Request for Proposals from Independent Consultants

Project	Digitisation of the Accelerated Learning Programme of the African Professionalisation Initiative (API), in the French language, onto the online learning platform
Issued by	African Organisation of English-speaking Supreme Audit Institutions (AFROSAI-E) on behalf of the African Professionalisation Initiative (API)
Issued on	6 November 2023
Deadline for submission	**8 December 2023**
Inquiries	info@professionalisation.africa

Letter of Invitation

Pretoria, South Africa, 6 November 2023

AFROSAI-E Project on behalf of the African Professionalisation Initiative (API):

Digitisation of the Accelerated Learning Programme of the African Professionalisation Initiative into French onto the online learning platform

To Whom It May Concern:

AFROSAI-E is a partner of the API. The API's mission is to grow the capacity of accountancy professionals in the African public sector for enhanced service delivery. The API's Strategic Plan is available here.

Over the past three years, the API commenced the development of its learning programmes. These learning programmes are designed to support the API's capacity building approach. This approach identifies three target audiences who each have their own learning needs:

- **Incumbents:** senior officials serving in PFM roles but who don't have a professional accountancy background
- **Accounting and auditing professionals** who have an interest in accepting a role within the public sector but lack exposure to this environment.
- **Students:** aspiring professionals who have an interest in pursuing a career in public sector accountancy

This project relates to the implementation (online digitisation) of the French translated and contextualised learning materials, onto the learning platform. The vision of the API is commonly shared across the entire African continent and as a result there is an identified need to also cater for the Francophone region. A comprehensive study was conducted pertaining to public sector accounting and auditing (PSAA) practices in Francophone sub-Saharan African countries, where contextual differences in the organisation of public sector accounting and auditing were established. It is because of this that the API had identified the need to translate and contextualise learning material for the Accelerated Learning Programme from English into the French language.

The process to translate and contextualise the learning resources for the French context has been undertaken through separate procurement processes- therefore AFROSAI-E is at this time requesting proposals for this project for the digitisation (implementation) of these learning materials onto the online learning platform, as detailed in the section "*Terms of Reference*".

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION AND ACCESS TO ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Interested consultants are required to submit their application by 5:00 PM South African Time on **8 December 2023**. Late submissions will not be accepted. Applications must be submitted by email to info@professionalisation.africa using the subject line- **Response to RFP- Digitisation of the Accelerated Learning Programme in French**

All applications must include both a technical proposal and a financial proposal. The technical proposal must follow the "*Instructions for Completing the Technical Proposal*" beginning on page 11. Submissions must not exceed the specified length. Any submissions that do not comply with the instructions will not be considered.

Interested consultants are encouraged to send a short expression of interest via email to the above email address at least 5 working days before the deadline to confirm their intentions to submit an application. This will allow the consultant to be provided with access to a sample course, and the full Accelerated Learning Curriculum (both currently in English). The only details that will be required for this purpose is the name of the consultant and a short explanation of why they are considering submitting a proposal for the project.

Definitions, Key Terminology and Acronyms

AFROSAI-E	African Organisation of English-speaking Supreme Audit Institutions
API	African Professionalisation Initiative, being the collaboration between AAAG, AFROSAI-E, CREFIAF and PAFA
Consultant(s)	A consulting firm or team of independent experts or service provider(s) interested in this RFP
Contract	A legally binding written agreement between the parties
IFAC	International Federation of Accountants
IPD	Initial Professional Development - Learning and development through which aspiring professional accountants first develop professional competence leading to performing a role as a professional accountant or auditor.
Learning resources	Materials which have been produced under this project targeting aspiring professional accountants and auditors. The learning content will be that which will be digitised on the online learning platform.
PAO	Professional Accountancy Organisation
PEC	Proposal Evaluation Committee, a panel which will be established by AFROSAI-E and its API partners to evaluate the submissions.
Proposal	Constitutes a Technical Proposal and a Financial Proposal for undertaking this project as outlined in the ToR
RFP	Request for Proposals
ToR	Terms of Reference for a specific project that outline key deliverables

Terms of Reference

This section sets out the objectives of the project and the contribution of the independent consultants.

Background

1. Public sectors in Africa face a significant shortage of competent accountancy professionals. Public funds are often managed by individuals with no formal accountancy qualification or training in accountancy. Existing accounting qualifications are usually delivered and assessed in a private sector context, and therefore do not adequately address the unique complexities of practicing accountancy in the public sector. Consequently, most accountancy professionals tend to work in the private sector. The shortage of competent accountancy professionals in the public sector is often cited as one of the root causes of corruption and inefficiency in the public sector.

2. The API has been created to respond to this problem. One aspect of the API's work is the development of generic learning resources that target aspiring accountancy professionals. This generic learning content (referred to hereafter as "the Accelerated Learning Programme") has already been developed in English and covers the unique aspects of working as an accountant or auditor in the public sector. It will be offered to relevant institutes in the Francophone region to enable them to prepare aspiring accountancy professionals with the skills and knowledge required of professional accountants and auditors working in or with the public sector.

3. API learning programmes follows a building block approach. Generic content, such as that developed under this project, can be supplemented by local content which provides the learner with a country-specific perspective.

4. The Accelerated Larning Programme is intended for senior financial managers and auditors in the public sector without a formal accounting or auditing qualification, designation or have not been through a course that addresses the latest developments in international standards. The courses provided in this programme can contribute to providing training for this community and, perhaps with additional context and assessment, lead to a PAO or country-administered certification.

5. The Accelerated Learning Programme is a comprehensive suite of courses covering topics relevant to a senior finance professional working in the public sector. There are total of 55 courses in 15 topics as detailed in the table in **Appendix A**. The programme includes problem-based online learning content, downloadable notes, practice assessments and final assessments. The content will be implemented (digitised) onto the online learning platform as translated and contextualised, using the same structure as the API's extant learning

programmes currently implemented using the English language. Interested consultants will be provided with access to a sample course as an example of the structure and format.

6. A competency framework developed by the API, will be used as the foundation for all the generic learning resources. The API competency framework may be viewed on the API website as follows: here.

Project objectives

7. The consultant will implement (digitise) the translated and contextualised content in French, onto the online learning platform. This will require the consultant to have team members capable of HTML and JavaScript programming in the context of a Moodle platform, as well as members who understand French in a business context, who can ensure that the content reflects appropriately.

8. Consultants will only be considered if their proposed team clearly has the skills and experience to implement (digitise) learning resources in the French language, onto the Moodle platform. It will not be possible to meet the minimum requirements for this project as an individual (see section on quality assurance below).

Principles

9. The following principles must be adhered to throughout the digitisation of the learning resources.

    a. All learning content must be implemented (digitised) on the OLP in alignment with the format already developed for the Accelerated Learning Platform (access to be provided as specified in the section: *Instructions for submission and access to additional resources).*

    b. All learning resources must be digitised in a manner that conforms, where applicable, to the relevant international standards, including those developed by *inter alia*: the International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board, the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants, the International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board, the International Accounting Standards Board, the International Sustainability Standards Board and the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI).

    c. For topics where there are no specific international standards exist, digitisation must ensure that learning is in line with guidance from IFAC, INTOSAI, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Digitisation must also make learning based on internationally recognised assessment tools such as the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) tool and the SAI Performance Management Framework (SAI PMF) possible for learning to take place seamlessly.

d. All learning resources must be:

   i. digitised in line with the established conventions and structures of the API online learning platform.

   ii. structured in a manner that makes it simple for a PAO to add accompanying local content to the generic resources without reducing the standard of the learning materials.

   iii. developed in a format that is easy to update and maintain.

Reporting arrangements

10. The consultant will work closely with the API's Academic Advisory Committee (AAC), or a delegated person or structure, and a designated person at the API secretariat.

11. The consultant will report periodically to the AAC through the API secretariat.

Quality assurance

12. The consultant is responsible for ensuring the quality of all project deliverables.

13. The consultant is expected to include an internal quality review process for all project deliverables. This review should include consideration of both technical and pedagogical expectations.

14. The AAC will provide an independent quality assurance function for the project.

15. The consultant will be required to respond to all inputs provided by the AAC on the project deliverables to the satisfaction of the AAC.

Monitoring and evaluation

16. The project will be monitored and evaluated according to the governance processes established by AFROSAI-E and the API.

Intellectual property

17. All rights of ownership and use for the intellectual property produced under this project will be held solely by AFROSAI-E for the benefit of the API. It is incumbent on the consultant to ensure that all processes undertaken for digitisation, including very limited development work, does not infringe on the

copyright of any other party.

Scope of work and deliverables

18. The following paragraphs will outline the scope of the work and the deliverables for the project.

    a. The consultant will complete the digitisation of French learning resources of the Accelerated Learning Programme based on the following considerations:

        i. Translated and contextualised learning content will be provided in the French language in editable format- either using Microsoft Excel or Word.

        ii. Additional graphic or reference material may be provided using other formats, such as in pdf, png, jpg, etc.

        iii. Some elements of additional graphic or reference material might require modification and/ or translation into the French language.

        iv. Some elements or functionalities of the online learning platform might require modification and/ or translation into the French language.

        v. Assessments will need to be digitised in the form of computer-marked, objective testing.

        vi. Practice assessments will allow for learner feedback to be visible as part of the learning process.

        vii. Final assessments will not include learner feedback but should be digitised on the online learning platform in the form of a question bank.

        viii. Assessment questions will take the form of multiple choice, multiple selection, matching, worksheet or other question types, as best suited, and closely as practicable to the implemented English version.

        ix. Assessment questions will include both short questions and scenario questions. A short question is a single standalone question that addresses a single competency. A scenario question begins with a case study or scenario, followed by four or five individual questions which assess the learner’s ability to apply concepts learnt to the case study or scenario. A scenario question can assess one or more competencies.

        x. Assessment questions must be implemented (digitised) in a manner that makes it possible to draw global and question specific statistic for each learner, as well as globally for all learners.

b. Required and recommended reading references should be included in the same way as the existing version in English, ensuring that the necessary copyright is acknowledged, where applicable.

c. Core learning content will use a problem-based learning approach (no video or audio). A downloadable replica of the online content is required, though this is not required to include the interactive functionality of the online version.

d. The consultant(s) will validate the completed resources with the AAC and other stakeholders. The consultant will be required to make changes to the resources based on the outcomes of the feedback.

e. The consultant(s) will pilot the completed, digitised modules with a group of learners identified by AFROSAI-E. The consultant will be required to make changes to the implemented learning content based on the outcomes of the pilot.

Project timeline

19. The table below describes the expected timeline for the project.

Services	**Indicative Due Date**	**Deliverable(s)**
Contracting with the consultant	Tbc	• None
Kick-off meeting	+1 weeks	• Roll-out/ inception plan
Implementation of learning into the OLP	+ 1 month	• Live content ready for pilot
Piloting of modules	+ 1.5 months	• Pilot report

Services	Indicative Due Date	Deliverable(s)
Revision of content based on pilot feedback	+ 2 weeks (this activity should overlap with the above activity)	• Final live content ready for sign-off
Final approval of translated and contextualised and implemented content by the AAC	+ 1 weeks	

Funding and cost

20. The approved total budget for the project is ZAR 2,000,000 inclusive of all

    a. consulting fees;
    b. travel or other expenses; and
    c. all taxes.

21. No additional amounts above the final contracted budgets will be paid to the consultant(s) with respect to this project under any circumstances.

Instructions for Completing the Technical Proposal

Criteria

The Consultant should have as part of their team the following experience and expertise:

Technical Proposal Area	Weight
Proven experience by the service provider in developing and/ or digitisation of quality learning programmes in the French (and other languages).	**15**
Proven experience by the service provider in developing online learning content and implementing the content into a Moodle platform (including capabilities in HTML and JavaScript programming).	**35**
Experience of the service provider in accountancy/ finance/ public sector and other related fields within a Francophone environment	**25**
Qualifications and skills of key personnel- i.e., resumes (curriculum vitae), relevant to the project.	**10**
A track record by the service provider of high-quality projects completed within scope, budget and timeline, giving rise to sustainable outcomes (documented through summary of previous projects and inclusion of adequate corresponding reference).	**15**
Total	**100%**

Submission Documentation for Technical Proposals

In order to demonstrate suitability to undertake the project:

1. Consultants should submit a Technical Proposal detailing how they meet **each** of the criteria listed above. Consultants should address each of the criteria individually, ensuring that each section is clearly numbered and labelled with the criteria heading. This should include examples of similar work performed to date. The Technical Proposal **should not exceed 10 pages (appendices are not permitted)** and use a text font with a point size of at least 10.
2. Consultants should include, **on a separate page**, 2 to 4 professional references who can speak directly to their ability to meet the criteria above and their ability to successfully complete the project.
3. Consultants should complete and sign the declaration on page 13.
4. Consultants should include a paragraph explaining how they will offer value for money on this project. This will be an important consideration for the Proposal Evaluation Committee (PEC) because the project is donor funded.
5. Consultant should include a brief overview of their policies related to gender equality and inclusivity, as well as corporate and social responsibility.
6. Consultants should submit a Financial Proposal as described on page 16 taking into consideration

the total budget for the project.

Any proposal submitted that does not adhere to these guidelines will not be considered.

Declaration

To Whom It May Concern:

I, the undersigned, offer to provide consulting services in accordance with your Request for Proposals and our proposal.

I certify that the information in this proposal correctly describes our proposed project team, their qualifications, and experience, and we are available to undertake the assignment if we are selected. I understand that any misstatement or misrepresentation described herein may lead to our disqualification or dismissal.

I certify that I/ my organisation possesses the capacity, as well as the financial and competent personnel capability to deliver within project scope, budget, and time should I/ my organisation be contracted to perform work on the AFROSAI-E/ API project.

I certify that I do not foresee any potential conflict(s) of interest in being contracted to perform work on the AFROSAI-E/ API related project.

I/ my organisation does not have any pending litigation against myself or the organisation that might present a problem in carrying out work related to the AFROSAI-E/ API project.

I commit that I/ my organisation will comply with any policies and procedures related to combating corrupt and fraudulent practices should I/ we be contracted to undertake work related to an AFROSAI-E/ API project.

I undertake to inform AFROSAI-E/ API in writing should any changes occur, that would lead me to no longer be in a position to offer the services for which I am expressing an interest, including conflict(s) of interest.

By submitting this proposal, I authorise AFROSAI-E to contact the references I have supplied.

I confirm that I will perform the service in compliance with the laws and regulations in South Africa.

I confirm that I will not make any attempt to contact members of the Proposal Evaluation Committee or to unduly influence its decision in any way.

Name of Consultant (*Individual)*	Signature	Date
Capacity of individual making the declaration:		(*dd/mm/yyyy)*

Basis of selection and scoring

Technical and Financial Proposal weight

Total score (quality & cost)	**100**
Technical Proposal weight	80
Financial Proposal weight	20

A qualitative evaluation of the value for money offered by the proposal will also be considered in the final decision of the PEC.

Evaluation process

Each Proposal will first be evaluated for compliance to the requirements of this document and to confirm if the consultant meets the minimum requirements required to deliver the project component(s).

Each Proposal that passes the initial compliance checks will be given a technical score by the PEC, as outlined in *Basis of Selection and Scoring.*

As part of the evaluation process, AFROSAI-E will contact references and may, at its discretion, ask the Consultant for additional information that it deems necessary for the PEC to complete its evaluation. Any such requests from AFROSAI-E, and responses from the Consultant, will be conducted by email.

The PEC will open the Financial Proposals for each of the Consultants whose Technical Proposals were considered responsive to the RFP and ToR. The Financial Proposals of Consultants whose Technical Proposals were considered non-responsive to the RFP and ToR will not be opened.

The scoring of the financial proposals by the PEC will not be solely based on the total value of the proposal but also on the allocation of costs to each line item. The PEC will make a final qualitative assessment of the value for money offered by the proposal.

Shortlisted consultants may be required to present or demonstrate their proposal to the PEC. AFROSAI-E will notify the Consultant if this required during the proposal evaluation stage.

AFROSAI-E will notify the Consultants of the outcome of the selection process via email, provided they met the minimum requirements and guidelines of this document. Consultants whose submissions do not comply with the minimum requirements will not be notified. For the selected Consultant, contract negotiations are expected to begin immediately following completion of the selection process.

AFROSAI-E and the PEC reserve the right to accept or reject any Proposal, and to annul the RFP and reject all submissions at any time, with or without reasons, without thereby incurring any liability to any Consultant or service provider.

Financial proposal

The following templates provide guidance on the format of the Financial Proposal. Please note that the Technical Proposal and Financial Proposal must be submitted in separate files, and each file must be clearly titled as per instructions under *Preparation and Submission of Proposal*.

Financial Proposal Cover Letter

Date: ……………….

To: Neo Hlatshwayo
Technical Director: African Professionalisation Initiative
AFROSAI-E (host of the API)
info@professionalisation.africa

Dear Neo

We, the undersigned, are submitting our Financial Proposal in accordance with your Request for Proposal dated ____________________. Our Technical Proposal is submitted in a separate file.

Our Financial Proposal shall be binding upon us subject to the modifications resulting from contract negotiations, up to expiration of the validity period of the Proposal, i.e., 90 days from the submission deadline for the Proposal.

All amounts are in South African Rands (ZAR).

We understand that AFROSAI-E is not bound to accept any Proposal we submit.

Yours sincerely,

Breakdown of Costs and Expected Timetable

Please include a table which illustrates:

1. An estimate of people hours and hourly rates for the assignment.
2. Other expenses expected to be incurred in completing the project, for example, travel cost, hotel cost, other costs, etc.

The form of presentation is flexible but should provide enough information to give a good picture of how the money will be spent in completing the project outlined in the ToR.

Preparation and submission of proposal

Preparation

Cost

The Consultant will be responsible for all costs associated with the preparation and submission of the Proposal. AFROSAI-E will in no case be responsible or liable for those costs, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the process.

Language

The Proposal and all correspondence and documents exchanged by the Consultant and AFROSAI-E should be written in English. Supporting documents and printed literature may be in another language provided they are accompanied by an accurate translation of the relevant passages in English, in which case, for purposes of interpretation of the Proposal, the English translation will govern.

Currency

Unless otherwise indicated, all monetary amounts in the Proposal should be indicated in South African Rands (ZAR).

Submission

The Proposal (which should include two separate files – a Technical Proposal and a Financial Proposal) should be submitted electronically by the Consultant to Neo Hlatshwayo, Technical Director: African Professionalisation Initiative, AFROSAI-E (info@proessionalisation.africa).

The Technical Proposal and accompanying documentation must be submitted as a separate file to the Financial Proposal. The file containing the Financial Proposal should be clearly named *FINANCIAL PROPOSAL – OPEN ONLY FOLLOWING APPROVAL OF TECHNICAL PROPOSAL*.

Deadline

AFROSAI-E may, at its discretion, extend the deadline for the submission of Proposals, in which case all rights and obligations of AFROSAI-E and the Consultants/ service providers subject to the previous deadline will thereafter be subject to the deadline as extended.

Validity

By submitting a Proposal, the Consultant confirms that the Proposal will remain valid for a period of 90 days from the submission deadline.

Clarification

Any request for clarification related to this RFP should be addressed to info@professionalisation.africa. Such requests must be received by AFROSAI-E and the API no later than five (5) days prior to the deadline for submission of Proposals.

Any changes, clarifications, or additional guidance related to the RFP as a result of requests for clarification will also be communicated in writing via email to all RFP recipients. If you did not receive this RFP via a direct email, please monitor the AFROSAI-E and the API websites (www.afrosai-e.org.za / www.professionalisation.africa) for any such information.

Confidentiality

Detailed information relating to the Proposals and their evaluation will not be disclosed by anyone involved in the evaluation, even after Contracts are awarded. After the deadline for submission of Proposals, any Consultant that wishes to contact AFROSAI-E on any matter related to the process (other than confidential matters as noted above) may do so only by email.

Appendix A- Accelerated learning programme (as digitised for the English language)

Core modules	Unit	Unit topics	Competencies
Accountancy and Legislation	1	Different contexts for accountancy	2
	2	Legislation	3
	3	Legal provisions impacting the finance function	3
Public Finance Management and governance, risk and compliance	1	Public sector accountability framework	6
	2	Procurement and supply chain management	1
	3	Public financial management	5
	4	Risk and internal control	2
Economics	1	Introduction to economics	1
	2	Economics in the public sector environment	1
Introduction to accounting	1	Foundations of accounting	1
	2	Standardisation of accounting	1
	3	Role of management accounting	1
	4	Role of financial reporting	2
	5	Accounting in different contexts	1
Financial accounting	1	Fundamental accounting principles and concepts	1
	2	The accounting cycle and the general journal	1
	3	Cash and accrual accounting	1
	4	Components of the financial statements	1
	5	Financial record keeping methods and documentation	1
	6	Financial accounting	1
	7	Financial reporting	1
IPSAS Financial reporting	1	IPSAS - Fundamental concepts of accounting	1
	2	Components of financial statements (IPSAS)	1
	3	Presentation and disclosure standards	3
IFRS Financial reporting	1	IFRS - Fundamental concepts of accounting	1
	2	Components of financial statements (IFRS)	1

	3	Preparation and presentation of financial reports	3
Managerial finance	1	Introduction to costing and pricing	3
	2	Basic financial ratios and indicators	1
	3	Monitoring expenditure against budget	1
	4	Financial management	4
Performance Management	1	Performance management within government	1
	2	Performance information	1
Introduction to auditing	1	Auditing environment	3
	2	Principles of auditing	1
	3	Types of audits	2
	4	Public and private sector auditing	1
	5	External audit - reports and opinions	1
Public sector auditing	1	Functioning of SAIs	8
	2	Financial auditing	8
	3	Compliance auditing	1
	4	Performance auditing	1
Introduction to taxation and other sources of revenue	1	World of taxation	3
	2	Raising government revenue	2
	3	Accounting for taxation	2
ICT systems	1	Basic components and design of ICT systems	1
	2	ICT system design and development in public service	1
	3	Impact of ICT systems: Controls, threats, and counter procedures	2
	4	Effective communication end-user applications	2
	5	Ethical and legal framework of ICT	2
Communication	1	Communicating matters of governance interest to stakeholders	1
	2	Forms of communication	2
	3	Interpersonal communication	1
Ethics	1	Framework of ethics and behaviour	2
	2	Accountability and responsibility	1
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