

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
Research Consultancy

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this request for proposal is to find a suitable consultant to write a report reviewing public finance system with a view to identifying the legal and practical gaps with recommendations that might facilitate an anti-corruption oriented, transparent insight into the process of public finance. The report is expected to be written in consultation with relevant stakeholders and concluded with a position paper based on the findings of the report.

1.2. Coverage & Participation

Transparency Maldives (TM) reserves the right not to enter into any contract, to add and/or delete elements, or to change any element of the coverage and participation **prior to the award** without prior notification at any time without any liability or obligation of any kind or amount.

2. GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1 The Organisation

Transparency Maldives (TM) is a non-partisan organization that endeavours to be a constructive force in society by promoting collaboration and discussion on corruption, transparency, and accountability. TM seeks to engage with stakeholders from all sectors (government, business, political and civil society, among others) to raise awareness of corruptions' detrimental effects on development and society, improve transparency and accountability in governance, and eliminate corruption from the daily lives of people.

Transparency Maldives was formally registered in 2007, and is the National Chapter of Transparency International in the Maldives.

2.2 Schedule of Events

The following tentative schedule will apply to this Request for Proposal (RFP), but it may change in accordance with TM's needs or unforeseen circumstances. Changes will be communicated by email to all service providers.

Event	Date
RFP Re- announcement date	09 March 2020
RFP Closes – All Bids Due	23:59 hrs on 14 March 2020

3. PROPOSAL PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS

3.1 Service Providers' Understanding of the RFP

In responding to this RFP, the service provider accepts full responsibility to understand the RFP in its entirety, and in detail, including making any inquiries to TM as necessary to gain such understanding. TM

reserves the right to disqualify any service provider who demonstrates less than such understanding. Further, TM reserves the right to determine, at its sole discretion, whether the service provider has demonstrated such understanding. Such disqualification shall be at not fault, cost, or liability whatsoever to TM.

3.2 Good Faith Statement

All information provided by TM in this RFP is offered in good faith. Individual items are subject to change at any time. TM makes no certification that any item is without error. TM is not responsible or liable for any use of the information or for any claims asserted there from.

3.3 Communication

Verbal communication shall not be effective unless formally confirmed in writing by a TM staff in charge of managing this RFP process. In no case shall verbal communication govern over written communication.

3.3.1 Service Providers' Inquiries Applicable terms and conditions herein shall govern communications and inquiries between TM and service providers as they relate to this RFP. Inquiries, questions and requests for clarification related to this RFP are to be directed in writing to:

Shaziya Ali
shaziya@transparency.mv

3.3.2 Formal Communications shall include, but are not limited to:

- Questions concerning this RFP must be submitted in writing.
- Inquiries about technical interpretations must be submitted in writing.

3.3.3 TM will make a good-faith effort to provide a written response to the questions or request for clarification.

3.4 Proposal Submissions shaziya.ali@transparencymaldives.org

It is mandatory for service providers to send a proposal and a budget in electronic copy via email to shaziya@transparency.mv on or prior to 23:59 hrs on 14 March 2020.

3.5 Criteria for Selection

TM will evaluate bids based on the following criteria:

Candidate Experience - candidate has successfully completed similar projects and has demonstrable experience in conducting research (i.e. defining scope of research; developing methodology; developing a theoretical framework; identifying stakeholders; conducting interviews and focus group discussions)	20%
Candidate Qualifications - candidate has demonstrable qualifications to undertake the assignment. Please provide qualifications of all team members	20%
Methodology Proposal	40%
Cost Proposal	10%
Proposed Work Plan	10%

3.6 Selection & Notification

Service providers determined by TM who possess the capacity to compete for this contract will be selected. The selected provider will be notified. Those service providers not selected for the negotiation phase will not be notified.

4. SCOPE OF WORK & GUIDELINES

Anti-corruption is one of the key guiding principles for Transparency Maldives. As an organization working towards a corruption-free society, TM focuses on key areas that are prone to the scourge of corrupt practices. As such, a review of the public finance system that assesses the practical and legal gaps that perpetuate the cycle of corruption would inform advocacy efforts of Transparency Maldives, as well as key stakeholders.

The report will highlight, through a literature review of existing legislation and regulations as well as in-depth consultation with stakeholders, practical and legislative gaps that currently exist and the necessary recommendations required to make the public finance system more resilient to corruption. The consultant is expected to:

- Conduct a comprehensive **desk review**. The review is expected to include but not necessarily limited to a review of procurement policies of the government, independent institutions as well as how procurement occurs in state-owned enterprises (SOEs), the functioning of the Tender Board and a review of audit reports and case laws.
- Conduct **focus group discussions** to understand the practical issues in the existing regulations and their implementation. The information gathered from these FGDs will be key to the understanding of how the legal system is practically implemented on the ground and the gaps that exist in that implementation.
- Conduct **interviews with state and non-state stakeholders** who might be able to provide key information into the functioning of the public finance system.
- Conduct a **validation workshop** with stakeholders to present the findings and to address issues and inaccuracies. The validation workshop will allow for any final amendments to the report and a corroboration of the information included in the review.
- Write a **position paper** (no more than four pages) based on the findings of the review for advocacy purposes.

A methodology for undertaking this research should be submitted by the consultant and should be approved by TM, which may be modified by the research team in consultation with TM if required. The verification of information collected is the responsibility of the consultant.

The review should include:

- A brief background of the existing laws and regulations relating to public finance.
- An assessment of the procurement practices in the government, SOEs, independent institutions and the role of the Tender Board.
- Assessment of the existing public finance system through information from state and non-state stakeholders.
- An analysis of gaps and inconsistencies in the existing legal framework, governance system and other relevant factors that contribute to corruption in public finance.

- Key changes brought to the public procurement system during the past 10 years.
- An analysis of the role of USPs in the current procurement system.
- Policy recommendations on reforming and strengthening the existing public finance system and recommendations towards increasing transparency of the public procurement system.

Responsibilities of Consultant (in close consultation at every stage with TM):

- Identify key stakeholders and provide a list of stakeholders to be interviewed.
- Organize and arrange interviews with state and non-state stakeholders.
- Submit a realistic work plan for a period not exceeding 60 days.
- Arrange necessary meetings with stakeholders and conduct interviews and/or focus group discussions.
- Provide notes from the interviews and focus group discussions conducted.
- Provide photos and notes of interviews, focus group discussions and sites visited.
- Present the findings of the assessment report to TM staff.
- Produce a final review report with feedback from TM and stakeholders considered.
- Organize a validation workshop with stakeholders.
- Write up a position paper not exceeding four pages based on the findings of the review.

5. FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The Contractor is expected to start the assignment during the last week of March 2020 for a period of 60 days.

6. FORM/CONTENT OF THE RESPONSE

Service providers must provide the following information in order for their proposal to be considered. Both individuals or teams may submit proposals.

1. Details about the service provider:

- Describe your experience in conducting research.
- Provide a brief description of each team member and a statement of how team members meet the knowledge and skills needs of the assignment.

2. Technical proposal detailing:

- Proposed research methodology
- Proposed work plan from start to finish.
 - The work plan for assignment will be evaluated. In addition, the work plan will be part of the contractual agreement; therefore, a realistic work plan for completion is requested.

3. Evidence of successful completion of an assignment of a similar size and complexity. Please provide a list of assignments and reference contacts. Please also provide the URL for completed reports, studies, etc undertaken. Only links that are live will qualify during evaluation.

7. BUDGET & ESTIMATED PRICING

Service providers are required to fill out the following cost breakdown. Pricing must be in Maldivian Rufiyaa. Unit prices are required and in the case of discrepancies between unit price and total price, the unit price will be taken as reference basis in the evaluation. Technical Specification must be shown per each item.

No.	Item Description	Technical Specifications	QTY	Unit	Total
1.					

2.					
3.					
	Total				MVR _____

8. ADDITIONAL TERMS & CONDITIONS

8.1 Non-Disclosure Agreement

TM reserves the right to require any respondent to enter into a non-disclosure agreement.

8.2 Costs

The RFP does not obligate TM to pay for any costs of any kind whatsoever, which may be incurred by a respondent or any third parties, in connection with the Response. All Responses and supporting documentation shall become the property of TM, subject to claims of confidentiality in respect of the Response and supporting documentation.

8.3 Intellectual Property

The respondent should not use any intellectual property of TM including, but not limited to, all logos, registered trademarks, or trade names of TM, at any time without the prior approval of TM, as appropriate.

8.4 Authorship Rights

TM reserves the right to be labelled as author of any works produced under this RFP. The Service Provider shall have the right to be labelled as researcher/s of the works

8.5 Respondent's Responses

All accepted Responses shall become the property of TM and will not be returned.

8.6 Partial Awarding

TM reserves the right to accept all or part of the quotation when awarding the contract.

8.7 No Liability

TM reserves the right to accept or reject any quotation or stop the procurement process at any time, without assigning any reason or liability.

TM shall not be liable to any respondent, person, or entity for any losses, expenses, costs, claims or damages of any kind:

- Arising out of, by reason of, or attributable to, the respondent responding to this RFP; or
- As a result of the use of any information, error, or omission contained in this RFP document or provided during the RFP process.

8.8 Entire RFP

This RFP, any addenda to it, and any attached schedules, constitute the entire RFP.

End of RFP