

Africa Connect 4

UbuntuNet Network 4 Link Upgrades and Extensions

(Phase I and II)

Provision of Connectivity Services Tender

Volume 2– Bidder Capability Assessment

1 Guidance Notes for Bidders

1. This “Supplier Qualification Questionnaire (SQ)” is Volume 2 of a set of 4 comprising the following documents:

- Volume 1 – Information about AfricaConnect4 and the UbuntuNet Alliance
- Volume 2 – Bidder Capability Assessment
- Volume 3 – Invitation to Submit Outline Proposals (ITSOP) - Technical and Commercial Requirements
- Volume 4– Master Service Agreement

Bidders should familiarise themselves with the procurement process and documents as described in Volume 1, “Information for Bidders”. All procurement documents are available to download from the UbuntuNet Alliance website (<https://www.ubuntunet.net/procurement>), or e-procurement portal <https://s2c.mercell.com>

2. This Supplier Questionnaire has been designed to assess a Bidder’s capability to deliver UbuntuNet Alliance’s requirements for the provision of **end-to-end connectivity services**. Success at this phase is a pre-requisite for a bid to advance to the next phase.

3. Note that Part A of this Selection Questionnaire, requires the Bidder to confirm that none of the mandatory or discretionary exclusion criteria therein applies to their organisation.

4. Please return a completed version of this and all documents and correspondence through the e-procurement portal <https://s2c.mercell.com> according to the guidelines for Submission of Responses given in Volume 1 “Information for Bidders”.

5. “Bidder” means the legal entity completing the SQ, responsible for the information provided and seeking to be invited to the next phase of the procurement process.

6. Bidders must ensure that all questions are completed accurately and concisely and, in the format, requested in accordance with the questionnaire. Failure to do so may result in a Bidder’s submission being disqualified. If the question does not apply, please state ‘N/A’ and provide an explanation

7. Where a “Yes” or “No” answer is required, Bidders shall mark the relevant check box so as not to create ambiguity for evaluators. Any uncertainty should be raised by the Bidders through clarifications via email (procure@ubuntunet.net) before submitting their response.

8. Information must be entered into the appropriate answer boxes except where additional documentation is required or specifically requested.

9. Should a Bidder need to provide additional Appendices in response to the questions, these should be numbered clearly and listed as part of your declaration.

10. Bidders must not alter any questions set out in the SQ in their response. Amended questions will not be evaluated and a score of zero may be applied in that scenario.

11. Bidders must not cross-reference their answer to one question in their answer to another, even where there is commonality. Cross-referenced questions will not be evaluated and a score of zero will be applied in that scenario.

2 SQ Scoring and Evaluation

1. Bidders' SQs will be scored and evaluated in accordance with the criteria set out below.

- Parts ES1 to ES4 is required for information only to assist with due diligence.
- Part A1 is a Pass/Fail section (Mandatory);
- Part A2 is a Pass/Fail section (Discretionary);
- Part A3 is Pass/Fail section (Discretionary);
- Parts B1 to B4 are scored as part of the Evaluation (Discretionary).

2. Each response will be checked for completeness and compliance against the requirements of this SQ. UbuntuNet Alliance reserves the right, at its absolute discretion, to reject any incomplete or non-compliant SQ responses, which may prevent the Bidder from further participation in this procurement.

2.2 Executive Summary Assessment

1. Answers provided in the Executive Summary section of the Requirements are for information purposes only and will not be formally evaluated and scored. However, completion of these questions is mandatory and the answers may be used for validation purposes.

2. A Bidder's failure to provide a comprehensive and accurate answer to any of the mandatory questions may render their response non-compliant.

3. UbuntuNet Alliance reserves the right to exclude non-compliant responses from further evaluation, which may prevent a Bidder from further participation in this procurement exercise.

2.3 Part A Assessment

1. Part A selection criteria are the minimum standards that UbuntuNet Alliance will require the service provider to meet or exceed, and therefore are of a Pass/Fail nature.

2. Where the Bidder answers 'Yes' to any question at A2, Grounds for Discretionary Exclusion, UbuntuNet Alliance reserves the right to exclude the Bidder from consideration, but may at its discretion decide to allow the Bidder to proceed further.

3. The essential selection criteria are summarised in Table 4 below– while the actual requirements are set out in Part B of the SQ.

4. Subject to the time taken from the submission of responses to the point when an award decision may be reached, UbuntuNet Alliance reserves the right to re-examine the financial and economic standing of each Bidder after the submission of responses and prior to award of contract(s), and reserves the right to decline a bid if the Bidder at that time fails to meet the criteria set out in question A3.

5. Part B shall be scored only for Bidders who pass all Part A mandatory questions

Verification of Information Provided

Whilst reserving the right to request information at any time throughout the procurement process, UbuntuNet Alliance may enable the Bidder to self-certify that there are no mandatory/ discretionary grounds for excluding their organization. When requesting evidence that the Bidder can meet the specified requirements as in B4 below, UbuntuNet Alliance may only obtain such evidence after the final tender evaluation decision i.e. from the winning Bidder only.

2.4 Part B Assessment

1. Part B questions will be assessed subject to Bidders having passed all Part A criteria.
2. Assessment shall be based on reasoned professional judgement as to the merits and validity of each answer.
3. The response guidance contained within each question and the accompanying notes set out the criteria that shall be used to assess each response.
4. Bidders must attain a minimum total score of 60% to pass Part B.
5. UbuntuNet Alliance reserves the right to reject any Bid where a Bidder scores zero on any Part B question assessment.
6. UbuntuNet Alliance reserves the right to consider answers to one question where it may support the evaluation of another question but as part of a validation exercise only.
7. Based on the Assessment Guidance for Question B1 to B4 (see Table 4), marks will be awarded according to the scoring criteria in table 3 below.

Table 3: SQ Scoring Criteria

Score	Performance
5	Shows considerable evidence of capacity and capability that meet the project requirements in most areas. Demonstrates proven experience in business and/or technical ability in providing added value to similar grant agreements or contracts, above and beyond standard provision. This could entail the use of technology in an innovative manner, new ways of working that had not been previously considered, or adopting a proactive approach in working with the contract counter parties at no extra cost.
4	Shows sufficient evidence of capacity and capability that meet the project requirements in most

Score	Performance
	areas.
3	Shows sufficient evidence of required capability and capacity to undertake the project in some areas.
2	Limited evidence of required capacity and capability.
1	Significantly fails to demonstrate required capacity and capability.
0	Completely fails to demonstrate required capacity and capability.

Table 4. SQ Section B – Guidance for Evaluators

Question	Assessment Considerations
B1	Evidence of sufficient accreditations to evidence a capability to work in the applicable telecom industry as per the links requirements.
B2	Provision of resource that is considered to be suitable for both the implementation and delivery of capacity services and is provided in suitable volumes and qualities such that there is not a dependency on key individuals.
B3	Clarification and quantification of the Bidder's audit and quality assurance procedures. Industry/professional standards and the application of these to operations will be considered in the evaluation.
B4	To determine experience in the provision of the infrastructure and service provision. Bidders need to show the successful delivery of similar contracts, especially covering the range, scale and complexity of user base. Descriptions of relevant customers will be required.

Supplier Qualification Questionnaire (SQ)

Executive Summary – Company Details

ES1 Bidder Details		
Full name of Bidder		
Registered Company Address		
Registered Company or Charity number		
VAT registration number		
Date of formation, and date of registration in relevant state, if different <i>Please select, or use format dd/mm/yy</i>	Date of formation Enter date:	Date of registration Enter date:
Name and address of immediate parent company		
Name and address of ultimate parent company		
Trading Status <i>Please check the relevant box</i>	(i) A public limited company	☐
	(ii) A limited company	☐
	(iii) A limited liability partnership	☐
	(iv) Other partnership	☐
	(v) Sole trader	☐

ES2- Sub-Contracting Arrangements	
(Check the box (es) that applies)	
Will you:	
(a) be entirely using your own network to provide services (including cables) or	
(b) be relying on the services of a 3 rd party company for any part of the service	

ES2- Sub-Contracting Arrangements

(Check the box (es) that applies)

Will you:

ES3 – Consortia Arrangements

(Check the box that applies)

Bidding as:

(a) A consortia	
(b) A stand alone entity	

ES4 - Bidder Contact Details

Please enter Bidder's contact details for enquiries about this SQ

Role	
Address	
Telephone no.	
Email address	

Part A – Company Capability

A1 Exclusion Criteria

Bidders will be excluded from participation in procurement and grant procedures if they have been the subject of a conviction by final judgment for one of the following reasons:

- participation in a criminal organisation, as defined in Article 2 of European Council Framework Decision 2008/841/JHA [\(32\)](#);
- corruption, as defined in Article 3 of the Convention on the fight against corruption involving officials of the European Communities or officials of Member States of the European Union [\(33\)](#) and Article 2(1) of Council Framework Decision 2003/568/JHA [\(34\)](#) as well as corruption as defined in the national law of the contracting authority or the economic operator;
- fraud within the meaning of Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests [\(35\)](#);
- terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities, as defined in Articles 1 and 3 of European Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA [\(36\)](#) respectively, or inciting or aiding or abetting or attempting to commit an offence, as referred to in Article 4 of that Framework Decision;
- money laundering or terrorist financing, as defined in Article 1 of Directive 2005/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council [\(37\)](#);
- child labour and other forms of trafficking in human beings as defined in Article 2 of Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council [\(38\)](#).

Bidders should confirm that none of the above criteria apply if their proposal is to be considered:

I confirm that none of the above criteria apply to my company or organisation:

Name

Position

Company

Date

A2 – Exclusion Criteria applicable during the procurement

Bidders may be excluded from participation in procurement and grant procedures if they have been party to any of the following situations (further defined in the relevant reference to Directive 2014/24/EC) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2014/24/oj/eng> . Bidders must confirm that none of the criteria below apply to them;

- where the contracting authority can demonstrate by any appropriate means a violation of applicable obligations referred to in Article 18(2);
- where the economic operator is bankrupt or is the subject of insolvency or winding-up proceedings, where its assets are being administered by a liquidator or by the court, where it is in an arrangement with creditors, where its business activities are suspended or it is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure under national laws and regulations;
- where the contracting authority can demonstrate by appropriate means that the economic operator is guilty of grave professional misconduct, which renders its integrity questionable;
- where the contracting authority has sufficiently plausible indications to conclude that the economic operator has entered into agreements with other economic operators aimed at distorting competition;
- where a conflict of interest within the meaning of Article 24 cannot be effectively remedied by other less intrusive measures;
- where a distortion of competition from the prior involvement of the economic operators in the preparation of the procurement procedure, as referred to in Article 41, cannot be remedied by other, less intrusive measures;
- where the economic operator has shown significant or persistent deficiencies in the performance of a substantive requirement under a prior public contract, a prior contract with a contracting entity or a prior concession contract which led to early termination of that prior contract, damages or other comparable sanctions;
- where the economic operator has been guilty of serious misrepresentation in supplying the information required for the verification of the absence of grounds for exclusion or the fulfilment of the selection criteria, has withheld such information or is not able to submit the supporting documents required pursuant to Article 59; or
- where the economic operator has undertaken to unduly influence the decision-making process of the contracting authority, to obtain confidential information that may confer upon it undue advantages in the procurement procedure or to negligently provide misleading information that may have a material influence on decisions concerning exclusion, selection or award.

I confirm that none of the above criteria apply to my company or organisation:

Name

Position

Company

A3 – Economic and Financial Standing

A3 Economic and Financial Standing			
A3a	Please provide at least one of the following to demonstrate your economic and financial standing. <i>Please check the relevant box(es) to show which document(s) you will be providing and give file names of any attachments.</i>		
	(i) A copy of your audited accounts for the most recent two years	☐	
	(ii) A statement of overall turnover, profit and loss account, current liabilities and assets and cash flow for the most recent year of trading of submitted accounts to Companies House (or equivalent body in your country of registration)	☐	
	(iii) A statement of the cash flow forecast for the current year and a bank letter outlining the current cash and credit position	☐	
	(iv) Alternative means of demonstrating financial status if trading for less than a year, e.g. forecast of turnover for the current year and a statement of funding provided by the owners and/or the bank, charity accruals accounts or an alternative means of demonstrating financial status.	☐	
A3b	Are you part of a wider group, e.g. a subsidiary of a holding or parent company? If you answered 'Yes' please provide the name below and state relationship with you as Bidder.	<i>Please check the relevant box</i>	
		Yes ☐	No ☐
	Name of the organisation:		
	Relationship with Bidder:		
	If 'Yes' please are the Ultimate/parent company accounts available?	Yes ☐	No ☐
	If 'Yes' would the Ultimate/parent company be willing to provide a guarantee if necessary?	Yes ☐	No ☐
	If 'No', would you be able to obtain a guarantee from elsewhere, e.g. a bank?	Yes ☐	No ☐

Part B – Resources and Technical Capability

Sections B1 to B4 are scored with a maximum allocated score of 5 for each response.

B1 – Business Operations and Staff

B1 Nature and scale of your Company and its operations (max score: 5)	
Please describe your organisation and its primary business operations. To support your response please include an organisation diagram that shows the types of teams/roles (e.g. administrative, commercial, engineering, design, etc.), that your company retains to deliver the operations that you have described that are relevant to the requirement as stated in the tender documents. Please also make a statement about the total number of staff in each team/role (as Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)), that might reasonably be allocated to support any resultant contract(s) from this tender.	
Enter text:	

B2 – Physical resources and facilities

B2	Physical resources and facilities (max score: 5)
	Please describe the physical facilities and resources that your company owns or controls that will be used in meeting the technical requirements stated in this tender document. This should cover the administrative elements of the organisation as well as the operational/technical/support teams and resources in place to deliver the connectivity Service, for example, but not limited to, access to cable ships to repair submarine cable cuts.
Enter text:	

B3 – Auditing and Quality Assurance

B3 – Auditing and Quality Assurance (max score: 5)	
The UbuntuNet Alliance requires that bidders have a system in place to demonstrate the ability to deliver and implement the required capacity services and are able to meet accepted industry practice. Bidders are expected to describe their Quality Assurance systems and processes along with any relevant / applicable accreditations or Quality work in progress. Copies of certificates should be provided where they exist.	
<i>Please enter your response in the box below</i>	
<i>[Max 1500 words].</i>	

B3 – Auditing and Quality Assurance (max score: 5)
Enter text:

B4 – Technical Capability

- 1.1 To assess the Bidder as a suitable and capable provider, the Bidder must submit evidence that they are genuinely capable of providing the point-to-point capacity services and performing all of the associated support services that are within the scope of this tender.
- 1.2 The assessment will be carried out in accordance with **Section 2.4** above. Bidders must provide the complete customer references to support the independent verification of all submissions. Proof must be provided in the form of customer references which must evidence the specific competences required.
- 1.3 Customer evidence shall be by means of a list of the principal deliveries effected and the main services provided over the past three years. The list must clearly state the sums, dates and recipients, whether public or private.
- 1.4 Bidders must provide evidence of their track record in respect of providing point to point connectivity services and related support services.
- 1.5 Each reference provided must evidence at least one of the core competences required.
- 1.6 Bidders must demonstrate that for at least 12 consecutive months, at any point in the last 3 years, (2023 <> 2026) that your organization has been providing connectivity services and related support services listed below in Vol2. It is not sufficient to show a track record in one or two areas - all areas are required:
- 1.7 These competencies are, as provided in Vol.1):
 - **Competency 1** - End to end link visibility - seamless and proactive monitoring of the capacity services with a holistic view of the link being provided from point to point against a defined set of bandwidth and related requirements.
 - **Competency 2** – Implementation – committed delivery date underwritten by an effective “bring into service” commissioning and acceptance Testing regime following a period of satisfactory acceptance testing, and evidence of the ability to manage the entire process from end to end in terms of project management and planning resources.
 - **Competency 3** – Service operations – evidence of the Bidder’s capability to provision of access to effective support services, including operational service desk facilities that will be used to support the capacity services for the proposed capacity or listed link requirements.

B4 – Technical Capability (max score: 5)

Please provide details of up to three reference contracts from either the public or private sector, that are relevant to the project's requirements for the provision of capacity services that the Bidder intends to respond to.

Contracts should have been providing services during the past three years. It is the Bidder's responsibility to provide sufficient information to convince the procurement team that the Bidder is capable of meeting the requirement.

Should the project team wish to speak to the contacts provided, we shall inform the Bidder in advance. The contact point from the reference client should therefore be prepared to communicate expressly with UbuntuNet Alliance to confirm the accuracy of any information provided in the Bidder's response at any stage throughout this procurement process.

	Contract 1	Contract 2	Contract 3
Customer organisation (name)			
Customer contact name, phone number and email			
Contract start date			
Contract completion date			
Contract value			
Description of contract In no more than 500 words please describe the contract delivered including evidence as to the Bidder's technical capability in this market.			
Sub-contractor details If work was sub-contracted, please provide details of the sub-contractors, the nature of the work that they undertook, and how their performance was managed.			