TENDER SPECIFICATIONS FOR SUBCONTRACTING EXTERNAL EXPERTISE

Project: “Matching education with the needs of Public Services on the labour market”

Tender specifications – project under budget line 04.03.03.01

1. Introduction

The Europe 2020 Strategy has set an ambitious target of a 75% employment rate to be achieved by 2020. Today shortages of skills and competences have become a serious problem in many economic sectors and an obstacle to growth in some enterprises. In one worldwide survey of CEOs published recently¹, one in four CEOs said they were unable to pursue a market opportunity or have had to cancel or delay a strategic initiative because of a lack of talent. According to a CEO of a European energy company, “Close to 15 percent of energy-related investments around the world fail or are lost because a suitable workforce is not available”².

The Bruges Communiqué called for vocational education and training to better respond to labour market needs. Project partners believe that a better matching of education with market needs comes not only with a better understanding of emerging and evolving needs of skills and competences but also with stronger involvement of the vocational education sector with representatives of enterprises / organisations.

¹ PWC CEO Survey
² Zsolt Hernádi, Chairman and CEO of MOL Plc.
This project was set up to contribute to the work of employers’ organisations. On the side of CEEP, we can mention the work programme of the European Social Partners 2012 – 2014 which plans following issues and activities: (1) an in-depth employment analysis, (2) a framework of action on youth employment, (3) work on education and lifelong learning.

Skills and competences gap is a crucial issue for the labour market. These gaps occur more frequently nowadays for several reasons: jobs are becoming more technical and the proportion of people with technical ability may not have increased as rapidly; there is a need to develop communication skills in different languages in a more globalised work; working methods are changing, etc.

2. Narrowing down the topic of the project

Such a project needs to be narrowed down to lead to successful results.

“The terms ‘competence’ and ‘key competence’ are preferred to ‘basic skills’, which was considered too restrictive as it was generally taken to refer to basic literacy and numeracy and to what are known variously as ‘survival’ or ‘life’ skills. ‘Competence’ is considered to refer to a combination of skills, knowledge, aptitudes and attitudes, and to include the disposition to learn in addition to know-how. A ‘key competence’ is one crucial for three aspects of life:

a. personal fulfilment and development throughout life (cultural capital): key competences must enable people to pursue individual objectives in life, driven by personal interests, aspirations and the desire to continue learning throughout life;

b. active citizenship and inclusion (social capital): key competences should allow everybody to participate as an active citizen in society;

c. employability (human capital): the capacity of each and every person to obtain a decent job in the labour market.”

What are key competences? “Key competences represent a transferable, multifunctional package of knowledge, skills and attitudes that all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, inclusion and employment. These should have been developed by the end of compulsory schooling or training, and should act as a foundation for further learning as part of lifelong learning.”

Several factors are responsible for skill shortages such as insufficient training, bad orientation in studies, education systems responding slowly to market changes, complexities in identifying future needs, etc.

3. Objective of the project

The objective of this project is to focus on what kinds of competences are needed to make sure that people can adapt to the demands of public services providers in the future. This will be done by bringing from the start employers and participants from the education sector together.

This project will have the following objectives:

- To “map” current and future competences needed in public services providers via a specific survey in selected public services providers and specific seminars. The aim is to get a preliminary feel of the knowledge, skills, competences and dispositions that those who employ and manage workers think such employees need to possess in order to be productive and fulfilled in the workplace. This include getting a feel of how “best” these competences are acquired;
- To create a collection of best practices in establishing bridges between public services providers and the education sector. The aim is to support the further development and dissemination to help employers and education providers to apply successfully the results observed;
- To set recommendations regarding better skills and competences in Europe for the attention of both policy-makers - including social partners - and education operators.

The main work of the external contractor will be to draft a report on current and future competences needs in (a selection of) Public Services, showcase some observed interesting practices and to support project partners in establishing policy recommendations.

In practice, this project will manage the following activities:

- To organise two seminars for competences and skills needs in Public Services;
To collect experience and practices from over 30 enterprises/organisations from all over Europe including in the vocational education and training sector;

Based on the two first pragmatic objectives, a compendium of “best practices in establishing bridges between public services and the vocational education sector” will be drafted;

At a second stage, partners will be invited to discuss the results and potential solutions that CEEP and partners could foster as political suggestions or for future initiative in the social dialogue; mainly in the cross-industry social dialogue.

Total duration: 14 months from December 2012 until January 2014

4. Network of the project

On the employers’ side:

- CEEP – European Centre of Employers and Enterprises providing Public Services
- EFEE – European Federation of Education Employers

Partners of the Public Services Employers’ Forum will be invited to send participants in the seminar. These participants will be invited free of charge (following conditions as established by the European Commission co-financing this project).

On the employers, education and trainings’ side:

- EUproVET (Europe)
- IVEA (Ireland)

5. Purpose of the tender

The purpose of the tender aims at finding a subcontractor to carry out the work of external expertise of the joint project CEEP – EFEE “Matching education with the needs of Public Services on the labour market”.

The main work of the external contractor will be to draft a report on current and future competences needs in (a selection of) Public Services, showcase some observed interesting practices and to support project partners in establishing policy recommendations.

This project will focus exclusively in the field of Public Services as defined in the project called “Mapping of the Public Services”
This project will tackle the issue of competences needs with a focus on vocational and education training.

6. Tasks to be performed by the contractor

Description of tasks

- Tasks involved;

External consultants will have 4 main tasks:

  a) Collect background information

This first element will be relatively short in time and will aim mainly to collect existing practices and information both from the academic literature but mainly from enterprises / organisations.

This phase will consist of collecting descriptive qualitative and quantitative data at national and European level. Additional interviews with experts can be forecasted by the selected experts already at this stage.

This literature review is expected to take place from January 2013 until March 2013.

For this part of the project, the external expert will be asked to (list non-exhaustive):

- Collect information from various sources and enrich the project with background information;
- Collect statistical data in line with the objectives of the project on the field of education, skills management, etc.;
- Collect EU as well as national information that can be used to animate the two seminars and that can feed into the final report.

Examples of literature to review:

CEDEFOP reports:
  The skill matching challenge: Analysing skill mismatch & policy implications

CEEP reports:
  Anticipation of Change in Public Services
  Change in Public Services
b) To animate seminars and exchange of information

Two seminars will be organised during this project. These will be two one-day stock-taking seminar that will take place in two different place in Europe and will bring together employers, representatives of enterprises and vocational and training institutes to discuss on the issue of matching needs for public services and on the labour market for competences. We will discuss competences needs and also how to better match these needs with representatives from the education.

A travel fund of 12 1-day event will be organised for each of the two seminars.

The external expert to be hired will be asked to animate the seminar by presenting information collected previously and highlight questions to contribute to the objectives of the project.

Examples of potential questions:

For employers and representatives of public services providers:
- What are competences needed in your enterprise/organisation?
- What will be the future needs of competences in your enterprises and mainly in the units/fields most in needs of employees?
- What policies have you implemented to fulfil the needs?
- What practices have you developed to monitor current and future needs of competences
- How are you organising the recruitment of your employees?
- What kind of new competences will gain importance in the next 10 years within your enterprise/organisation?
- What hinders you in your work?

For education and training institutes:
- What practices have you developed with industries to maximise the chance of matching competences with needs in public services providers or enterprises in general?
- What contact have you developed with enterprises to better monitor
competences needed? More especially with public services enterprises/organisations?
- What hinders you in your work?

For this part of the project, the external expert will be asked to (list non-exhaustive):

- Animate the seminars;
- Prepare a draft report (discussion paper) highlighting the discussion that will be useful to animate the seminars;
- Review the set of questions that will be raised during the seminars;
- Etc.

**c) Collect practices and information and draft the book on best practices**

During this part of the project, the subcontracted expert will collect practices and information from more than 30 enterprises/organisations from all over Europe. The aim will be to publish a document on best practices.

This toolkit should:

- Be user-friendly;
- Present in a structured way what enterprises have done, how they have implemented a skills development policy, and what are the lessons learned;
- Present the technical and legal situations in which enterprises operate and have to deal in their work with finding and developing better skills.

The project will allow the subcontracted expert to conduct a limited number of field interviews. A travel for up to 20 2-day trips will be available through this project to allow the journey of one expert each time to meet leaders of enterprises and vocational education and training experts. Experts will also be invited to use modern technologies to save money (skype, webinars, etc.).

The selection of providers will be done by project partners during the second steering committee meeting. The external experts can also suggest enterprises/organisations to be added.

This part of the project will take place from February 2013 until December 2013. The journeys to collect information are expected to take place May and June 2012.
Draft Best practice fiche

Name of the enterprise:
Short description of the enterprise:
Short description of the main characteristics of the practice:

General information regarding the practice (target group, purpose of the practice, etc.):

Outcomes and results:

Factors that led to the success:

Obstacles encountered:

Lessons learnt:

Potential sources or sources for more information:

For this part of the project, the external expert will be asked to (list non-exhaustive):

- Draft the report;

    d) Chair and animate the final conference

A final seminar will take place in Brussels to present the outcomes of the project and of the discussions.

The external experts will present the results of the project during this event and animate the sessions.

7. Expertise required

To be able to contribute effectively to the success of this project, the expert(s) selected must have significant knowledge in the field of SGIs providers, experience in social dialogue and in the question of competences and skills.

The consultant must be able to work effectively at European level as well as at national level. Language capacity is therefore required. The consultant must be able to demonstrate experience in conducting broad EU-wide studies as well as factual studies.
Expertise must be evidenced through the proposal for carrying out the work, past experiences / references and CVs of proposed staff members.

8. Time schedule and reporting
The work of the consultants is scheduled to begin in January 2013 and is due to last for 13 months until January 2014. Background research is expected to start from the beginning of the project.

1- January 2013:
   a. Selection of the external experts based on a call for tender
   b. Planning of the seminars
2- February 2013:
   a. Discuss methodology
   b. Discuss list of questions that will be put forward in the project (cfr draft in the CFT)
   c. Plan seminars
   d. Select participants to invite to seminars
   e. Discuss proposed agenda of seminars and final
3- March - September
   Interview and collection of practices
4- May – June: Seminar 1
5- September: Seminar 2
6- January 2014 - Final conference and finalisation of the report

The bidder should bear in mind that a first half-day meeting will take place between the 12 and the 14 February.

9. Payments and standard contract

30% of the total sum can be invoiced at the beginning of the work, 30% in the middle of the project and the balance after receipt of the final instalment from the European Commission. A contract will be issued between the consultant and the contracting authority (CEEP).

CEEP reserves the right to reduce the final amount should the report and deliverables be poor in quality or written in a poor English. In this case, the budget for external expertise will be reduced by the cost needed to revise the report.
10. Prices
Prices must be quoted in Euro (using, where appropriate, the conversion rates published in the C Series of the Official Journal on the day when the invitation to tender was issued) and broken down to express:

- Professional fees, expressed as the number of person-days multiplied by the unit price per working day for each expert proposed. This unit price should cover fees and administrative expenditure.

In the budget of the project, an amount of Euro 38 000.00 is estimated for the external expertise.

The price was calculated based on an estimation of 38 days of work for two persons for a daily cost of 500€.

Please note that, if the final report is of low quality and / or the English language is poor, the budget for external expertise will be reduced by the cost needed to revise the report.

11. Award criteria
The contract will be awarded to the tender whose offer represents the best value for money – taking into account the following criteria:

- Knowledge in the field of SGIs / Public Services
- Experience with social dialogue;
- Experience with education issues;
- Expertise with chairing and animating European conferences and seminars.

It should be noted that the contract will not be awarded to a tenderer who meets less than 50% of the award criteria.

12. Content and presentation of the bids
Tenders must include:

- All information and documents necessary to enable to appraise the bid on the basis of the selection and award criteria (see points 5 and 6 above);
- Detailed CV of all members of staff to be assigned to the project

13. Presentation of the bids

Bids should be presented in triplicate and must contain all the information requested in points 8, 9 and 10. Bids must be sent to meet the deadline in line with the specific requirements of the tendering process.

Deadline to send bids: 24 January 2013

Bids should be sent to:

CEEP
CEEP – EFEE Project
Rue des Deux Eglises, 26 bte5
BE – 1000 Brussels
Belgium

And to:
David.anciaux@ceep.eu