IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABLE LOW AND NON-CHEMICAL DEVELOPMENT IN SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (ISLANDS)
(Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago)

**Consultancy for the Development of a Digital Learning Hub
(Reference Number: BCRC_ISLANDS+_2023_005_V02)**

APPENDIX 7 – DOCUMENTATION OF CLARIFICATIONS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Published on 29 July 2024

Updated on 11 September 2024

The following information is provided as a response to requests for clarification on the RFP package for the above-mentioned consultancy. This document will be updated as needed.

Question 1:

While we are thoroughly reviewing the ToR, we have identified a few areas where additional clarification would be beneficial to ensure that our proposal fully aligns with BCRC-Caribbean's expectations and objectives. Could you please suggest a convenient time for a virtual meeting?

Response 1:

In accordance with the BCRC-Caribbean's tender process, we are unable to meet at this stage. However, we encourage bidders to submit any queries via email to both Ms. Shalina Rooplal at shalina.rooplal@bcrc-caribbean.org and Ms. Janine Boodram at janine.boodram@bcrc-caribbean.org. Responses will be provided via return email and posted on this webpage: Consultancy Opportunity – Development of a Digital Learning Hub – BCRC Caribbean (bcrc-caribbean.org) at Appendix 7.

Question 2:

What are the main goals of the Digital Learning Hub (DLH)? Are you focusing on capacity building, professional development, knowledge sharing or something else?

Response 2:

The main goal of the DLH is to build capacity on the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Minamata Conventions, and the Global Framework on Chemicals, as well as other existing chemicals and waste related issues.

Question 3:

Who is the DLH intended for? Is the main audience internal (staff, partners) or external (public, educational institutions)? What is the demographic breakdown (age, educational level, professional background)?

Response 3:

The main audience is the public sector actors involved in the implementation of the Conventions in the Caribbean. Given the professional profile of the target audience, the

education level will be at least Bachelors' level in environmental or natural sciences. In terms of age, the target audience is expected to be aged 22 and up.

Question 4:

What is the expected scale of the DLH? How many users are you expecting (initially and in the future)? Is the DLH expected to support hundreds or thousands of users?

Response 4:

For beta testing, we would like to engage fifty (50) persons. Following the launch of the DLH, we anticipate that at least 100-200 stakeholders will be engaged. We anticipate that this number will steadily increase over a 5 – 10-year period. The DLH is expected to support thousands of users over time.

Question 5:

What are the key features you would like to include for the DLH? These could include a content repository, quizzes, discussion forums, webinars and certifications.

Response 5:

Content repository (including text and videos based on training programmes) must be included, as well as webinars, discussion forums, short courses, and massive open online courses, for which participants should receive certifications upon successful completion. The courses should be engaging and should be able to facilitate quizzes, flip cards, and animations or live-action videos, where possible and appropriate.

Question 6:

Is there any specific type of content that you want to prioritize? E.g. text, video, webinars, podcasts, interactive simulations etc.

Response 6:

Content repository, short courses, and webinars should be prioritized.

Question 7:

Do you need personalized learning paths for different user groups? Should the platform support customized learning journeys based on user profiles?

Response 7:

Yes

Question 8:

What assessment and certification features are required? Do you want quizzes, exams, certifications or badges to be integrated into the platform?

Response 8:

Quizzes and certifications are required. Badges may be nice to have for shorter courses but are not necessary.

Question 9:

Are there any collaboration or community-building features that you consider essential? E.g. forums, group projects, peer review, chat functionalities etc.

Response 9:

Discussion forums can be considered to facilitate information exchange within communities of practices on a topic.

Question 10:

Is multilingual support needed on the platform? Which additional languages other than English would be beneficial to include?

Response 10:

Spanish will be required. Dutch may also be considered at a later stage.

Question 11:

How will content be created and managed? Will there be a dedicated team to creating and managing content, or will this be crowdsourced from multiple contributors?

Response 11:

Content will be created by consultants engaged separately by the BCRC-Caribbean. The content on the DLH will be managed by the BCRC-Caribbean as the owner of the DLH, following the initial content development and transposition by the contracted party.

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Do you have any specific requirements for content upload and management? E.g. file size limits, specific file formats, version control etc. How frequently will new content be added to the platform? Will content expire and need archiving functionality?

Response 12:

Version control will be required. New content should be added at least on a monthly basis. Content should have archiving functionality but should not expire.

Question 13:

Should the DLH support both live and on-demand content? If yes, what types of live content (webinars, live Q&A sessions etc.) are required?

Response 13:

Recordings of webinars will be uploaded onto the DLH. It is not envisaged that the DLH will support live and on-demand content.

Question 14:

What levels of access control are needed for different user types? Should there be different permissions for admins, educators, learners and the open public?

Response 14:

There should be different permissions for admin, learners and open public. We do not envision that the educators will be interacting with learners. Learners will earn certification (or badges) for achieving a minimum score on quizzes, which would demonstrate their understanding of the course content (which would be comprised of lessons delivered in text and as videos).

Question 15:

Are there any specific tools or plugins that you would like to integrate for content creation or management? E.g. SCORM-compliant tools, H5P for interactive content etc.

Response 15:

SCORM-compliant tools will be required. We would also want to be able to view the analytics on the number of persons who completed courses, the average time taken to complete a course and the rate and completion of courses. We believe that both SCORM and H5P would be useful here.

Question 16:

What are your expectations for the user interface and experience (UI/UX)? Are there specific design principles or templates to follow?

Response 16:

There are no specific templates. This will be agreed upon with the support of the consultant during execution of the activity.

Question 17:

How important is mobile compatibility for the DLH? Should the platform be optimized for smartphones and tablets in addition to desktops and laptops?

Response 17:

The platform should be accessible for mobile users. However, the priority will be to ensure full functionality for desktop and laptop users.

Question 18:

What accessibility features are required? E.g. screen reader support, keyboard navigation, subtitles, etc.

Response 18:

Keyboard navigation may not be necessary. Screen reader support may be useful. Subtitles will be required for all training videos and may be considered for webinars.

Question 19:

Would you prefer a customizable user dashboard for different user roles (E.g. learners, educators, admins)?

Response 19:

This is not necessary.

Question 20:

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Do you have a preference for a custom-built software solution or an off-the-shelf market solution for the DLH? If custom-built, are there any specific customization requirements? If a market solution, are there preferred platforms or vendors you are considering?

Response 20:

We do not have a preference. However, the platform should allow for customization to support specific branding of the BCRC-Caribbean and the ISLANDS Caribbean Child Projects. At this time, we do not have a preferred platform or vendor. However, the assessment phase of this consultancy should bring additional information in this regard to the fore. At that time, this decision can be made.

Question 21:

What are your hosting and scalability requirements? Should the platform be cloud-based, on-premises, or a hybrid solution? What are the anticipated growth rates, and how should the platform scale?

Response 21:

A cloud-based platform is preferred. At present, we are unable to anticipate the growth rate of the platform; the assessment phase should also inform this, if this information is available for similar platforms. Decisions on scalability can then be made, and any necessary adjustments can also be made within the nine (9) months following the initial development of the DLH.

Question 22:

Are there any specific security and data protection requirements? E.g. compliance with GDPR, data encryption, user privacy controls, etc.

Response 22:

GDPR compliance is essential. Bidders are at liberty to recommend any data or privacy controls deemed necessary.

Question 23:

Do you need offline access capabilities for the DLH? Should users be able to download resources for offline use?

Response 23:

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Yes

Question 24:

What are your expectations for system reliability and uptime? Are there any specific service-level agreements (SLAs) or performance metrics to be met?

Response 24:

A specific SLA may be required; the contracted party will be obligated to provide maintenance and technical support as needed for nine (9) months following the initial development of the DLH. Initial uptime can be 99.95%.

Question 25:

Are there any existing systems or platforms that the DLH needs to connect with? E.g. CRM< ERP, HR systems, third party learning tools etc.

Response 25:

The DLH will not have to be paired with any existing systems or platforms. It should however, be able to be linked to the BCRC-Caribbean's website, the POPs Regional Information System, the UPOPs Compendium, the POPs Massive Open Online Course, and the FAO's E-Learning Academy as mentioned in the Terms of Reference.

Question 26:

What level of API support and interoperability is required? Should the platform provide RESTful APIs or support for other integration standards?

Response 26:

RESTful APIs would be preferred.

Question 27:

Do you have a preferred method for authentication and user management? – Single sign on (SSO), OAuth, LDAP Integration etc.

Response 27:

SSO authentication will suffice.

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Question 28:

What are your expectations regarding support and maintenance? Should there be 24/7 support, regular updates or a dedicated support team?

Response 28:

Regular updated regarding support is required in the nine (9) months following the initial development of the DLH, following which the BCRC-Caribbean will be responsible for any maintenance and user support as owner of the DLH.

Question 29:

How will user support and training be handled? Are there expectations for training materials, user manuals, or onboarding sessions?

Response 29:

With reference to Sections 2. (e), (f) and (g) of the Terms of Reference, a user manual must be developed for the final version of the platform prior to its launch. The consulting team will be required to develop a communications strategy which includes an awareness campaign to promote the use of the DLH in the Caribbean. The creation and dissemination of communications products will be required here. The team will also be required to facilitate a virtual regional training workshop to demonstrate the use of the DLH and its resources to key stakeholders in the region. The consulting team will also be expected to collaborate with the resident technical support for the BCRC-Caribbean's website to handover the ownership or the DLH, along with routine operations and maintenance.

Question 30:

How will the success of the DLH be measured? What are the key performance indicators (KPIs) that are important (e.g. user engagement, completion rates, satisfaction scores).

Response 30:

The end of the GEF 10279 and 10472 projects (2026) should see at least fifty (50) people engaged by the online training platform and at least one hundred (100) people engaged by the awareness raising programme.

Question 31:

Are there specific goals or milestones that the DLH needs to achieve within a certain timeframe?

Response 31:

Outside of the activities described and deliverables outlined within the Terms of Reference to be executed within the specified timeframe, there are no other specific milestones to be achieved at this time.

Question 32:

How often do you want to review the performance and impact of the DLH?

Response 32:

The performance and impact of the DLH can be reviewed on a monthly basis by the consulting team for the nine (9) months following the initial development of the DLH. Following this, the BCRC-Caribbean will be responsible for same as needed.

Question 33:

Do you have any plans for future expansions or additional features? What new functionalities might be needed in the next 2-3 years?

Response 33:

At present, there are no plans for future expansions or additional features within the scope of this consultancy.

Question 34:

Are there any anticipated challenges or barriers to the DLH's successful implementation and operation?

Response 34:

No.

Question 35:

What are your long-term goals for the DLH? How do you envision it evolving over the next 5-10 years?

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Response 35:

Any evolution of the DLH following the end of this consultancy will be informed based on country needs and technological advancements/improvements as and when required.

Question 36:

Could you review the attached flowchart and confirm whether it accurately reflects the flow of activities outlined in the TOR?

Response 36:

At this stage of the tendering process, we are unable to review any draft submissions. Kindly refer to the Terms of Reference which details the scope of the consultancy.

Question 37:

Utilisation of pre-existing materials – Could you clarify how you envision the integration of materials from previous or ongoing projects? Additionally, could you specify the types of materials we will be working with (E.g. documents, videos, presentations). This information will help us tailor our approach accordingly.

Response 37:

Content will include, but not be limited to, documents, presentations, videos (webinars, workshops, animated content).

Question 38:

Training sessions – Could you specify the target audience for the training sessions (E.g. general public, government officials, regional stakeholders)? Are there specific training goals you would like us to achieve for each group?

Response 38:

The target audience will comprise public sector actors involved in the implementation of the Conventions in the Caribbean. Key stakeholders from each of the project countries should be identified and trained in the use of the DLH, with consideration given to the Training of Trainers programme being executed under a separate consultancy.

Question 39:

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Awareness programme – Could you elaborate on the specific goals of the programme? Who is the primary target audience and what outcomes would indicate the success of the programme? Are there any key performance indicators (KPIs) or benchmarks that should guide our strategy? Additionally, will our team be responsible for rolling out this campaign in each country, or will another party use our plan for implementation?

Response 39:

The awareness campaign will aim to promote the use of the DLH throughout the Caribbean. The target audience will comprise of chemicals and waste management professionals. The awareness programme should reach at least 100 persons. The design of the campaign should consider its implementation, which will be conducted by a separate entity.

Question 40:

Monitoring dashboard – Could you clarify whether the monitoring dashboard is meant to track project activities during the consultancy phase, or if it will serve as a long-term feature of the DLH for ongoing use post project?

Response 40:

The monitoring dashboard is intended to be a long-term feature of the DLH for continued use beyond the life of the project.

Question 41:

Content localization – Beyond translation, will content localization involve cultural adaptation to ensure the materials are appropriate for the different Caribbean nations?

Response 41:

Content will not require adaptation to the national context.

Question 42:

Engagement with the National Working Groups (NWGs) - Could you outline the level of interaction and collaboration expected between our team and the National Working Groups (NWGs) throughout the project?

Response 42:

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The NWGs comprise of key national stakeholders involved in the waste and chemicals sector in each project country. Each NWG is led by a Chair and a National Project Coordinator (NPC). The Chair and NPC provide technical backstopping and support with stakeholder engagement to consultants, while other members of the NWG are co-opted for the review of deliverables, validation of findings, and feedback as well as participation in meetings. Deliverables will only be finalized following review by both the BCRC-Caribbean and the NWGs.

Question 43:

Based on a pre-existing professional relationship, do you require us to complete the Eligibility Form?

Response 43:

As the bidding process for that project activity did not require an Eligibility Form to be submitted, we do not have an Eligibility Form on file for your team. We would therefore need the Eligibility Form to be submitted along with the requested documentation.

Question 44:

Do you have a budget range that we should be aware of (or maximum budget)?

Response 44:

Please be advised that the BCRC-Caribbean will not be disclosing the budget range for this consultancy, as we have requested bidders to prepare financial proposal based on the anticipated level of effort to achieve the scope of work.

Question 45:

We kindly request an extension of the submission deadline to September 23 if feasible.

Response 45:

The deadline for submission has been extended to Sunday September 22nd at 11:59p.m.

Question 46:

In reading the TOR, it is clear that the development of a digital learning hub and a marketing and communication strategy is required. It is not clear to us if training content on the use of the DLH must also be developed and delivered as part of this consultancy. Would you be so kind as to clarify this for us?

Response 46:

Regarding the development of training content, the successful bidder will be responsible for:

- Development of a user manual for the final version of the DLH
- Development of communications projects which promote the availability and use of the DLH
- Facilitation of a virtual regional training workshop to demonstrate the use of the DLH and its resources to key stakeholders in the region. Presentations and other appropriate content for this training workshop must also be developed based on the user manual.

Question 47:

We are a new company with less than one year in the market. However, our team has extensive experience in the topic related to the consultancy. I would like to ask how we could comply with the eligibility criteria related to 'Financial Capability: Audited Financials OR Banker's Report: Please provide audited financial statements for the last three (3) years (Limited Liability, Unlimited Liability, and Not-for-Profit Companies) OR a Banker's Report (Individual Consultants/ Sole Proprietors and Partnerships) which details your business relationship for the last three (3) years for each year of operation, if less than three (3) years. The report should indicate credit worthiness and should not be older than three (3) months from the date of submission of this prequalification package. Please include the requisite documents as Annex IV to this package'. Could we submit the banker's report of the main team member to meet the criteria?

Response 47:

You will be required to present a Banker's Report for the company, if an audit has not yet been conducted. This report must speak to credit worthiness, include an average running balance for the submitted account using general figures (for example, 'Equal to or greater than $100,000'), and should not be older than three (3) months from the date of submission.

Please note that payments under this consultancy will be disbursed in accordance with the submission and approval of deliverables; pre-approved expenses will also be paid on a reimbursable basis where evidence of expenditure is provided. As such, the consulting team will be expected to bear the costs upfront.

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