

Preferred Supplier Agreement

REQUEST FOR QUOTATION (RFQ)

FOR SERVICES

Project Title:	AMR Genomic Surveillance
Nature of the services	Preferred Supplier Arrangement to provide advise to SPC Public Health Division, surveillance and Laboratory team to pertaining surveillance of Antimicrobial Resistant organisms and other PPHSN priority diseases using molecular technology such as Whole Genome Sequencing and PCR
Location:	Pacific
Date of issue:	26/04/2024
Closing Date:	9/06/2024
SPC Reference:	RFQ 24-6301

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Part 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 About the Pacific Community (SPC)

The Pacific Community (SPC) is the principal scientific and technical organisation of the Pacific region, established by treaty in 1947 with the signing of the *Agreement Establishing the South Pacific Commission* (the Canberra Agreement).

Our unique organisation covers more than 20 sectors and is renowned for knowledge and innovation in such areas as fisheries science, public health surveillance, geoscience and conservation of plant genetic resources for food security.

For more information about SPC and the work that we do, please visit our website: <https://www.spc.int/>.

1.2 SPC's procurement activities

SPC's procurement activities are guided by the principles of high ethical standards, value for money, open competition and social and environmental responsibility and are carried out under our Procurement Policy.

For further information or enquiries about SPC's procurement activities, please visit the procurement pages on our website: <https://www.spc.int/procurement> or email: procurement@spc.int

1.3 SPC's Request for Quotation (RFQ) Process

At SPC, procurement valued at more than EUR 2,000 and less than or equal to EUR 45,000 requires an evaluation of at least three quotations to determine the offer that provides the best value for money through a Request for Quotation (RFQ) process.

This RFQ sets out SPC's requirements for a project and it asks you, as a bidder, to respond in writing in a prescribed format with pricing and other required information.

Your participation confirms your acceptance of SPC's conditions of participation in the RFQ process.

Part 2: INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

2.1 Background

SPC invites you to submit a quotation to deliver the services as specified in [Part 3](#).

SPC has compiled these instructions to guide prospective bidders and to ensure that all bidders are given equal and fair consideration. Please read the instructions carefully before submitting your bid. For your quotation to be considered, it is important that you provide all the prescribed information by the closing date and in the format specified.

2.2 Submission Instructions

You must **submit your quotation and all supporting documents** in English and as an attachment to an email sent to ekab@spc.int and with the subject line of your email as follows: **Submission RFQ-6301**. The email should also be copied to rfq@spc.int.

The supporting documents expected in this RFQ are:

- [The Conflict-of-Interest Declaration form](#) completed
- CV

Your submission must be clear, concise and complete and should only include a quotation and information that is necessary to respond effectively to this RFQ. Please note that you may be marked down or excluded from the procurement exercise if your submission contains any ambiguities or lacks clarity.

Bids will be evaluated on the basis of information received by **23.45 FJT on 9/06/2024**.

2.3 Evaluation & Contract Award

Each quotation validly received will be assessed against the evaluation criteria matrix set out in [Part 4](#). Any changes in the evaluation criteria will result in the RFQ process being re-issued.

SPC may award the contract once it has determined that a bidder has met the prescribed requirements and the bidder's proposal has been determined to be substantially responsive to the RFQ documents, provide the best value for money (highest cumulative score) and best serve the interests of SPC. The purpose of this RFQ is to implement Preferred Supplier Agreements (PSAs) based on work areas. Initial contract will be for one (1) year and can be renewed for three (3) more years based on performance.

In the event of a bid being accepted, procurement will take place under SPC's [General Terms and Conditions of Contract](#) and depending on the value or nature of the procurement, the award will be made by issuing a purchase order or a signed and dated contract, or both under the PSA. A sample PSA is attached to this RFQ.

2.4 Key Contacts

Please contact SPC should you have any doubt as to what is required or if we can help answer any questions that you may have.

Dr Eka Buadromo will be your primary point of contact for this RFQ and can be contacted at ekab@spc.int. You should copy any communications into rfq@spc.int.

Details will be kept of any communications between SPC and bidders. This assists SPC to ensure transparency of the procurement process. While SPC prefers written communication in the RFQ process, at any point where there is phone call or other conversation, SPC expects to keep a file note of the exchange, with all forms of communication with prospective bidders to be retained as source documents for the procurement of the services.

2.5 Key Dates

Please see the proposed procurement timetable in the table below. This timetable is intended as a guide only and while SPC does not intend to depart from the timetable, it reserves the right to do so at any stage.

STAGE	DATE
RFQ sent to potential vendors	24/04/2024
RFQ Closing Date	9/06/2024
Award of Contract	15/06/2024
Commencement of Contract	24/06/2024
Conclusion of Contract	23/06/2025

2.6 Legal and compliance

Confidentiality: Unless otherwise agreed by SPC in advance or where the contents of the RFQ are already in the public domain when shared with the bidder, bidders shall at all times treat the contents of the RFQ and

any related documents as confidential. SPC will also treat the information it receives from the bidders as confidential.

Conflict of interest: Bidders must take all necessary measures to prevent any situation of conflict of interest. You must notify SPC in writing as soon as possible of any situation that could constitute a conflict of interest during the RFQ process. If you have any familial connection with SPC staff, this must be declared, and approval will then be sought for you to engage in the RFQ process. **In support of your response to this RFQ, you must submit to SPC [the Conflict-of-Interest Declaration form](https://spc.int/procurement) available on our procurement page website: <https://spc.int/procurement>.**

Breach of this requirement can result in SPC terminating any contract with a successful bidder.

Currency, validity, duties, taxes: Unless specifically otherwise requested, all proposals should be in bidder's local currency and must be net of any direct or indirect taxes and duties, and shall remain valid for 120 days from the closing date. The successful bidder is bound by their proposal for a further 60 days following notification they are the preferred bidder so that the contract may be awarded. No price variation due to escalation, inflation, fluctuation in exchange rates, or any other market factors shall be accepted at any time during this period.

No offer of contract or invitation to contract: This RFQ is not an offer to contract or an invitation by SPC to enter into a contract with you.

Privacy: The bidder is to comply with the requirements of applicable legislation and regulatory requirements in force for the use of personal data that is disclosed for the purposes of this RFQ. SPC will handle any personal information it receives under the RFQ in line with its [Privacy Policy](#), and the [Guidelines for handling personal information of bidders and grantees](#).

Warranty, representation, assurance, undertaking: The bidder acknowledges and agrees that no person has any authority to give any warranty, representation, assurance or undertaking on behalf of SPC in connection with any contract which may (or may not) follow on from this RFQ process.

2.7 Complaints process

Bidders that consider they were not treated fairly during any SPC procurement process may lodge a protest. The protest should be addressed to complaints@spc.int. The bidder must provide the following information: (1) full contact details; (2) details of the relevant procurement; (3) reasons for the protest, including how the alleged behaviour negatively impacted the bidder; (4) copies of any documents supporting grounds for protest; (5) the relief that is sought.

Part 3: TERMS OF REFERENCE

A. Background/context

Infections caused by multi-resistant organisms is rampant in healthcare settings in the Pacific causing frequent outbreaks and deaths. The World Health Organization is estimating 10 million deaths per year from infections caused by multi-resistant organisms (MRO) by 2050, a real challenge in countries with smaller population as in the Pacific.

One of the ways to reduce the occurrence and spread of MRO is early identification, proper surveillance and identification of the source of infection using advanced technology such as whole genome sequencing. While basic AMR testing work has been supported by SPC over the past 5 years, gaps are still existing affecting timely surveillance and the preventative measures that are put in place to stop spread of infection.

This short-term consultancy is meant to review and set in place a way to standardise AMR testing and reporting in PICTs, restructure current AMR reporting system to a user-friendly data reporting/analysis platform of GLASS priority multi-resistant organisms. The consultant will also advise and provide guidance on whole genome sequencing of MROs and organisms causing outbreak-prone diseases that are challenging the Pacific due to climate change.

B. Purpose, objectives, scope of services

Purpose:

To further improve Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance in Pacific Island Countries

Objective:

To standardise Antimicrobial resistance testing & reporting in Pacific Island Laboratories, provide guidance on Genomic Surveillance for AMR and other PPHSN priority diseases.

Scope of service: The consultancy will start in Fiji where AMR activities have

advanced over the years. Depending on the progress of this work, similar activities will be conducted in other countries to suit the existing infrastructures on the ground and the status of AMR surveillance.

The consultant is expected to:

- 1) review antimicrobial testing and reporting system in the main divisional hospitals in the pacific countries
- 2) Advise on the changes in testing and reporting guidelines and
- 3) Put in place a user-friendly data analysis and reporting system of GLASS priority organisms that can extract data from existing Laboratory Information System.
- 4) Review the existing service and advise on viability of Genome testing, specimen referral for Whole Genome sequencing and the supporting infrastructures.
- 5) Align genomic reporting and bioinformatics to the countries data analysis and reporting system.
6. Collaborate with partners who are already contributing to AMR work in Fiji to ensure the result (KRAs) of this consultancy are aligned with that of the Fiji Ministry of Health.

C. Timelines

- 1) Submit a clear workplan at the beginning of the contract to be reviewed and discussed with supervisor.
- 2) Review of antimicrobial resistant testing and reporting format in Lautoka, Labasa and CWMH and submit review report inclusive of Guidelines and SOP of the new testing and reporting methodology with advise on changes – **1st month**:
Note: this report should include partner collaboration (VIDRL, NARC and other partners) who are assisting in AMR testing and reporting in Fiji.
- 3) Submit list of GLASS priority and other resistant organisms that are prioritised for surveillance in Fiji using the new testing system together with a brief update of the new data analysis program or software. – **2nd month**
- 4) Report of the review of existing service in relation to Whole genome sequencing including specimen storage and referral to WGS focal laboratory/ies and other logistics including future needs that SPC would assist in. Submit a copy of advice/guidance – end of **3rd month**.
- 5) Receipts for travel and accommodations while visiting Lautoka and Labasa Hospital labs are to be submitted immediately after travel for reimbursement.

D. Reporting and contracting arrangements

- The consultant will report directly to Team Leader Laboratory Strengthening Program
- Reporting is expected fortnightly with progress report in the 15th day and a written report of the activities at the end of the month in the 3 months of consultancy.
- The consultant is expected to collaborate and interact with the head of laboratory service in the 3 divisional hospitals in Fiji, Heads of Microbiology laboratories and in the divisional hospitals, representative of Victoria Infectious disease research laboratory assisting Fiji in AMR surveillance and control, Representative of the Fiji National Antimicrobial Resistant Committee, FijiCDC microbiology team, Director PHD, and LSP team members.
- Consultant to make presentations to the designated Divisional Hospital Laboratory team on the gaps there are in the current testing and reporting system, the latest update of CLSI and EUCAST and they make collective decision on which system to be used for microbiology testing. Also discuss national reporting to GLASS with NARC representatives/other respective bodies as maybe communicated.
- Collaborate with VIDRL team on the AMR testing and reporting system they have put in place at CWMH, Whole Genome sequencing and other guidelines.
- The consultant expected to work closely with LabNet and PPHSN surveillance officer gathering information of work that SPC has done with Pacific region including Fiji. Then progress on to the Divisional Hospitals/Regional Hospitals in the designated countries. Fortnightly updates and Monthly reports to be discussed and submitted to team leader LSP, SPC Narere Office.
- Contractor is expected to clearly specify to SPC the scope of use of materials that are governed by international standards and as such a copyright, distributions, commercial use etc.
- Travel in country will be required for this consultancy where SPC will arrange Travel. Economy class airfares and per diems at SPC rates, in accordance with SPC Travel policy, will be covered separately by SPC.
- The purpose of this RFQ is to implement Preferred Supplier Agreements (PSAs). Initial contract will be for one (1) year and can be renewed for three (3) more years based on performance

E. Skills and qualifications

- The consultant should have a minimum qualification of Masters in Medical Microbiology or equivalent.
- At least 10 years' experience in the field of medical Microbiology,
- Has worked as senior microbiology scientist for 5 years in a large hospital laboratory performing organism identification and sensitivity testing.
- Has at least 1 year experience working as a scientists in a developed country microbiology lab with ISO accreditation.
- At least 1 year experience in setting up Whole Genome Sequencing for organisms with experience in Bioinformatics
- Has published microbiology papers in international journals.
- Genome sequencing publication is also desirable.
- Experience working in laboratories in the Pacific Island countries.

F. Scope of Bid Price and Schedule of Payments

- The contract price will be paid in lump sums based on the satisfactory delivery of milestones as outlined in the table below
- Bidder is requested to specify the preferred schedule of payments and terms acceptable, noting that generally, SPC will not enter into arrangement requiring a 100% advance payment.
- Cost components to include professional fees and other related costs.
- Payment schedule to be in accordance with Article 10 of the SPC General Conditions

Milestone/deliverables
Fortnightly progress reports
Monthly written reports
Final Report

Part 4: PROPOSAL EVALUATION MATRIX

4.1 Competency Requirements & Score Weight

The evaluation matrix below reflects the obtainable score specified for each evaluation criterion (technical and financial requirements) which indicates the relative significance or weight of the items in the overall evaluation process.

Evaluation criteria	Score Weight (%)	Points obtainable
Mandatory requirements		
A senior microbiology scientists with solid experience working in the Pacific Island countries	Mandatory requirements. Bidders will be disqualified if any of the requirements are not met	
Technical requirements		
Technical requirement 1: [Experience in working with countries in the Pacific as a microbiologist and familiarity in the Pacific region’s Microbiology service and the standard used for microbiology testing, the shortfalls and planned corrective measures.]	20%	200
Technical requirement 2: Familiarity with Fiji Microbiology service and the standard used for microbiology testing, shortfalls and planned corrective measures	20%	200
Technical requirement: Experience in performing whole genome sequencing and the use of WGS results to determine epidemiology of the disease	20%	200
Technical requirement: Ability to interpret WGS bioinformatics reports and defining phylogenetic trees of an organism.	10%	100
Pricing and Payment Terms	30%	300
Total Score	100%	1000

TECHNICAL PROPOSAL SUBMISSION FORM – SERVICES

INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

Technical Requirements	
Evaluation criteria	Response by Bidder
Technical requirement 1:	
Experience in working with countries in the Pacific as a microbiologist and familiarity in the Pacific region’s Microbiology service and the standard used for microbiology testing, the shortfalls and planned corrective measures.	[Bidder’s answer]
Technical requirement 2:	
Familiarity with Fiji Microbiology service and the standard used for microbiology testing, shortfalls and planned corrective measures	[Bidder’s answer]
Technical requirement 3:	
Experience in performing whole genome sequencing and the use of WGS results to determine epidemiology of the disease	[Bidder’s answer]
Technical requirement 4:	
Ability to interpret WGS bioinformatics reports and defining phylogenetic trees of an organism	[Bidder’s answer]

For the Bidder: *[insert name of the company]*

Signature:

Name of the representative: *[insert name of the representative]*

Title: *[insert Title of the representative]*

Date: *[Click or tap to enter a date]*

BIDDER'S FINANCIAL PROPOSAL

All costs indicated on the Financial Proposal should be **inclusive** of all applicable taxes.

The format shown below should be used in preparing the price schedule. All prices in the proposal must be presented in bidders' local currency.

Particulars	Amount (STATE CURRENCY)
Professional Fee (lumpsum, Inclusive of all related charges)	
Others (Specify)	
TOTAL [Insert Currency]	

Professional fees: Staff salaries, consultant fees and any other professional costs (with details on the level of effort of each person on the team if applicable. i.e., 50% full time, full-time, etc.).

Other expenses: if any, that are directly related to the delivery of the services will be reimbursable based on actuals (receipts and other supporting documents will be required). Such expenses will need prior approval before it is incurred and paid.

SPC does not provide or reimburse insurance for consultant's travel or health, professional indemnity or any other risks or liabilities that may arise during the consultancy (this includes any subcontractors or associates the consultant may hire). SPC is also not responsible for any arrangements or payments related to visas, taxes, or duties for which the consultant may be liable.

The Contractor's duty station is their home country with travel. If travel is required, SPC will pay semi flexible economy airfares, meals, incidentals, and accommodation (DSA).

SPC will not cover any IT and communication equipment for the duration of the assignment. The consultant is to ensure stable internet connection for virtual interactions when necessary.

No payment will be made for items which have not been priced. Such items are deemed to be covered by the financial offer.

Bidders will be deemed to have satisfied themselves, before submitting their proposal and to its correctness and completeness, considering of all that is required for the full and proper performance of the contract and to have included all costs in their rates and prices.

For the Bidder:

Signature:

Name of the representative:

Title: