers Y and Z, as well as Supplier X, will all be asked to determine which one of the two responses will be considered by Canada. Both responses cannot be submitted, because Supplier Y is related to Supplier X as an affiliate.

- f) By submitting a response, the Respondent is certifying that it does not consider itself to be related to any other Respondent.

## **2.4 Security Clearance Requirement**

- a) A Respondent is not required to have security clearance in order to become a Qualified Respondent. Security clearance and other security requirements will be identified at a later stage of the procurement process.

### 3. Preparing and Submitting a Response

#### 3.1 General Instructions

- a) Responses must be submitted by the date and time indicated on Page 1 of this ITQ. Responses can be submitted either to the Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) Bid Receiving Unit or directly to the Generic email:  
  
[TPSGC.PAApprovalRHalaPAYE-APHRtoPAYProcurement.PWGSC@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca](mailto:TPSGC.PAApprovalRHalaPAYE-APHRtoPAYProcurement.PWGSC@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca)
- b) Due to the nature of the bid solicitation, responses transmitted by facsimile to PWGSC will not be accepted.
- c) If there is a discrepancy between the wording of an electronic copy and a hard copy, the wording of the hard copy will have priority over the wording of the soft copy.
- d) If the Bidder chooses to submit its bid electronically, Canada requests that the Bidder submits its bid in accordance with section 08 of the 2003 Standard Instructions. Bidders must provide their bid in a single transmission. The epost Connect service has the capacity to receive multiple documents, up to 1GB per individual attachment.

#### 3.2 Language for Future Communications

Each Respondent is requested to identify, in its Response Submission Form, which of Canada's two official languages it chooses to use for future communications with Canada regarding this ITQ and any subsequent phases of the procurement process.

#### 3.3 Content of Response

A complete response to this ITQ consists of all of the following:

- a) **Response Submission Form (Requested at ITQ Closing):** Respondents are requested to include the *Response Submission Form* with their responses, found at **Attachment 2**. It provides a common form in which Respondents can provide information required for evaluation, such as a contact name, the Respondent's Procurement Business Number, the language for future communications with Canada about this procurement process, etc. Using the form to provide this information is not mandatory, but it is recommended. If Canada determines that the information requested by the *Response Submission Form* is incomplete or requires correction, Canada will provide the Respondent with an opportunity to provide the additional information or make the correction. Providing the information when requested during the evaluation period is mandatory.
- b) **Specific Responses to the Qualification Requirements at Attachment 1 (Mandatory at ITQ Closing):** The response must include all the information required by **Attachment 1**.
- c) **Mandatory Requirements Check List at Attachment 3 (Mandatory at ITQ Closing):** The response must include all the information required by **Attachment 3**.
- d) **Certifications (Requested at ITQ Closing):**
  - i) By submitting a response, the Respondent is automatically providing the certifications identified below as required.

- ii) Although all these certifications are requested at ITQ closing, if Canada determines that any certification is missing, incomplete or requires correction, Canada will provide the Respondent with an opportunity to provide the required information. Providing the certification when requested during the ITQ evaluation period is mandatory. If the Respondent fails to provide the requested information or certification within 5 working days (or a longer period provided by the Contracting Authority), Canada will disqualify the Respondent.

Federal Contractors Program for Employment Equity Certification	Required – please provide the information in the Response Submission Form
Former Public Servants Certification	Required – please provide the information in the Response Submission Form

Respondents should note that certain certifications that are not required at the ITQ stage may be required at a later stage of the procurement process.

### 3.4 Electronic Submission of Response

- a) **Submission of Response:** This ITQ solicitation allows bidders to use the [epost Connect](#) service provided by Canada Post Corporation to transmit their bid electronically. Bidders may also email their responses to the Contracting Authority.
- b) [epost Connect](#)
- i) Unless specified otherwise in the bid solicitation, bids may be submitted by using the [epost Connect](#) service provided by Canada Post Corporation.
- (A) PWGSC, National Capital Region: The only acceptable email address to use with epost Connect for responses to bid solicitations issued by PWGSC headquarters is: [tpsgc.dgareceptiondessoumissions-abbidReceiving.pwgsc@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca](mailto:tpsgc.dgareceptiondessoumissions-abbidReceiving.pwgsc@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca)
- or, if applicable, the email address identified in the bid solicitation.
- ii) To submit a bid using [epost Connect](#) service, the Bidder must either:
- (A) send directly its bid only to the specified PWGSC Bid Receiving Unit, using its own licensing agreement for epost Connect provided by Canada Post Corporation; or
- (B) send as early as possible, and in any case, at least six business days prior to the solicitation closing date and time, (in order to ensure a response), an email that includes the bid solicitation number to the specified PWGSC Bid Receiving Unit requesting to open an epost Connect conversation. Requests to open an epost Connect conversation received after that time may not be answered.
- iii) If the Bidder sends an email requesting epost Connect service to the specified Bid Receiving Unit in the bid solicitation, an officer of the Bid Receiving Unit will then initiate an epost Connect conversation. The epost Connect conversation will create an email notification from Canada Post Corporation prompting the Bidder to access and action the message within the conversation. The Bidder will then be able to transmit its bid afterward at any time prior to the solicitation closing date and time.



- iv) If the Bidder is using its own licensing agreement to send its bid, the Bidder must keep the epost Connect conversation open until at least 30 business days after the solicitation closing date and time.
- v) The bid solicitation number should be identified in the epost Connect message field of all electronic transfers.
- vi) It should be noted that the use of epost Connect service requires a Canadian mailing address. Should a bidder not have a Canadian mailing address, they may use the Bid Receiving Unit address specified in the solicitation in order to register for the epost Connect service.
- vii) For bids transmitted by epost Connect service, Canada will not be responsible for any failure attributable to the transmission or receipt of the bid including, but not limited to, the following:
  - (A) receipt of a garbled, corrupted or incomplete bid;
  - (B) availability or condition of the epost Connect service;
  - (C) incompatibility between the sending and receiving equipment;
  - (D) delay in transmission or receipt of the bid;
  - (E) failure of the Bidder to properly identify the bid;
  - (F) illegibility of the bid;
  - (G) security of bid data; or,
  - (H) inability to create an electronic conversation through the epost Connect service.
- c) A bid transmitted by epost Connect service constitutes the formal bid of the Bidder and must be submitted in accordance with section 05, of the 2003 Standard Instructions.

## **4. Process for Evaluating Responses**

### **4.1 Evaluation of Respondent Qualifications**

Canada will evaluate whether each Response satisfies all the mandatory requirements described in this ITQ (including information that this ITQ indicates is required, but the ITQ specifically states that it may be submitted upon request after the closing date). The provisions of Standard Instructions - Goods or Services - Competitive Requirements 2003 (2018-05-22) that relate to evaluation also apply. A response must comply with all the requirements of the ITQ in order to be declared compliant.

### **4.2 Basis of Qualification**

- a) Each Respondent whose response meets all the requirements of this ITQ will become a Qualified Respondent for the next stage of the procurement process.
- b) Canada reserves the right to re-evaluate the qualification of any Qualified Respondent at any time during the procurement process. For example, if a particular certification is a requirement of this ITQ and the Respondent's certification changes or lapses, so that the Respondent no longer meets the requirements of this ITQ, Canada may disqualify that Qualified Respondent. Similarly, if information comes to the attention of Canada that calls into question any of the Qualified Respondent's qualifications under this ITQ, Canada may re-evaluate that Qualified Respondent. If Canada re-evaluates the qualification of any Qualified Respondent, Canada may request further information and, if the Qualified Respondent fails to provide it within 5 working days (or a longer period provided by the Contracting Authority), Canada may disqualify the Qualified Respondent.
- c) Unsuccessful Respondents will not be given another opportunity to participate or be re-evaluated for the subsequent phases of the procurement process, unless Canada determines, in its sole discretion, that the circumstances require such a change.
- d) Canada will provide written notice to each Respondent informing of their qualification status.

### **4.3 ITQ Phase Second Qualification Round**

- a) Canada reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to conduct a second qualification round among the unsuccessful Respondents if, in Canada's opinion, the first qualification round results in an insufficient number of Qualified Respondents.
- b) If Canada determines that unsuccessful Respondents will be given a second opportunity to qualify, Canada will provide written information to all unsuccessful Respondents on the same day regarding the reasons they were unsuccessful during the first qualification round.
- c) Any Respondent who does not qualify as a result of any second qualification round conducted by Canada will not be given another opportunity to participate or be re-evaluated for any subsequent phases of this procurement process.

### **4.4 Ad-hoc Refresh of Qualified Respondent List**

- a) Canada reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to conduct subsequent qualification round(s).