



Request for Proposals (RFP)

The provision of Language Services to CSIR (The development of speech technology project)

RFP No. 958/21/07/2021

Date of Issue	Wednesday, 07 July 2021	
Compulsory briefing session	N/A	
Closing Date	Wednesday, 21 July 2021	
Place	Tender box, CSIR Main Reception, Gate 3 (North Gate)	
Enquiries	Strategic Procurement Unit	E-mail: tender@csir.co.za
CSIR business hours	08h00 – 16h30	
Category	Professional Services	

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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.

2 BACKGROUND

Over the past 12 years, the Voice Computing Research Group (VCRG) at the NGEI Cluster has been developing language resources and technologies (ASR, TTS and machine translation technologies) for South Africa's resource-scarce environment.

The language services will support projects which aim to identify potential sources of spoken audio (existing datasets and new sources) for our local languages; design and implement automated data capturing tools and procedures for harvesting speech and text in these languages; develop corpora of transcribed speech data from existing datasets for these languages; develop computational resource grammars for these languages; and curate, package and release data for language technology development and research purposes in South Africa.

3 INVITATION FOR PROPOSAL

Proposals are hereby invited for the provision of Language services to the CSIR.

4 PROPOSAL SPECIFICATION

Tenderers to submit tenders in a format they deem fit.

A 3-year contract (with a language services provider) for all language services, including but not limited to the following:

- Translation
- Back translation
- Editing

- Verifying automatically generated text
- Transcription (will include various types of audio - such as speeches/dramas/news bulletins/prompts/ utterances; for language technology development purposes - thus extra-ordinary transcription requiring strict adherence to protocols provided)
- Proofreading.

A specific focus on all official SA languages; the African languages spoken in neighbouring countries - chiShona, Sesotho (Lesotho), Setswana (Botswana); and other African languages spoken on the African continent - starting with Kiswahili.

Some tasks will require the downloading and using of prescribed software. Successful completion of short trial versions of tasks may also be required, before commencement of the main task, to ensure quality of execution.

5 FUNCTIONAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

5.1 The evaluation of the functional / technical detail of the proposal will be based on the following criteria:

No	Functionality Factors	Weighting
1	Company's years experience in delivering language services (broken down in terms of translation, transcription, editing and proofreading)	20%
2	Language practitioners' qualifications and years of experience in providing language services (translation, transcription, editing and proofreading)	20%
3	Language practitioners and company's relevant experience in providing "non-standard" language services tailored to the needs of language technology development. This may include following protocols specific to the technology being developed, using software specific to the project (e.g. non-standard transcription software), and a willingness to attend brief training sessions on the services required.	20%
4	Contracts with mother tongue language practitioners for all eleven of the official languages, as well as access to experienced and qualified practitioners in other African languages spoken in neighbouring countries and on the African continent	20%
5	Ability to provide the required services (including non-standard services such as verifying automatically generated text; undertaking perceptual evaluations on text-to-speech voices; transcribing audio; and providing feedback on language resource grammars) within specified timeframes.	20%
Total		100%

5.2 Proposals with functionality/technical points of less than the pre-determined minimum overall percentage of **75%** and less than **70%** on any of the individual criteria will be eliminated from further evaluation.

5.3 Refer to **Annexure A** for the scoring sheet that will be used to evaluate functionality.

6 ELIMINATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be eliminated under the following conditions:

- Submission after the deadline
- Proposals submitted at incorrect location
- National Treasury restricted suppliers
- Company based outside of South Africa

7 NATIONAL TREASURY CENTRAL SUPPLIER DATABASE REGISTRATION

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

- be registered on 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. If no certificate can be provided, no points will be scored during the evaluation process. (RSA suppliers only)

SECTION B – TERMS AND CONDITIONS

8 VENUE FOR PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

All proposals must be submitted at: tender@csir.co.za

The CSIR requires that all tender submissions be submitted electronically to: tender@csir.co.za.

Should tender file size exceed 30 MB, tenderers can submit tender in multiple emails. Use the tender number **958/21/07/2021** and description of the tender as the subject on your email.

9 TENDER PROGRAMME

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

● Issue of tender documents:	Wednesday, 07 July 2021
● Compulsory Briefing session:	None
● Closing / submission Date:	Wednesday, 21 July 2021 at 16:30

10 SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

10.1 All proposals are to be submitted to: tender@csir.co.za clearly marked with the RFP number and the description of the tender as the subject on e-mail. Proposals must consist of two parts, each of which is submitted as a separate e-mail where possible and clearly marked:

PART 1: Technical Proposal: RFP No.: **958/21/07/2021**.

PART 2: Pricing Proposal, B-BBEE and other Mandatory Documentation:
RFP No.: **958/21/07/2021**.

10.2 Proposals submitted by companies must be signed by a person or persons duly authorised.

10.3 The CSIR will award the contract to qualified tenderer(s)' whose proposal is determined to be the most advantageous to the CSIR, taking into consideration the technical (functional) solution, price and B-BBEE.

11 DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

Proposals shall be submitted at the address mentioned above no later than the closing date of **Wednesday, 21 July 2021** during CSIR's business hours. The CSIR business hours are between 08h00 and 16h30.

Where a proposal is not received by the CSIR by the due date and stipulated place, 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 or the CSIR's tender website. No regret letters will be sent out.

13 EVALUATION PROCESS

13.1 Evaluation of proposals

All proposals will be evaluated by an evaluation team for functionality, 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 tenderers.

A two-phase evaluation process will be followed.

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

Pricing Proposals will only be considered after functionality phase has been adjudicated and accepted. Only proposals that achieved the specified minimum qualification scores for functionality 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.

14 PRICING PROPOSAL

14.1 Pricing proposal must be cross-referenced to the 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 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.

14.3 Price should include additional cost elements such as freight, insurance until acceptance, duty where applicable.

14.4 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.*

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

15 VALIDITY PERIOD OF PROPOSAL

Each proposal shall be valid for a minimum period of three (3) months calculated from the closing date.

16 APPOINTMENT OF SERVICE PROVIDER

16.1 The contract will be awarded to the tenderer 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 supplier.

16.3 Awarding of contracts will be announced on the National Treasury website and no regret letters will be sent to unsuccessful bidders.

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 958/21/07/2021 - The provision of Language services to the CSIR"** as the subject.

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

Tenderers are expected to fully acquaint themselves with the conditions, requirements and specifications of this RFP before submitting proposals. Each tenderer 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 tenderers.

20 CORRECTNESS OF RESPONSES

- 20.1 The tenderer 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 tenderer accepts that any mistakes regarding prices and calculations will be at their own risk.

21 VERIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS

- 21.1 Tenderers 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 suppliers 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 SUB-CONTRACTING

- 22.1 A tenderer will not be awarded points for B-BBEE status level if it is indicated in the tender documents that such a tenderer 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 tenderer qualifies for, unless the intended sub-contractor is an exempted micro enterprise that has the capability and ability to execute the sub-contract.
- 22.2 A tenderer 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.

23 ENGAGEMENT OF CONSULTANTS

The consultants will only be remunerated at the rates:

- 23.1 Determined in the "Guideline for fees", issued by the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA); or
- 23.2 Set out in the "Guide on Hourly Fee Rates for Consultants", by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA); or
- 23.3 Prescribed by the body - regulating the profession of the consultant.

24 TRAVEL EXPENSES

- 24.1 All travel expenses for the CSIR's account, be it directly via the CSIR's travel agent or indirectly via re-imburements, must be in line with the CSIR's travel policy. The following will apply:
- 24.1.1 Only economy class tickets will be used.
- 24.1.2 A maximum of R1 400 per night for accommodation, dinner, breakfast and parking will be allowed.
- 24.1.3 No car rentals of more than a Group B will be accommodated.

25 ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- 25.1 A tenderer 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.

- 25.2 Copies of any affiliations, memberships and/or accreditations that support your submission must be included in the tender.
- 25.3 In case of 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.
- 25.4 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.
- 25.5 Failure to comply with any of the terms and conditions as set out in this document will invalidate the Proposal.

26 CSIR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO

- 26.1 Extend the closing date;
- 26.2 Verify any information contained in a proposal;
- 26.3 Request documentary proof regarding any tendering issue;
- 26.4 Give preference to locally manufactured goods;
- 26.5 Appoint one or more service providers, separately or jointly (whether or not they submitted a joint proposal);
- 26.6 Award this RFP as a whole or in part;
- 26.7 Cancel or withdraw this RFP as a whole or in part.

27 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, tenderers 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 tenderer concerning the CSIR RFP No. 958/21/07/2021

RFP, whether with regard to its accuracy, completeness or otherwise and the CSIR shall have no liability towards the tenderer or any other party in connection therewith.

28 DECLARATION BY TENDERER

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

RFP No: 958/21/07/2021.

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. **958/21/07/2021** 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 tenderer 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

CSIR RFP No. 958/21/07/2021

WITNESSES DATE:
--

NAME OF FIRM

DATE

29 ANNEXURE A FUNCTIONALITY EVALUATION SCORE CARD

Functional Factors	Weight	Criteria	Scoring
Company has capability and experience in a wide range of language services including translation, transcription, editing and proofreading	20	Company's years experience in delivering language services (broken down in terms of translation, transcription, editing and proofreading)	<p>More than ten years experience in each of the services = 10</p> <p>Between 5 and 10 years experience in each of the services = 8</p> <p>Less than 5 years experience in each of the services = 0</p> <p>Require proof of track record of company such as customer satisfaction reports, examples of large contracts delivered on successfully (without divulging proprietary information), list of main customers (without divulging proprietary information)</p>
Appointed language practitioners have relevant qualifications and experience in translation, transcription, editing and/or proofreading	20	Language practitioners' qualifications and years of experience in providing language services (translation, transcription, editing and proofreading)	<p>More than 60% of the language practitioners have more than ten years experience in one or more of the language services = 10</p> <p>More than 60% of the language practitioners have between 5 and 10 years experience in one or more of the language services = 8</p> <p>More than 60% of the language practitioners have less than 5 years experience in one or more of the language services = 0</p> <p>Require an indication of the qualifications and/or experience of the language practitioners employed or contracted by the company to undertake the required language services.</p>

<p>Company and language practitioners have a track record in supplying language services for language technology development purposes</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>Language practitioners and company have relevant experience in providing “non-standard” language services tailored to the needs of language technology development. This may include following protocols specific to the technology being developed, using software specific to the project (e.g. non-standard transcription software), and a willingness to attend brief training sessions on the services required.</p>	<p>Company and/or language practitioners have delivered services for language technology development purposes in the last 12 months, with proof of such services provided, and have provided an indication of the software used and the skills levels of the practitioners in using said software = 10</p> <p>Company and/or language practitioners have delivered services for language technology development purposes in the last 12 months, with proof of such services provided = 8</p> <p>Company and/or language practitioners have not delivered services for language technology development purposes or no proof of such services provided = 0</p> <hr/> <p>Require proof of having delivered language services that formed part of language technology development processes, using relevant software.</p>
<p>All eleven official languages covered by mother tongue language practitioners, as well as in other African languages spoken in neighbouring countries and the African continent, or proven ability to source reputable, qualified and experienced language practitioners in these languages</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>Contracts with mother tongue language practitioners for all eleven of the official languages, as well as access to experienced and qualified practitioners in other African languages spoken in neighbouring countries and on the African continent</p>	<p>More than 2 contracted mother tongue language practitioners per language for all eleven official languages and at least one contracted language practitioner for two additional African languages = 10</p> <p>1 or 2 contracted mother tongue language practitioners per language for all eleven official languages and international languages and at least one contracted language practitioner for one additional African language = 8</p> <p>1 or no contracted mother tongue speaker per language for all required languages = 0</p> <hr/> <p>Require proof of contracts with mother tongue language practitioners in the languages offered and an indication of the number of practitioners per language.</p>

Ability to provide the languages services required within specific timeframes	20	Provide the required services (including non-standard services such as verifying automatically generated text; undertaking perceptual evaluations on text-to-speech voices; transcribing audio; and providing feedback on language resource grammars) within specified timeframes.	Language practitioners available to deliver services with two weeks notice = 10 Language practitioners unable to deliver services with two weeks notice = 0 <hr/> Turn-around times for language services clearly indicated and reasonable given the amount of work required.
Total (note: total weight should not exceed 100)	100		