

Request for Proposals (RFP)

RFP Number:	TFCS-RFP-2021-003
Issuance Date:	Friday 24 th of September 2021
Deadline for Receipt of Questions	12:00 pm, Wednesday 29 th of September 2021 (Ramallah local Time)
Deadline for Offers:	04:00 pm, Saturday 9 th of October 2021 (Ramallah local Time)
Description:	Tasdeer is seeking an experienced firm or individual to produce and manage communications materials for the programme.
For:	Trade Facilitation and Customs Support Programme (Tasdeer)
Funded By:	UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)
Implemented By:	Cowater International
Point of Contact:	Hanadi Musleh – Finance & Operations Lead – procurement@tasdeer.ps - +972569838398

ETHICAL AND BUSINESS CONDUCT REQUIREMENTS

Tasdeer adheres to Cowater and FCDO's ethical and business conduct requirements. Cowater is committed to integrity in procurement, and only selects offerors based on objective business criteria such as price and technical merit. Cowater expects offerors to comply with our Standards of Business Conduct, available at <https://www.cowater.com/en/about-us/#history>

Cowater does not tolerate fraud, collusion among offerors, falsified proposals/bids, bribery, or kickbacks. Any firm or individual violating these standards will be disqualified from this procurement, barred from future procurement opportunities, and may be reported to the Client.

Employees and agents of Cowater are strictly prohibited from asking for or accepting any money, fee, commission, credit, gift, gratuity, object of value or compensation from current or potential vendors or offerors in exchange for or as a reward for business. Employees and agents engaging in this conduct are subject to termination and will be reported to the client.

Offerors responding to this RFP must include the following as part of the proposal submission:

- Disclose any close, familial, or financial relationships with Cowater or project staff. For example, if an offeror's cousin is employed by the project, the offeror must state this.
- Disclose any family or financial relationship with other offerors submitting proposals. For example, if the offeror's father owns a company that is submitting another proposal, the offeror must state this.
- Certify that the prices in the offer have been arrived at independently, without any consultation, communication, or agreement with any other offeror or competitor for the purpose of restricting competition.
- Certify that all information in the proposal and all supporting documentation are authentic and accurate.
- Certify understanding and agreement to Cowater prohibitions against fraud, bribery and kickbacks.

Please contact procurement@Tasdeer.ps with any questions or concerns regarding the above information or to report any potential violations. Potential violations may also be reported directly to Cowater at to codeofconduct@cowater.com.

Section I: Introduction and Instructions to Offerors

I. Introduction

Tasdeer, the Trade Facilitation and Customs Support Programme, is soliciting proposals from eligible and responsible firms and individuals for the supply of **Communications Services**, as described in Annex I (Detailed Terms of Reference and Requirements). The Trade Facilitation and Customs Support Programme (Tasdeer) is funded by UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), and is being carried out in West Bank and Gaza. Cowater International is responsible for managing the implementation of this programme on behalf of FCDO and under its supervision. The objective of the Tasdeer programme is to improve the Palestinian private sector's competitiveness and the PA's capacity in the fields of trade, customs and exports. It aims to increase sustainable private sector-led economic growth and job creation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, including East Jerusalem and Area C, and the PA's fiscal sustainability, while ensuring equitable access to increased trade and improved institutional capacity. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion are main objectives for Tasdeer to ensure the benefits of the programme are equally accessed by the diverse groups of men and women in the supply chain.

Tasdeer is designed to be flexible and adaptable, and will work politically and technically to make progress across four key interrelated Workstreams:

- **Work Stream 1: Support to expedite the movement of goods and reduce transaction costs.** This work stream aims to develop systemic interventions that will seek to expedite the movement of goods and contribute to impactful reductions in transaction costs for Palestinian imports and exports.
- **Work Stream 2: Support to improve Palestinian trade-related institutions and business enabling environment.** This work stream aims to improve the Palestinian trade-related institutions and strengthen the trade operating environment.
- **Work Stream 3: Support to improve the private sector's skills and innovation to export and create jobs.** This work stream aims to provide grants in support of activities that will help Palestinian firms increase their exports through the application of a market-driven approach.
- **Work Stream 4: Support to improve PA's Customs readiness to assume functions from Israel and revenues from trade-related taxes.** This workstream aims to provide technical assistance to enhance the capacity of the PA Ministry of Finance Customs Department including the possible transfer of additional custom functions from Israel to the PA and to limit fiscal losses from inefficient clearance mechanism of trade-related taxes.

The interventions implemented by each work stream are designed to take into consideration the roles and needs of women, youth, and people with disabilities, including those in marginalized areas (i.e., East Jerusalem, seam zone, area C and Gaza), ensuring that all interventions and activities are GESI responsive, as main principle to achieve their expected results.

The programme is expected to implement between 40-60 strategic and systematic interventions across the workstreams and a number of activities that will require a range of communication support.

Offerors are responsible for ensuring that their offers are received in accordance with the instructions stated herein. Failure to adhere with instructions described herein may lead to disqualification of a proposal from consideration.

2. Questions and Requests for Clarifications

Questions regarding the technical or administrative requirements of this RFP may be submitted no later than **12:00 pm, Wednesday 29th of September 2021 (Ramallah local time) by email to procurement@tasdeer.ps**. Questions must be submitted in writing; phone calls will not be accepted. Questions and requests for clarification and the responses thereto that Tasdeer believes may be of interest to other offerors will be circulated to all RFP recipients who have indicated an interest in bidding.

Only the written answers issued by Tasdeer will be considered official and carry weight in the RFP process and subsequent evaluation. Any verbal information received from employees of Tasdeer, or any other entity should not be considered as an official response to any questions regarding this RFP.

3. Offer Deadline

Offers must be received no later than 04:00 pm Ramallah Local time on Saturday 9th of October 2021. Offers received after this date or time will be considered late and will be considered only at the discretion of Tasdeer.

4. Instructions for Submission of Offers

Each offeror must submit its proposal in two separate volumes: the Technical Volume and the Cost Volume. The technical proposal shall be submitted in separate envelop from the commercial proposal.

All offers and related documents must be enclosed in sealed envelopes with the name and address of the offeror and the RFP number ("RFP No. TFCS-RFP-2021-003") clearly marked on the outside. The Technical Volume and the Cost Volume must be submitted separately. Envelopes must be clearly marked either "Technical Volume" or "Cost Volume". If multiple envelopes must be submitted due to the size of a proposal, offerors must ensure that each envelope is sealed and clearly marked with the information described above.

The proposal (consisting of both volumes) must be hand-delivered or sent by mail to: **6 Jaffa St. Al Bardouni Commercial Center, 7th Floor, Ms. Hanadi Musleh, +972569838398. Electronic copies may also be submitted to procurement@tasdeer.ps. All electronic copies of documents must be in PDF, Microsoft Word or Microsoft Excel format.**

All offers must be prepared in English.

4.1 Technical Volume

The Technical Volume should describe in detail the offeror's proposed method for providing the commodities described in the scope of work found in Annex I. It should demonstrate a clear understanding of the work to be undertaken and the responsibilities of all parties involved. The plan should include details on equipment, personnel, and personnel that the offeror will make available to carry out the required activities. The plan should also provide details on the anticipated delivery schedule.

At a minimum, the Technical Volume must contain the following required completed documents:

1. Completed Technical Requirements (see Annex 1)
2. Evidence of Responsibility Statement (see Annex 2)
3. Proposal Cover Letter (see Annex 3)
4. Past Performance Form (see Annex 5), which includes links to previous materials.
5. Proposal Checklist (see Annex 6)
6. Consultant LOC (Letter of Commitment) (see Annex 7)
7. Completed copy of the attached due diligence form signed by an authorized representative of the offeror.
8. In addition, offerors responding to this RFP are requested to submit the following:
 - Organizations responding to this RFP are requested to submit a copy of their official registration or business license.
 - Individuals responding to this RFP are requested to submit a copy of their identification card.

Subcontracting arrangements: If the execution of work to be performed by the offeror requires the hiring of subcontractors, the proposal must clearly identify the subcontractor(s), contact information of subcontractor(s), and the work they will perform. Tasdeer will not refuse a proposal based upon the use of subcontractors; however, Tasdeer retains the right to approve or reject the specific subcontractors selected.

All electronic copies of documents in the Technical Volume must be in PDF, Microsoft Word or Microsoft Excel format.

The information contained in the Technical Volume should not contain any cost- or price-related information.

4.2 Cost Volume

The Cost Volume must include a unit cost breakdown for every line item described in Annex 4, as well as a description of any other costs involved; see the Price Schedule in Annex 4 for the required format. The offer must preserve and clearly indicate the line-item numbers, showing a price quote per task. All items, services, transportation costs, etc. must be clearly labeled and included in the total price. Prices must be quoted on a lump-sum, all-inclusive basis. No other costs, taxes, and/or fees may be added later.

Tasdeer Programme is exempt from VAT. Any award issued by Cowater on behalf of the Tasdeer Programme, an official program of the Government of the UK in Palestine, is free and exempt from VAT.

Quotations must be fixed price, expressed in GBP.

The Cost Volume must contain the following required documents:

1. Quotation on official letterhead or official quotation format, containing the information in Annex 3. Alternatively, offerors may complete the format found in Annex 3 and submit a signed/stamped version to Tasdeer .

The anticipated subcontract type for this procurement will be a firm fixed priced subcontract.

It is anticipated that Tasdeer will subcontract for the full quantities of commodities and services described in this RFP. However, Tasdeer reserves the right to subcontract for less or more quantities and/or services at its discretion. An offeror may present a proposal for less than the list of commodities as described in Annex 1, but Tasdeer ' preference is for proposals that address the complete technical solution.

4.3 Validity Period

Offers must remain valid for at least 90 calendar days after the offer deadline.

4.4 Past Performance

In the Technical Volume, all offers should include information for at least three (3) client references for recently offered services of similar technical scope and/or capacity.

The information offered must include a.) the name, address, contact person, and current phone number of the organization for which services were performed; b.) a brief description of the work performed, including links where possible to communications material designed by the bidder; c.) the duration (including the dates) of the work and amount (specify the currency) of the contracts/subcontracts. If the Offeror encountered problems in carrying out any of these contracts, it should provide an explanation of the problem encountered and describe any corrective action taken. Failure to submit complete and accurate information regarding previous similar or related contracts is grounds for disqualification from the evaluation process.

Tasdeer reserves the right to obtain past performance information obtained from sources other than those identified by the offeror. Tasdeer shall determine the relevance of similar past performance information.

4.5 Negotiations

Best and final price quotations are requested from all offerors. It is anticipated that awards will be made solely on the basis of these original quotations. However, Tasdeer reserves the right to conduct negotiations and/or request clarifications prior to awarding a subcontract.

4.6 Basis for Award

The award will be made to a responsible offeror whose offer follows the RFP instructions, meets the eligibility requirements, and is determined via a trade-off analysis to be the best value based on application of the following evaluation criteria. The relative importance of each individual criterion is indicated by the number of points below:

- **Technical approach – 25 points:** Responsiveness to the technical specifications and requirements. This will evaluate the offeror's proposed method and workplan. The methodology should demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the scope of work and firm grasp of the purpose of the required deliverables. The workplan should include the organization of the tasks illustrating maximization of time and clarity in the assignment of personnel.

- **Past experience – 20 points in relevant field and corporate capabilities:** This will include an evaluation of the capacity of the organization or individual to perform the scope of work, review of success stories of previous experience in similar jobs and the ability to illustrate past successes in performing similar assignment. Firms or individuals must list relevant past projects /experience to the task. This will be scored separately to the personnel themselves and must be completed.
- **Consultant Composition 15 points:** This will include an evaluation of the qualifications of proposed personnel; experience and technical capabilities. Evaluation of the CV and reference if needed. Short descriptions/bios demonstrating why the proposed person is correct for the role are encouraged.
- **Cost Proposal – 30 points:** The overall cost presented in the offer.

4.6.1 Awarding to multiple bidders

In cases where Tasdeer deems that no single offeror can fulfill all the requested service requirements, Tasdeer may select multiple offerors for different services. In such a scenario two or more offerors may be selected and Tasdeer will clearly articulate which services each offeror will provide to Tasdeer.

Commercial Evaluation Criteria (see Annex 8)

Technical Evaluation Criteria Item (see Annex 9)

- * Technical proposals that get score less than 45/70, the financial offer might not be considered.
- * Proposals short listed based on highest scores in the technical evaluation maybe required to make a presentation, after which the technical scoring will be adjusted for those short-listed proposals.

Best-offer quotations are requested. It is anticipated that award will be made solely on the basis of these original quotations. However, Tasdeer reserves the right to conduct any of the following:

- Tasdeer may conduct negotiations with and/or request clarifications from any offeror prior to award.
- While preference will be given to offerors who can address the full technical requirements of this RFP, Tasdeer may issue a partial award or split the award among various offerors, if in the best interest of Tasdeer Programme
- Tasdeer may cancel this RFP at any time.

Please note that in submitting a response to this RFP, the offeror understands that FCDO is not a party to this solicitation and the offeror agrees that any protest hereunder must be presented—in writing with full explanations—to Tasdeer Programme for consideration, as FCDO will not consider protests regarding procurements carried out by implementing partners. Tasdeer, at its sole discretion, will make a final decision on the protest for this procurement.

4.7 Terms and Conditions of Subcontract

This is a Request for Proposals only. Issuance of this RFP does not in any way obligate Tasdeer to award a subcontract, nor does it commit Tasdeer to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal.

ANNEX I: DETAILED SPECIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

FCDO Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs) Trade Facilitation and Customs Support (Tasdeer) Programme

Communications Firm or Expert

I. Description of Role: Communications Firm/Expert – Ramallah, Palestine

The Communications Firm or Expert (CF/E) will work with Tasdeer's Senior Management Team, KMEL Director, Workstream Leads, and other staff as needed to provide on-demand, request-based communications support in both English and Arabic.

The role is part-time on a request basis, meaning that the frequency of requests can vary month to month based on Tasdeer's activities. As such, interested companies or individuals **should submit a proposal detailing how they intend to carry out the outlined tasks, and a price quote per task.**

Scope of Work:

The CF/E will support the Tasdeer team to communicate the project's activities and successes to stakeholders, donors, the public, and others. The CF/E will be requested to carry out tasks/activities such as:

- Prepare press releases in Arabic (or English as required) in line with FCDO and stakeholders' requirements. These could cover Tasdeer events such as workshops and launch events, or communicate new Tasdeer support, such as grants to firms.
- Take professional photographs to cover Tasdeer events. Photos may be used as part of social media posts or as part of project reporting.
- Liaise with media outlets (print and electronic) to disseminate communication material
- Produce success stories in English (or Arabic if required). These are short written pieces accompanied by photographs or charts which highlight project achievements or results. These may be for internal use or for wider dissemination.
- Produce and/or manage website content
- Develop and implement targeted communications plans to support Tasdeer's intervention activities.
- Develop and disseminate promotional and/or informative materials in a range of formats e.g. banners, leaflets, social media posts.
- Other services as relevant (interested firms and individuals are welcome to quote for additional services which they are able to provide)

Required Expertise and Competencies:

- The ability to supply engaging and professionally-written pieces in both English and Arabic
- A good track record of doing similar tasks for businesses and organisations
- Ability to nominate a specific staff member as a single point of contact to liaise with Tasdeer on all matters
- Good outreach and relations with all media outlets
- Having own platform with wide range of reach is an advantage

Reporting Lines:

- This role reports to Abdullah Ali Ahmad (Trade Institution Building Expert)

Duration:

Part-time support on a request/call-down basis

Location:

This position will be based in Ramallah. Project-related travel may take place within Palestine (West Bank and Gaza) according to project needs.

ANNEX 2: Evidence of Responsibility Statement

Evidence of Responsibility Statement

This statement describes the offeror's internal policies and procedures, as well as its ability to comply with the terms and conditions of a potential subcontract resulting from RFP No. TFCS-RFP-2021-003. The offeror shall complete the information in this statement as part of its proposal.

Company Name: _____

I. Authorized Negotiators

The offeror's proposal in response to RFP No. TFCS-RFP-2021-003 may be discussed with any of the following individuals. These individuals are authorized to represent our company in negotiation of this proposal.

Names of authorized negotiator(s): _____

These individuals can be reached at the following office:

Address: _____

Telephone/Email: _____

2. Adequate Financial Resources

We hereby certify that the above-named company maintains adequate financial resources to manage any subcontract resulting from this offer.

3. Ability to Comply

We certify we are able to comply with the proposed schedule and period of performance, having taken into consideration all existing business commitments, commercial as well as governmental.

4. Record of Performance, Integrity, and Business Ethics

Our record of integrity is outstanding. We have no allegations of lack of integrity or of questionable business ethics. Our integrity can be confirmed by our Past Performance References, contained in the Technical Volume.

5. Organization, Experience, Accounting and Operational Controls, and Technical Skills

Describe how the subcontract will be managed: _____

6. Equipment and Facilities

We maintain the necessary facilities and equipment to carry out the subcontract.

7. Eligibility to Receive Award

We are qualified and eligible to receive an award under applicable laws and regulation. In addition, we have performed similar work – describe: _____

8. Acceptability of Subcontract Terms and Conditions

We have reviewed the solicitation document and attachments and agree to the terms and conditions set forth therein.

I hereby certify that the above statements are true and accurate, to the best of my knowledge.

Company Name: _____

By (Signature): _____ Title: _____

Printed Name: _____ Date: _____

ANNEX 3: Proposal Cover Letter

[On Firm's Letterhead]

The following cover letter must be placed on letterhead and completed/signed/stamped by a representative authorized to sign on behalf of the offeror, as part of the Technical Volume:

**To: Cowater International – Tasdeer Programme
Ramallah Office**

Reference: RFP no. TFCS-RFP-2021-003

To Whom It May Concern:

We, the undersigned, hereby provide the attached offer to perform all work required to complete the activities and requirements as described in the above-referenced RFP. Please find our offer attached.

We hereby acknowledge and agree to all terms, conditions, special provisions, and instructions included in the above-referenced RFP. We further certify that the below-named firm—as well as the firm’s principal officers, and all commodities and services offered in response to this RFP—are eligible to participate in this procurement under the terms of this solicitation.

Furthermore, we hereby certify that, to the best of our knowledge and belief:

- We have no close, familial, or financial relationships with any Cowater or Tasdeer programme staff members.
- We have no close, familial, or financial relationships with any other offerors submitting proposals in response to the above-referenced RFP; and
- The prices in our offer have been arrived at independently, without any consultation, communication, or agreement with any other offeror or competitor for the purpose of restricting competition.
- All information in our proposal and all supporting documentation is authentic and accurate.
- We understand and agree to Cowater’ prohibitions against fraud, bribery, and kickbacks.

We hereby certify that the enclosed representations, certifications, and other statements are accurate, current, and complete.

Authorized Signature: _____

Name and Title of Signatory: _____

Date: _____

Company Name: _____

Company Address: _____

Company Telephone and Website: _____

Company Registration or Taxpayer ID Number: _____

Does the company have an active bank account (Yes/No)? _____

Official name associated with bank account (for payment): _____

ANNEX 4: Price Schedule

Item No.	Item Name	Description/Specifications	QTY	Unit Price	Total Price
1.					
2					

3					
GRAND TOTAL IN Click here to enter text.					
GRAND TOTAL IN GREAT BRITISH POUND GBP					£

Delivery Period: Click here to enter text.

Note: If the cost offer could be provided in GBP, please adjust your cost proposal and mark clearly costs to be in the GBP currency.

ANNEX 6: Proposal Checklist

Offeror Name:

Have you?

Submitted your proposal to Cowater International / Tasdeer Programme by hand or mail to the as specified in General Instructions above?

Does your proposal include the following?

- Signed Cover Letter (*use template in Attachment 3*)
- Separate Technical and Cost proposals individually emailed and indicated as Volume I and Volume II respectively.
- Proposal of the Product or Service that meets the technical requirements as per Attachment A
- Response to each of the evaluation criteria
- Past Performance (*use template in Attachment*)
- Letter of Commitment to be filled by each consultant. (*Use the letter in Attachment 4*)

ANNEX 7: Consultant LOC (Letter of Commitment)
Letter of Commitment to be filled by each consultant:

Letter of Commitment (to be signed by consultants included in RFP#: TFCS-RFP-2021-003)

I, the undersigned [insert consultant's name], hereby confirm that I wish to be included on an exclusive basis in the team submitted by [insert lead firm name], which is participating in the Request for Proposal (**TFCS-RFP-2021-003**) titled (Study on the impact of applying Israeli standards on Palestinian imports' transaction costs and trade competitiveness) issued by the Tasdeer Programme. I therefore undertake not to offer my services to another company taking part in the same application process for the RFP.

Consequently, any other company using my name for this registration process is doing so without my consent.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Title: _____

Place: _____

Consultant Signature

ANNEX 8: Commercial Evaluation Criteria

RFQ/RFP Criteria	Scoring Guide	Weighted Score
C1: Cost Breakdown	A cost breakdown/price schedule that transparently demonstrates the costs of proposed inputs, including the unit cost breakdown for every line item, as well as a description of any other costs involved	Pass/Fail
C2: Reasonableness of Costs	Costs proposed are reasonable, necessary, and realistic for the work to be performed	5
C3: Total Costs	The total points allocated to each bidder shall be determined according to the following formula: (lowest proposed costs / your proposed costs) * Maximum score achievable (20). The lowest cost offer will be assessed against the maximum available budget by the Project Manager.	20
C4: Consultant VfM	If market-rate exists through benchmarking. The cost of the consultant versus the market rate for similar roles. This shall be determined by the formula (market rate/proposed rate) * 5. The evaluation team should justify consultants whose costs are much higher than market rate, possibly seeking clarification, if appropriate, from the bidder.	10
C5: Whole-Life Costing	(Where there are multiple bidders) The panel will determine whether it is more beneficial to invest in more cost-intensive input to more effectively achieve the output (e.g., Proper consideration of long-term or crucial factors including GESI and sustainability). This is a qualitative judgment by the panel members. Allocate 20 points among the firms, according to the long-term effectiveness of their inputs versus their price.	20
C5b: Whole-Life Costing	(Where there is a single bidder) This criterion will be used if the total cost exceeds the allocated budget. This is a qualitative judgment by the panel members, of whether it is worthwhile to invest in more cost-intensive input to more effectively achieve the output (e.g., Proper consideration of long-term or crucial factors including GESI and sustainability).	Pass/fail
Total:	55	([Total] /55) x 30

ANNEX 9: Technical Evaluation Criteria Item

Scoring Guide	Score	Qualitative Comment/Feedback
Compliance Items		
The technical document is in the required format. i.e. Technical volume must contain required documents (including annexes)	Pass/Fail	N/A
The technical volume must not include cost or price-related information	Pass/Fail	N/A
1-Technical approach: Evaluate the proposed methodology and workplan in response to the ToRs		25
Does the proposal demonstrate a clear understanding of the purpose and parts of the assignment?	5	[required]
Do the method and workplan lead to the effective delivery of deliverables listed in the scope of work?	15	[required]
Is the workplan realistic and does it contain all necessary resources?	5	[required]
2- Past project experience of the consulting firm or individual(s)		20
Project examples must be included for recently offered services of similar scope; the details stated in the ToRs must be included.	Pass/Fail	N/a
Does the firm/individual(s) demonstrate experience in similar assignments with evidence of past successes?	13	[Required]
3- Qualifications and competence of the key personnel for the assignment (including evaluation of experience, technical capabilities, and assignment of tasks to maximize resources and meet deadlines).		15
Key Representative	15	[Required]
Total:		65