

Additional information about the Contract Notice

Customs SEED+ Maintenance, Upgrade and Risk Management Support Brussels and CEFTA Parties

Pease note that the awarding of the contract is subject to the prior signature of the amendment of Grant Contract number: 2025/489018 – Support to the Secretariat of CEFTA 2025-2028, with the European Commission /DG ENEST which does not modify the elements of the procurement procedure (this will be the case, for instance, if the budget initially foreseen is different or if the timeframe, the nature or the condition of the implementation are altered). If the precedent condition is not met, the contracting authority will either abandon the procurement or cancel the award procedure without the candidates or tenderers being entitled to claim any compensation

1. Nature of contract

Fee-based

2. Programme title

Support to the Secretariat of CEFTA 2025-2028

3. Financing

Support to the Secretariat of CEFTA 2025-2028

4. Eligibility and rules of origin

Participation is open on equal terms to all natural and legal persons (participating either individually or in a grouping – consortium – of candidates/tenderers) effectively established in a Member State of the European Union or in a Party or territory of the regions covered and/or authorised by the specific instruments applicable to the programme under which the contract is financed (Annex A2a to the practical guide)¹ to the practical guide of the call. Tenderers must state their nationality in their tenderers and provide the usual proof of nationality under their national legislation.

5. Candidature

All eligible natural and legal persons (as per item 4 above) or groupings of such persons (consortia) may apply.

A consortium may be a permanent, legally-established grouping or a grouping which has been constituted informally for a specific tender procedure. All partners of a consortium (i.e., the leader and all other partners) are jointly and severally liable to the contracting authority. In the event that a

¹ <https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/display/ExactExternalWiki/Annexes>

natural or legal person submits more than one request to participate or tender, all requests to participate or tenders in which that person has participated will be excluded.

The participation of an ineligible natural or legal person will result in the automatic exclusion of that person. In particular, if that ineligible person belongs to a consortium, the whole consortium will be excluded.

6. Number of applications or tenders

No more than one application or tender can be submitted by a natural or legal person whatever the form of participation (as an individual legal entity or as leader or partner of a consortium submitting an application/tender). In the event that a natural or legal person submits more than one application or tender, all applications or tenders in which that person has participated will be excluded.

7. Grounds for exclusion

Candidates or tenderers must submit a signed declaration, included in the application form or tender form, to the effect that they are not in any of the situations listed in Declaration on honour on exclusion criteria and selection criteria (Annex VIII).

Candidates or tenderers included in the lists of EU restrictive measures at the moment of the award decision cannot be awarded the contract

8. Sub-contracting

Sub-contracting is allowed up to 20% of the value of the implementation services within this Contract.

9. Number of candidates to be short-listed

On the basis of the request to participate received, between 4 and 8 candidates will be invited to submit detailed tenders for this contract. If the number of eligible candidates meeting the selection criteria is less than the minimum of 4, the contracting authority may invite the candidates who satisfy the criteria to submit a tender. If the number of eligible candidates meeting the selection criteria is more than the maximum allowed, the contracting authority will rank them using the re-examination criteria stated below.

10. Short-list alliances prohibited

Any tenders received from tenderers having a different composition than the ones mentioned in the short-listed request to participate forms will be excluded from this restricted tender procedure, unless prior approval from the contracting authority has been obtained – see practical guide 2.6.3. Short-listed candidates may not form alliances or subcontract to each other for the contract in question.

11. Provisional date of invitation to tender

30/10/2026

12. Provisional commencement date of the contract

January 2027

13. Period of implementation of tasks

28 months

14. Language of the procedure

All written communications for this tender procedure and contract must be in English.

15. Additional information

Financial data to be provided by the candidate in the request to participate form or in the tender submission form must be expressed in EUR.

SELECTION AND AWARD CRITERIA

16. Selection criteria

Capacity-providing entities

An economic operator (i.e. candidate or tenderer) may, where appropriate and for a particular contract, rely on the capacities of other entities, regardless of the legal nature of the links which it has with them. If the economic operator relies on other entities, it must in that case prove to the contracting authority that it will have at its disposal the resources necessary for the performance of the contract by producing a commitment by those entities to place those resources at its disposal. Such entities, for instance the parent company of the economic operator, must respect the same rules of eligibility and notably that of nationality as the economic operator relying on them and must comply with the selection criteria for which the economic operator relies on them. **Furthermore, the data for this third entity for the relevant selection criterion should be included in a separate document.** Proof of the capacity will also have to be provided when requested by the contracting authority.

With regard to technical and professional criteria, an economic operator may only rely on the capacities of other entities where the latter will perform the tasks for which these capacities are required.

With regard to economic and financial criteria, the entities upon whose capacity the economic operator relies, become jointly and severally liable for the performance of the contract.

The following selection criteria will be applied to candidates. In the case of requests to participate submitted by a consortium, these selection criteria will be applied to the consortium as a whole if not specified otherwise. The selection criteria will not be applied to natural persons and single-member companies when they are sub-contractors.

1) Economic and financial capacity (based on item 3 of the request to participate form, or on item 3 of supply tender form). In case of candidate being a public body, equivalent information should be provided. The reference period which will be taken into account will be the last three years for which accounts have been closed.

- Criterion 1: The candidate's or tenderer's average annual turnover of the last 3 financial years for which the accounts have been closed must be not less than 1,250,000 EUR.
- Criterion 2: A valid Tax Clearance Certificate for the tenderer and, where applicable, for each member of a consortium.
- Criterion 3: A bank letter confirming that the account is in good standing or financial balance sheets demonstrating the required financial standing.

2) Professional capacity (based on items 4 and 5 of the request to participate form for service contracts and on items 4 and 5 of the tender form for supply contracts). The reference period which will be taken into account will be the last five years preceding the submission deadline.

- Criterion 1: The tenderer has, during the current year at least 10 personnel in total directly employed or otherwise legally contracted on a permanent or non-permanent basis within the areas of specialist knowledge related to this contract.
- Criterion 2: The tenderer is in business for at least 5 years in the area of software development projects.
- Criterion 3: The candidate is not subject to professional conflicting interests which may negatively affect contract performance. The presence of professional conflicting interests shall be examined on the basis of the statements made through the Declarations on Honour and, where applicable, the statements and other documents submitted.
- Criterion 4: Tenderers shall provide a description of their policies and procedures for quality assurance, together with supporting documentation and evidence of relevant certifications, such as ISO 9001 (Quality Management Systems) or equivalent.
- Criterion 5: Tenderers shall, in a relevant format (statement/letter with supporting documents), describe the measures and procedures implemented to ensure the confidentiality, integrity, availability and security of the Contracting Authority's applications. Tenderers shall also provide details of current organisational certifications and relevant accreditations demonstrating adherence to recognised standards for IT governance, information security, data protection, and IT service management. This shall include, but not be limited to, ISO/IEC 27001 or equivalent certifications.

3) Technical capacity (based on items 5 and 6 of the request to participate form for service contracts and on items 5 and 6 of the tender form for supply contracts). The reference period which will be taken into account will be the last five years from submission deadline.

- Criterion 1: The tenderer has successfully completed services under at least two (2) distinct contracts implemented at any time during the five (5) years preceding the submission deadline, with a cumulative value of at least EUR 1,250,000 in the area of development, management, maintenance, support and/or optimisation of a complex information system of

comparable technical complexity. The contract shall preferably involve custom systems development, data exchange and/or workflow management and include interoperability and secure data exchange between multiple information systems or administrations, including the development and/or maintenance of APIs, web services or other system-to-system integrations for the exchange of structured data with external systems.

- Criterion 2: At least one (1) separate contract must demonstrate experience in the development, implementation, maintenance and/or support of an information system in the risk management area, preferably in the area of customs.
- Criterion 3: The tenderer must provide customer references for the above-mentioned contracts used to demonstrate compliance with the above requirements, including information on the nature and scope of the services, technical complexity, implementation period and contract value.

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Additional comparative criteria

If more than 8 eligible candidates meet the above selection criteria, the relative strengths and weaknesses of the request to participate of these candidates will be re-examined in order to rank them and identify the 8 best requests to participate for the tender procedure. The only additional comparative criteria that will be taken into consideration during this re-examination, in the order in which they appear below, are:

- Criterion 1: the highest cumulated value of completed contracts and delivered services that meet the technical capacity criterion as per technical capacity criterion 1 and criterion 2.

17. Award criteria

Best price-quality ratio

APPLICATION AND TENDERING

18. Applications format and details to be provided

Applications must be submitted using the standard application form, the format and instructions of which must be strictly observed. The application form is available from the following Internet address:

<https://cefta.int/technical-assistance/tenders/>

Any documentation (brochure, letter, etc.) sent with an application in addition to what has been requested will not be taken into consideration.

19. How applications may be submitted

Applications must be submitted in English exclusively to the contracting authority in a sealed envelope.

- Either by post or by courier service, in which case the evidence shall be constituted by the postmark or the date of the deposit slip, to:

*The Secretariat of the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) 2006
Rue de la Loi 42, 1040 Brussels*

- OR hand delivered by the participant in person or by an agent directly to the premises of the contracting authority in return for a signed and dated receipt, in which case the evidence shall be constituted by this acknowledgement of receipt, to:

The Secretariat of the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) 2006

Rue de la Loi 42, 1040 Brussels

9.00 am to 5.00 pm

The contract title and publication reference (see contract notice) must be clearly marked on the envelope containing the application and must always be mentioned in all subsequent correspondence with the contracting authority.

Applications submitted by any other means will not be considered.

By submitting an application candidate accept to receive notification of the outcome of the procedure by electronic means. Such notification shall be deemed to have been received on the date upon which the contracting authority sends it to the electronic address referred to in the application form.

20. Deadline for submission of applications

The deadline for submission of applications can be found in the Contract Notice under IV.2.2.

Any request to participate sent to the contracting authority after this deadline will not be considered.

The contracting authority may, for reasons of administrative efficiency, reject any request for participation submitted on time but received, for any reason beyond the contracting authority's control, after the effective date of approval of the short-list report, if accepting requests to participate that were submitted on time but arrived late would considerably delay the evaluation procedure or jeopardise decisions already taken and notified.]

21. Clarifications on the contract notice

Clarifications may be sought from the contracting authority at the following email address procurement@cefta.int at the latest 21 days before the deadline for submission of applications stated at section **IV.2.2) of the contract notice**.

Clarifications will be published at <https://cefta.int/technical-assistance/tenders/> at the latest 5 days before the deadline for the submission of applications.

22. Alteration or withdrawal of applications

Applicants may alter or withdraw their applications by written notification prior to the deadline for submission of applications. No applications may be altered after this deadline.

Any such notification of alteration or withdrawal shall be prepared and submitted in accordance with precedent item. The outer envelope (and the relevant inner envelope if used) must be marked 'Alteration' or 'Withdrawal' as appropriate.

23. Legal basis

CEFTA Secretariat Mandate²

CEFTA Agreement³

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² [Decision 1/2018 Functioning of Secretariat](#)

³ <http://cefta.int/legal-documents/#1463498231136-8f9d234f-15f9>