



Request for Proposals (RFP)

Procurement of Services

Standard Bidding Document

For the

CONSULTING SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN AFCFTA JOINT CURRICULUM WITH AFRICAN TRAINING CENTERS/SCHOOLS/INSTITUTES OF CUSTOMS

Procurement Number: AfCFTA/DCA/NC/2026/0002

Date of Issue: 20 January, 2026

Section 1: Letter Of Invitation

20th January, 2026

Dear Prospective Bidder,

Ref: Consulting Services for The Development of an AfCFTA Joint Curriculum with African Training Centers/Schools/Institutes of Customs

Procurement No: AfCFTA/DCA/NC/2026/0002

1. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat would like to engage the services of a consulting African Training Centers/Schools/Institutes of Customs to lead and coordinate the development, pilot testing, and implementation of a comprehensive joint curriculum to enhance the capacity of customs administrations in AfCFTA Member States.

2. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat invites interested and eligible Training Centers/Schools/Institute of Customs with expertise as per attached Terms of Reference (TOR).

3. A **firm** will be selected under the ***Quality and Cost Based Selection*** method described in this Request for Proposal (RFP). The weight for technical and financial scores shall be 70% and 30% respectively.

4. The RFP includes the following documents:

Section 1 - This Letter of Invitation
Section 2 - Information to Consultants Section
Section 3 - Data Sheet
Section 4 - Terms of Reference
Section 5 - Technical Proposal - Standard Forms
Section 6 - Financial Proposal - Standard Forms

5. **This is TWO FOLDERS BIDDING PROCESS:** the TECHNICAL and FINANCIAL offers must be submitted as **TWO SEPARATE FOLDERS** and be saved as follows:

- **Technical offer: "Company name" _TO_ AfCFTA DAJC_ System**
- **Financial offer: "Company name" _FO_ AfCFTA DAJC_ System**

To ensure the integrity of the bidding process, the financial proposal **MUST be password-protected**.

6. Bidders should ensure that their electronic submissions are fully functional. **The AfCFTA Secretariat will not accept any claim of password malfunctioning or corrupted file as a basis for the replacement of the technical and financial proposal with a new submission.**

7. The deadline for submission of proposals is **18th February 2026 at 11:00am GMT**. Late bids will be rejected. The subject of the e-mail shall be the title and the number of the procurement.

8. Pre bidding conference is on the **27 January 2026 at 11:00am GMT** in the virtual presence of the prospective bidders using the zoom link below

9. Pre-Bid Conference

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/97373381699?pwd=fdR7FM7SfwxaAq7NPnzyMZg4YyMKha.1>

Meeting ID: 973 7338 1699

Passcode: 743240

10. Technical bids shall be opened on **18th February 2026 at 11:30 am GMT** in the virtual presence of bidders or legal Representatives. The zoom link for the technical bid opening is as follows:

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

<https://zoom.us/j/97220032732?pwd=aWKpYNx8Cmf6UbxntEYfCX98vqzhQT.1>

Meeting ID: 972 2003 2732

Passcode: 392893

11. The financial proposal will be opened after the technical evaluation. Only the technically compliant bidder will be contacted and provided with a zoom link for the Financial opening. The password for the financial offer will be provided by each bidder during the Bid opening session. **Therefore, the presence of the bidder or its legal representative is mandatory.**

12. Bidders may request for additional clarifications, no later than **03 February 2026**, The address for clarifications is: Tender.afcfta@au-afcfta.org ; Cc: nadia.amoako-gyampah@au-afcfta.org and jessica.lawson@au-afcfta.org

13. Bidders must submit the following **mandatory documents**:

I. Copies of Business Registration

II. Power of Attorney for the authorized representative to sign the proposal

III. Tax registration certificate

IV. Company last three (3) years **Annual Audited Statement** (2022, 2023 and 2024).

V. Company Profile showing experience providing similar corporate services

VI. At least three (3) reference letters from reputable international organizations, with contact details.

VII. Letters of commitment from proposed team members

The above documents must be part of the Technical Proposal.

14. Bidders must submit their proposal at the following address:

Tender.afcfta@au-afcfta.org; with copy to Nadia.Amoako-Gyampah@au-afcfta.org and jessica.lawson@au-afcfta.org

15. Bidders may file procurement-related complaints during the process by writing an email to

For the attention : Senior Internal Auditor

Email address: procurement.complaints@au-afcfta.org

Section 2: Information to Consultants

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Client named in the Data Sheet will select a consultant from those listed in the Letter of Invitation, in accordance with the method of selection specified.
- 1.2 The consultants are invited to submit a Technical Proposal and a financial proposal, or a Technical Proposal only, as specified in the Data Sheet for consulting services required for the assignment named in the Data Sheet. The proposal will be the basis for contract negotiations and ultimately for a signed contract with the selected firm.
- 1.3 The assignment shall be implemented in accordance with any phasing indicated in the Data Sheet. When the assignment includes several phases, the performance of the consultant under each phase must be to the Client's satisfaction before work begins on the next phase.
- 1.4 The consultants must familiarise themselves with local conditions and take them into account in preparing their proposals. To obtain first - hand information on the assignment and on the local conditions, consultants are encouraged to visit the Client's website www.au.int/www.au-afcfta.org before submitting a proposal and to attend a pre-proposal conference if one is specified in the Data Sheet. Attending any specified pre-proposal conference is optional. The consultants' representative should contact the officials named in the Data Sheet to arrange for their visit or to obtain additional information on any pre-proposal conference. Consultants should ensure that these officials are advised of the visit in adequate time to allow them to make appropriate arrangements.
- 1.5 African Union policy requires consultants to provide professional, objective, and impartial advice, and at all times hold the Client's interests paramount, without any consideration for future work, and strictly avoid conflicts with other assignments or their own corporate interests. Consultants shall not be hired for any assignment that would be in conflict with their prior or current obligations to other clients, or that may place them in a position of not being able to carry out the assignment in the best interests of the Client.
 - 1.5.1 Without limitation on the generality of this rule, consultants shall not be hired under the circumstances set forth below:

(a) Conflict between consulting activities and procurement of goods, works or services: A firm that has been engaged to provide goods, works, or services for a project, and each of its affiliates, shall be disqualified from providing consulting services related to those goods, works or services. Conversely, a firm hired to provide consulting services for the preparation or implementation of a project, and each of its affiliates,

shall be disqualified from subsequently providing goods, works or services resulting from or directly related to the firm's consulting services for such preparation or implementation (other than a continuation of the firms earlier consulting services for the same project).

(b) Conflict among consulting assignments: Neither consultants (including their personnel and subconsultants) nor any of their affiliates shall be hired for any assignment that, by its nature, may be in conflict with another assignment of the consultants.

(c) Relationship with AU staff: Consultants (including their personnel and sub-consultants) that have a business or family relationship with a member of AU staff (or of the Client staff, or of a beneficiary of the assignment) who are directly or indirectly involved in any part of: (i) the preparation of the TOR of the contract, (ii) the selection process for such contract, or (iii) supervision of such contract may not be awarded a contract.

1.6 The African Union requires that Officers of the AU, as well as Bidders/ Suppliers/ Contractors/ Consultants, observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of such contracts.¹ In pursuance of this policy the AU:

- (a) defines, for the purposes of this provision, the terms set forth below as follows:
 - (i) “corrupt practice”² is the offering, giving, receiving or soliciting, directly or indirectly, of anything of value to influence improperly the actions of another party;
 - (ii) “fraudulent practice”³ is any act or omission including a misrepresentation that knowingly or recklessly misleads, or attempts to mislead, a party to obtain a financial or other benefit or to avoid an obligation;
 - (iii) “collusive practice”⁴ is an arrangement between two or more parties designed to achieve an improper purpose, including to influence improperly the actions of another party;

¹ *In this context, any action taken by a bidder, supplier, contractor, sub-contractor or consultant to influence the procurement process or contract execution for undue advantage is improper.*

² *“Another party” refers to an officer of the AU acting in relation to the procurement process or contract execution. In this context, “officer of the AU” includes staff and employees of other organisations taking or reviewing procurement decisions.*

³ *a “party” refers to any officer of the AU; the terms “benefit” and “obligation” relate to the procurement process or contract execution; and the “act or omission” is intended to influence the procurement process or contract execution.*

⁴ *“parties” refers to any participants in the procurement process (including officers of the AU) attempting to establish bid prices at artificial, non competitive levels.*

1.1 The Client named in the Data Sheet will select a firm from those listed

in the Letter of Invitation, in accordance with the method of selection specified in the Data Sheet.

1.2 The consultants are invited to submit a Technical Proposal and a financial proposal, or a Technical Proposal only, as specified in the Data Sheet for consulting services required for the assignment named in the Data Sheet. The proposal will be the basis for contract negotiations and ultimately for a signed contract with the selected firm.

1.3 The assignment shall be implemented in accordance with any phasing indicated in the Data Sheet. When the assignment includes several phases, the performance of the consultant under each phase must be to the Client's satisfaction before work begins on the next phase.

1.4 The consultants must familiarise themselves with local conditions and take them into account in preparing their proposals. To obtain firsthand information on the assignment and on the local conditions, consultants are encouraged to visit the Client before submitting a proposal and to attend a pre-proposal conference if one is specified in the Data Sheet. Attending any specified pre-proposal conference is optional. The consultants' representative should contact the officials named in the Data Sheet to arrange for their visit or to obtain additional information on any pre-proposal conference. Consultants should ensure that these officials are advised of the visit in adequate time to allow them to make appropriate arrangements.

1.5 The Client will provide the inputs specified in the Data Sheet, assist the firm in obtaining licenses and permits needed to carry out the services, and make available relevant project data and reports.

1.6 Note that: (i) the costs of preparing the proposal and of negotiating the contract, including a visit to the Client, are not reimbursable as a direct cost of the assignment; and (ii) the Client is not bound to accept any of the proposals submitted.

1.7 African Union policy requires consultants to provide professional, objective, and impartial advice, and at all times hold the Client's interests paramount, without any consideration for future work, and strictly avoid conflicts with other assignments or their own corporate interests. Consultants shall not be hired for any assignment that would be in conflict with their prior or current obligations to other clients, or that may place them in a position of not being able to carry out the assignment in the best interests of the Client.

1.7.1 Without limitation on the generality of this rule, consultants shall not be hired under the circumstances set forth below:

(a) Conflict between consulting activities and procurement of goods, works or services: A firm that has been engaged to provide goods, works, or services for a project, and each of its affiliates, shall be disqualified from providing consulting services related to those goods, works or services. Conversely, a firm hired to provide

consulting services for the preparation or implementation of a project, and each of its affiliates, shall be disqualified from subsequently providing goods, works or services resulting from or directly related to the firm's consulting services for such preparation or implementation (other than a continuation of the firms earlier consulting services for the same project).

- (b) Conflict among consulting assignments: Neither consultants (including their personnel and sub-consultants) nor any of their affiliates shall be hired for any assignment that, by its nature, may be in conflict with another assignment of the consultants.
- (c) Relationship with AU staff: Consultants (including their personnel and sub-consultants) that have a business or family relationship with a member of AU staff (or of the Client staff, or of a beneficiary of the assignment) who are directly or indirectly involved in any part of: (i) the preparation of the TOR of the contract, (ii) the selection process for such contract, or (iii) supervision of such contract may not be awarded a contract.

1.7.2 As indicated in paragraph 1.7.1 (a) above, consultants may be hired for downstream work, when continuity is essential, in which case this possibility shall be indicated in the Data Sheet and the factors used for the selection of the consultant should take the likelihood of continuation into account. It will be the exclusive decision of the Client whether or not to have the downstream assignment carried out, and if it is carried out, which consultant will be hired for the purpose.

1.7.3 In the event of 1.7.2. and in order to ensure fairness and transparency in the selection process, it is required that consultants or their affiliates competing for a specific assignment do not derive a competitive advantage from having provided consulting services related to the assignment in question. To that end, all information that would in that respect give a consultant a competitive advantage shall be made available to all the short-listed consultants together with the request for proposals.

1.8 The African Union requires that Officers of the AU, as well as Bidders/ Suppliers/ Contractors/ Consultants, observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of such contracts.¹ In pursuance of this policy the AU:

- (a) defines, for the purposes of this provision, the terms set forth below as follows:
 - (i) “corrupt practice”² is the offering, giving, receiving or soliciting, directly or indirectly, of anything of value to influence improperly the actions of another party;
 - (ii) “fraudulent practice”³ is any act or omission including a misrepresentation that knowingly or recklessly misleads,

¹ *In this context, any action taken by a bidder, supplier, contractor, sub-contractor or consultant to influence the procurement process or contract execution for undue advantage is improper.*

² “another party” refers to an officer of the AU acting in relation to the procurement process or contract execution. In this context, “officer of the AU” includes staff and employees of other organisations taking or reviewing procurement decisions.

³ a “party” refers to any officer of the AU; the terms “benefit” and “obligation” relate to the procurement process or contract execution; and the “act or omission” is intended to influence the procurement process or contract execution.

or attempts to mislead, a party to obtain a financial or other benefit or to avoid an obligation;

- (iii) “collusive practice”⁴ is an arrangement between two or more parties designed to achieve an improper purpose, including to influence improperly the actions of another party;
- (iv) “coercive practice”⁵ is impairing or harming or threatening to impair or harm, directly or indirectly, any party or the property of the party to influence improperly the actions of a party;
- (v) “obstructive practice” is deliberately destroying, falsifying, altering or concealing of evidence material to any investigation or making false statements to investigators in order to materially impede any investigation into allegations of a corrupt, fraudulent, coercive or collusive practice; and/or threatening, harassing or intimidating any party to prevent it from disclosing its knowledge of matters relevant to the investigation or from pursuing the investigation;

(b) will reject a recommendation for award of contract if it determines that the bidder recommended for award has, directly or through an agent, engaged in corrupt, fraudulent, collusive, coercive or obstructive practices in competing for the contract in question;

(c) will declare a firm ineligible, either indefinitely or for a stated period of time, to be awarded an African Union financed contract if it at any time determines that the firm has, directly or through an agent, engaged in corrupt, fraudulent, collusive, coercive or obstructive practices in competing for, or in executing, an African Union financed contract.

1.9 Consultants shall not be under a declaration of ineligibility for corrupt, fraudulent, collusive, coercive or obstructive practices issued by the AUC in accordance with the above sub-paragraph 1.8.

1.10 Consultants shall furnish information as described in the Financial Proposal submission form (Section 4A) on commissions and gratuities, if any, paid or to be paid to agents relating to this proposal, and to execute the work if the firm is awarded the contract.

1.11 Consultants shall be aware of the provisions on fraud and corruption stated in the Standard Contract under the clauses indicated in the Data Sheet.

2.1 Consultants may request a clarification of any of the RFP documents up

⁴ “parties” refers to any participants in the procurement process (including officers of the AU) attempting to establish bid prices at artificial, non competitive levels.

⁵ a “party” refers to any participant in the procurement process or contract execution.

to the number of days indicated in the Data Sheet before the proposal submission date. Any request for clarification must be sent in writing by mail, facsimile, or electronic mail to the Client's address indicated in the Data Sheet. The Client will respond by facsimile, courier or electronic mail to such requests and will send written copies of the response (including an explanation of the query but without identifying the source of inquiry) to all invited consultants who intend to submit proposals.

2.2 At any time before the submission of proposals, the Client may, for any reason, whether at its own initiative or in response to a clarification requested by an invited firm, amend the RFP. Any amendment shall be issued in writing through addenda. Addenda shall be sent by mail, facsimile, or electronic mail to all invited consultants and will be binding on them. The Client may at its discretion extend the deadline for the submission of proposals.

3. Preparation of Proposal

3.1 Consultants are requested to submit a proposal (paragraph 1.2) written in the language(s) specified in the Data Sheet.

3.2 In preparing the Technical Proposal, consultants are expected to examine the documents constituting this RFP in detail. Material deficiencies in providing the information requested may result in rejection of a proposal.

3.3 While preparing the Technical Proposal, consultants must give particular attention to the following:

- (i) If a consultant considers that it does not have all the expertise for the assignment, it may obtain a full range of expertise by associating with individual consultant(s) and/or other consultants or entities in a joint venture or sub-consultancy, as appropriate. Consultants may associate with the other consultants invited for this assignment only with approval of the Client as indicated in the Data Sheet. Consultants must obtain the approval of the Client to enter into a joint venture with consultants not invited for this assignment. The consultants are encouraged to seek the participation of local consultants by entering into a joint venture with, or subcontracting part of the assignment to consultants who are Nationals of African Union Member States.
- (ii) For assignments on a staff-time basis, the estimated number of professional staff-months is given in the Data Sheet. The proposal shall, however, be based on the number of professional staff-months estimated by the firm. For fixed-budget-based assignments, the available budget is given in the Data Sheet, and the Financial Proposal shall not exceed this budget.
- (iii) It is desirable that the majority of the key professional staff proposed be permanent employees of the firm or have an extended and stable working relationship with it.
- (iv) Proposed professional staff must, at a minimum, have the experience indicated in the Data Sheet, preferably working under conditions similar to those prevailing in the Country specified for Performance of the Services.
- (v) Alternative professional staff shall not be proposed, and only one curriculum vitae (CV) may be submitted for each position.
- (vi) Reports to be issued by the consultants as part of this assignment must be in the language(s) specified in the Data Sheet.

3.4 The Technical Proposal shall provide the following information using the Standard Forms attached in Section 4:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) A brief description of the firm's organisation and an outline of recent experience on assignments (Section 4B) of a similar nature. For each assignment, the outline should indicate, inter-alia, the profiles of the staff proposed, duration of the assignment, contract amount, and the firm's involvement.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (ii) Any comments or suggestions on the Terms of Reference and on the data, a list of services, and facilities to be provided by the Client (Section 4C).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (iii) A description of the methodology and work plan for performing the assignment (Section 4D).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (iv) The list of the proposed staff team by specialty, the tasks that would be assigned to each staff team member, and their timing (Section 4E).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (v) CVs recently signed by the proposed professional staff and the authorized representative submitting the proposal (Section 4F). Key information should include number of years working for the firm/entity and degree of responsibility held in various assignments during the last ten (10) years.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (vi) Estimates of the total staff input (professional and support staff; staff time) needed to carry out the assignment, supported by bar-chart diagrams showing the time proposed for each professional staff team member (Sections 4E and 4G).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (vii) A detailed description of the proposed methodology, staffing, and monitoring of training, if the Data Sheet specifies training as a major component of the assignment.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (viii) Any additional information requested in the Data Sheet.
3.5	The Technical Proposal shall not include any financial information.
Financial Proposal	<p>3.6 In preparing the Financial Proposal, consultants are expected to take into account the requirements and conditions outlined in the RFP documents. The Financial Proposal should follow the Standard Forms in Section 5. These list all costs associated with the assignment, including (a) remuneration for staff, (foreign and local, in the field and at headquarters); and (b) reimbursable expenses such as subsistence (per diem, housing), transportation (international and local, for mobilisation and demobilisation), services and equipment (vehicles, office equipment, furniture, and supplies), office rent, insurance, printing of documents, surveys, and training, if it is a major component of the assignment. Where appropriate, these costs should be broken down by activity, and, if appropriate, into foreign and local expenditures.</p> <p>3.7 The Financial Proposal shall include all the costs the consultant incurs to provide the services (including travel expenses, translation, printing and the taxes the consultant pays for its business requirements by the law of the domicile country of the consultant), but shall exclude all local taxes levied within African Union Member States on the invoice issued by the consultant (such as local sales tax, services tax or withholding tax).</p> <p>3.8 Consultants may express the price of their services in any freely convertible currency. The consultants may not use more than three foreign currencies. The Client may require consultants to state the portion of their price representing local costs in the Currency of the Country specified for performance of the Services if so indicated in the Data Sheet.</p>

3.9 Commissions and gratuities, if any, paid or to be paid by consultants and related to the assignment will be listed in the Financial Proposal submission form (Section 5A).

3.10 The Data Sheet indicates how long the proposals must remain valid after the submission date. During this period, the consultant is expected to keep available the professional staff proposed for the assignment. The Client will make its best effort to complete negotiations within this period. If the Client wishes to extend the validity period of the proposals, the consultants who do not agree have the right not to extend the validity of their proposals.

4. Submission, Receipt, and Opening of Proposals

4.1 The original proposal (Technical Proposal and, if required, Financial Proposal; see paragraph 1.2) shall be prepared in indelible ink. It shall contain no interlineations or overwriting, except as necessary to correct errors made by the firm itself. Any such corrections must be initialed by the person or person signing the proposal.

4.2 **An authorised representative of the firm initials all pages of the proposal. The representative's authorisation is confirmed by the written power of attorney accompanying the proposal.**

4.3 For each proposal, the consultants shall prepare the number of copies indicated in the Data Sheet. Each Technical Proposal and Financial Proposal shall be marked "Original" or "Copy" as appropriate. If there are any discrepancies between the original and the copies of the proposal, the original will govern.

4.4 The original and all copies of the Technical Proposal shall be placed in a sealed envelope clearly marked "Technical Proposal," and the original and all copies of the Financial Proposal in a sealed envelope clearly marked "Financial Proposal" and warning: "Do Not Open with the Technical Proposal." Both envelopes shall be placed into an outer envelope and sealed. This outer envelope shall bear the submission address and other information indicated in the Data Sheet and be clearly marked, "Do Not Open, Except in Presence of the Tender Opening Committee."

4.5 The completed Technical and Financial Proposals must be delivered at the submission address on or before the time and date stated in the Data Sheet. Any proposal received after the closing time for submission of proposals shall be returned unopened.

4.6 After the deadline for submission of proposals, the Technical Proposal shall be opened immediately by the Bid Opening Committee. The Financial Proposal shall remain sealed and retained securely until all submitted proposals are opened publicly.

4.7 The Firm may withdraw its Proposal after the Proposal's submission, provided that the written notice of the withdrawal is received by the Client prior to the deadline prescribed for submission of Proposals. The Firms' withdrawal notice shall be prepared, sealed, marked, and dispatched in accordance with the provisions of clause Deadline for Submission of Proposals. The withdrawal notice may also be sent by telex or fax but followed by a signed confirmation copy. No Proposal may be modified subsequent to the deadline for submission of

proposals. No Proposal may be withdrawn in the interval between the deadline for submission of proposals and the expiration of the period of proposal validity specified by the firm on the Proposal Submission Form.

5. Proposal Evaluation General

Evaluation of Technical Proposals

Public Opening and Evaluation of Financial Proposals: Ranking (QCBS, Fixed-Budget, and Least-Cost Selection Methods Only)

- 5.1 From the time the bids are opened to the time the contract is awarded, if any consultant wishes to contact the Client on any matter related to its proposal, it should do so in writing at the address indicated in the Data Sheet. Any effort by the firm to influence the Client in proposal evaluation, proposal comparison or contract award decisions may result in the rejection of the consultant's proposal.
- 5.2 Evaluators of Technical Proposals shall have no access to the Financial Proposals until the technical evaluation is completed.
- 5.3 The evaluation committee appointed by the Client, as a whole, and each of its members individually, will evaluate the proposals on the basis of their responsiveness to the Terms of Reference, applying the evaluation criteria, sub-criteria (typically not more than three per criteria), and point system specified in the Data Sheet. Each responsive proposal will be given a technical score (St). A proposal shall be rejected if it does not respond to important aspects of the Terms of Reference or if it fails to achieve the minimum technical score indicated in the Data Sheet.
- 5.4 In the case of Quality-Based Selection, Selection Based on Consultant's Qualifications, and Single-Source Selection, the highest ranked firm, or the firm selected on a single-source basis, is invited to negotiate a contract on the basis of the Technical Proposal and the Financial Proposal submitted in accordance with the instructions given in paragraph 1.2 and the Data Sheet.
- 5.5 After the evaluation of technical quality is completed, the Client shall notify those consultants whose proposals did not meet the minimum qualifying score or were considered non-responsive to the RFP and Terms of Reference, indicating that their Financial Proposals will be returned unopened after completing the selection process. The Client shall simultaneously notify the consultants that have secured the minimum qualifying score, indicating the date and time set for opening the Financial Proposals. The opening date shall not be sooner than two weeks after the notification date. The notification may be sent by registered letter, facsimile, or electronic mail.
- 5.6 The Financial Proposals shall be opened publicly in the presence of the consultants' representatives who choose to attend. The name of the consultant, the technical scores, and the proposed prices shall be read aloud and recorded as the Financial Proposals are opened. The Client shall prepare minutes of the public opening.
- 5.7 The evaluation committee will determine whether the Financial Proposals are complete (i.e., whether they have costed all items of the corresponding Technical Proposals; if not, the Client will cost them and add their cost to the initial price), correct any computational errors, and convert prices in various currencies to the single currency specified in the Data Sheet. The official selling rates used, provided by the source

indicated in the Data Sheet, will be those in effect on the date indicated in the Data Sheet. The evaluation shall exclude those taxes, duties, fees, levies, and other charges imposed that are subject to the African Union exemption on the payment of taxes and duties, and estimated as per paragraph 3.7.

5.8 In case of QCBS, the lowest priced Financial Proposal (Fm) will be given a financial score (Sf) of 100 points. The financial scores (Sf) of the other Financial Proposals will be computed as indicated in the Data Sheet. Proposals will be ranked according to their combined technical (St) and financial (Sf) scores using the weights (T = the weighting for the Technical Proposal; P = the weighting for the Financial Proposal as indicated in the Data Sheet. $T + P = 1$); The firm achieving the highest combined technical and financial score using the formula:

$$S = St \times T\% + Sf \times P\%$$

will be invited for negotiations.

5.9. In the case of Fixed-Budget Selection, the Client will select the firm that submitted the highest ranked Technical Proposal within the indicated budget price. Proposals that exceed the indicated budget will be rejected. In the case of the Least-Cost Selection, the Client will select the lowest evaluated cost proposal among those that passed the minimum technical score. The selected firm will be invited for negotiations.

6. Negotiations

6.1 Negotiations will be held at the address indicated in the Data Sheet. The aim is to reach agreement on all points and sign a contract.

6.2 Negotiations will include a discussion of the Technical Proposal, the proposed methodology (work-plan), staffing, and any suggestions made by the firm to improve the Terms of Reference. The Client and firm will then agree final Terms of Reference, staffing, and bar charts indicating activities, staff, periods in the field and in the home office, staff-months, logistics, and reporting. The agreed work plan and final Terms of Reference will then be incorporated in the “Description of Services” and form part of the contract. Special attention will be paid to getting the most the firm can offer within the available budget and to clearly defining the inputs required from the Client to ensure satisfactory implementation of the assignment.

6.3 Financial negotiations will reflect agreed technical modifications in the cost of the services, and will include a clarification of the firm’s tax liability (if any) in the Country specified for performance of the Services, and the manner in which it will be reflected in the contract. The financial negotiations will not normally involve either the remuneration rates for staff (no breakdown of fees), or other proposed unit rates under QCBS, Fixed-Budget Selection, or the Least-Cost Selection methods. For other methods of selection, an Appendix will be provided for the firm to explain the required information on remuneration rates.

6.4 Having selected the firm on the basis including an evaluation of proposed key professional staff, the Client expects to negotiate a contract on the basis of the experts named in the proposal. Before contract negotiations, the Client will require assurances that the proposed experts will be actually available. The Client will not consider substitutions during contract negotiations unless both parties agree that

		undue delay in the selection process makes such substitution unavoidable or that such changes are critical to meet the objectives of the assignment. If this is not the case and if it is established that key staff were offered in the proposal without confirming their availability, the firm may be disqualified.
	6.5	The negotiations will conclude with a review of the draft form of the contract. On completion of negotiations, the Client and the firm will initial the agreed contract. If negotiations fail, the Client will invite the firm whose proposal received the second highest score to negotiate a Contract.
7. Award of Contract	7.1	The contract will be awarded following negotiations. After negotiations are completed, the Client will promptly notify other consultants on the shortlist that they were unsuccessful and return the unopened Financial Proposals of those consultants who did not pass the technical evaluation (paragraph 5.3).
	7.2	The firm is expected to commence the assignment on the date and at the location specified in the Data Sheet.
8. Confidentiality	8.1	Information relating to the evaluation of proposals and recommendations concerning awards shall not be disclosed to the consultants who submitted the proposals or to other persons not officially concerned with the process, until the winning firm has been notified that it has been awarded the contract.

Section 3 - Data Sheet

ITB Clause Reference

ITB Clause 1.1 The name of the Client is **African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat**.
The method of selection is **Quality and Cost Based Selection Method. The weights shall be 70% on quality of technical proposal and 30% on financial proposal.**

ITB Clause 1.2 Technical and Financial Bids are requested.
The name and Procurement Number of the service are
Consulting Services for The Development of an AfCFTA Joint Curriculum with African Training Centers/Schools/Institutes of Customs
Procurement Number: AfCFTA/DCA/NC/2026/0002

ITC Clause 1.5 The Client will provide the following inputs:
Terms of Reference attached with this bidding document

ITB Clause 2.1 Clarifications may be requested up to 14days before the submission deadline – **03 February 2026**.
The address for requesting clarifications is:
Tender.afcfta@au-afcfta.org; with copy to Nadia.Amoako-Gyampah@au-afcfta.org and jessica.lawson@au-afcfta.org

ITB Clause 3.1 Bids should be submitted in the English or French language.

ITB Clause 3.3(ii) All reports that are required under the service shall be submitted in the English or French language.

ITB Clause 3.4(v) Additional information required in the Technical Bid is: Refer to Terms of Reference under Section 4.

ITB Clause 3.10 Bids must remain **valid for 90 days after the submission date**.

ITB Clause 4.4 The address for submission of bids is: **Tender.afcfta@au-afcfta.org; with copy to Nadia.Amoako-Gyampah@au-afcfta.org and jessica.lawson@au-afcfta.org**

ITB Clause 4.5 Electronic Bids must be submitted not later than **18th February 2026 at 11:00 am GMT. Late bids will be rejected.**

ITB Clause 5 The address for communications to the Client is:
**Procurement and Travel Unit,
African Continental Free Trade Area,
Africa Trade House,
Accra Ghana. E-mail: Tender.afcfta@au-afcfta.org**

ITC Clause 5.2	Preliminary Technical evaluation shall be based on the following mandatory documents submitted :
	(i) Copies of Business Registration
	(ii) Power of Attorney for the authorized representative to sign the proposal
	(iii) Tax Registration certificate
	(iv) Company last three (3) years Annual Audited Statement (2022, 2023 and 2024).
	(v) Company Profile showing experience providing similar corporate services
	(vi) At least three (3) reference letters from reputable international organizations, with contact information.
	(vii) Letters of commitment from proposed team members

The above documents are mandatory and must be part of the Technical Proposal.

ITB Clause 5.7	The single currency for the financial offer submission is <u>United States Dollars</u>
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ITB Clause 5.8	The combined technical and financial evaluation in accordance with the Quality and Cost Based Selection Method shall be computed as: 80% for technical proposal and 20% for financial proposal
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ITB Clause 6.1	Negotiations will be held virtually.
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ITB Clause 7.2	The service is expected to commence: <i>TBA</i>
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Section 4: TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTING SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN AFCFTA JOINT CURRICULUM WITH AFRICAN TRAINING CENTERS/SCHOOLS/INSTITUTES OF CUSTOMS

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The **African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)** represents a landmark initiative designed to accelerate intra-Africa trade and enhance Africa's global trading position by strengthening the continent's collective voice and policy influence in global trade negotiations. The AfCFTA Secretariat plays a critical role in empowering State Parties and Non-State Parties to effectively implement the Agreement.
2. The **AfCFTA Agreement** was signed in March 2018 during the 10th Extraordinary Summit in Kigali, Rwanda, and came into force on 30th May 2019. On 5th December 2020, during the 13th Extraordinary Session of Heads of State and Government, it was decided that trading under the AfCFTA would commence on 1st January 2021.
3. By July 2025, 49 Member States had ratified the Agreement, 48 countries have had their tariff offers adopted, and nearly 93% of the rules of origin had been finalised. The AfCFTA Secretariat is therefore striving to ensure that all the required processes and instruments (particularly Customs and Trade Facilitation mechanisms) are in place for the successful implementation of the Agreement, in line with the African Union's theme for 2023.

II. BACKGROUND

4. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) represents one of the most ambitious regional integration initiatives globally, with the goal of establishing a single continental market for goods, services, and the free movement of persons. The effective implementation of customs procedures across its member states is critical to facilitate seamless trade and ensure the successful realization of the Agreement's objectives.
5. The customs sector plays an indispensable role in the AfCFTA by ensuring that trade flows smoothly, efficiently, and in compliance with the provisions of the Agreement, particularly those related to Rules of Origin, Trade Facilitation, Customs Cooperation, and Transit. To achieve this, customs officials across all AfCFTA Member States must be well-trained, equipped with the relevant skills, and knowledgeable about these complex areas.
6. The AfCFTA Secretariat, through its Directorate of Customs Administration, is initiating the development of a Joint Curriculum with customs schools and institutes in the AfCFTA Member States. This curriculum will focus on essential customs-related topics necessary to facilitate and regulate trade under the AfCFTA, ensuring the harmonization of customs practices across the continent.

III. OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

7. The primary objective of this consultancy is to lead and coordinate the development, pilot testing, and implementation of a comprehensive joint curriculum to enhance the capacity of customs administrations in AfCFTA Member States. The consulting Firm will work closely with the AfCFTA Secretariat, customs training institutes, and other stakeholders to develop educational content focused on:
 - Rules of Origin (RoO)
 - Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Economic Operators (AEOs)
 - Customs Cooperation through digitalization
 - Transit under the AfCFTA

IV. SCOPE OF WORK

8. The consulting Firm will be responsible for the following tasks:

Phase 0: Project Initiation (Q2 2026)

- Develop a detailed project implementation plan
- Establish communication channels with key stakeholders
- Set up a project management framework and reporting mechanisms
- Conduct an initial stakeholder mapping and engagement strategy

Phase 1: Planning and Design (Q3 2026 – Q2 2027)

- Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment across Member States
- Organize and facilitate consultative meetings with stakeholders
- Develop draft curriculum outline based on identified needs
- Facilitate consultations on curriculum design with subject matter experts
- Finalize curriculum structure in alignment with stakeholder inputs
- Coordinate the appointment of subject matter experts
- Oversee the development of course content and materials

Phase 2: Pilot Testing (Q3 2027 – Q1 2028)

- Coordinate the pilot implementation of the curriculum in selected institutes
- Conduct feedback sessions to gather insights on curriculum effectiveness
- Oversee revisions to the curriculum based on feedback
- Develop a "Train-the-Trainer" program to build capacity of instructors
- Finalize revisions to curriculum content and structure
- Plan and coordinate the broader rollout of the curriculum

Phase 3: Full Implementation and Monitoring (Q2 2028 – Q3 2028)

- Oversee the full-scale implementation across Member States
- Develop strategies to equip training institutes with necessary resources
- Establish an ongoing monitoring and evaluation framework
- Create mechanisms for continuous improvement and curriculum updates

Cross-cutting Responsibilities

- Regular reporting to the AfCFTA Secretariat on project progress
- Financial management and budget oversight
- Risk management and mitigation strategies
- Knowledge management and documentation
- Stakeholder engagement and communication

V. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

9. The consulting Firm is expected to deliver the following outputs:

a) Inception Report (Within 2 weeks of contract signing)

- Detailed work plan and methodology
- Stakeholder engagement strategy
- Risk assessment and mitigation plan

b) Needs Assessment Report (Q3 2026)

- Comprehensive analysis of training needs
- Mapping of existing customs training programs
- Gap analysis and recommendations

c) Curriculum Framework (Q4 2026)

- Detailed curriculum structure
- Learning objectives and outcomes
- Assessment methodologies

d) Course Content Development (Q2 2027)

- Complete set of training materials
- Instructor guides
- Student handbooks
- Assessment tools

e) Pilot Testing Report (Q3 2027)

- Results and analysis of pilot implementation
- Recommendations for improvements

f) Train-the-Trainer Program (Q4 2027)

- Training methodology
- Training materials for trainers
- Implementation guide

g) Implementation Strategy (Q1 2028)

- Rollout plan for full implementation
- Resource requirements and allocation
- Timeline and milestones

h) Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (Q2 2028)

- Indicators and evaluation criteria
- Data collection tools
- Reporting templates

i) Final Project Report (Q3 2028)

- Comprehensive overview of project implementation
- Lessons learned and best practices
- Recommendations for sustainability

NB: The report shall be provided in format and template agreed between the consultancy firm and the Client during the contract implementation.

VI. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Firm Requirements

- Minimum 8 years of experience as a registered consulting firm
- Proven track record in curriculum development and training program implementation
- Experience in customs administration, trade facilitation, or related areas
- Portfolio of successful projects with international organizations
- Demonstrated expertise in project management and multi-stakeholder coordination

Team Composition Requirements

Team Leader/Project Manager

- Master's degree in Customs Administration, International Trade, Education, Curriculum Development or related fields.
- Minimum 10 years of professional experience in customs administration or trade facilitation
- Minimum 5 years of experience in project management and team leadership
- Proven experience in curriculum development and training program implementation
- Strong knowledge of the AfCFTA Agreement
- Excellent communication and stakeholder management skills

- Fluency in English (written and spoken)

Technical Expert - Rules of Origin (RoO)

- Bachelor's degree minimum in International Trade, Economics, Law, or related field
- Minimum 5 years of experience in Rules of Origin, preferably in African context
- In-depth knowledge of AfCFTA Rules of Origin provisions
- Experience in developing training materials on RoO
- Understanding of customs procedures related to origin determination

Technical Expert - Trade Facilitation for Authorized Economic Operators (AEOs)

- Bachelor's degree minimum in Customs Administration, International Trade, or related field
- Minimum 5 years of experience in trade facilitation measures
- Expertise in AEO programs and implementation
- Knowledge of WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and AfCFTA trade facilitation provisions
- Experience in capacity building and training in trade facilitation

Technical Expert - Customs Cooperation and Digitalization

- Bachelor's degree minimum in Information Technology, Customs Administration, or related field
- Minimum 5 years of experience in customs digitalization projects
- Knowledge of customs cooperation frameworks and mutual administrative assistance
- Experience with customs IT systems and digital transformation
- Understanding of data sharing and interoperability in customs operations

Technical Expert - Transit under AfCFTA

- Bachelor's degree minimum in Customs Administration, International Trade, or related field
- Minimum 5 years of experience in transit procedures and facilitation
- In-depth knowledge of AfCFTA transit provisions
- Experience with transit guarantee systems and procedures
- Understanding of regional transit arrangements in Africa

Curriculum Development Specialist

- Master's degree in Education, Instructional Design, or related field
- Minimum 5 years of experience in curriculum development
- Understanding of adult learning principles and methodologies
- Experience in developing training materials and assessment tools
- Knowledge of e-learning platforms and digital training delivery

VIII. DURATION AND LOCATION

10. The consultancy is expected to span approximately 30 months, from April 2026 to September 2028, in line with the project work plan. The consulting firm will work remotely with periodic travel to the AfCFTA Secretariat in Accra, Ghana, and to Member States as required for consultations, stakeholder meetings, pilot testing, and implementation activities.

IX. REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

11. The consulting Firm will report directly to the Director of Customs Administration at the AfCFTA Secretariat. Regular progress reports will be required on a monthly basis, with quarterly detailed reports on milestone achievements, challenges, and expenditures.

X. PAYMENT STRUCTURE

Payment Terms

12. The consulting firm will be paid based on the satisfactory completion and acceptance of deliverables as outlined in Section 4. Payments will be made within 30 days of the AfCFTA Secretariat's written acceptance of each deliverable.

Payment Schedule and Distribution

Phase 0: Project Initiation (10% of total contract value)

- Payment upon acceptance of Inception Report: **10%**

Phase 1: Planning and Design (40% of total contract value)

- Payment upon acceptance of Needs Assessment Report: **15%**
- Payment upon acceptance of Curriculum Framework: **12%**
- Payment upon acceptance of Course Content Development: **13%**

Phase 2: Pilot Testing (30% of total contract value)

- Payment upon acceptance of Pilot Testing Report: **15%**
- Payment upon acceptance of Train-the-Trainer Program: **15%**

Phase 3: Full Implementation and Monitoring (20% of total contract value)

- Payment upon acceptance of Implementation Strategy: **8%**
- Payment upon acceptance of Monitoring and Evaluation Framework: **7%**
- Payment upon acceptance of Final Project Report: **5%**

Payment Conditions

13. Each deliverable must meet the quality standards and specifications (especially in terms of format, content and size of reports as agreed by both parties) outlined in these Terms of Reference

- The AfCFTA Secretariat reserves the right to request one round of revisions before acceptance
- No payment will be made for incomplete or unsatisfactory deliverables

XI.EVALUATION CRITERIA

14. Proposals from potential consulting/ firms will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Weight
Technical understanding and approach	15%
Firm's relevant experience and track record in particular in curriculum development	30%
Team Leader qualifications and experience	15%
Technical experts' qualifications and experience (10% for each expert)	40%

15. The financial proposal will form part of the overall evaluation, with the technical evaluation carrying 70% weight and the financial proposal carrying 30% weight of the total evaluation score.

XII.APPLICATION PROCESS

16. Interested firms should submit:

1. **Technical proposal** containing the following information:

- Company profile and track record
- Technical approach (maximum 15 pages) outlining:
 - Understanding of the assignment
 - Proposed methodology and approach
 - Work plan with clear timelines
 - Previous relevant experience
- Detailed CVs of all proposed team members
- Team organization chart and roles/responsibilities matrix
- Evidence of team members' expertise in the four technical areas

2. **Financial Proposal** including:

- Total contract price in USD
- Breakdown of costs by deliverable/phase
- Team member rates and time allocation
- Estimated travel costs

N. B: ONLY financial proposals for the firms meeting the minimum technical threshold shall be opened

XIII. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

17. All materials, documents, and other outputs produced under this consultancy will be the property of the AfCFTA Secretariat. The consulting Firm shall not use or reproduce these materials without prior written consent from the AfCFTA Secretariat.

XIV CONFIDENTIALITY

18. The consulting Firm shall maintain confidentiality regarding all aspects of the assignment, including data, information, and documents accessed during the consultancy period.

Section 5: TECHNICAL PROPOSAL - STANDARD FORMS

- 5A. Technical Proposal submission form.
- 5B. Firm's references.
- 5C. Comments and suggestions of consultants on the Terms of Reference and on data, services, and facilities to be provided by the Client.
- 5D. Description of the methodology and work plan for performing the assignment.
- 5E. Team composition and task assignments.
- 5F. Format of curriculum vitae (CV) for proposed professional staff.
- 5G. Letters of commitment from proposed team members

5A: TECHNICAL PROPOSAL SUBMISSION LETTER

{*Location, Date*}

To:{*Name and address of*

Client}

Sir / Madam:

We, the undersigned, offer to provide the consulting services for {*Title of consulting services and Procurement Number*} in accordance with your Request for Proposals dated {*Date*} and our Proposal. We are hereby submitting our Proposal, which includes this Technical Proposal, and a Financial⁶ Proposal sealed under a separate envelope.

We declare that we have no conflict of interest as defined by Section 1.7 of the Information to Consultants in relationship to performance of this assignment.

If negotiations are held during the period of validity of the Proposal, i.e., before {*Date*} we undertake to negotiate on the basis of the proposed staff. Our Proposal is binding upon us and subject to the modifications resulting from Contract negotiations.

We understand you are not bound to accept any Proposal you receive.

We remain,

Yours sincerely,

Authorised Signature:

Name and Title of Signatory:

Name of Firm:

Address:

If any additional documentation is attached, a signature and authorisation at Sections 5 and 6 is still required as confirmation that the terms and conditions of this RFP prevail over any attachments. If the Proposal is not authorised in Sections 5 and 6, the proposal may be rejected

Duly authorized to sign this proposal for and on behalf of:

⁶ In Quality-Based Selection, the proposal may include only a Technical Proposal. If this is the case, delete “and a Financial Proposal sealed under a separate envelope.”

5B. Firm's References

Relevant Services Carried Out in the Last Five Years That Best Illustrate Qualifications

Using the format below, provide information on each assignment for which your firm/entity, either individually as a corporate entity or as one of the major companies within an association, was legally contracted.

Assignment Name:		Country:
Location within Country:		Professional Staff Provided by Your Firm/Entity(profiles):
Name of Client:		No. of Staff:
Address:		No. of Staff-Months; Duration of Assignment:
Start Date (Month/Year):	Completion Date (Month/Year):	Approx. Value of Services (in Current US\$):
Name of Associated Consultants, If Any:		No. of Months of Professional Staff Provided by associated Consultants:
Name of Senior Staff (Project Director/Coordinator, Team Leader) Involved and Functions Performed:		
Narrative Description of Project:		
Description of Actual Services Provided by Your Staff:		



Firm's Name: _____

5C. Comments and Suggestions of Consultants on the Terms of Reference and on Data, Services, and Facilities to be Provided by the Client

On the Terms of Reference:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

On the data, services, and facilities to be provided by the Client:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

5D. Description of the Methodology and Work Plan for Performing the Assignment

5E. Team Composition and Task Assignments

1. Technical/Managerial Staff		
Name	Position	Task

2. Support Staff		
Name	Position	Task

5F. Format of Curriculum Vitae (CV) for Proposed Expert

Proposed Position: _____

Name of Firm: _____

Name of Staff: _____

Profession: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Years with Firm/Entity: _____ Nationality: _____

Membership in Professional Societies: _____

Detailed Tasks Assigned: _____

Key Qualifications:

{Give an outline of staff member's experience and training most pertinent to tasks on assignment. Describe degree of responsibility held by staff member on relevant previous assignments and give dates and locations. Use about half a page.}

Education:

{Summarize college/university and other specialized education of staff member, giving names of schools, dates attended, and degrees obtained. Use about one quarter of a page.}

Languages:

{For each language indicate proficiency: excellent, good, fair, or poor in speaking, reading, and writing.}

Employment Record:

{Starting with present position, list in reverse order every employment held. List all positions held by staff member since graduation, giving dates, names of employing organizations, titles of positions held, and locations of assignments. For experience in last ten years, also give types of activities performed and client references, where appropriate. Use about two pages.}

Certification:

I, the undersigned, certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief, these data correctly describe me, my qualifications, and my experience.

Date: _____
{Signature of staff member and authorized representative of the firm} Day/Month/Year

Full name of staff member:

Full name of authorised representative:

5G. Letters of commitment from proposed team members

Section 6: FINANCIAL PROPOSAL - STANDARD FORMS

6A. Financial Proposal submission form.

6B. Summary of costs.

6C. Breakdown of price per activity.

6A. FINANCIAL PROPOSAL SUBMISSION LETTER

{Date}

To: {Name and address of Client}

Sir / Madam:

We, the undersigned, offer to provide the consulting services for *{Title of consulting services and Procurement Number}* in accordance with your Request for Proposals dated {Date} and our Proposal (Technical and Financial Proposals). Our attached Financial Proposal is for the sum of *{Amount in words and figures}*. This amount is exclusive of the local taxes which shall be identified during negotiations and shall be added to the above amount.

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., {Date}.

Commissions and gratuities, if any, paid or to be paid by us to agents relating to this Proposal and Contract execution, if we are awarded the Contract, are listed below:

Name and Address of Agents	Amount and Currency	Purpose of Commission or Gratuity
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

We understand you are not bound to accept any Proposal you receive.

Yours sincerely,

Authorised Signature:
Name and Title of Signatory:
Name of Firm:
Address:

6B: SUMMARY OF COSTS

Schedule of Rates and Prices (to be priced by Service provider)

Authorised By:

Signature: _____ Name: _____

Position: _____ Date: _____
(DD/MM/YY)

Authorised for and on behalf of:

Company: _____

6C. BREAKDOWN OF PRICE PER ACTIVITY

Activity No.: _____

Description: _____

Price Component	Currency(ies)	Amount(s)
Remuneration		
Reimbursables		
Miscellaneous Expenses		
Subtotal		_____