



Universal Services Fund

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST No. 1 of 2017

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR THE SUPPLY OF
PASSIVE TELECOMMUNICATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND ACTIVE
RAN EQUIPMENT**

01 AUGUST 2017

1. BACKGROUND

The Universal Services Fund (USF), would like to engage reputable Companies with relevant experience to design, supply, install and commission a Multi Operator Radio Access Network (MORAN) comprising both passive infrastructure and active equipment.

A network coverage study conducted by POTRAZ in 2016 established that 314 Wards, hosting 354,000 households and a total population of two million people, have no access to basic telecommunication services. Furthermore, a preliminary network planning exercise for coverage extension conducted by the Authority, established that an estimated 250 new rural sites would be required in order to achieve full population coverage.

It is against this background that the USF has decided to rollout the MORAN Project to provide telecommunication services to people living in underserved areas. The project is planned to be implemented as a Build and Transfer Public Private Partnership Project.

2. DESCRIPTION OF REQUIREMENT

Under this project the USF seeks to construct 250 sites and provide the requisite active equipment (BTS/NodeB/BSC/RNC) including microwave backhaul. Interested suppliers are invited to submit proposals for either the passive component or the active component of the MORAN. Interested suppliers with the capacity to provide both passive and active components of the MORAN may submit a combined proposal for the two.

The MORAN will be shared by three (3) operators who will initially offer 2G and 3G services (GSM900 and UMTS900). The MORAN shall comprise and conform to the following:

- a. Shared tower

- b. Shared power system
- c. Shared antenna and feeder system
- d. Shared Base Band Unit (BBU).
- e. Shared Remote Radio Unit (RRU).
- f. Vendors to provide separate radio units for GSM and UMTS.
- g. Shared Base Station Controllers (BSCs) / Radio Network Controllers (RNCs).
- h. Shared site amenities
- i. Shared backhaul

3. FINANCING OF THE PROJECT

The project is planned to be implemented as a Build and Transfer Public Private Partnership Project. Interested suppliers shall indicate the project sum on offer, among other requirements as indicated below.

For the provision of passive infrastructure only prospective suppliers with the capacity to fund at least ten (10) sites will be considered.

For the active equipment, prospective suppliers should have the capacity to fund at least 20 base stations, 20 NodeBs, one BSC, one RNC and the associated microwave backhaul equipment.

Interested suppliers should clearly indicate the following terms of the funding for the project:

- Project sum on offer
- the repayment period and premium
- interest rates for the funding
- source of funds
- turnaround time for securing funds
- grace period
- advance payment requirements and conditions if any
- indicative loan establishment costs

4. LOAN REPAYMENT

USF will be responsible for loan repayment to the full project sum and associated premiums. Loan repayment details will be negotiated with prospective suppliers based on their respective substantive offers.

5. SUBMISSION OF EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

Interested suppliers must provide the following information to demonstrate their competence in the performance of the services and supply of equipment required:

- i. For active equipment, the proposal must clearly demonstrate that the respondent is the original manufacturer of the equipment or is an Authorised Channel Partner of the original manufacturer. The Authorised Channel Partner shall demonstrate that he/she has been authorised by the Manufacturer to make a submission on his/her behalf. All the information will be verified by the Authority.
- ii. The proposal shall include full registration particulars of the Organisation/ Company/ Institution supported by certified registration documents issued by the Registrar of Companies/Deeds in the country of origin of the manufacturers and the list of Directors issued and certified by the Registrar of Companies. If the proposal is made by an Authorised Channel Partner, certified registration documents of the Authorised Channel Partner are required including those of the manufacturers, as well as valid an agreement of partnership and confirmation from the supplier that that applicant is a bona fide channel partner.
- iii. The proposal shall include a detailed profile of the Organisation/ Company/ Institution. Authorised Channel Partners are required to provide a detailed profile of their organisation/Company/Institution and that of the Manufacturer, including proof that they are on the list of authorized distribution partners of the manufacturer.
- iv. The company profile must, *inter alia*, include the following information:
 - a) Organisational structure,
 - b) Core business and Key competence areas,

- c) Minimum number of personnel available to manage the project and their detailed qualifications and Project Management skills of the key personnel. These should be supported by certified certificates; detailed Curriculum Vitae; proof of membership to professional bodies and proof of project management skills.
- v. Details of key infrastructure, including the manufacturing plant, Offices and After Sale Services shall be included. The details should include verifiable physical and postal addresses, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of key personnel at the premises. Authorised Channel Partners shall provide their details as well as the Manufacturer's.
- vi. Audited financial accounts for the last three years along with latest Income Tax Clearance Certificate and solvency certification from bankers.
- vii. Details of work experience in the field of passive and/or active telecommunications infrastructure for the last One (1) year accompanied by a list of at least 3 similar assignments in developing countries similar to Zimbabwe. References from the countries and contact details (address, telephone numbers, e-mails) of the contact person should be provided. A description of the scope and objectives of the assignment and to what extent they were achieved should also be provided.

6. ELIGIBILITY

Interested suppliers must have the following:

- i. Good reputation and registered in the country of origin. If the proposal is made by an Authorised Channel Partner, the partner should be registered and have to be authorised by the manufacturers. A valid Registration Certificate and authentic letter of authorization from original manufacturer (dated after EOI advertisement date and duly signed on supplier/manufacturer letterhead) or Channel Partner Agreement must be submitted.
- ii. Experienced staff in telecommunication site design and construction, Radio Access Network design and construction, as well as power system design and construction.

- iii. Expertise in GSM and UMTS technologies, tower design and construction, site development, site energy provision.
- iv. For Passive infrastructure (site build), prospective suppliers should have the capacity to fund and rollout at least ten (10) sites.
- v. For the active equipment, prospective suppliers should have the capacity to fund at least 20 base stations, 20 NodeBs, one BSC, one RNC and the associated microwave backhaul equipment.

A clean operational record, and not under formal investigation, nor having been sanctioned within the preceding three (3) years, for engaging or having engaged in proscribed practices, including but not limited to corruption, fraud, coercion, collusion, obstruction, or any other unethical practice.

7. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The parties will be evaluated /assessed broadly on the following criteria:

- i. Number of years in operation of at least one (1) years supported by a registration certificate clearly indicating the scope of this project as part of its core business. If the proposal is made by an Authorised Channel Partner, an authentic letter of authorization from original manufacturer (dated after EOI advertisement date and duly signed on supplier/manufacturer letterhead) or valid registration certificate or Channel Partner Agreement, indicating a minimum of five years as Channel Partner must be submitted as proof.
- ii. Proof of experience in the field of passive and active telecommunications equipment design and construction of not less than three projects in the last five consecutive years. This must be supported by authentic references from current and previous clients.
- iii. Knowledge and Expertise in tower design and construction, site energy, access roads, RAN design and implementation and key competence areas of the company evidenced by at least three (3) references for projects already undertaken in the last five years.

- iv. Qualifications, Technical Expertise and Project Management skills of key personnel for the project of the Manufacturer/ Authorised Channel Partner. These should be supported by authentic certificates, proof of membership to professional bodies, curriculum vitae and references from previous and current clients.
- v. Operational reputation evidenced by submission of latest Income Tax Clearance Certificate and solvency certification from bankers.
- vi. Project financing terms which include the Project sum, the repayment period and premium, interest rates for the funding, source of funds, turnaround time for securing funds, grace period, advance payment requirements and conditions if any, indicative loan establishment costs

The evaluation results will be used in the pre-qualification process for the supplying companies. The companies that will be successful will be invited to present technical and economic proposals on the basis of Request for Proposals to be issued to them by the USF.

The USF will not reimburse any of the expenses incurred by interested parties towards preparation of the EOI document, travelling costs, boarding or lodging costs incurred in preparing the Expression of Interest. The USF shall, in no case, be responsible or liable for any such costs whatsoever, regardless of the outcome of the EOI process.

Expressions of Interest must be in five copies, well printed, properly bound and enclosed in sealed envelopes for delivery to USF addressed as follows:

The Director General

Universal Services Fund

Block A Emerald Park

No. 30 The Chase

Box MP843

Mount Pleasant

Harare

The deadline for submissions is **31 August 2017**. Interested eligible applicants may obtain further information from the Project Manager at the following address:

Universal Services Fund

877 Endeavour Crescent

Mt Pleasant Business Park

Box MP843

Mt Pleasant

Harare

e-mail: towers@usf.gov.zw; Tel: 263-4-369015/6: