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COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND
SOUTHERN AFRICA



COMESA



COURT OF JUSTICE

السوق المشتركة للشرق
والجنوب الأفريقي
محكمة العدل

COMESA Centre
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OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

PROVISION OF FLIGHT TICKET BOOKING AND TRAVEL AGENT SERVICES

(ON FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT BASIS)

RFP Ref: CCJ/PRM/LUN/2/12/23

DECEMBER 2023

1. Background

The Court of Justice of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (the COMESA Court of Justice hereafter referred to as “the CCJ or the Court”) was established in 1994 under Article 7 of the COMESA Treaty (the Treaty) as one of the Organs of the Common Market.

The CCJ now invites proposals from eligible and qualified travel agencies/firms with a strong market position within the COMESA region to conclude a Framework Agreement for the provision of flight ticket booking and related travel agent services.

2. Scope

This is a primary procurement process through competitive tendering with a view of establishing a framework agreement with the selected supplier for the provision of flight booking and travel services for a duration of 2 years, with the possibility of extension for another 1 year.

The framework agreement will not be binding for the CCJ to place any Purchase Orders. Any Order resulting from the framework agreement awarded under this tender procedure shall be by placement of a Purchase Order based on the agreement as per CCJ’s requirement.

The Travel Agency should provide travel services from 8.00 am to 5.00 p.m. during working days. In addition, the Travel Agency shall provide 24hour emergency service including weekends and official holidays where emergency travel service is required.

3. Terms of Reference

The products and services required include the following:

(i) Reservation and Ticketing

- (a) Upon a formal request from the Officer responsible for Procurement at the CCJ (Officer responsible for Procurement), the Travel Agency shall immediately make bookings on the three airlines operating the route and prepare appropriate itineraries and formal quotations based on the most economical route of travel from the place of origin to the official destination that does not exceed the most direct route by four hours or more and does not add a connection;
- (b) In the event that the required travel arrangements cannot be confirmed, Travel Agency shall notify the Officer responsible for Procurement of the problem and present three alternative routings and quotations for consideration, if available;
- (c) For wait-listed bookings, the Travel Agency shall provide daily feedback on status of flight and update the Officer responsible for Procurement on a daily basis. The Travel Agency will be responsible to follow up until booking confirmation;
- (d) The Travel Agency shall promptly issue and accurately deliver tickets and detailed itineraries in electronic format and in printed format when the electronic format is not available, showing the accurate status of the reservations on all segments of the journey;
- (e) The Travel Agency shall accurately advise the Officer responsible for Procurement of ticketing deadlines and other relevant information every time reservations are made to avoid cancellations of bookings;
- (f) The Travel Agency shall only act on travel requests for official travel submitted by the Officer responsible for Procurement.

(ii) Airfares and Airline Routings/Itineraries

Upon a request by the Officer responsible for Procurement, the Travel Agency shall:

- (a) Propose fares and airline routings and guarantee that it shall obtain the lowest available airfare for the journey concerned according to the CCJ travel policy; and
- (b) Advise market practices and trends that could result in further savings for the CCJ, including the use of corporate travel booking tools.

(iii) Flight Cancellations/Rebooking and Refunds

The Travel Agency shall:

- (a) Process duly authorised flight changes or cancellations when and as required and taking care that, in such cases, cancellation fees and charges imposed by the airlines are avoided;
- (b) Immediately process airline refunds for cancelled/unutilised pre-paid tickets and credit these to the CCJ as expeditiously as possible;
- (c) Refund tickets within one month (shorter periods offered will be an advantage);
- (d) The Travel Agency shall limit refund charges at airline rate only, i.e., no additional charges will accrue to the Travel Agency;
- (e) Travel Agency shall bear charges for cancellation and/or change in reservation dates, which are due to no fault of the CCJ;
- (f) Travel Agency shall report back to the CCJ on the status of ticket refunds; and
- (g) Extend validity of non-refundable tickets to one year.

(iv) Travel Information/Advisories:

The Travel Agency shall:

- (a) Provide quick reference for requested destinations;
- (b) Provide travellers with a complete automated itinerary document to include carrier(s); flight and voyage numbers, departure, and arrival times for each segment of the trip, tax exempt information, etc.
- (c) Inform travellers, before booking confirmation, of flight/ticket restrictions, involuntary stopovers, hidden stops, and other possible inconveniences of the itinerary;
- (d) Provide travellers, upon request from the Officer responsible for Procurement, with relevant information on official destinations, including airport transfers/land transportation facilities, local points of interest, currency restrictions/regulations, health advisories, security advisories, weather conditions, etc.;
- (e) Endeavor to notify travellers, with sufficient time before departure, of airport closures, delayed or cancelled flights, security procedures, health precautions, as well as other changes that will affect or will require preparations from the travellers.

(v) Availability of other products and services

The Travel Agency, where applicable and upon request of the travellers, shall provide other services including the following:

- (a) Excess baggage/lost baggage; and
- (b) Provide support to travellers while they are on mission in case of emergencies (information on flights delay, missed flights, etc.).

(vi) Contract management, billing, and invoicing

The Travel Agency shall send the CCJ an itemised invoice for each ticket which should reflect among others the following information:

- (i) ticket number;
- (ii) airline name;
- (iii) date the ticket was issued;
- (iv) traveller's surname/name;
- (v) departure/stopovers and destination points;
- (vi) actual ticket cost as offered by the airlines and applied service fee; and
- (vii) the name of the staff who made the request.

The Travel Agency will issue and deliver a statement of account once a month to the CCJ. The CCJ will process the corresponding payment within 30 days of receipt by means of bank transfer after the approval of transactions.

(vii) Management Reporting System

Travel Agency shall submit to the CCJ the following reports/documents quarterly:

- a) Purchase statistics;
- b) Statistics on the issued/rejected tickets and the reason for rejections;
- c) Carrier – Route – Fare/Volume of Business;
- d) Status of ticket refunds;
- e) Changes and update on promotions, policy changes etc. immediately upon the receipt of the advice;
- f) Proposed Itineraries to include service fees for any cancellation/changes in bookings, if they occur.

4. Schedules and Dates

The following schedule includes key milestones and their associated completion dates and is provided primarily for planning purposes. The CCJ may modify the project timeline at its discretion.

Indicative Timelines	Milestone
11 December 2023	Issue RFP
08 January 2023	End of inquiry period for RFP clarification (bidder)
15 January 2024	Response to inquiries shared and published on the CCJ website
04 February 2024	Deadline for submission of proposals
26 February 2024	Travel Agency selected and informed by the CCJ
04 March 2024	Agreement with Travel Agency signed

5. Eligibility of Travel Agency

Firms registered in the COMESA Member States.

6. Commencement of Work

The expected for commencement of the Services is 05 March 2024.

7. Schedule of required documents

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS	
Mandatory Travel Agency documents: Please provide below mandatory documents. Shall be in a separate envelope.	
i.	Certified Business Registration Certificate/Certificate of Incorporation
ii.	Valid Tax Compliance Certificate issued by the relevant Revenue Authority

iii.	Official Letter of Appointment as local representative, if Bidder is submitting a Bid on behalf of an entity located outside the country
iv.	Copy of Valid IATA Certificate of Accreditation
v.	List of Major Corporate Clients with yearly purchasing volume of 150,000 USD or more-for last 3 years. This should be accompanied by at least three up-to-date Letters of recommendations from the aforementioned corporate clients.
Other Travel Agency Documents: Please provide below other required documents. Documents shall be part of the technical proposal envelope	
i.	The Travel Agency profile
ii.	Quality Certificates, if available
iii.	Financial Information:
	Volume of Sales for the last three years 2020, 2021 and 2022:
	Annual international, regional and local air tickets (number)
	Annual international, regional and local air tickets (value)
	Audited Financial Reports for the last two years 2021 and 2022.
vi.	Personnel Competence:
	Curriculum Vitae:
	<input type="checkbox"/> Team leader
	<input type="checkbox"/> Travel expert 1
Technical Proposal outlining Methodology of Contract Implementation. Bidders need to provide and clearly articulate on the following:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Description of the arrangements to take place in order to accommodate the contract: issue tickets, accommodate urgent requests, handle claims, and maintain the submission of the quarterly reports	
<input type="checkbox"/> Detailed description of your ability to secure competitive airfares and /or negotiate airfares, describing what booking systems will be used	

- | |
|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Description of any additional services and benefits that can be offered to the CCJ. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Description of the invoicing and reporting arrangements |

8. Bidder Preliminary Examination Criteria

Submitted offers will be reviewed on “Pass” or “Fail” basis to determine compliance with the below formal criteria/ requirements:

- (i) Offers must be submitted within the stipulated deadline;
- (ii) Offers must meet required Offer Validity;
- (iii) Offers have been signed by the proper authority;
- (iv) Offers include requested company documentation, including documentation regarding the company’s legal status and registration;
- (v) Tax clearance certificate;
- (vi) Staff CV’s (for Account Manager and 1 Travel Expert);
- (vii) Offers must comply with general administrative requirements:
 - (a) properly registered and licensed company;
 - (b) at least 3 years of experience in the required area;
 - (c) access to Global Distribution System;
 - (d) IATA accredited (minimum 2 years); and
 - (e) A minimum of 150 air tickets sold annually within the period of 2020 - 2022 and a minimum of 50,000 USD annual turnover for the period of 2021-2022 is required.

9.Criteria for Evaluation of Bidders

Bidders must provide technical proposals. The evaluation shall be based on the following attributes:

Technical criteria	Minimal technical criteria	Maximum Score
1	Bidder's experience and reputation in the market	20%
1.1	Bidder's experience in the field (3 - 5 years of relevant services provision – 3 pts., 6 and more years – 5 pts.)	5
1.3	Years of IATA membership (2 - 3 years – 3 pts., 4 and more years –5 pts.)	5
1.4	Reputation of the Company reflected in references and recommendations provided (references from IATA Air Carrier – 2 points for every recommendation, 6 points max; recommendations from international organizations, embassies, medium to large businesses – 2 points for every recommendation, 4 points max)	10
2	Bidder's capability and expertise	35%
2.1	Size of Agency (capital, branch offices, number of qualified employees)	5
2.2	The volume of sales (number of tickets) for the past 3 years: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • < 150 air tickets issued annually: 5 points • 150 air tickets issued annually: 7 points • > 150 air tickets issued annually: 12.5points 	12.5
2.3	The volume of sales (USD) for the past 3 years: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -<USD 150,000: 0 points USD 150,000: 10 points 	12.5

	> USD 150,000 :12.5 points	
2.4	Availability of at least 1 Reservation Booking Systems / computer reservation system/airline reservation system (e.g. Amadeus, or Galileo, or Sabre): 5 points Availability of any other additional booking systems – 7 points	5
	Approach and Methodology	25%
	Approach to the services required and Management Plan for providing the services	10
	Approach to secure competitive airfares and/or negotiate competitive airfares	5
	Availability of additional services and benefits that can be offered to the CCJ	5
3	Key Personnel	20%
3.1	Team Leader/Account Manager: Years of experience in the management of travel services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 years of experience in Air Ticketing: 4 points • 3 years of management experience: additional 2 points • more than 5 years of management experience: 2 additional points 	8
	Travel Expert: Years of experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 years of experience in Air Ticketing: 4 points; • more than 3 years of experience in Air Ticketing services: 3 additional Points 	7
3.2	IATA certified staff members in travel management -	3

3.3	Professional Skills (computer reservations systems: Amadeus, Galileo or Sabre)	2
	Total	100%

10. Submission of Applications

The bidder shall submit the proposal electronically (email) by the closing date set forth in point no. 12 to:

The Registrar

CCJ Court of Justice

Email: procurement@comesacourt.org

With copy to: info@comesacourt.org

The subject line of the email should indicate **“RFP No: CCJ/PRM/LUN/2/12/23 – TENDER FOR PROVISION OF FLIGHT TICKET BOOKING AND TRAVEL AGENT SERVICES”**

Submission of a Proposal shall be deemed to constitute an acknowledgement by the Bidders that all obligations stipulated by this RFP will be met and unless specified otherwise, the Bidders has read, understood and agreed to all the instructions provided in this RFP.

This RFP does not commit the CCJ to award a Contract or to issue a Purchase Order. Any Proposal submitted will be regarded as a proposal by the Bidders and not as an acceptance by the Bidders of any proposal by the CCJ.

11. Cost of Proposal Preparation

The bidders shall bear any, and all costs and expenses related to the preparation and/or submission of a Proposal, regardless of whether its Proposal is selected or not.

12. Closing date of tender

Tenders must be submitted to the CCJ on or before 04 February 2024 at 17:00-hours SAST.

13. Clarifications

Technical queries for clarification related to this tender should be submitted to the Officer responsible for Procurement; exclusively in writing, via e-mail: esimon@comesacourt.org with a copy to Lsinnary@comesacourt.org on or before 08 January 2024 not later than 17:00 hours SAST.

Responses to technical queries will be provided by close of business not later than 15 January 2023. No communication, written or verbal, is allowed in connection with this RFP, with any CCJ staff members other than Procurement Officers. Queries received after the above deadline may not be considered.

In order to maintain transparency, all Bidders' requests for clarifications and the CCJ responses will be recorded and circulated to all Bidders, without indicating the source of the request.

14. Amendment of the RFP

At any time prior to the deadline for submission of Proposals, the CCJ may amend this RFP by issuing Addenda.

All Addenda issued shall be part of this RFP, posted on the CCJ and COMESA websites, and shall be communicated in writing to all bidders who have registered or obtained the RFP directly, as the case may be.

To give prospective Bidders reasonable time in which to take an Addendum into account in preparing their Proposals, the CCJ may extend the deadline for the submission of Proposals at its sole discretion.

15. Validity of Proposals

Proposals shall be irrevocable and remain valid for acceptance for at least **90** calendar days, commencing on the Closing Time.

If deemed necessary by the CCJ, Bidders may be requested to extend the validity of their Proposals for an additional period(s), in order to finalise the solicitation process. If the extension of the validity period is accepted by Bidders, the Bidders will not be permitted to otherwise modify or consequently withdraw their Proposals and will be required to extend the validity period of the Bid Security, if so required in this RFP.

16. Availability of Professional Staff/Experts

Having selected the Travel Agency based on, among other things, an evaluation of proposed Key Professional Personnel, the CCJ expects to negotiate a Contract on the basis of those Personnel named in the Technical Proposal.

During Contract negotiations, the CCJ will not consider substitution of any Key Professional Personnel unless both parties agree that undue delay in the selection process makes such substitution unavoidable or for reasons such as death or medical incapacity of one of the Personnel. If this is not the case and if it is established that any Key Professional Personnel were offered in the Proposal without confirming their availability, the Travel Agency may be disqualified. Any proposed substitute shall have equivalent or better qualifications and experience than the original candidate.

17. Notification of Contract Award

Prior to Notification of the Award constituting the formation of the contract, a Notification of the Intention to Award will be communicated to all bidders. The contract will be

awarded 7 days after the date of transmission of the Notification of Intention to Award, if there shall be no challenges during the Standstill Period.

18. Bid Challenge

A Bidder may challenge the results of a procurement only according to the rules established in the Bid Challenge System as provided in the CCJ Procurement Rules.

19. Commencement Date

The successful Travel Agency is expected to commence the assignment on 04 March 2024.

20. Publication of Contract Award

After the award of Contract, the CCJ shall publish on the CCJ and COMESA websites, the results identifying the procurement, the name of the winning Bidder and the price, duration, and summary scope of the Contract. The same information shall be sent to all Bidders who have submitted proposals.