

Request for Proposals (RFP)

SANReN Managed Bandwidth links

**between Teraco data centre in Cape Town
and**

SALT in Sutherland

RFP No. 3465/09/07/2021

Date of Issue	Friday, 11 June 2021	
Closing Date	Friday, 09 July 2021 by 16h30	
Electronic submission	Email: tender@csir.co.za If the size of the documents exceed 30MB, send multiple emails. Use the tender number and description as the subject on the email.	
Enquiries	Strategic Procurement Unit	E-mail: tender@csir.co.za
Closing date for queries:	Friday, 25 June 2021	16:30
CSIR business hours	08h00 – 16h30	
Category	Computer Equipment	

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Glossary

Abbreviation	Term	Description
B-BBEE	Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment	A term describing South African Government Policy regarding the economic upliftment of persons previously excluded from involvement in the economy of South Africa
CHPC	Centre for High Performance Computing	
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research	A statutory body established in terms of Scientific Research Council Act 46 of 1988, as amended
DIRISA	Data Intensive Research Initiative of South Africa	
DSI	Department of Science & Innovation	
NICIS	National Integrated Cyber-Infrastructure System	
RFP	Request for Proposal	A request for organisations and companies to submit a proposal to supply goods and services to CSIR
RSA	Republic of South Africa	
SAAO	South African Astronomical Observatory	SAAO is the national centre for optical and infrared astronomy in South Africa.
SALT	Southern African Large Telescope	Southern African Large Telescope is the largest single optical telescope in the southern hemisphere and among the largest in the world.
SANReN	South African National Research Network	The South African National Research Network (SANReN) is a high-speed network dedicated to science, research, education and innovation traffic.

Definition of Terms

Term	Definition
Managed Bandwidth Service	A service provided by telecoms companies where a point-to-point link/service of a particular bandwidth capacity is provided to the customer.

SECTION A – TECHNICAL INFORMATION

1 INTRODUCTION

The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is one of the leading scientific research and technology development organisations in Africa. In partnership with national and international research and technology institutions, CSIR undertakes directed and multidisciplinary research and technology innovation that contributes to the improvement of the quality of life of South Africans. The CSIR's main site is in Pretoria while it is represented in other provinces of South Africa through regional offices.

The National Integrated Cyber Infrastructure System (NICIS) is responsible to provide integrated Cyber-Infrastructure in the form of a high-speed network, large scale processing capacity and long term data storage system to the research community in South Africa. NICIS provides these services through the Centre for High Performance Computing (CHPC), the South African National Research Network (SANReN) and the Data Intensive Research Initiative of South Africa (DIRISA).

2 BACKGROUND

SANReN is a major research infrastructure initiative of the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) with the responsibility to connect all research, education and innovation institutions to a high-speed telecommunications network.

The Southern African Large Telescope (SALT) is the largest single optical telescope in the southern hemisphere and among the largest in the world. SALT is situated at the South African Astronomical Observatory (SAAO) field station near the small town of Sutherland, in the Northern Cape province, about 400 km from Cape Town. Currently SALT is connected to SANReN via a 10Gbps managed bandwidth link. The contract for the link will expire 18 September 2021. The intention is to replace the link before it expires. In discussions with SALT to refresh this link, they have also indicated their requirement for a capacity increase and a high availability connection for the site. In order to provide this increase in capacity requirement and high availability, two physically diverse routes from the SALT site in Sutherland to the SANReN Point of Presence (PoP) at the Teraco data centre in Cape Town will need to be procured.

The CSIR has been issued with a Licence Exemption in terms of the regulations for Licence exemption as defined in the Electronic Communications (EC) Act no 36 of 2005, for the establishment of SANReN. This licence exemption entitles the CSIR to build and acquire its own communications infrastructure, or to lease connectivity and capacity from licensed telecommunications operators holding Electronic Communication Network Service (ECNS) licences issued in term of the EC Act.

This document describes the general terms and conditions to which all bidders must comply.

3 INVITATION FOR PROPOSAL

Proposals are hereby invited for the supply of **ALL possible diverse routes** of fixed-line managed bandwidth links of 10Gbps capacity. As a result of this tender process, the intention is to procure **only two** managed bandwidth links. The links chosen will be two physically diverse routes (no overlap) between the SAAO SALT site in Sutherland and the SANReN network PoP at the Teraco data centre in Cape Town as detailed in *Table 1* and schematically illustrated in *Diagram 1* below:

Table 1: Table 1: SALT site in Sutherland and Teraco data centre in Cape Town

Link #	Site A	Site B
1	SAAO SALT, Sutherland	Teraco data centre, Cape Town
2	SAAO SALT, Sutherland	Teraco data centre, Cape Town

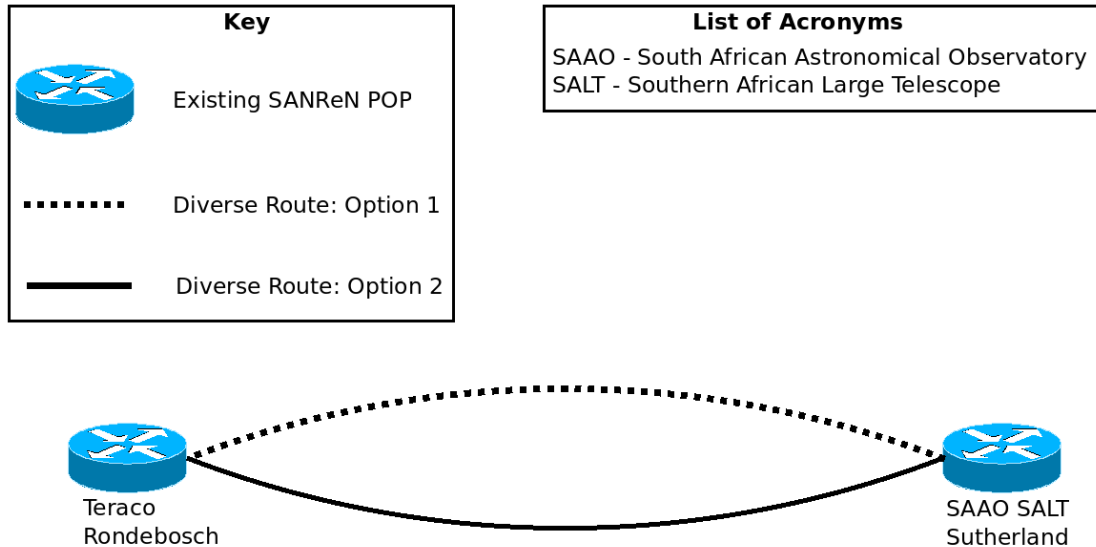


Diagram 1: Schematic diagram of managed bandwidth links between SAAO SALT in Sutherland and Teraco data centre in Cape Town

4 REQUIREMENT LEVEL KEYWORDS

- 4.1 To eliminate ambiguity, bidders are to interpret the meaning of technical requirements using the keywords; "must", "must not", "required", "shall", "shall not", "should", "should not", "recommended", "may", and "optional", as defined by the IETF RFC (Request For Comments) document designated as RFC2119.

5 PROPOSAL SPECIFICATION

- 5.1 CSIR requests bidders to provide **ALL possible diverse routes** for the managed bandwidth point to point link that they can provide with 10Gbps bandwidth capacity as stated in the Technical Requirements (Annexure A).
- 5.2 **As a result of this tender process, the best two routes will be procured. The links chosen will be two physically diverse routes (no overlap) and may result in an award to more than one bidder.**

5.3 Bidders must provide a schedule with timelines for the delivery of the link(s).

5.4 Structure of this RFP:

5.4.1 This document consists of a main RFP document and four (4) Annexures. i.e. Annexure A – Technical requirements, Annexure B – Technical compliance matrix, Annexure C – Pricing Schedule and Annexure D – Returnable Documents Checklist

5.4.2 Bidders must provide all the documentation requested in the main RFP once only. The Technical and Price responses must not be included in the main RFP, but in respective Technical and pricing matrices as per the bid file structure in Table 4.

5.4.3 Refer to Section 10 below for details on how the bidders must structure their responses.

5.5 The bidders must cater for an access build if it is required for the solution.

5.6 Bidders must provide an end-to-end solution, i.e. from one ODF to the next ODF.

5.7 Bidders must provide pricing that is inclusive of the fibre lease and maintenance and support for a period of 60 months and 120 months.

5.8 Bidders who intend to bid for this RFP must complete the Technical Compliance Matrix. If a bidder intends to provide a solution for more than one route, the Technical Compliance Matrix for each route needs to be completed.

5.9 The CSIR reserves the right not to award the second link if no suitable solution can be found.

6 FUNCTIONAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

6.1 The bidder **must** complete the technical compliance matrix in full, which is a mandatory submission and is found in Annexure B. The technical compliance matrix will facilitate the technical evaluation of the proposed solution(s). Bidders who do not submit a completed matrix will not be evaluated.

6.2 Technical Requirements

- 6.2.1 The bidder must respond to the specific technical requirements of the project as detailed in *Annexure A - Technical Requirements*.
- 6.2.2 Proposals with technical points of less than the predetermined minimum overall percentage of 70% and a score of 0 on any individual criteria as stated in the Technical Compliance Matrix spreadsheet (Annexure B) will be eliminated from further evaluation.
- 6.2.3 The evaluation of the technical detail of the proposal will be based on the following criteria in Table 2. There are different weights assigned to each criterion. A possible score of 0, 5 or 10 for each criterion, based on non-compliance, partial compliance, or full compliance with the specific criterion. Some criteria shown below require full compliance to pass.

Table 2: Technical evaluation criteria

Technical Criteria	Weighting	Possible score
Committed Link capacity rates of 10Gbps	10%	0 or 10
Direct Physical Routing	8%	0, 5 or 10
Existing Core Infrastructure	10%	0, 5 or 10
Circuits are end-to-end and based on fixed-line fibre infrastructure	9%	0 or 10
Underlying infrastructure	5%	5 or 10
Infrastructure shared with other services provided to SANReN	5%	5 or 10
Demarcation Equipment	3%	0 or 10
AC Power at end points	3%	0 or 10
Link Loss Forwarding	3%	0 or 10
Jumbo Frames	3%	0 or 10
Ethernet handoff with 10GBASE-LR (LAN) PHY interface	3%	0 or 10
End-to-end service quality is managed with an availability of 98% per link	10%	0, 5 or 10
Bidder Maintenance undertakings and associated procedures	10%	0, 5 or 10
Commitment to deliver the required link at the specified times	5%	0, 5 or 10

Project Plan	5%	0, 5 or 10
Acceptance Documentation (Soak testing results)	8%	0, 5 or 10
Total	100 %	160 (without weighting)

6.2.4 Refer to Annexure B for the scoring sheet that will be used to evaluate technical compliance.

7 ELIMINATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be eliminated under the following conditions:

- Proposals submitted after the deadline;
- Proposals submitted at incorrect email address;
- Failure to submit a signed declaration form;
- Failure to complete the Technical Compliance Matrix in full; and
- Failure to complete the Pricing Schedule.
- National Treasury restricted suppliers

8 NATIONAL TREASURY CENTRAL SUPPLIER DATABASE (CSD) REGISTRATION

Before any negotiations will start with the winning bidder it will be required from the winning bidder to:

- be registered on the National Treasury's Central Supplier Database (CSD). Registrations can be completed online at: www.csd.gov.za;
- provide the CSIR of their CSD registration number; and
- provide the CSIR with a certified copy of their B-BBEE certificate (RSA suppliers only). If no certificate can be provided, no points will be scored during the evaluation process.
- provide the CSIR with a valid copy of tax certificate.

SECTION B – TERMS AND CONDITIONS

9 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, the CSIR requires that all tender submissions be submitted electronically. Should tender file size exceed 30 MB, bidders can submit tender in multiple emails. Use the tender number **3465/09/07/2021** and description of the tender as the subject on your email.

- 9.1 All proposals must be submitted at: tender@csir.co.za.
- 9.2 All proposals are to be clearly marked with the RFP number under the subject on each e-mail submission.
- 9.3 Proposals must consist of three parts, each of which is submitted in a separate e-mail package clearly marked with the RFP Number and the description of the tender:
 - **PART 1:** General Terms, Conditions and Documentation: RFP No. **3465/09/07/2021**
 - **PART 2:** Technical Proposals, Technical Compliance Matrix: RFP No. **3465/09/07/2021**
 - **PART 3:** Pricing Proposals: RFP No. **3465/09/07/2021**

The detail requirements for each link are provided in each of the project's technical requirements document.

The bidder must follow the file structure in Table 4 in the structuring of the tender documents.

Table 4: Bid File Structure

RFP Section	Tender Response Documents
Part 1	Sign main RFP document (this document)
	Completed and duly signed Declaration of Interest Form
	Completed and signed Returnable documents checklist (Annexure D)
	Any other information the bidder wishes to submit, e.g. marketing messages, sales executive messages, etc. This information must not contain any pricing information, i.e. Part 3, or any information referenced in Part 2 of the submission
Part 2	Technical Compliance Matrix (Annexure B)
	Project management related information
	References related information
	Any other technical information the bidder wishes to share as part of the technical submission, e.g. Maps, Network diagrams, SLA info, etc. This information must not contain any pricing information (Part 3).
Part 3	Pricing Schedule (Annexure C)
	B-BBEE Certificate
	Completed SBD1 form
	Recent audited financial statement
	Any other pricing information the bidder wishes to share as part of the pricing submission.
	This information must not contain any technical information i.e. Part 2 information.

9.4 Bidders must not embed files within other files, e.g. .pdf file(s) embedded within a Word file.

- 9.5 Proposals submitted by companies must be signed by a person or persons duly authorised.
- 9.6 The CSIR will award the contract to qualified bidder(s) whose proposal is determined to be the most advantageous to the CSIR, taking into consideration the technical solution, price and B-BBEE.

10 TENDER PROGRAMME

The tender programme, as currently envisaged, incorporates the following key dates:

Table 3: Tender Programme

• Issue of tender documents:	Friday, 11 June 2021
• Compulsory Briefing session:	None
• Closing date for inquiries	Friday, 02 July 2021 by 16h30pm
• Closing / submission Date:	Friday, 09 July 2021 by 16h30pm
• Estimate appointment date of successful bidder:	Friday, 30 July 2021
• Estimated contract duration	60 months or 120 months

11 DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

Proposals shall be submitted to tender@csir.co.za no later than the closing date of **Friday, 09 July 2021** by 16h30.

Where a proposal is not received by the CSIR by the due date and time via the stipulated email address, it will be regarded as a late tender. Late tenders will not be considered.

12 AWARDING OF TENDERS

- 12.1 Awarding of tenders will be published on the National Treasury e-tender portal and CSIR website. No letters of regret will be sent out.

13 EVALUATION PROCESS

13.1 Evaluation of proposals

All proposals will be evaluated for technical capability, price and B-BBEE. Based on the results of the evaluation process and upon successful negotiations, the CSIR will approve the awarding of the contract to successful bidder(s).

A two-phase evaluation process will be followed.

- The first phase includes the evaluation of the **elimination criteria** and **technical criteria**.
- The second phase includes the evaluation of **price** and **B-BBEE** status.

Pricing Proposals will only be considered after technical capability phase has been evaluated and accepted. Only proposals that achieved the specified minimum qualification scores for technical capability will be evaluated further using the preference points system.

13.2 Preference points system

The **80/20** preference point system will be used where 80 points will be dedicated to price and 20 points to B-BBEE status.

Bidders are encouraged to provide the CSIR with a certified copy of their B-BBEE certificate. If no certificate can be provided, no points will be scored during the evaluation process.

14 PRICING PROPOSAL

14.1 Pricing proposal must be cross-referenced to the respective sections in the Technical Proposal. Any options offered must be clearly labelled. Separate pricing must be provided for each option offered to ensure that pricing comparisons are clear and unambiguous.

14.2 Pricing Schedule Matrix (Annexure C) is a mandatory submission designed to facilitate evaluation. Separate pricing must be provided for each option offered to ensure that pricing comparisons are clear and unambiguous.

- 14.3 Price needs to be provided in South African Rand (excl. VAT), with details on price elements that are subject to escalation and exchange rate fluctuations clearly indicated.
- 14.4 Price should include additional cost elements such as freight, insurance until acceptance, duty where applicable.
- 14.5 Price should indicate the Rand/Dollar exchange rate and the cost of the forward cover valid for six (6) Months from the date of the proposal if applicable.
- 14.6 Only firm prices* will be accepted during the tender validity period. Non-firm prices** (including prices subject to rates of exchange variations) will not be considered.

* Firm price is the price that is only subject to adjustments in accordance with the actual increase or decrease resulting from the change, imposition, or abolition of customs or excise duty and any other duty, levy, or tax which, in terms of a law or regulation is binding on the contractor and demonstrably has an influence on the price of any supplies, or the rendering costs of any service, for the execution of the contract;

** Non-firm price is all prices other than “firm” prices.

14.7 Payment will be according to the CSIR Payment Terms and Conditions.

14.8 Pricing Expectation

- Bidders are reminded that the CSIR expects all solutions offered to be “Wholesale Transmission Services” at carrier quality, availability and pricing levels normally associated with such services sold on to licensed providers of electronic communications service providers.
- Since the SANReN network is a research and education network, and will not be used by the CSIR in a “for profit” sense, bidders are encouraged to provide discounted pricing below the “wholesale transmission services” rate. e.g. E-rate, education discounts.

15 VALIDITY PERIOD OF PROPOSAL

14.1 Each proposal shall be valid for a minimum period of six (6) months calculated from the closing date.

16 APPOINTMENT OF SERVICE PROVIDER

- 16.1 The contract will be awarded to the bidder who scores the highest total number of points during the evaluation process, except where the law permits otherwise.
- 16.2 Appointment as a successful service provider shall be subject to the parties agreeing to mutually acceptable contractual terms and conditions. In the event of the parties failing to reach such agreement CSIR reserves the right to appoint an alternative service provider.

17 ENQUIRIES AND CONTACT WITH THE CSIR

Any enquiry regarding this RFP shall be submitted in writing to CSIR at tender@csir.co.za with “RFP No. **3465/09/07/2021**– SANReN Managed Bandwidth links between Teraco data centre in Cape Town And SALT in Sutherland” *as the subject*.

The closing date for the technical enquiries is Friday, **02 July 2021**. Responses to the enquiries will be published at CSIR website under tenders

Any other contact with CSIR personnel involved in this tender is not permitted during the RFP process other than as required through existing service arrangements or as requested by the CSIR as part of the RFP process.

18 MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION

All documentation submitted in response to this RFP must be in English.

19 COST OF PROPOSAL

Bidders are expected to fully acquaint themselves with the conditions, requirements and specifications of this RFP before submitting proposals. Each bidder assumes all risks for resource commitment and expenses, direct or indirect, of proposal preparation and participation throughout the RFP process. The CSIR is not responsible directly or indirectly for any costs incurred by bidders.

20 CORRECTNESS OF RESPONSES

- 20.1 The bidder must confirm satisfaction regarding the correctness and validity of their proposal and that all prices and rates quoted cover all the work/items specified in the RFP. The prices and rates quoted must cover all obligations under any resulting contract.
- 20.2 The bidder accepts that any mistakes regarding prices and calculations will be their own risk.

21 VERIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS

- 21.1 Bidders should check the numbers of the pages to satisfy themselves that none are missing or duplicated. No liability will be accepted by the CSIR in regard to anything arising from the fact that pages are missing or duplicated.
- 21.2 The CSIR requires that all bidders to submit proposals electronically to CSIR at tender@csir.co.za.
- 21.3 Pricing schedule and B-BBEE credentials should be submitted with the proposal, but as a separate document and no such information should be available in the technical proposal.

22 ANNEXURE D - RETURNABLE DOCUMENTS CHECKLIST

The bidder must complete Annexure D and return the necessary documents as per the annexure.

23 SUB-CONTRACTING

- 23.1 A bidder will not be awarded points for B-BBEE status level if it is indicated in the tender documents that such a bidder intends sub-contracting more than 25% of the value of the contract to any other enterprise that does not qualify for at least the points that such a bidder qualifies for, unless the intended sub-contractor is an exempted micro enterprise that has the capability and ability to execute the sub-contract.
- 23.2 A bidder awarded a contract may not sub-contract more than 25% of the value of the contract to any other enterprise that does not have an equal or higher B-BBEE status level than the person concerned, unless the contract is sub-contracted to an exempted micro enterprise that has the capability and ability to execute the sub-contract.

24 ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- 24.1 A bidder shall not assume that information and/or documents supplied to CSIR, at any time prior to this request, are still available to CSIR, and shall consequently not make any reference to such information document in its response to this request.
- 24.2 Copies of any affiliations, memberships and/or accreditations that support your submission must be included in the tender.
- 24.3 In case of a proposal from a joint venture, the following must be submitted together with the proposal:
- Joint venture Agreement including split of work signed by both parties;
 - The original or certified copy of the B-BBEE certificate of the joint venture;
 - The Tax Clearance Certificate of each joint venture member;
 - Proof of ownership/shareholder certificates/copies; and
 - Company registration certificates.
- 24.4 An omission to disclose material information, a factual inaccuracy, and/or a misrepresentation of fact may result in the disqualification of a tender, or cancellation of any subsequent contract.
- 24.5 Failure to comply with any of the terms and conditions as set out in this document will invalidate the Proposal.
- 24.6 During Contracting, the CSIR will negotiate with the highest scoring bidder to convert any Partial Compliance Scores that they have received in their tender response to become fully compliant. This is done to ensure that the bidder fully complies with all of the CSIR's requirements. Furthermore, this will be done at no additional cost to the CSIR.

25 CSIR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO

- 25.1 Extend the closing date;
- 25.2 Verify any information contained in a proposal;
- 25.3 Request documentary proof regarding any tendering issue;
- 25.4 Give preference to locally manufactured goods;
- 25.5 Appoint one or more service providers, separately or jointly (whether or not they submitted a joint proposal);
- 25.6 Award this RFP as a whole or in part to a single bidder or multiple bidders;
- 25.7 Cancel or withdraw this RFP as a whole or in part.

26 DISCLAIMER

This RFP is a request for proposals only and not an offer document. Answers to this RFP must not be construed as acceptance of an offer or imply the existence of a contract between the parties. By submission of its proposal, bidders shall be deemed to have satisfied themselves with and to have accepted all Terms & Conditions of this RFP. The CSIR makes no representation, warranty, assurance, guarantee or endorsements to bidder concerning the RFP, whether with regard to its accuracy, completeness or otherwise and the CSIR shall have no liability towards the bidder or any other party in connection therewith.

27 DECLARATION BY BIDDER

Only bidders who completed the declaration below will be considered for evaluation.

RFP No: 3465/09/07/2021

I hereby undertake to render services described in the attached tendering documents to CSIR in accordance with the requirements and task directives / proposal specifications stipulated in RFP No. **3465/09/07/2021** at the price/s quoted. My offer/s remains binding upon me and open for acceptance by the CSIR during the validity period indicated and calculated from the closing date of the proposal.

I confirm that I am satisfied with regards to the correctness and validity of my proposal; that the price(s) and rate(s) quoted cover all the services specified in the proposal documents; that the price(s) and rate(s) cover all my obligations and I accept that any mistakes regarding price(s) and rate(s) and calculations will be at my own risk.

I accept full responsibility for the proper execution and fulfilment of all obligations and conditions devolving on me under this proposal as the principal liable for the due fulfilment of this proposal.

I declare that I have no participation in any collusive practices with any bidder or any other person regarding this or any other proposal.

I accept that the CSIR may take appropriate actions, deemed necessary, should there be a conflict of interest or if this declaration proves to be false.

I confirm that I am duly authorised to sign this proposal.

NAME (PRINT)

CAPACITY

SIGNATURE

NAME OF FIRM

DATE

WITNESSES

1

2

DATE: