



Pre

Universal Service Fund

(A company setup under Section 42 of the Companies Ordinance 1984)

**Prequalification for Panel Formation for Hiring of Monitoring
Auditors (MA) for USF OFC Projects**

(Monitoring Services for USF OFC Projects)

Project Reference: USF/MA Panel/2023/01

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1. INTRODUCTION

Universal Service Fund (USF) aims to promote development of telecommunication services in un-served and under-served rural areas of Pakistan to make available and affordable, the voice telephony and Hi-Speed Broadband services, throughout the length and breadth of the country.

This also requires the establishment of a stable and reliable Optic Fiber Network for effective and reliable transmission media backhauling.

USF intends to hire/pre-qualify a team of Monitoring Auditors (MA) to monitor technical performance of fiber networks deployed by Service Providers in USF mandated areas as mentioned in Service & Subsidy Agreements (SSA).

Monitoring of Optical Fiber networks shall be conducted on a portion of the network, as specified in the monitoring audit contract.

2. BIDDING PROCESS

- 1) A panel of Companies/Firms/Sole proprietor/consortium will be prequalified after an open, competitive, and transparent bidding process in accordance with Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) Ordinance, 2002, and Rules, Regulations and Guidelines made thereunder.
- 2) The Bidder will be entitled to receive detailed bidding documents/information package from the office of USF Co against a non-refundable payment of PKR 1,000 (One Thousand Pak Rupees) in the shape of CDR/Demand Draft/Pay Order in favor of “**Universal Service Fund - MoITT**” at the time of registration. No financial instrument other than specified in this clause shall be accepted.
 - a) At the time of proposal submission, the bidder shall furnish:
 - i. A certificate stamped with Company seal Compliance Criteria Checklist. When completing the Compliance Criteria Checklist, bidders must provide the specific documents and information required by the RFP in the Compliance Criteria Checklist. Bidders must also specifically identify and comment on any of the identified RFP checklist clauses for which their documentation is “Non-Compliant”. *In case of any discrepancy between the mandatory Proposal checklist requirements described in this RFP, the bid shall be returned unopened to the bidder.*
 - b) Evaluation of technical proposal for prequalification of panel members will be carried out, in accordance with evaluation criteria as per section 9. The proposal, therefore, shall be marked as “**TECHNICAL PROPOSAL**” in bold and legible letters to avoid confusion.
 - c) The result of technical evaluation shall be communicated to the bidders once the evaluation is completed.
 - d) The qualified bidder shall be registered with USFCo. as a part of prequalified panel of Monitoring Auditors till de-notified or dissolved by USFCo. upon completion of task or otherwise.
 - e) Financial Proposals for respective projects/lots **for which a separate Financial RFP shall be issued only to the** technically responsive bidders. Financial RFP shall, inter alia, include the scope of work for monitoring audit contract.
 - f) A Monitoring Auditor cannot be awarded more than Five (05) monitoring contracts in 6 monthly monitoring cycle. In case a monitoring contract ends after successful execution and

the completion certificate has been issued by USFCo. in this regard, then the Monitoring Auditor who has successfully executed the contract may apply for a new contract.

- g) All technically responsive bidder(s) shall be eligible for monitoring services, provided there is no conflict of interest. For instance, a monitoring audit firm engaged by the service provider or USF for design of the same network or technical audit or DT or otherwise, which is to be monitored, will be considered as a conflict of interest. Similarly, subcontractors engaged in installation and commissioning services of the same service provider's network may not be eligible. The monitoring audit firm may not employ any person for performance of tasks under this contract, if that person is in any way, professionally or otherwise, associated with the service provider whose network is to be monitored. The services shall be liable to immediate termination, once any conflict of interest is noticed or brought to the notice of USF.
- h) The contract of respective project/lot will be awarded to technically responsive bidders(s) who shall submit lowest financial bid.
- i) In case of a consortium, where local and foreign partners are involved, only local Firm / Company/ Sole proprietor can be the consortium leader and in case where all partners are local, the partner who shall submit the bid will be identified as the consortium leader and combined experience of all partners shall be considered. The consortium leader shall also enter into all contracts on behalf of consortium and shall otherwise be responsible for consortium performance. All members of the consortium shall be jointly and individually liable to USF in respect of the performance of the USF's Tender. Consortium deed/agreement shall be submitted with Technical Proposal.

3. General Conditions/Instructions

- a) Proposals shall be submitted in English/Urdu language as per Rule 6 of the PPRA Rules.
- b) The bidder will be selected after an open, competitive, and transparent bidding process in view of Rule 20 of the PPRA Rules.
- c) The bidders shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of their respective bids and USFCo will, in no case, be responsible or liable for those costs, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the bidding process.
- d) Bidders are under obligation to understand complete information package/bid documents and address all requirements, USFCo. shall not be responsible towards the Bidders for any of their claim or complaint which may arise in result of misreading or misinterpreting the bid documents/information package by Bidders.
- e) For clarification on any item of this RFP, the bidder may send a written request, with in the time schedule mentioned in Section 12 (Time Schedule) of this RFP.
- f) All clarifications will be communicated to the registered Bidders through e-mail and shall be uploaded on the USFCo. website at the specific tender's web page.
- g) USFCo. is the originator of information package/bidding documents, any clarification or interpretation communicated by USFCo., whether in response of a query or otherwise, shall be deemed final, conclusive and will remain unquestioned.
- h) Each page of the Technical Proposal shall be stamped and signed by an authorized representative of the Bidder. The representative's authorization shall be confirmed by power of attorney accompanying the proposal on company's official letter head.
- i) USFCo. may reject all bids or proposals at any time prior to the acceptance of a bid or proposal. USFCo. shall, upon request, communicate to any supplier or contractor who submitted a bid

or proposal, the grounds for its rejection of all bids or proposals, but USFCo. is not required to justify those grounds as per Rule 33 of PPRA Rules.

- j) All prices mentioned in the Financial Proposal shall be in Pak Rupees (PKR).
- k) The bidder must submit quote in accordance with Pricing Table, quoting each item. Failure to do so may lead to non-compliance and bid rejection.
- l) The term for Monitoring Auditor services contract is six (06) months and may be extended after mutual agreement between USFCo. & MA and contract shall be amended accordingly.
- m) The Most Advantageous Bidder for respective project/lot bidding process shall be awarded with contract and shall be responsible to complete all the tasks as per scope of work mentioned in ToR.
- n) Work done and all reports shall be evaluated by USFCo. and USFCo. will issue a Completion Certificate upon successful acceptance.
- o) If more than one qualified bidder submits equal quotations/bids, the tied qualified bidders shall be notified by USFCo., and they will be requested to submit revised financial proposals in compliance with the RFP in sealed envelopes. The revised bid amount must be either equal to or less than the original submitted bid amount. Such revised financial proposals shall be submitted in a sealed envelope and shall be re-evaluated.
- p) USFCo. requires that Bidder, under its contract, observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of such contract. In pursuit of this policy, the USFCo. defines, for this provision, the terms set forth below:
 - i. "Coercive practice": is impairing or harming, or threatening to impair or harm, directly or indirectly, any party or the property of the party to influence the actions of a party improperly.
 - ii. "Collusive practice": is an arrangement between two or more parties designed to achieve an improper purpose, including to influence the actions of another party improperly.
 - iii. "Corrupt practice": is the offering, giving, receiving, or soliciting, directly or indirectly, of anything of value to influence the actions of another party improperly.
 - iv. "Fraudulent practice": is any act or omission, including a misrepresentation, which knowingly or recklessly misleads, or attempts to mislead, a party to obtain a financial or other benefit or to avoid an obligation.
 - v. "obstructive practice": is deliberately destroying, falsifying, altering or concealing of evidence material to the investigation or making false statements to investigators in order to materially impede USF Co investigation into allegations of a corrupt, fraudulent, coercive or collusive practice; and/or threatening, harassing or intimidating any party to prevent it from disclosing its knowledge of matters relevant to the investigation or from pursuing the investigation.
 - vi. "RFP" means this Request for Proposal.
 - vii. "Services" means the Scope of Work defined in the ToR.
- q) USFCo. will reject the award of contract if it determines that the Bidder has directly or through an agent, engaged in corrupt, fraudulent, collusive, or coercive practices in competing for the contract in discussion.
- r) Incomplete or partial bids will be rejected.
- s) Bids which do not comply with the prescribed format and requirements set out by USFCo. shall be rejected.

4. Registration Process

The interested bidder must get registered with USFCo. as per schedule mentioned in Section 12 (Time Schedule) of this RFP.

Following documents shall be submitted at the time of registration:

- a) Authorization certificate issued to an authorized representative on company's official letter head duly signed and stamped by CEO along with respective copies of CNIC.
- b) Proof of verifiable NTN and STRN along with status on FBR Active Taxpayers List (ATL) and Sale Tax Active Taxpayer and with relevant provincial revenue authorities where services will be provided.
- c) In case of company, incorporation certificate from SECP, in case of Firm, Form C issued by registrar of Firms and in case of sole proprietor active registration status with FBR
- d) The bidder shall provide undertaking on company's official letter head duly signed and stamped by company's CEO to the extent "That the bidder has not ever been blacklisted by any Government/Semi-Government Office/Institution"

5. BID SECURITY

- a) A bid security in the form of a CDR/Pay Order/Demand Draft, in the name of 'Universal Service Fund Company', of Rs 45000/- must be attached in a separate envelope, with the **financial proposal** otherwise unopened proposal shall be returned, and bid will be rejected.
- b) Payment of bid security in form other than that specified in clause 5(a) shall not be entertained and accepted. USFCo. shall return such bids unopened to respective bidders.
- c) Bid Security of Bidders whether successful or unsuccessful shall be returned within fifteen (15) days of signing of the respective contract of project/lot.

6. Performance Guarantee & Liquidated Damages

- a) Performance Guarantee equivalent to ten [10%] percent of the contract value in shape of Irrevocable Bank Guarantee will be submitted by Most Advantageous Bidder strictly in accordance with the format attached as Annex G. In case of non-submission within the time stipulated in Letter of Intent (LoI), USF Co may cancel the LoI and shall proceed accordingly.
- b) The Performance Guarantee shall be valid for a period of six (06) months from the date of signing of the contract or for any other extended period, as the case may be. Provided further that, if the Monitoring Auditor (MA) successfully discharges all contractual obligations and meets all requirements set out by USFCo. in the contract before the expiry date of Performance Guarantee, the said guarantee can be released early on request of Monitoring Auditor (MA).
- c) Monitoring Auditor (MA) shall complete the monitoring activity along with all the reports, deliverables, and annexures within thirty (30) calendar days. However, if the MA fails to complete the activity and fails to submit deliverables in stipulated time, the delay shall lead to the imposition of Liquidated Damages @ 1% per day of the contract value till the rectification of such delays and up to a maximum deduction of ten [10%] percent of the contract value. Once the maximum is reached, USFCo. shall have the right to en-cash the Performance Guarantee and terminate the Contract. Moreover, USFCO. shall have the right to en-cash the Performance Guarantee in case of "Unsatisfactory Performance".

- d) Where a FM has been awarded to the MA either due to delay by the Service Provider or USF Co, LD shall not be imposed on MA.
- e) Any Liquidated Damages shall be deducted from the invoice (s) submitted by Monitoring Auditor or performance bond. The imposition of Liquidated Damages upon the Monitoring Auditor (if not terminated) and its payment shall not absolve the Monitoring Auditor from its obligations to delivery or from any other liabilities or obligations under the Monitoring Auditor Contract.

7. Technical Proposal

Technical Proposals to be submitted by the bidder shall be in compliance with the requirements laid down in the RFP and ToR.

The Technical proposal shall be clearly marked with the following:

Tender ID: USF/OFC/NG-OFNS/MA Panel/2023-1

“TECHNICAL PROPOSAL”

The technical proposal shall include:

- a) A covering letter from the head of the company or an authorized representative of the applicant covering the key features of the technical solution.
- b) In addition, the Bidder shall have related work experience of two (2) years, working in the field of Telecom.
- c) The bidder must provide documentary proof of completed projects as part of technical proposal with references.
- d) The following documentation will be provided as part of the technical proposal:
 - i. Brief company profile.
 - ii. Major areas of expertise.
 - iii. Outline of work experience in chronological order with references to work/scope on projects, name of the client along with their references and project value in the following format.

S. No.	[Insert Serial Number of the project reference provided]
Project Title	[Insert title of the project]
Client	[Insert name of the Client]
Client Contact Information	[Insert the Name and Contact details (mobile & official email) of Point of Contact who can be contacted for verification]
Brief Description of the Project	[Brief Description of the project, area of operations, Team details]
Value of the Project	[Insert the value of the project]
Duration of the project	[Insert the duration i.e., total time taken for the completion of the project]
Documentary Evidence	[Attach documentary evidence (acceptance certificate, Reference letter, Purchase Orders, Details of license of software’s and testing tools/equipment proposed and Contracts)].

- e) Complete address along with contact details and point of contact for all offices.
- f) CVs of proposed team should be provided. CVs of proposed team should include contact details (mobile number and email), trainings attended, certifications, relevant work experience and educational details.
- g) Assigned roles and responsibilities of each proposed team member.

- h) Proposed Monitoring Audit Methodology.
- i) Work plan for the audit execution as per the timelines set in the TOR.
- j) All tools, whether owned or rented, provided by the Bidder(s) must be fully functional, meet the requirement of the audit and have valid licenses. USF reserves the right to inspect and verify.
- k) Compliance against each clause and sub-clause of RFP, ToR and Draft Contract, cross linked with the submitted Technical Proposal, must be attached. Following conventions shall be used in the compliance checklist:
 - i. Fully Complied (FC)
 - ii. Not Complied (NC)
- l) Additional Information which can facilitate USFCo. in evaluation of technical proposal (if any).
- m) Failure to meet any of the above-mentioned clauses will lead to declaration of Technical proposal as non-responsive and such non-responsive bid will not be considered for Technical evaluation as per Section 9 (Evaluation criteria) of this RFP.
- n) The annual inward inflows of the Bidder must be more than PKR 2,000,000/- (Pak Rupees Two Million Only/-) in recent two (02) year(s). Provided further that it is mandatory for the Bidder(s) to submit, in support thereof, bank statement for this period issued after the publication of this advertisement.
- o) In case of a consortium, where local and foreign partners are involved, only local Firm / Company/ Sole proprietor can be the consortium leader and incase where all partners are local, the partner who shall submit the bid will be identified as the consortium leader and combined experience of all partners shall be considered. The consortium leader shall also enter into all contracts on behalf of consortium and shall otherwise be responsible for consortium performance. All members of the consortium shall be jointly and individually liable to USF in respect of the performance of the USF's Tender. Consortium deed/agreement shall be submitted with Technical Proposal.

8. Submission, Opening and Receipt of Proposals

The technical proposals shall be submitted as:

- a) Original proposal and one copy of technical proposal along with one soft copy of Technical Proposal, in separate USB shall be submitted in separate envelope.
- b) All envelopes including those that carry the USB of the Technical shall be properly sealed and clearly marked as Technical Proposal.
- c) The technical proposal shall be prepared without any interlineations or overwriting.
- d) The technical proposal must be delivered at the address given below on or before Tuesday 10-October-2023 at time 1100 Hours. (PST).

Head of Auction Committee
Universal Service Fund,
3rd Floor, Evacuee Trust Complex
Agha Khan Road, F-5/1, Islamabad
Tel: (92-51) 9212308-09, Fax: (92-51) 9214261
Email: projects.tenders@usf.org.pk

- e) Technical Proposals shall be opened on bid submission day at 1130 Hours (PST), in presence of all the applicants who choose to be present.
- f) The evaluation of Technical proposal will be carried out first as per the evaluation criteria given in the RFP. The results of the evaluation may be communicated to all the Bidders.

9. Evaluation Criteria For Technical Proposal

- a) USFCo. will evaluate the Technical proposal based on its compliance with this RFP, ToR, evaluation criteria and the scoring mechanism as specified below in Table-1.
- b) Bidders are required to answer queries raised by USFCo. within Forty-Eight (48) hours, otherwise, USFCo. shall proceed with evaluating bids as per the actual submission and shall not in any case entertain answers to its queries submitted after the specified time.
- c) A proposal shall be rejected during technical evaluation if it does not comply with this RFP and ToR or disqualified if it fails to achieve the minimum score as indicated in Table 1 below:

Evaluation Criteria		
S.No.	Description	Weight
1	Specific relevant experience of company/firm	20
	a) Relevant experience in deployment/maintenance/operational support of OFC networks	
	Monitoring Audit of Previous and Running USF Co projects:	10
	1 Team Responsibility (2 Marks)	
	2 Monitoring Team Composition Strength (2 Marks)	
	3 Understanding of monitoring audit requirements and MA Responsiveness during the audit (2 Marks)	
4 Monitoring audit of USFCo. projects as per the proposed audit methodology, work plan, and quality assurance. (2 Marks)		
5 Monitoring audit report writing and audit documentations (2 Marks)		
2	Presentation of Proposal, Monitoring Audit Methodology	30
	Proposed Monitoring Audit methodology and work plan for the audit execution as per the timelines set in TOR.	
3	Competence of key staff & Equipment	10
	a) 01 Project Manager: Should possess at least 7 years of relevant Work Experience with experience of handling matters related to coordination with civil administration and Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs)	
	b) 02 Fiber deployment engineers having 3 Years of relevant work experience in deployment/maintenance of fiber networks. (8 Marks)	25
	c) 02 civil engineers (8 Marks)	
	d) 02 Power Engineer/Technician having relevant experience of 2 years (04 Marks)	
e) Legal Expertise of Firm/Individual (5 Marks)		
4	Company owned tools/equipment/software	5
Total Marks		100
Minimum Score Required to Qualify		70

Table 1: Evaluation Criteria

- d) USFCo. reserves the right to ask the perspective bidder to demonstrate standard audit tools that are to be used for audit.

- e) A proposal/bidder shall be disqualified in technical evaluation if it fails to achieve the minimum score.

10. Financial Proposal

As mentioned above, after the prequalification of panel, a separate Financial RFP will be issued for each project for monitoring audit services only to the prequalified eligible bidders to submit their Financial Proposals on a per-lot basis.

The Bidder shall submit Financial Proposals in original and duplicate along with a softcopy of financial proposal in USB in sealed envelope. Envelope shall be clearly marked with the following:

Tender ID: USF/OFC/NG-OFNS/MA Panel/2023-1

“LOT X-XXX”

“FINANCIAL PROPOSAL”

“Do Not Open Prior to Financial Opening”.

The Financial Proposal shall include the following:

1. A covering letter from the head of the company or an authorized representative of the applicant for applying in specific USF OFC/NG-OFNS Lot MA bidding process stating that the financial proposal shall remain valid for a period of 180 days from bid closing date and that the bidder has no conflict of interest in rendering his services in specific lot.
2. A bid security in the form of a CDR/Pay Order/Demand Draft, in the name of ‘Universal Service Fund Company’, of Rs 45000/- must be attached in a separate envelope, with the financial proposal otherwise unopened proposal shall be returned, and bid will be rejected.
3. The Bidder shall quote lumpsum as well as breakup/itemized price otherwise, the proposal will be rejected for being non-compliant to this requirement.
4. Unit of material, count, quantity, rate, subtotal of all line items and grand total shall be written in words as well in Financial Proposals.
5. Total cost along with the complete item wise cost breakup inclusive of all applicable taxes shall be provided. However, the payment shall be made according to the per line item-wise actual performed services.
6. All prices shall be in Pak Rupees. Any exchange rates fluctuations shall be the responsibility of the Bidder and USF Co shall not give any price escalation on that account or any other account. Bidder will be responsible to pay any fee, taxes, duties, or charges required for successful completion of the audit/Scope of work.
7. All withholding taxes levied by the government will be deducted by USF Co. at the time of the payment as per government rules and regulations.
8. Each page of the Financial Proposal shall be stamped and signed by an authorized representative of the Bidder. The representative’s authorization shall be confirmed by power of attorney accompanying the proposal on company’s official letter head.
- 9.

Annex 1: Pricing Table (Inclusive of applicable GST)

Pricing Table OFC/ NG-OFNS XXXXX Lot					
S. No.	Description	Units*	Unit price	Total Price	Amount in words
1	Fiber Nodes				
2	OFC Links				
3	Re-Visit (If applicable)				
Subtotal					
Total					
Total Amount in words					

11. Award of Contract

- a) USFCo. shall award the contract to the bidder:
 - i) who has quoted the Most Advantageous Bid as per exact format required in financial RFP, and bid is not in conflict with any other law, rules, regulations, or policy of the Federal Government, within the original or extended period of bid validity (PPRA Rule 38).
- b) A letter of Intent (LoI) will be issued to the qualified Bidder who shall submit Letter of Acceptance (LoA) within Seven (07) days of issuance of the LoI.
- c) The Bidder, to whom LoI has been issued, will have to submit the performance guarantee within Twenty-one (21) working days after issuance of LoI.
- d) Performance Guarantee equivalent to [ten (10) percent] of the signed contract value in shape of Irrevocable Bank Guarantee issued by a scheduled Pakistani bank will be submitted by the successful Bidder
- e) After submission of the Letter of Acceptance and Performance Guarantee, the contract will be signed within time stipulated in LoI, failing which USFCo. may proceed accordingly.

12. Time Schedule

Publication of Specific Procurement Notice	20 th or 21 st Sep-2023
Distribution of RFP Document	20 th or 21 st Sep-2023
Deadline for submission of questions by bidders	06-Oct-2023
Answers to questions	06-Oct-2023
Deadline for Submission of Technical Proposals	10-Oct-2023
Opening of the Technical Proposals	10-Oct- 2023
Complete evaluation of Technical Proposals of applicants	26-Oct-2023
Auction committee recommendation for OFC/NG-OFNS panel formation	30-Oct-2023

13. Performance Evaluation

Performance evaluation of MA panel members will be done quarterly, as per below table which will be shared within all stakeholders.

Performance Evaluation Criteria		
S/No	Description	Weight
1	Report Finalization:	40
	Number of Iterations (Each iteration will deduct 10 points) After four Iteration zero number	
2	Recommendation & Feedback:	20
	Each Recommendation will have 05 Marks (e.g. Solution for Drop call rate, congestion, coverage, planning for future projects, complaints etc)	
3	Impact Assessment:	30
	i. Additional points for diversity of Questionnaires (age, gender, age group, educational qualification, profession) (10 Marks)	
	ii. If videos encompass all factors mentioned in Task-3 of ToR (10 Marks)	
	iii. Inclusion of success stories (crisp, enriched, with photos and videos) (10 Marks)	
4	HSE standards Compliance and Duty of Care	10
	Sub Total	100
	Minimum Score Required To Qualify Technically	75%