

01. GENERAL RFP INFORMATION

1.1 The Investor

Albanian-American Development Foundation: "Ibrahim Rugova" Street, Building no. 42, Entrance no. 7, Apartment no. 61, Tirana, Albania.

The Albanian-American Development Foundation (AADF) began operations in November 2010 with the support and encouragement of USAID and the United States Government. The foundation's mission is to make a meaningful contribution to Albania's economic growth by making social investments related to entrepreneurship, education, leadership development, and support for cultural tourism.

1.2 Cost of applying

The Applicant shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of its Application, and AADF shall in no case be responsible or liable for those costs, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the applying process.

1.3 Source of Financing

The subject of this Request for RFP is financed in full by AADF.

1.4 RFP Documents

RFP documents are obtained only through registration on AADF's website and downloaded from the links provided right after. If you have questions, please address them in writing either by email to tenders@aadf.org or by letter at the above-given address. Other forms of communication regarding RFPs, are not accepted during a procedure still in process.

1.5 RFP Package

Submit your application in person or by mail at the AADF office in Tirana (address provided above).

Applications shall also be sent by email at tenders@aadf.org. The financial offer (including Excel format if relevant) shall be sent in a separate email with the *subject "Financial Offer, RFP number"*

Ensure the following:

- Prepare three sets of complete RFP documentation
- Place them in sealed envelopes labeled:
 1. "ORIGINAL"
 2. "PRINTED COPY"- including the financial offer
 3. "DIGITAL COPY (USB)"- including the financial offer and BoQ in Excel format (if relevant)
 4. A fourth envelope shall contain the original and a copy of the Financial Offer form and the BoQ.
 5. Label it " FINANCIAL BID."

Seal all envelopes together in one package, clearly displaying:

- (a) Applicant's name and address
- (b) Addressed to AADF
- (c) Specific identification of the application process, including project name and RFP number

(d) Warning not to be opened before the designated bid opening time and date.

1.6 Instructions to Applicants

1. Fill in all forms in the Application Package
2. Use the "Similar Experience" form to highlight company experiences. Clearly describe their relevance in the dedicated section. Employ dividers or sticky tabs to emphasize important pages or sections.
3. Present evidence of your staff's and company's experience, as these are key evaluation criteria.
4. Thoroughly consider the listed evaluation criteria, noting the assigned relative weights for their importance. Avoid assuming that the lowest price guarantees success.
5. To surpass the 60% individual criteria qualifying threshold, present more similar works and staff experience contracts than the minimum required. Note that AADF will indicate in the ... section the maximum of acceptable similar contracts.
6. Do not scan all documents in one batch. Each document should be scanned and saved separately, with titles that reveal their content
7. Make sure your USB works properly, contains all the documents and is virus-free

1.7 Contract

Applications or even signed contracts, that will result in the payment of unusual commercial costs compared to market prices, will be rejected or canceled with immediate effect without any consequences for the investor.

1.8 Application Opening

Envelopes will be opened by the AADF's representatives. The applicant's name, the Bid, any discounts, and the completion time, will be announced and registered in the minutes. There will be no public opening unless mentioned in the Specific Bidding Details document

1.9 Application Evaluation

The Committee will check the applications to ensure that they contain no amendments to the terms or errors. To assist in the examination, evaluation, and comparison of Applications, the Committee, at its discretion, may request assistance from other professionals in the quality of the consultant to the Committee. The AADF reserves the right to vary the quantity of work/materials specified in the RFP Documents without any changes in unit price or other terms and conditions and to accept or reject any, all, or part of the Applications submitted without assigning a reason for such decision.

1.9.1 Technical Evaluation: Applications will be initially evaluated on technical merits, assessing the company's capacity through submitted documentation. Deficiencies may impact scores and chances of winning.

In case there are qualitative evaluation criteria, quality thresholds are in place. Proposals scoring less than **60%** on at least one qualitative criterion and less than **70%** on qualitative criteria altogether, will be excluded from the rest of the assessment procedure.

1.9.2 The financial evaluation: follows technical evaluation and is based on the cost. The cost criterion is rated by giving the lowest qualified Bid, the maximum number of cost points available. The rest of the Bids are scored using a formula that allows a proportional reduction of points.

A close consideration will be given to Bids to determine **price anomalies**. Bids that are judged by the Evaluation Committee to be unrealistically low will be disqualified on this basis, independently of their technical score. This decision requires investigation which involves also the bidder.

Bids with a price superior to the ceiling price indicated in the Specific Bidding Details will be excluded from the rest of the assessment procedure.

1.9.3 Other Evaluations: When assigning companies to the designated shortlist, the Evaluation Committee may take into consideration other criteria, including, but not limited to time of completion, record of past performance with AADF or partners, integrity, references, and community rapport. Interviews with top-ranked companies may also be used as a complementary decision-making tool.

1.9.4 Selection of the Winner: Selection of the successful applicant will be based on the qualified proposals ranking according to cumulative scores of technical and financial criteria.

1.10 Validity of Documentation

Certifications required for this RFP cannot be older than three months on RFP date.

1.11 Language

As determined by AADF, the working language for this RFP is English, however any certification received in Albanian from the Governmental Institutions and contracts/ certifications/ references received from third parties in Albanian, do not need to be translated.

1.12 Eligibility of Applicants

Applicants cannot apply if they:

- 1- Cannot conduct business legally in Albania.
- 2- Are bankrupt or in the process of going bankrupt.
- 3- Have been guilty of grave professional misconduct.
- 4- Have not fulfilled obligations related to payment of obligatory insurance, social security, and taxes.
- 5- Are guilty of serious misinterpretation in supplying information.
- 6- Were declared at serious fault of implementation owing to a breach of their contractual obligations.
- 7- Operate in breach of Albanian Law requirements.
- 8- Are on any list of sanctioned parties issued by the United States Government, United Nations, or European Union.

1.13 Applying Rules

- a) All Documents in the Application Package must be completed in full to avoid disqualification.
- b) All applicants will receive identical documents: No applicant should add, omit, or change any item, term or condition in the original papers. If they do, this will be grounds for immediate disqualification.
- c) Addenda and/or clarifications regarding this RFP maybe issued at any time. A notification regarding such addenda will be published on AADF's website. Their content may affect the RFP price and conditions. It is the responsibility of the applicant to keep informed.
- d) If Applicants have any request and condition to negotiate, this shall be stipulated in a separate letter accompanying the Application.

- e) Each applicant may make one bid only for this specified RFP unless otherwise stated in the **Specific Bidding Details** document .
- f) All prices must include all taxes, compulsory payments, levies, and duties. VAT will be calculated and shown separately in the manner indicated in the appropriate forms.
- g) The bill of quantities must include all information requested and must comprise a detailed analysis of the prices unless otherwise stated in the **Specific Bidding Details** document.
- h) No Subcontracting will be accepted unless otherwise stated in the **Specific Bidding Details** document.
- i) No joint ventures will be accepted unless otherwise stated in the **Specific Bidding Details** document.
- j) All Applications shall be made in accordance with the RFP Documents including but not limited to ToRs, technical specifications or requirements, and the contract.
- k) AADF will organize an informative meeting unless otherwise stated in the **Specific Bidding Details** document. AADF will consider that each applicant has attended the meeting and understands the requirements of the RFP to the full extent before making and delivering an application, and any mistakes or problems arising from the lack of information that could have been obtained in such a meeting will not be taken into consideration by AADF.
- l) Questions and requests regarding the RFP must be sent in writing to the AADF up to five working days before the RFP deadline. Send by e-mail at tenders@aadf.org or to the AADF office in Tirana in writing. The answers to any questions raised by any applicant will be issued to that applicant in writing, if possible, within two working days. However, it is a condition of this RFP that no clarification shall be deemed to supersede, contradict, add to, or detract from the conditions hereof unless changes are made in writing and signed by the CEO or their designated representative.

1.14 Fraud and Corruption

AADF requires that suppliers, contractors, and consultants under AADF contracts or seeking such contracts, observe the highest standards of ethics during procurement and execution of contracts. In pursuit of such policy, AADF defines for the purpose of this provision, the terms set forth below as follows:

- a- “Corrupt practice” means the bidding, giving, receiving or soliciting of anything of value to influence the action of a public official in the procurement process or in contract execution.
- b- “Fraudulent practice” means a misrepresentation of facts in order to influence a procurement process or the execution of a contract to the disadvantage of AADF and includes secret illegal agreement practices among Applicants (prior to or after Application submission) designed to establish Application prices at artificial, non-competitive levels and to deprive the borrower of the benefits of free and open competition

AADF will reject a proposal if it determines that the Applicant has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for the contract. AADF will also declare a firm ineligible to be awarded a contract, either indefinitely or for a stated period of time if it determines that the firm has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for, or in executing an AADF-financed contract.

Direct contact with AADF employees or managers regarding your submission during the RFP evaluation period is prohibited.

Any attempt by the Applicants to influence AADF representatives in the evaluation of the bids or contract award decisions will result in the immediate rejection of their application.

1.15 Amendment of RFP Document

At any time prior to the deadline for submission of RFPs, AADF may amend the RFP Document by issuing an addendum. Any addendum issued shall be part of the RFP Document and shall be communicated in writing to all who are registered and have attended the site visit. To give prospective Applicants reasonable time in which to take the addendum into account in preparing their applications, AADF may, at its discretion, extend the deadline for the submission of applications.

1.16 Withdrawal, Substitution, and Modification of Applications

An Applicant may withdraw, substitute, or modify its application after it has been submitted by sending a written notice, duly signed by an authorized representative. All notices must be received by AADF before the deadline prescribed for submission of applications. Applications withdrawn shall be returned unopened to the Applicants. No application may be withdrawn, substituted, or modified in the interval between the deadline for submission of the application and the expiration of the period of Tender validity specified by the Applicant on the RFP documents or any extension thereof.

1.17 Bid Validity

Each bid shall be valid at least for 150 calendar days from its date of submission.

1.18 Performance Standards

The services must be undertaken by all relevant rules, regulations, and statutes currently in force in Albania and by the industry's best practices.