



Association of Caribbean States (ACS)

Request for Proposal

Provision of a Records Management Solution for the ACS Secretariat

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1.0 Introduction

The Association of Caribbean States, hereinafter referred to as the “ACS”, is a regional intergovernmental organisation comprising nations centred on the Caribbean Sea Basin. It was formed via the Convention Establishing the Association of Caribbean States signed in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia on July 24, 1994 with the aim of promoting consultation, cooperation, and concerted action among countries of the Caribbean.

The primary functions and mandates of the ACS are based on specific efforts aimed at the strengthening of regional co-operation. These efforts are intended to create an enhanced economic space in the region; preserve the environmental integrity of the Caribbean Sea which is regarded as the common patrimony of the peoples of the region; and promote the sustainable development of the Greater Caribbean. The ACS currently comprises twenty-five Member States and ten Associate Members. The ACS Secretariat is located in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

The Office of the Secretary General has issued directives to pursue the digitisation of all records at the ACS Secretariat. In support of this effort, the ACS Secretariat also adopted a Draft Records Retention Policy which is intended to form the governance basis for a comprehensive digitisation programme aimed at capturing and managing ACS Secretariat records electronically. A Digitisation plan is in the process of being prepared using the best practice guidance information available from the International Council on Archives and the joint Australian/New Zealand Standard adopted by the International Standards Organization as ISO/TR 13028:2010-Information and documentation - Implementation guidelines for digitisation of records. This notwithstanding, the ACS Secretariat requires vendors to provide professional services and/or records management solutions which would facilitate the digital transformation of the organization, provide enterprise storage and archival feature sets and ultimately satisfy the following requirements:

1. An electronic records management solution that can ingest, store, manage, share and output various document and multimedia content types.
2. Professional Services to facilitate the digitisation of specific processes at the ACS Secretariat which must use the aforementioned electronic records management solution.
3. Back-file / Data conversion of all paper records in accordance with ISO/TR 13028:2010 standards and/or any other specific requirements defined by the ACS.

The desired outcome for this project would be aligned primarily to the expectations and requirements of the Office of Secretary General, inclusive of any agreed performance benchmarks. Prospective suppliers are expected to carefully review this document before submitting their proposals and to consider all of the requirements stated within. Allowances will not be facilitated for amendments to those proposals resulting from any omissions or exclusion on the part of the bidder.

Accordingly, the ACS is pleased to issue an invitation for proposals from suitably qualified, experienced, responsible, and reputable service providers/contractors for the provision of the technical solutions and services as described.

2.0 Preliminaries

2.1 Copyright

This document and its contents belong to the ACS and must be used in confidence and solely for the purpose it was prepared and supplied. It must not be reproduced in whole or in part or used for any other purpose than which it was intended. No information relating to the contents of this document shall be given to or communicated in any manner to any third party without the prior consent or approval of the ACS.

2.2 Confidentiality

This document constitutes confidential and proprietary information of the ACS and shall not be disclosed in whole or in part by the supplier to any third party other than those that would be required to have access to such information. The information provided in this RFP, its schedules and annexes and the subsequent document(s) are provided to the supplier by the ACS as information of confidential nature. This also applies to all communications (whether written or oral) between the ACS and the recipients of this RFP. Information received from the ACS may not be divulged to a third party without the prior express written consent of the ACS. The information contained within it shall not be duplicated or used for any other purpose than to supply a response to this RFP. This restriction does not however limit the supplier's right to use the information contained herein to obtain information or requirements from another source such as suppliers, contractors, insurance agents, financial institutions, or other service provider as may be necessary for the submission of a comprehensive proposal. The supplier shall however exercise a duty of care when exposing or sharing such information and ensure that confidentiality is communicated and maintained at all times.

2.3 Ethical Behaviour

The ACS requires that all suppliers engaging in this process adhere to the highest ethical standards, both during the procurement process itself and throughout the performance of the contract arising from it. The participation in and encouragement of corrupt or illegal practices inclusive of but not limited to bribery, fraud, extortion, or collusion are all deemed unacceptable. If it is demonstrated or discovered that a supplier or an agent acting on its behalf, during the performance of the resulting contract committed or encouraged corrupt or illegal practices in relation to this project, the ACS will take appropriate measures including but not limited to the termination of any awarded contract and the cessation of all relationships with the relevant organization or company and the agents or employees which would have been involved.

2.4 Terms & Conditions

2.4.1 The issuance of this document does not constitute an offer to trade and the ACS is not bound to conduct any business based on any submissions or responses to it. Any subsequent arrangements are subject to contract negotiation and such contracts must be issued and agreed upon prior to commencement of any business and written confirmation in writing from the Office of the Secretary General at the ACS Secretariat headquarters based in Trinidad and Tobago.

2.4.2 The ACS expects that in response to this request, all suppliers provide relevant and appropriate responses to the specific requirements in a concise and comprehensive manner. Any proposal which does not fully address or comply with the stated requirements may be considered incomplete and therefore rejected.

2.4.3 The bidder shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of its response and any attendant documentation supplied. The ACS will not be responsible or liable for any such costs, regardless of the outcome of this process.

2.4.4 All submitted proposals shall remain valid for a period of ninety (90) days following the closing date for submissions. If the situation arises whereby an extension of validity would be required, the ACS would seek an extension in writing. Any bidder who consents to the granting of any such request will not be allowed to modify its proposal.

2.4.5 To assist in the evaluation of all submitted proposals, the ACS may at its discretion, issue a Request for Clarification in writing, which shall also be responded to in writing. No amendments in the pricing or contents of the proposal shall be sought, offered, or permitted.

2.4.6 Any proposal or submission received by the ACS after the stated deadline date and time for submission will be rejected and not considered.

2.4.7 Prospective suppliers successful in the pre-qualification process will receive a written notification of their status and may be provided with a timetable for an Invitation to Tender. Unsuccessful prospective suppliers shall also receive written notification of the non-acceptance of their submissions and failure for pre-qualification.

2.4.8 The successful bidder must be prepared to immediately begin contract negotiations upon notification of the award. If the bidder is not able to begin contract negotiations, the ACS reserves the right to begin negotiations with any other bidder who submitted bid which merits consideration. The ACS also reserves the right to negotiate the contract to include any portion or portions of the scope of work as it deems necessary to meet the current requirements of the project. Should the successful bidder for any reason be unable to finalize or perform its obligations under and performance of the contract, the ACS reserves the right to enter into an agreement with any other supplier or service provider for the provision of the required goods or services.

2.4.9 The organization providing the successful proposal will be offered the opportunity to enter into an agreement with the ACS, which can conform to the following;

- Any Scope of Work (SOW) and specifications described in this RFP;
- The Proposal submitted by the bidder;
- Agreed key performance indicators or service level agreements;
- The ACS's standard contract terms and conditions.

2.4.10 All price estimates shall be quoted in United States Dollars (USD) with any applicable Value Added Tax (VAT) clearly identified in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars (TTD).

2.4.11. All employees of the selected organization will be required to adhere to the ACS HSE (Health, Safety and Environment), Security, and other applicable policies during the performance of its work, which shall be provided prior to the commencement of any activities.

2.4.12. ACS reserves the right to undertake a due diligence exercise, aimed at determining to its satisfaction, the validity of the information provided by prospective suppliers. Such exercise shall be fully documented and may include, but need not be limited to, all or any combination of the following:

- a) Verification of accuracy, correctness and authenticity of information provided by the prospective supplier;
- b) Validation of extent of compliance to the ACS requirements and evaluation criteria based on what has so far been found by the evaluation team;
- c) Inquiry and reference checking with Government entities with jurisdiction on the prospective supplier, or with previous clients, or any other entity that may have done business with the prospective supplier;
- d) Inquiry and reference checking with previous clients on the performance on ongoing or completed contracts, including physical inspections of previous works, as deemed necessary;
- e) Physical inspection of the prospective supplier's offices, branches or other places where business transpires, with or without notice to the prospective supplier;
- f) Any other means that ACS may deem appropriate, at any stage within the selection process, prior to awarding the contract.

2.4.13 ACS shall be under no obligation to enter into any discussions or correspondence for the purpose of seeking clarification to the proposals of each prospective Supplier. However, ACS reserves the right to request any, or all, prospective suppliers to explain or elaborate their offers without incurring any obligations whatsoever.

2.4.14 The submission and evaluation of estimates and proposals in response to this RFP, is not to be construed or interpreted as a commitment to acceptance of the any proposal.

2.4.15 ACS reserves the right to reject any, or all proposals, documents, and to accept the proposal(s) or documents that, in their judgment, they may deem to be in the best interest of the Association of Caribbean States and reserves the right to waive any or all of the requirements/specifications stated in this RFP.

3.0 Background & Scope of Work

The ACS Secretariat has been existence since 1994 and is desirous of digitizing all its physical records which span a period of approximately twenty-four (28) years and storing these electronic records in an extensible electronic records management system. This effort is also expected to facilitate key digital transformation objectives for the Office of the Secretary General whereby the new solution is expected to be used for all ACS administrative operations and tasks/activities related to its projects with stakeholders, The solution will be used as a new platform for the digitisation of workflow and processes within the organization and it must deliver on the following strategic demands:

- **Adaptable, flexible, extendable:** This solution will be a long term strategic investment that must be able to adapt to circumstances where requirements may evolve.
- **Usability & Accessibility:** This solution must facilitate flexible user interfaces to support accessibility compliance for the broad range of device form factors available in addition to rendering content in the three working languages of the ACS, English, French and Spanish.
- **Value for money:** The ACS is a government-funded body and any licensing or deployment arrangements for the solution must be able to qualify to key regional stakeholders as a responsible use of public money whilst not impended any opportunities for innovation.
- **Systems Integration:** This solution should be able to integrate with existing on premise and cloud based technologies or external systems via a multitude of protocols.
- **Community & Security:** The solution should have an active base of clients who can attest to the security, performance reliability and long term stability of the platform.

The primary operational goal of the project effort is to deploy a fit for purpose solution whilst adopting best practices in order to maximize the following benefits:

- Minimizing manual processes and task interventions
- Eliminating work or task duplication
- Expediting document submission and approval through workflow
- Increasing accountability and implementing control costs
- Improving opportunities to realize operational cost savings
- Providing a new digital central repository for ACS records, working documents and any other related content required for operational efforts.

The approach to the deployment of the solution envisions a transformation of the organization to a digital by default approach to all processes and related back-office services. This approach has the following criteria:

- Deliver a digital service/solution using a service design and delivery process, taking an agile and user-centred approach.
- Ensure that end users who use the digital service/solution can also use the other available channels if needed, without repetition or confusion where applicable.
- Ensure the digital service/solution is accessible to all authorized users regardless of their ability and environment.
- Encourage users to fully utilize the digital service/solution and consolidate or phase out existing alternative channels where appropriate

In the delivery of the aforementioned requirements, Professional Services to facilitate digitisation of processes to use the new solution at the ACS Secretariat are also requested from vendors. It should be noted that the majority of the active and inactive documents are currently stored in standard archive boxes located both on site and off site. The latest estimate of the volume of boxes to be considered for this effort is five hundred and thirteen (513) boxes of documents which would be mixed in sizes (letter, legal, A4) and printed format (single sided/double sided).

There is a limited requirement for the creation of meta-data for these records however the expectation is that a specific taxonomy will be followed to facilitate the digitisation effort of the records and any other processes that will use the new solution. The image specifications expected to be applied for scanned documents are provided in section 3.1

3.1 Image Specifications

The compliant digital formats are PDF, PDF/A, JPEG, and JPEG2000. For documents especially where colour is present and is important, or for documents with low contrast (e.g. faded text, coloured background) the produced file images should conform to the following specification:

- Resolution: 400 - 600 dpi
- Type of image: colour
- Bit-depth: 24 bit
- Colour management: embedded ICC colour profile
- Lossless compression (Lossy compression is acceptable if this is the only representation available from the digitisation device)

3.2 Technical Information

The ACS operates a software-defined data center with primary servers being Microsoft Windows Server 2012 R2 editions. The end user client workstations use Microsoft Windows 10 Professional, together with the use of the Microsoft Office Suite and a Microsoft Exchange environment. The ACS Secretariat has access to a high speed multifunction copier (MFP) for bulk scanning and there is no immediate plan to outsource the digitisation of historical case files/documents. The organization

has personnel assigned with the operational responsibility to scan records and ingest them into any new solution deployed; however cost proposals should also be provided for bulk scanning where applicable. In addition to the aforementioned specifications the following provides additional information on the current state of operations:

- 98% of existing records are paper based and 2% of existing records are PDF scans.
- Records in email correspondence, text, social media are neither stored separately nor managed using any specific software solution except Microsoft Outlook.
- Current electronic correspondence records are stored on file servers using a structured Filing Plan and covering the period 2019 to date.
- Electronic correspondence records are stored in PDF format and file names are expected to follow pre-defined naming conventions. e.g. CN2019Co27EN etc.
- Compliance with the aforementioned pre-defined naming conventions is generally inconsistent.
- On premise virtualization is in use and consideration is in progress for migration of some services to the cloud to facilitate hybrid operations and business continuity.
- A policy has recently developed for the classification and retention of records, naming convention, metadata etc. based on the International Council on Archives Specifications and Standards however this is pending adoption.
- All records and documents ingested into the system are expected to be kept indefinitely pursuant to Draft Records Retention Policy adopted by the Office of the Secretary General.
- A high capacity multifunction copier is currently used for bulk PDF capture of documents.
- There is no immediate plan to outsource the digitisation/backfile conversion of paper based documents however any proposal for same should specify requirements.
- There is a conservative estimate of at least 1.5 million pages of documents from the on-site and off-site storage archives required to be digitized.
- There are some audio and audiovisual records which are stored on analog media which would require conversion prior to storage. An estimate of the size of these files post conversion is unavailable at present.
- There is an overcast estimate of 1900 new records expected to be added annually for formal correspondence/documents.
- There are countries who are Association of Caribbean States members that are subject economic and trade sanctions based on the foreign policy of the United States of America. Suppliers must confirm that the use of their solution, regardless of the type of deployment or the location of deployment, will not be impacted or subject to any accessibility or usage restrictions by such member states or will be subject to any special license or dispensation managed by the Office of Foreign Assets Control ("OFAC") of the US Department of the Treasury.

3.3 Desired Situation

1. A digital records management solution that is fit for purpose, facilitates a transition to fully electronic record keeping/management and supports the following requirements:
 - Facilitate simultaneous access for at least ten (10) users and/or support end user access for at least thirty (30) users.
 - Facilitate storage, retrieval, archive features, workflow and process automation.
 - Facilitate full access to content for internal ACS Staff and limited/restricted access to Member States or even the Public for specific content.
 - On-premise solution preferred but the ACS is open to a cloud deployment bearing in mind the need for data sovereignty and data security among Caribbean & Latin American States
 - Records Management Solution should be ISO 15489-1:2001 or ISO 15489-1:2016 compliant
2. Professional Services Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) or Definitive Cost Proposal to facilitate the digitisation of specific processes at the ACS Secretariat which must use the aforementioned digital records management solution. This effort will be subject to requirement specifications that would be covered by work orders generated by the Office of the Secretary General.
3. Back-file cost proposal (if applicable) for data conversion all paper records in accordance with ISO/TR 13028:2010 standards and/or any other specific requirements defined by the ACS with this converted data ready to be ingested into the aforementioned digital records management solution.

The following table provides a high level description of the Records Management System functionalities identified to meet the end-state objectives of this effort.

Requirement Status	Heading	Description
Desired	Annotations	Allow notes, redaction, highlight, mark-up of documents and images without modifying the source document.
Required	Audit Trail	Provide audit log and access to system events, read/modify access to documents.
Required	Authentication	Active Directory, SSO support/integration, two-factor authentication (2FA).

Requirement Status	Heading	Description
Desired	Batch Upload	Import processing unattended and on schedule. Mass uploads. Multiple import processes managed as a single job. Support document import from URLs.
Required	Business Continuity	Backups and Disaster Recovery Requirements. Data Integrity Testing and Non Repudiation Validation.
Desired	Collaboration	Select and send documents from RMS client.
Required	Content	Manage digital content that will meet any of the following definitions: - Born-digital records produced in digital form such as Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, Outlook emails and video. Digitised records which are scanned copies of paper records that are converted to digital formats and will be accessioned in place of the paper record.
Required	Documentation	Operations Training and Procedures. End user Training and Procedures.
Desired	e-Sign	Signing from desktop. Signing from mobile.
Required	Indexing	Business information specific indexing. Document import indexing based on accompanying text file. Fill multiple index values based on primary index lookup. Index documents based on Metadata, document ID.
Required	Metadata	Maintain Document Metadata. Metadata Maintenance - Updated from an internal or external source. Metadata Retrieval - Automatics configurable document naming structure. Search results shall display metadata used in search. Support retention defined by metadata fields.
Required	Monitoring	Automatic visual notification when performance or storage thresholds are reached. Bandwidth measurement. Visible auditable log of workflow actions.

Requirement Status	Heading	Description
Required	Mobile Support	Mobile web access.
Required	Monitoring	Automatic visual notification when performance or storage thresholds are reached. Bandwidth measurement. Visible auditable log of workflow actions.
Required	Multimedia	Compress Images (loss-less). Digital Asset Management Component Integration. Import authored digital content.
Required	Notification	e-Mail notification modification by Authorized user. e-Mail notifications with attached documents. e-Mail notifications with embedded URL link.
Required	Printing	Print functionality - Option to suppress annotations. Print functionality - Restrict printing certain documents. Select multiple documents in a single print request.
Required	Operational Maturity	Change Control Process Capabilities. Issue Management Capabilities. Operational integrity. Maintenance Scheduling.
Required	Product Direction	Product Roadmap. Technology stack requirements.
Required	Publishing	Document staging. Publication Levels.
Required	Records Management	Records Management - Auto destruction after user review at reaching retention period subject to Policy. Records Management - Centralized administration over records.
Required	Reporting	Process workflow simulation reports. Import process run report.
Required	Scanning	2-D bar code recognition capabilities. Automated quality assurance of scanned images. Methods to consolidate newly scanned pages into an existing document. Mid-batch scanner setting changes. Multiple scan station setup tool. One step scanning script.

Requirement Status	Heading	Description
Desired	Role Based Access Control	Administration of users by assigning rights to user groups. User Creation. Workgroup and Role Based Folder access.
Required	Searching	Ad-hoc queries. Analytics (search). Document Repository - Display number of revisions in search result. Retrieval - Various search options. Search by metadata. Search results shall display metadata used in search.
Desired	Security	Support Encryption at rest. Support Encryption in transit. Password security. 2FA support.
Required	Training	Training via WebEx or Zoom. Training Methodology for Project Team members. Training Methodology for Technical Staff. End User Training.
Required	Version Control	Check In/Check Out. Unlock locked content by abandoning changes. Versioning - Allow users to track document history. Versioning - View prior document revisions. Versioning - Track document revisions.
Required	Watermarking	Watermark addition and removal.
Desired	Workflow	Alerts and Notifications. Business process modelling tool. e-Mail notifications with embedded URL link. Log of workflow actions. Logically group workflow document.
Required	Service Availability	Availability 24/7/365. Availability SLA for solutions that support Private or Hybrid cloud implementations.
Required	Standards and Regulation	ISO 270001 ISO/TR 13028:2010. Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1.

4.0 Standards, Specifications and Requirements

The successful service provider(s) or contractor(s) will also be responsible for ensuring that the works are completed in accordance with the provision of service design, operation and transition as defined in the ITIL documentation (<https://www.axelos.com/best-practice-solutions/itil>). A single programme manager contact point as well as a back-up programme manager must be identified and provided by the successful service provider(s) or contractor(s). The successful service provider(s) or contractor(s) must be able to respond to the ACS staff during ACS business hours (09:00 – 17:00 AST).

The successful service provider shall provide, recommend and/or produce Configuration and Technical Documentation Policies, procedures, and standards in conformance with Software Engineering Institute (SEI) requirements where applicable.

The successful service provider(s) or contractor(s) shall provide all personnel, equipment, tools, materials, vehicles, supervision, and other items and services necessary to perform all services, tasks, and functions as requested in this RFP.

The successful service provider(s) or contractor(s) will be responsible for ensuring that the project is completed on time, within scope and budget, and in accordance with the performance requirements and expectations of the ACS. It is similarly expected that the selected service provider(s) or contractor(s) would implement the minimum measures required to safeguard the health and well-being of all personnel, agents, visitors, and ACS staff during the execution and performance of the Scope of Work for their engagement.

5.0 Timescale and Activity Schedule

The following timetable constitutes a tentative schedule for the pre-qualification and the RFP evaluation process. The ACS reserves the right to modify this schedule at any time.

Activity	Description	Date / Period
Publication	RFP is issued and published on the ACS's Website and circulated to Member States;	5 December 2022
Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference	Pre-Bid Conference for Prospective suppliers Q&A and Commercially sensitive information	6 January 2022
Intent to Respond Deadline	Final date and time for prospective suppliers to indicate a commitment to RFP;	9 January 2022
End of Submissions RFP Questions	Final date and time for prospective suppliers to submit their questions to this RFP;	10 January 2022
End of Responses RFP Answers & Clarifications	Final date and time for issuance of answers, clarifications and addenda to this RFP;	13 January 2022
End of RFP Submissions window	Final date and time for prospective suppliers to submit their responses to this RFP;	20 January 2022
Review of Technical Submissions	Completion of Technical Evaluations inclusive of any other ancillary RFP Technical assessment requirements;	27 January 2022
Review of Price Submissions	Completion of Price Evaluations inclusive of any other ancillary RFP Pricing assessment requirements;	20 January 2022
Evaluations complete	Completion of Technical and Price Evaluations inclusive of any other ancillary RFP assessment requirements;	27 January 2022
Selection of Finalist	Results of the Evaluations process are communicated to suppliers;	30 January 2022
Expected date for Service Award		31 January 2022
Maximum expected duration of contract	Performance period duration from official start of project execution.	24 Months

6.0 Proposal Outline, Form and Formats

All prospective suppliers are required to provide the following as part of their submission:

- A completed proposal based on the requirements outlined in the scope of work and previous sections outlined above, the ensuing sections and any additional information provided under commercially sensitive disclosure requirements.
- A clear outline of the ACS' responsibilities in the provision of the required services.
- A clear statement of exclusions.
- A brief statement outlining how quality standards and performance levels will be achieved and maintained in the execution of the aforementioned scope of work.
- The resources that will be assigned to the project, inclusive of roles, titles, numbers, and applicable experience.
- A list of recent or existing contracts (within the last five (5) years), including a minimum of three (3) testimonials from current or past client engagements which are of a similar size and nature to scope of services potentially required for this effort.
- A Certificate of Incorporation or any other official documentation related to the Business/Company Registration.
- In the case of entities registered in Trinidad and Tobago, the following documents are also required:
 - Valid Income Tax Clearance Certificate,
 - Valid VAT Clearance Certificate,
 - Valid National Insurance Board Clearance Certificate
- A bank reference letter indicating tenure, financial standing, and credit rating.
- A completed Bid Submission Compliance and Risk Data Annex
- A list of any claims made against the bidder within the last five (5) years alleging that your firm breached a contract for services, was negligent in performance of services, or otherwise caused harm or damage to the claimant. Describe the nature and current status of the claims. Claims should be fully disclosed. The disclosures required under this provision also apply to any claims arising out of the services of any principal or officer of your firm or any member of the project team regardless of whether the person was associated with your firm at the time of the claim.

Prospective suppliers are required to provide a professional service at all times and hold the ACS interests paramount for the performance of these works, strictly avoid conflicts with other projects, and act with consideration for future work. Given such, prospective suppliers must disclose information regarding relationships that may be perceived to be a conflict of interest in doing business with the ACS.

6.1 RFP Response

The responses to the RFP should be prepared in a manner that would aid in the making of an informed decision regarding the acquisition and implementation of the proposed solution and any equipment applicable. The additional information required to be submitted in response to this RFP has been determined to be essential in the bid evaluation and contract award process.

Any vague qualifying statements made by the bidder to the RFP's requirements could result in a determination that the bidder's proposal is materially non-responsive. Each bidder is given wide latitude in the degree of detail it elects to offer or the extent to which plans, designs, systems, processes and procedures are revealed. Each bidder is cautioned, however, that insufficient detail may result in a determination that the bid proposal is materially non-responsive or, in the alternative, may result in a low technical score being given to the bid proposal.

If a joint venture is submitting a bid, the agreement between the parties relating to such joint venture should be submitted with the joint venture's proposal. Authorized signatories from each party comprising the joint venture must sign the bid proposal.

Prospective Supplier(s) may submit proposals on one or all of the task objectives identified in the Scope of Work. Preference will be given to a single bidder/proposer taking responsibility for coordinating all facets of the project. Proposer(s) may partner with other firms and submit the response. Proposer(s) that do this and accept full responsibility for the proposal will be given the same consideration as single bidder that undertakes full responsibility for all facets of the project. The proposals will be judged on quality and extent of competence and support and not necessarily price alone.

The preferred supplier selected will:

- Be able to provide a full fledged solution/service demonstration with clear performance details relative to its use, deployment or any service engagement in an active production environment together with active client references.
- Be able to supply a turn-key solution comprising and meeting all the services and requirements identified in this RFP within agreed constraints for the level of deliverability (or delivery risk).
- Be able to balance the importance of price, quality, economic requirements and the ability to add value, provide long term support and facilitate improvements through innovation in their solution offering.
- Have not less than 3 years' experience in the provision and implementation of requirements articulated in this RFP and any Appendices attached.
- Have been in business for at least 5 years.

6.2 Proposal Delivery

Suppliers are requested to submit their proposals via email to ACS at tenders@acs-aec.org. The subject of the email should be: "Response to Digitisation RFP".

In order to be considered formal communication from suppliers must arrive in the account no later than the deadline date for submission of 20th January 2022. Suppliers submitting responses are cautioned to allow adequate delivery time to ensure timely delivery of proposals and should request a delivery receipt in their email communication to verify successful delivery of your proposal.

CAUTION: No hard copy postal or facsimile submissions will be entertained. The supplier is instructed to clearly identify any requirement of this RFP that the supplier cannot satisfy.

The response should be submitted as a combination of Microsoft Word, Excel and Adobe Acrobat PDF document formats no larger than four megabytes (4MB) in size. If your response exceeds this size you should submit your response in separate email messages not exceeding 4MB. The response should follow the format indicated in Section 6.3 of this RFP. The supplier should limit their response to one volume, if at all possible, with that volume divided into the sections as indicated below

6.3 Proposal Form and Format

a) Corporate Information, Technical and Organizational Support and Experience Proposals

The supplier must provide the information previously itemized in item 6.0 inclusive of the items below:

1. A Company Profile inclusive of the official name and address of the company;
2. Name(s), title(s), telephone number(s) and email address of all primary points of contact;
3. An outline of your company's experience in initiating and successfully completing similar projects and services highlighting any technical, organizational support and applicable experience or client references. Please see item 6.4 for the format to be adopted for the submission of any client references provided ;
4. A completed Bid Submission Compliance and Risk Data Annex.

b) Technical Services and/or Solutions

Please provide the following information for each of the relevant Records Management services or solutions offered by suppliers:

1. Product/service name;

2. Product/service information or general description;
3. Product/service specifications;
4. Product support/licensing requirements;
5. Product User Training/Orientation requirements;
6. Any resources or technical dependencies required to be provided by a new client;
7. What is your approach to implementation; provide a typical project plan for a project the size of the one described in the introduction?
8. Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) Costs of the service or solution;
9. Any validated Return on Investment (ROI) metrics for the service or solution;
10. Any technical roadmap information published for your solution (if applicable).

Records Management System's Capabilities

Please provide the following information for each of the relevant products/services offered, describe the extent to which the following capabilities are supported or otherwise available:

1. Ability to automatically ingest and classify records with minimal upfront work by users Suppliers must define, in general terms, the nature of the minimal upfront work. This excludes task efforts such as creating and applying taxonomies, controlled vocabularies, metadata, keywords, etc.
2. Ability to apply automatic retention rules to the identified records based on approved retention schedules; explain how the retention and/or disposition rules are constructed.
3. How does the solution handle permanent records and the logical storage of these records on tiered storage or removable storage media?
4. Does the solution provide out of the box support for creating and/or managing records in:
 - a. Structured Data
 - b. All Email – Microsoft Exchange
 - c. Collaborative software or Groupware –Microsoft Office, Microsoft Project
 - d. All Instant Messages (Teams chats)
 - e. Social Media

c) Pre-qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) Technical Workbook Information

Suppliers must complete the Pre-qualification Questionnaire PQQ Technical Workbook attached as Annex A and submit this workbook along with the previously mentioned documents for evaluation.

All Pre-qualification Questionnaire PQQ Technical Workbook responses must conform to the instructions in the workbook attached as Annex A and be sent by e-mail, by the date indicated in section 5.0.

d) Statement of Work(SOW) Technical Workbook Information

Suppliers must complete the Statement of Work (SOW) Technical Workbook attached as Annex B and submit this workbook along with the previously mentioned documents for evaluation.

All Statement of Work(SOW) Technical Workbook responses must conform to the instructions in the workbook attached as Annex B and be sent by e-mail, by the date indicated in section 5.0.

e) Rough Order of Magnitude or Definitive Cost Proposal

Bidders must submit their summary Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) or Definitive cost proposals in accordance with the ROM Price Sheet(s) included in this RFP as Annex C.

All Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) or Definitive cost proposals responses must conform to the instructions in the workbook attached as Annex C and be sent by e-mail, by the date indicated in section 5.0.

CAUTION: All the information provided must be fully compliant with the requirements described in this RFP. Suppliers who provide non-compliant responses shall not be considered. In submitting their RFP response, prospective suppliers indicate their intention to accept all the terms contained in this RFP, attachments and schedules. The ACS reserves the right to remove from the pre-qualification process at any time a prospective supplier if, in its discretion, the ACS finds that the prospective supplier committed misrepresentation and/or provided incorrect information to the ACS.

A bidder's failure to fully, properly and accurately complete all of the technical proposal and organizational support and experience information required by Section 6.0 of the RFP may result in their bid being considered non-responsive.

6.4 Client Reference Format

The bidder should list references that clearly demonstrate the bidder's proven capabilities in deploying systems, providing services or solutions of a similar size and scope to those required by this RFP. It is requested that references be given in the format below.

The bidder should provide a comprehensive listing of contracts requiring work of a similar size and scope to those required by this RFP. References provided should be for systems that have been successfully installed and operated. These references will serve as a demonstration of the firm's ability to successfully install and operate the system required by this RFP. A description of the contract should be included and should show how the referenced contract relates to the ability of the firm to provide the services required by this RFP.

1. NAME OF ENTITY PROVIDED AS A REFERENCE FOR YOUR FIRM:

ADDRESS:

NAME OF ENTITY'S MANAGEMENT PERSON THAT THE ACS MAY CONTACT TO VERIFY REFERENCE:

PHONE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL LISTED ABOVE: (XXX)-____-_____

EMAIL ADDRESS OF INDIVIDUAL LISTED ABOVE: _____

DATES UNDER CONTRACT: FROM _____ TO _____

PROVIDE A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES THAT YOUR FIRM PROVIDED FOR THIS ENTITY UNDER CONTRACT. EMPHASIZE SERVICES THAT ARE SIMILAR TO THOSE REQUIRED BY THIS RFP:

7.0 Mandatory Events

All prospective suppliers are required to attend an online Pre-Bid Conference identified in item 7.3 and scheduled for **10th January 2022** via ZOOM/WebEx videoconference. Prospective suppliers must confirm their attendance via email to tenders@acs-aec.org on or before **6th January 2022**. The email must have the subject heading “Pre-Bid Conference for Digitalisation” and must state the name and contact details for the representatives that will be in attendance.

7.1 Deadline for inquiries

A mandatory Pre-Bid Conference has been scheduled for this project; therefore, the cut-off date for submission of questions will be five (5) business days after the conclusion of the mandatory Pre-Bid Conference. While all questions will be entertained at the mandatory Pre-Bid Conference, it is strongly urged that questions be submitted in writing prior to the mandatory Pre-Bid Conference. It is requested that prospective suppliers having long, complex or multiple part questions submit them via email as far in advance of the mandatory Pre-Bid Conference as possible. This request is made so that answers can be prepared prior to the mandatory Pre-Bid Conference and circulated to all potential respondents.

7.2 Question Protocol

Questions must be submitted in writing and should be directly tied to the RFP by the writer. Questions should be asked in consecutive order, from beginning to end, following the organization of the RFP. Each question should begin by referencing the RFP page number and section number to which it relates. Please use Annex B – Question Template when submitting questions.

Prospective supplier(s) shall **not** contact any person within ACS directly, in person, or by telephone concerning this RFP. All communication must be conducted via the designated email address identified in this RFP.

7.3 Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference

The purpose of the mandatory Pre-Bid Conference is to provide a structured and formal opportunity for prospective suppliers to meet with Representatives of the ACS Secretariat to raise questions and clarify any of the proposal requirements prior to submission of Bids for Examination and Review by the Tenders Committee at the ACS Secretariat. The date, time and location are provided as follows:

DATE:	10 th January 2022
TIME:	To be confirmed
LOCATION:	Virtual Meeting (Zoom/WebEx)

CAUTION: Proposal bids **may be** automatically rejected from any prospective supplier that was not represented or failed to properly register at the Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference.

It is the responsibility of the bidder to identify and address any additional requirements or information needed to submit a proposal. No special consideration shall be given to any prospective supplier, because of the bidder's failure to be knowledgeable of all the requirements of the proposal after the Pre-Bid conference date.

8.0 Pricing & Payments

All estimates submitted should be valid for a period of at least ninety (90) days after the closing date of the request for proposal to allow for the evaluation of bids and the selection of the contract awardee. Pricing structure should mirror that of the sections or categories outlined in section 6.3 Pre-qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) Response Forms.

All payments shall be made via cheque or wire transfer subject to any contract that arises from this procurement process.

9.0 Examination of RFP Contents

Prospective Suppliers are responsible for examining, with appropriate care and attention, the invitation package and are also responsible for informing themselves with respect to all conditions that may, in any way, affect the cost or the performance of any proposed solutions. Failure to do so shall be at the sole risk of the prospective Suppliers, and suppliers can be given no relief for error or omission.

In the event that it becomes necessary to clarify or revise this RFP, such clarification or revision will be by addendum. Any RFP addendum will be distributed as follows:

1. A mandatory Pre-Bid Conference has been scheduled for this procurement, any addendum issued before the mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be distributed to all prospective suppliers who were sent the initial RFP.
2. Any addendum issued at the time of or after the mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be distributed **only** to those prospective suppliers represented and properly registered at the mandatory Pre-Bid Conference.

10.0 Evaluation of Proposals & Correspondence

Proposals that meet the requirements will be given a thorough and objective review. Prospective suppliers are to assume that the Evaluation Panel has no previous knowledge of your organisation, its activities or experience. The tendered prices will be assessed together with qualitative and compliance criteria to determine the most economically advantageous outcome for the ACS.

A scoring system will be used as part of the assessment of the qualitative and pricing criteria. The extent to which a proposal demonstrates greater satisfaction of each of these criteria will result in a greater score. The aggregate score of each proposal will be used as one of the factors in the final assessment of the qualitative criteria and in the overall assessment of value for money. All submitted proposals will be evaluated in accordance with the table outlined below which details how each criterion will be weighted to indicate the relative degree of importance placed on the technical aspects of the goods or services requested.

Category	Description	Weight (%)
Proposal Meets Technical Requirements	Bidder has demonstrated a clear understanding of the project requirements and has proposed services and/or solution(s) that maybe fit for purpose.	5
Technical Capabilities & Competencies	Bidder has demonstrated that it has the necessary resources, experience, capabilities, and competences required to undertake the work; familiar with and can satisfy the identified standards, requirements, regulations, and specifications;	20
Experience	Bidder has demonstrated through past projects and efforts, the necessary experience in initiating and undertaking similar works	20
Management skills and systems	Bidder has demonstrated its capabilities for quality assurance, program management and/or project management and has the necessary quality assurance and control systems in place;	15
Methodology	Bidder has demonstrated its capability to bring similar contracts to a satisfactory conclusion by describing the methodology of approach to accomplish the project's required outcomes	15
Cost of Proposal	Bidder has demonstrated a competitive costing structure which will ensure the best value and outcome for the Client	25

Note that whilst pricing will be considered a part of the evaluation criteria, the submission of the lowest price is not essential for the award and, large pricing differentials between prospective suppliers will be carefully examined. Price may be used as a final indicator for determining an awardee when all other criteria have been normalized.

10.1 Contact Information

Prospective suppliers are requested to use the following contact details for all correspondence with the ACS concerning this RFP.

Attention Rodolfo Sabonge
Secretary General
Association of Caribbean States
Office of the Secretary General | Digitisation RFP 2022
Tel: 622-9575
Email: tenders@acs-aec.org

10.2 Contract Award and Notification

The selected Supplier(s) will be notified in writing by an authorized representative of ACS and will be invited to negotiate a contract.

10.3 Contract Award Requirements

Requirement	Description	Status
Liquidated Damages	Will be imposed as follows: Percentage of contract price per day of delay: 0.25% Maximum number of days of delay 10, after which ACS may terminate the contract.	Required

Requirement	Description	Status
Bid Security	<p>A Bid Security, if required by ACS, shall be provided in the amount and form indicated in the RFP.</p> <p>The Bid Security shall be valid for a minimum of thirty (30) days after the final date of validity of the Bid</p>	Not Applicable
Performance Security	<p>A performance security, if required by ACS, shall be provided in the amount and form indicated either in the RFP or negotiated in the performance contract.</p> <p>Where a performance security is required, the receipt of the performance security by ACS shall be a condition for rendering the contract effective.</p>	Not Applicable
Insurances	<p>Evidence of a Service or Solution Provider's Risk insurance and/or Professional Liability Insurance, if required by ACS, shall be provided in the amount and form indicated either in the RFP or negotiated in the performance contract.</p> <p>Where a Service or Solution Provider's Risk insurance is required, a copy of same must be lodged with ACS and shall be a condition for rendering the contract effective.</p>	Not Applicable

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