



CALL FOR TENDERS

SMEs AFRICA

Support to internationalisation of European
SMEs in African continent

Open Procedure

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1. Introduction

Aerospace Valley (henceforth AV), acting under powers delegated by the French National Space Centre (CNES), is launching this invitation to public tender for the development, establishment and the operation of SMEs Africa Work Package 2, Support to European SMEs internationalisation.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND CONTEXT

2.1 Space Applications

During the last decades, space industry has expanded the limits of humanity, allowing man-made creations to travel beyond the borders of our known cosmos. In our days, space technologies have also found application in our daily lives through diverse ways, revealing their huge but unexplored potential.

Satellites orbiting the Earth can observe every single point of our planet, bring connectivity to the most isolated persons, and position all objects all over the globe. These technologies are at the heart of a strong European leadership for many years, through the impulsion of the European Commission and the European Space Agency. Nowadays, we observe a major acceleration of the penetration of these technologies into our societies due to the miniaturisation of technologies, the use of smartphone, and the big data paradigm allowing the data to be collected and processed. These satellites create every day enormous amounts of signals and data that now can be transformed into information in answer to various societal challenges and benefit economic domains such as maritime activities, agriculture, energy, environmental and civil protection, public health, tourism, urban planning and transport.

In the European Union, significant attempts have already been launched to take advantage of these technologies. The Copernicus program and the European Global Navigation Satellite System GALILEO are two European investments with great importance for space and EU economy. Copernicus is the European Union's Earth observation programme, looking at our planet and its environment to citizens from Europe and beyond. It offers information services that draw from satellite Earth Observation and in-situ (non-space) data. The Copernicus services deliver near-real-time data on a global level which can also be used for local and regional needs, to help us better understand our planet and sustainably manage the environment we live in.

2.2 SMEs AFRICA action

SMEs AFRICA is an action implemented within the Framework Partnership Agreement Caroline Herschel funded by the European Commission since 2017. The double objectives of this programme is to promote



the use of Copernicus data at national, European and international level and to support the development of business solutions, innovative products and applications based on Copernicus data.

SMEs AFRICA is managed by the French National Space Centre (CNES), a partner of Caroline Herschel framework partnership agreement and operated by Aerospace Valley.

SMEs AFRICA focuses on business development in four African countries which are Ethiopia, Gabon, Senegal and South Africa. In details, the objectives are:

- To support the business development of 15 European SMEs in the targeted countries. The international support will include a training accompaniment and a business mission implementation or qualified B2B meetings (according to the sanitary crisis development).
- To promote the use of Copernicus data to African end-users during conferences or specific training.

3. General and specific objectives of the consultation

AV wishes to enter into an agreement with one subcontractor that can provide the services to support the works of SMEs AFRICA Work Package 2 (WP2) aiming to implement an effective and successful internationalisation support for the benefit of **15 EU SMEs**.

Access to third markets is a leverage effect for company's competitiveness and will be a strong asset in the development of SMEs concretizing partnerships abroad. SMEs AFRICA has selected 4 countries which are: Ethiopia, Gabon, Senegal and South Africa.

The specific objectives of this consultation are:

1. **To provide each SME with an export diagnosis in two countries** chosen by the SME
2. **To provide each SME with a roadmap** in the most promising country
3. **To support each SME with 4 hours of consultancy**

Overall agenda of SMEs AFRICA:

The 15 EU SMEs are expected to be selected in April 2021 in order to start the internationalization programme in May 2021 for 12 months. In the following description of activities we will describe the agenda from M1 (May 2021) until M12 (May 2022).



Objective 1: export diagnosis

To support AV in achieving its objective of providing an internationalisation service for SMEs, the subcontractor(s) will have to provide each SME with an export diagnosis in two of the four target countries of the programme. Both countries will be chosen by the SME among the four countries targeted by the project.

The subcontractor will use its own tool to set up the diagnosis.

The diagnosis should be doubled:

- internal to the structure: it will highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the SME;
- external to the structure: it will be market oriented with main opportunities and threats.

These two diagnosis will be the first outcomes of the project.

Calendar: the diagnosis will start at M1 and should be delivered at M3.

Expected outcomes: for each SME 1 export diagnosis in two countries.

Deliverables: 30 export diagnosis will be delivered to AV.

Objective 2: Country roadmap

Each of the 15 SMEs should receive a roadmap for the most promising country between the two analysed in the export diagnosis.

This roadmap will provide SMEs with key information before starting business in the target country. It will include good local business practices, cultural tips, intellectual property regulations, foreign investment strategy. This roadmap will also highlight the country market analysis started in the export diagnosis, the trends, the strengths and weaknesses, potential customers and partners as well as the main competitors.

Such roadmap should drive the SME as a guideline while it is starting internationalisation in one country.

Calendar: from M3 until M6.

Expected outcomes: for each SME, one roadmap in one target country

Deliverables: 15 roadmaps will delivered to AV

Objective 3: SMEs' support

The SMEs' support should be high qualified to answer its need for diverse topics: export taxes, legal advice, cultural aspects, intellectual property right, etc.

It is expected that each SME will benefit from 4 hours of consultancy in addition to the two first objectives of this call for tenders.



Calendar: all the project lifetime, until M12.

Expected outcomes: each SMEs will receive 4 hours of consultancy.

Deliverables: Minutes of meeting will be delivered to AV.

Optional: to provide the 15 EU SMEs a one hour webinar on each target country before the B2B mission. The applicants should detail in their COST proposition the optional presentation of 1h /country webinar + timing foreseen.

4. Indicative methodology

The role of the subcontractor is to support the SMEs AFRICA operator in achieving its objective of providing an internationalization service for SMEs.

- Each of the companies that have been selected by the SMEs AFRICA will have a meeting with Aerospace Valley and the subcontractor, at the beginning and at the end of the action in order to carefully check the company's international strategy (financial aspects and foreign settlement strategy).
- In addition AV and the selected subcontractor will have monthly meetings.
- The subcontractor will use its own tools to proceed to the export diagnosis and roadmaps.
- All meetings with SMEs will be reported to AV in minutes.

5. Subcontractor prerequisites

The subcontractor will have to meet the following prerequisites:

- Have experiences in target countries: the subcontractor will, for practical reasons, need to be highly experienced in internationalisation of SMEs in the target countries. The subcontractor must show at least 3 previous successful experiences in the target countries selected. These target countries are Ethiopia, Gabon, Senegal and South Africa.
- Expertise in earth observation activities will be appreciated in the evaluation process.

6. Input by SMEs AFRICA

The contract will be managed by Aerospace Valley. AV will appoint a project manager in charge who will participate in the meetings with the subcontractor, facilitate access to information, monitor the work and validate the results of the services of the contractor.



The subcontractor must ensure that activities progress properly, are reported upon regularly and for that purpose designate a person responsible for permanent and regular contact with AV.

7. Starting date of the contract and duration

It is expected that the contract shall enter into force in May 2021. The execution of the tasks shall not start before the contract has been signed or before the specific date specified in the contract. Work will follow the timetable of the SMEs AFRICA action.

Amendments may be made to the contract only in exceptional cases where the amendment is considered by AV to be necessary for the completion of the project and following the provisions of the draft contract.

8. Deliverables

The subcontractor must provide the required reports and documents accompanying the requests for payments in accordance with the conditions of the standard service contract.

- Two export diagnosis for each SME at M3.
- One target country roadmap for each SME at M6.
- Minutes of the 4 hours of consultancy provided to each of the 15 EU SMEs at M9 and M12.
- Optional: the Powerpoint presentation of the four target country webinars.

9. Payment terms

Payments under the contract will be made upon receipt of the corresponding invoices (check ANNEX III for other contractual conditions)

10. Confidentiality and data protection matters

Confidentiality is required for all persons working or collaborating directly or indirectly in the performance of tasks following this call for tender, as they might come into contact with confidential information during the course of their work. Any breach of confidentiality will be treated as professional misconduct and could lead to the termination of the contract as set out in Annex II. AV reserves the right to instigate any legal proceedings for breach of confidentiality necessary.

Specific requirements relating to personal data and the protection thereof are set out in the contract. The contractor is responsible for ensuring that all data to which he/she or his/her staff become party during the execution of the contract must be treated confidentially and in conformity with EC regulation Ne



45/2001¹. The contractor is equally responsible for ensuring the application of this obligation in respect of any of his/her direct or indirect sub-tenderers.

11. Eligibility

This invitation to tender is open to Tenderers from the Member States of the European Union and the European Economic Area². Participation in tendering procedures is open on equal terms to all natural and legal persons in a third country which has a special agreement with the EU in the field of public procurement on the conditions laid down in that agreement.

12. Costs

Tenderers themselves will bear the costs of drawing up their tenders and AV will not be liable to pay any compensation if a tender is rejected or if it decides not to select any tender.

13. Form and contents of the tenders

- All tenders must be signed by an authorised person or by the tenderer's legal representative.
- Tenders must be clear and concise, with continuous page numbering, and assembled in a coherent fashion (e.g. bound or stapled, etc.). Since Tenderers will be judged on the contents of their written bids, these must make it clear that they are able to meet the requirements set out in the specifications.
- Tenders may be drafted in English (UK).
- Consortium of tenderers may answer this tender. In this case, Aerospace valley will sign a contract with the leader of the consortium.
- Tenders must be delivered according to the requirements set out in the letter of invitation to tender (Annex I) and the present specifications, and before the date and time indicated in that letter.

Tenders must include the following information:

- All the information and documents duly filled in and signed, in order to assess the different criteria.

¹ Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 "on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data", OJ L 8 of 12.01.2001.

² States covered by the Public Procurement Agreement concluded within the World Trade Organisation are not included in this call for tenders as the EU Executive Agencies are not signatories of the Agreement.

- For the appraisal, the written submission shall include a clear and detailed description of the organisation, resources and methodology proposed. The Tenderers will provide a practical and detailed description of the resources and services proposed to achieve the objectives and deliverable;
- The price in Euro.

14. SUBMISSION OF TENDERS

Tenders must be submitted by email at smesafrica@aerospace-valley.com in electronic format (PDF or compatible) **by April, 12th 2021**.

Tenderers shall observe precisely the indications of the invitation to tender, in order to ensure that their tenders are admissible.

Late submission will lead to the non-admissibility of the tender and its outright rejection. Tenders sent by fax will be non-admissible.

15. STRUCTURE OF TENDERS

Tenders must contain the following sections:

- Section 1: Administrative proposal and presentation of the tenderer;
- Section 2: Technical proposal, addressing specifications of the call;
- Section 3: Financial offer.

15.1 Section 1 – Administrative proposal

This section must provide the following information:

Tenderer's identification: presenting the name of the tenderer and the name of the single contact person in relation to this tender. All Tenderers must provide proof of registration, as prescribed in their country of establishment, in one of the professional or trade registers, or provide a declaration or certificate. If the tenderer is a natural person, he or she must provide a copy of the identity card or passport and proof that he or she is covered by the social security scheme as self-employed person.

In case of a joint tender, the letter of submission of tender must be signed by a duly authorised representative for each tenderer, or by a single tenderer duly authorised by other Tenderers with power of attorney.

15.2 Section 2 – Technical proposal

The technical proposal must cover all aspects and tasks required in the technical specifications and provide all the information needed to apply the award criteria. Offers deviating from the requirements or not covering all requirements may be excluded on the basis of non-conformity with the tender specifications and will not be evaluated.

15.3 Section 3 - Financial offer

The price for the tender must be quoted in euro. Prices must be quoted free of all duties, taxes and other charges, including VAT, the amount of VAT may be shown separately.

The quoted price must be a fixed amount. That price should include all charges (fees, meetings, administrative expenses, overheads, travel and subsistence expenses, materials, equipment). No additional refund request in respect of the above mentioned charges will be accepted.

16. EVALUATION AND AWARD OF THE CONTRACT

The evaluation is based on the information provided in the submitted tender. It takes place in three steps:

- Step 1: Evaluation of Tenderers on the basis of selection criteria (technical and professional capacity of the tenderer and the performing team);
- Step 2: Evaluation of tenders on the basis of the award criteria (technical and financial evaluation of the offer).

Only tenders meeting the requirements of the preceding step will pass on to the next step.

The evaluation will be performed by the consortium and the final decision remains on AV.

16.1 SELECTION CRITERIA

Tenderers must prove their technical and professional capacity to carry out the work subject to this call for tender. The evidence requested should be provided by the contractor.

The tenderer must prove that he/she fulfils the following criteria:

- A minimum of two (2) years of professional experience in international support to SMEs;
- To have carried out at least 3 successful experiences of internationalisation of SMEs in at least 3 of the 4 targeted countries;
- Very good command of the English language at the level of native speakers or and proven capacity to draft reports in English;
- Proven skills and contacts / partners in earth observation fields;

16.2 AWARD CRITERIA

The quality of the tender will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Overall quality and understanding of the proposal (10% of the final score)
- Methodology set up to answer the 3 objectives of this call (30% of the final score)
- Team experience in international business support to European SMEs (20% of the final score)
- Matching of the tenderer with the targeted countries (30% of the final score)
- The price (10% of the final score)

Since assessment of the tenders will be based on the quality of the proposed solution, tenders should elaborate on all points addressed in order to score as many points as possible. The mere repetition of mandatory requirements set out in these specifications, without going into details or without giving any added value, will only result in a very low score.

The above criteria will be assessed on the basis of the details provided in the tender, and any other documents that the tenderer considers useful for this purpose.

AV will award the contract to the economically most advantageous tender as stated below.

- AV reserves the right not to select a contractor if the price of the offers proposed is in excess of the budget allocated to this project.
- The price (corresponding to 10% of the final score)

The formula used to rank tenders and to calculate which tender offers the best value for money incorporates the quality mark and the price as expressed above.

17. Information to tenderers on the final evaluation

AV will inform Tenderers of decisions reached concerning the award of the contract, including the grounds for any decision not to award a contract or to recommence the procedure.

18. ANNEX I INVITATION LETTER

Dear Sir/Madam,

Subject: Invitation to tender to SMEs AFRICA

1. SMEs AFRICA Action is planning to award the public contract referred to above. The tender documentation consists in this letter and the tender specifications with its annexes.
2. If you are interested in this contract, you should submit a tender in English (UK).

3. You must submit your application by email in electronic format (PDF or compatible) to smesafrica@aerospace-valley.com no later than **April 12th 2021**.
4. Tenders must be:
 - a. - signed by an authorised representative of the tenderer;
 - b. - perfectly legible so that there can be no doubt as to words and figures;
 - c. - drawn up following guidelines of the tender specification.
5. Submission of a tender implies acceptance of all the terms and conditions set out in this invitation to tender and in the tender specification and, where appropriate, waiver of the tenderer's own general or specific terms and conditions. Submission of a tender is binding on the tenderer to whom the contract is awarded for the duration of the contract.
6. All costs incurred during the preparation and submission of tenders is to be borne by the Tenderers and will not be reimbursed.
7. Contacts between the contracting authority (AV) and Tenderers are prohibited throughout the procedure save in exceptional circumstances and under the following conditions only:

Before the date indicated in point 3:

- At the request of the tenderer, the contracting authority may provide additional information solely for the purpose of clarifying the nature of the contract (all additional information has to be delivered to all tenders).
- Any request for additional information may be made in writing using the following e-mail address: smesafrica@aerospace-valley.com
- The contracting authority is not bound to reply to requests for additional information received less than five working days before the final date for submission of tenders.
- The contracting authority may, on its own initiative, inform interested parties of any error, inaccuracy, omission or any other clerical error in the text of the call for tenders.
- Any additional information including that referred to above will be posted on the tendering website indicated above
- The website will be updated regularly and it is your responsibility to check for updates and modifications during the tendering period.

After the opening of tenders:

If clarification is required or if obvious clerical errors in the tender need to be corrected, the contracting authority may contact the tenderer provided the terms of the tender are not modified as a result.

8. This invitation to tender is in no way binding on the contracting authority. The contracting authority's contractual obligation commences only upon signature of the contract with the successful tenderer.
9. Up to the point of signature, the contracting authority may either abandon the procurement or cancel the award procedure, without the candidates or Tenderers being entitled to claim any compensation. This decision must be substantiated and the candidates or Tenderers notified.



10. Once the contracting authority has opened the tender, it becomes its property and it shall be treated confidentially.
11. You will be informed of the outcome of this procurement procedure by e-mail. It is your responsibility to provide a valid e-mail address together with your contact details in your tender and to check it regularly.
12. If processing your reply to the invitation to tender involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as your name, address and CV), such data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data.

Yours sincerely,
AEROSPACE VALLEY LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE (signed)

Annexes: Tender specifications

19. ANNEX II CONFIDENTIALITY

- I. The contracting authority, Aerospace Valley and the contractor shall treat with confidentiality any information and documents, in any form, disclosed in writing or orally in relation to the performance of the contract and identified in writing as confidential.

The contractor shall:

- a. Not use confidential information and documents for any purpose other than fulfilling its obligations under the contract without prior written agreement of the contracting authority;
 - b. Ensure the protection of such confidential information and documents with the same level of protection it uses to protect its own confidential information, but in no case any less than reasonable care;
 - c. Not disclose directly or indirectly confidential information and documents to third parties without prior written agreement of the contracting authority.
- II. The confidentiality obligation set out in Article I shall be binding on the contracting authority and the contractor during the performance of the contract and for 3 years starting from the date of the payment of the balance unless:
 - a. The disclosing party agrees to release the other party from the confidentiality obligation earlier;
 - b. The confidential information becomes public through other means than in breach of the confidentiality obligation, through disclosure by the party bound by that obligation;
 - c. The disclosure of the confidential information is required by law.
 - III. The contractor shall obtain from any natural person with the power to represent it or take decisions on its behalf, as well as from third parties involved in the performance of the contract, an undertaking that they will comply with the confidentiality obligation set out in Article I.

20. ANNEX III OTHER CONTRACTUAL CONDITIONS

I. Article I.– Subject matter

- a. The subject matter of the contract is to deliver support for SMEs internationalisation.
- b. The contractor(s) shall execute the tasks assigned to it in accordance with the tender specifications
- c. Aerospace Valley will signed one contract.

II. Article II –Price

- a. The maximum total amount to be paid by the contracting authority under this tender shall be EUR 18.000 [EIGHTEEN THOUSAND EUROS] covering all tasks executed, so 1200€ per SME.
- b. Price revision
Not applicable.
- c. Reimbursement of expenses
Not applicable.

III. Article III – Payment arrangements

The payment of an invoice shall be executed only if the tenderer(s) have fulfilled all their contractual obligations by the date on which the invoice is submitted and once all outcomes have been delivered. Advance payment is not applicable.

The contractor(s) shall submit an invoice indicating the reference number of the contract for the payment of EUR. The contracting authority (AV) shall make the payment within 60 days from receipt of the invoice. The contractor(s) shall have 30 days in which to submit additional information or corrections if required by the contracting authority.

IV. Article IV – Applicable law and settlement of disputes

- a. The contract shall be governed by Union law, complemented, where necessary, by the law of the Republic of France.
- b. Any dispute between the parties in relation to the interpretation, application or validity of the contract which cannot be settled amicably shall be brought before the courts of Brussels, Belgium.