

## Request for Proposals (RFP)

<b>RFP Number:</b>	RFP-SPRING-0002-2025
<b>Issuance Date:</b>	September 25, 2025
<b>Program Name:</b>	Social Protection, Inclusion and Gender Equality Program (SPRING)
<b>Funded by:</b>	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)
<b>Description:</b>	Procurement of Service Provider for Travel Related to Program Implementation.
<b>Deadline for Receipt of Questions:</b>	October 15, 2025, 11:59PM, Manila Time
<b>Deadline for Submission of Proposal:</b>	October 25, 2025, 11:59PM, Manila Time
<b>Email Proposal to:</b>	<a href="mailto:procurement@springphilippines.org">procurement@springphilippines.org</a>
<b>Contact:</b>	<a href="mailto:procurement@springphilippines.org">procurement@springphilippines.org</a>

### BACKGROUND

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) **Social Protection, Inclusion and Gender equality (SPRING)** Program is Australia's flagship investment of support to the Philippine Government on Social Protection, Gender Equality, Disability, Social Inclusion and Indigenous Inclusion. It is an AUD 40 million investment over 5 years that will support the joint Development Partnership Plan (DPP 2024-2029) between the Government of Australia and the Philippine Government. The investment is DFAT's primary avenue in the Philippines for supporting poverty reduction and bilateral funding on gender equality and social inclusion at the national level and with some select Local Government Units (LGUs). SPRING supports efforts under Australia's new International Development Policy and DFAT's strategies on gender equality, disability equity and rights, and translate these into implementation in the Philippines.

*SPRING contributes to the goal that the social and economic transformation in the Philippines reduces poverty and provides equal opportunities to all Filipinos in line with the Philippines Development Plan.*

*The objective of SPRING is that Australia works in partnership with the Philippine Government to improve systems and structures that reduce poverty and inequality and advance gender equality and the rights of people with disabilities.*

SPRING has four mutually reinforcing End of Program Outcomes (EOPOs):

1. Philippine Government social protection plans, policies and programs increasingly close gaps in the social protection floor.
2. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and select LGU systems increasingly deliver quality social protection that is inclusive, gender and shock responsive, and climate sensitive.
3. The Philippine Government increasingly invests in gender responsive policies, plans, programs and systems.

The Philippine Government improves data, systems and targeting to enable people with disability and Indigenous Peoples improved access to targeted services.

Commonwealth Procurement Rules

(<https://www.finance.gov.au/government/procurement/commonwealth-procurement-rules>), DFAT Safeguards Guidelines (<https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/child-protection-policy.pdf>, <https://easterneurope.safeguardingsupporthub.org/taxonomy/term/295>)

## **Purpose of this Procurement**

The purpose of procurement is to establish a contractual agreement for a minimum duration of one (1) year with a qualified travel agency. These agencies will be responsible for providing comprehensive travel services to support the implementation of the SPRING Program, but not limited to:

- Facilitating issuance of flight tickets and travel insurance for program personnel, as well as for representatives from sub-national offices, Local Government Units (LGUs), program partners, private sector organizations, and other relevant stakeholders
- Scoping and booking for available hotels for accommodation needs
- Scoping and booking local land transportation/vehicle rentals as needed

The selection and contracting process for these travel agencies will be carried out in strict adherence to the Commonwealth Procurement Rules, DFAT Safeguarding Guidelines, the SPRING Program's internal guidelines, and all applicable procurement implementing rules and regulations. This ensures transparency, fairness, and compliance with legal and organizational standards. By engaging with qualified travel agencies, the SPRING Program will ensure efficient and cost-effective management of its travel requirements while maintaining high standards of service and accountability.

## **SCOPE OF WORK**

A complete guide to the deliverables can be found in the attached terms of reference (TOR).

## **DELIVERABLES**

A complete guide to the deliverables can be found in the attached terms of reference (TOR).

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

A complete guide to the deliverables can be found in the attached terms of reference (TOR).

## **SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS**

All firms that meet the selection criteria are invited to submit their bids by **October 25, 2025, 11:59 PM (Manila local time)** through [procurement@springphilippines.org](mailto:procurement@springphilippines.org).

1. Cover Letter (See template in Annex 2).
2. Business Permits
  - a. Latest and up to date business permit
  - b. BIR2303
  - c. Sample copy of invoice
  - d. Sample copy of statement of account
  - e. DTI for Sole Proprietor
  - f. SEC for Corporation
  - g. Latest Audited Financial Statement (the terms of payment will be though send-bill, this is to ensure that the winning travel agency have the financial capacity for such terms and conditions).
3. Cost Proposal. See selection criteria.
4. Technical Proposal. See selection criteria.

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### **Basis for Award**

The award will be given to a responsible offeror whose offer follows the RFP instructions, meets the eligibility requirements, and determination of 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 proposal: 75%**

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

*Past experience:* in relevant field and corporate capabilities: This will include an evaluation of the capacity of the organization 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 assignments.

#### **Financial Proposal: 25%.**

Proposals shortlisted 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, Cowater reserves the right to conduct any of the following:

- Cowater 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, Cowater may issue a partial award or split the award among various offerors, if in the best interest of the SPRING Programme.
- Cowater may cancel this RFP at any time.

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

### **Questions and Requests for Clarification**

Questions regarding the technical or administrative requirements of this RFP may be submitted no later than **October 25, 2025, 11:59pm (Manila local time)** by email to [procurement@springphilippines.org](mailto:procurement@springphilippines.org). Questions must be submitted in writing; phone calls will not be accepted. Questions and requests for clarification and the responses thereto that Cowater 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 Cowater will be considered official and carry weight in the RFP process and subsequent evaluation. Any verbal information received from employees of Cowater, or any other entity should not be considered as an official response to any questions regarding this RFP.

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## ANNEX 1: 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-SPRING-0002-2025. The offeror shall complete the information in this statement as part of its proposal.*

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1. Authorized Negotiators

The offeror's proposal in response to RFP-SPRING-0002-2025 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 the contract.

#### 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 Proposal.

#### 5. Equipment and Facilities

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

#### 6. Eligibility to Receive Award

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

#### 7. 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): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

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## ANNEX 2: 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 proposal*

To: **Cowater International – SPRING Program**

Reference: **RFP Number: RFP-SPRING-0002-2025**

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 SPRING 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's 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):	

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### **ANNEX 3: Proposal Checklist**

Offeror Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*Have you?*

- ☐ Submitted your proposal to Cowater International / SPRING Program by email as specified in General Instructions above?

*Does your proposal include the following?*

- ☐ Signed Cover Letter (*use template in Annex 2*)
- ☐ Price Proposal
- ☐ Latest and up to date business permit
- ☐ BIR2303
- ☐ Sample copy of invoice
- ☐ Sample copy of statement of account
- ☐ DTI for Sole Proprietor
- ☐ SEC for Corporation
- ☐ Latest Audited Financial Statement (the terms of payment will be though send-bill, this is to ensure that the winning travel agency has the financial capacity for such terms and conditions).
- ☐ Response to each of the evaluation criteria of Past Performance (*use template in Attachment*)

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#### Annex 4: Financial and Technical Proposal Evaluation Criteria

No.	Evaluation Criteria	Description	Weight (%)
1	Price Quotation	Net of Vat Service Fees	25%
2	Technical Capability and Experience	Demonstrated experience in providing corporate or development-sector travel services	20%
3	Service Quality and Responsiveness	Efficiency and reliability of online/offline bookings and ticketing. Availability of 24/7 support, ability to handle urgent requests, issue resolution process, and dedicated team structure.	20%
4	Cost Effectiveness	Competitiveness of service fees, transparency of cost structure, ability to provide best value options (e.g., discounts, loyalty programs).	15%
5	Customer Service and Support	Ability to manage complaints, cancellations, and refunds professionally and efficiently. Reference checks may be conducted.	10%
6	Credit Facility and Payment Terms	Availability and flexibility of credit facility, invoicing process, and alignment with the Platform's financial procedures and payment timelines.	10%
			100%

*Cowater International is an equal opportunity employer, basing employment on merit and qualifications as they relate to professional experience and position expectations. Cowater does not discriminate against any employee or applicants on the basis of race, religion, sex, gender identity, disability, age, or any other basis protected by law. Cowater aims to have a diverse workforce and a workplace that is supportive of gender equality, disability, and social inclusion. Women, people with disabilities and other minorities are highly encouraged to apply.*

#### **ABOUT US**

*Founded in 1985, Cowater International is a leading global development consulting company. Headquartered in Ottawa and with corporate hubs in Auckland, Berlin, Brussels, Helsinki, London, Madrid, Manila, Nairobi, Singapore and Stockholm, Cowater International has successfully delivered a portfolio of over 2,500 projects and assignments in more than 95 countries. We work with governments, private sector actors and communities implementing projects that support socio-economic development, institutional strengthening, environmental improvements and advance equal opportunities for all. We are a diverse and experienced team committed to building a better tomorrow for the people we serve. Our adaptive approach to management has led to our yearly award-winning work and recognition as one of Canada's Best Managed Companies since 2017.*