



## Association of Caribbean States (ACS)

# Request For Proposal (RFP)

### Design and Build - New website for the ACS Secretariat

<b>Reference:</b>	<b>RFP.OSG. WebDevelopment 2024</b>
RFP Release Date	December 14, 2023
Confirmation deadline re:Pre-Bid Conference	January 13, 2024
Deadline for RFP Questions:	January 23, 2024
Deadline for RFP Submission:	February 6, 2024
Send RFP Questions and/or Submission to:	<a href="mailto:tenders@acs-aec.org">tenders@acs-aec.org</a>

### Confidentiality

This document contains confidential and proprietary information of the Association of Caribbean States and shall not be disclosed or in whole or in part to any third party or to any other than those that would be required to have access to such information. The information contained within it shall not be duplicated or used for any other purpose than to aid in the evaluation process of a vendor proposing to provide services to the Association of Caribbean States in response to a formal Request for Proposal (RFP). This restriction does not however limit the Association of Caribbean States right to use the information contained herein to obtain information or requirements from another source such as suppliers, contractors, insurance agents, financial institutions, or other service provider as may be necessary for the completion of a comprehensive evaluation.

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# 1.0 Introduction

The Association of Caribbean States, hereinafter referred to as the “ACS”, is a regional intergovernmental organisation comprising nations centred on the Caribbean Sea Basin. It was formed via the Convention Establishing the Association of Caribbean States signed in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia on July 24, 1994 with the aim of promoting consultation, cooperation, and concerted action among countries of the Caribbean.

The primary functions and mandates of the ACS are based on specific efforts aimed at the strengthening of regional co-operation. These efforts are intended to create an enhanced economic space in the region; preserve the environmental integrity of the Caribbean Sea which is regarded as the common patrimony of the peoples of the region; and promote the sustainable development of the Greater Caribbean.

The ACS currently comprises twenty-five Member States and ten Associate Members. The ACS Secretariat is located in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

The ACS website ([www.acs-aec.org](http://www.acs-aec.org)) is the primary electronic solution used for dissemination of information. This site is maintained by the Communications Unit and is updated on demand, subject to internal control procedures. The site is generally public in all its page renderings, with restricted information for Members States protected by secured file downloads. The current website content is approximately 42 GB in storage size and has been deployed using Drupal as the Content Management System (CMS).

The ACS intends to solicit and engage a provider to deliver the following via fixed-term contract:

1. Web Development Services and any related support for the redesign of the current website.
2. Service Design and Service Support for the new website solution.

The execution of these contracts is intended to facilitate and support the Communications Plan and outreach efforts of the ACS which are aimed at better informing our target audiences whilst ensuring compliance with standard legal, technical and transparency obligations.

The general objectives of the contracts are as follows:

- i. To provide a better communications tool that is industry-supported and more extensible in its ability to promote and inform users on the organisation’s activities relative to its core mandate;
- ii. To engage website visitors more interactively and dynamically tailor the information and experience to suit the visitor’s needs;
- iii. To increase the visibility of the ACS among the target audiences;
- iv. To comply with the ACS requirements in terms of transparency and security.

The specific objectives of the contracts are as follows:

- i. To migrate specific website content data to a new industry/community supported CMS platform;
- ii. To provide a solution that adequately renders information for use and consumption by end users irrespective of their language or computing platform choice;
- iii. To create a clear, streamlined, intuitive and easily accessible information structure, making the new website visibly enhanced in terms of navigation and information research;
- iv. To deliver a solution that is accessible to the public and fit for purpose by June 28, 2024.

Prospective bidders are expected to carefully review this document before submitting their proposals and to consider all of the requirements stated within. Allowances will not be facilitated for amendments to those proposals resulting from any omissions or exclusion on the part of the bidder.

Accordingly, the ACS is pleased to issue an invitation for proposals from suitably qualified, experienced, responsible, and reputable service providers/contractors for the provision of the technical services which will be required as outlined in the scope of work contained in this document.

## 1.1 Requirements Language

In many standards track documents or request for comments documents several words are used to signify the requirements in the specification or recommendation for consideration. These key words are often capitalized but in instances where these words are not capitalized, their interpretation shall remain the same as described below.

The key words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT", "SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "MAY", and "OPTIONAL", when used in this document to Indicate Requirement Levels are to be interpreted as described below:

- I. **MUST** - This word, or the terms "REQUIRED" or "SHALL", mean that the definition is an absolute requirement of the specification or the directive.
- II. **MUST NOT** - This phrase, or the phrase "SHALL NOT", mean that the definition is an absolute prohibition of the specification or the directive.
- III. **SHOULD** - This word, or the adjective "RECOMMENDED", mean that there may exist valid reasons in particular circumstances to ignore a particular item, but the full implications must be understood and carefully weighed before choosing a different course.
- IV. **SHOULD NOT** - This phrase, or the phrase "NOT RECOMMENDED" mean that there may exist valid reasons in particular circumstances when the particular behavior is acceptable or even useful, but the full implications should be understood and the case carefully weighed before implementing any behavior described with this label.
- V. **MAY** - This word, or the adjective "OPTIONAL", mean that an item is truly optional. One vendor may choose to include the item because a particular marketplace requires it or because the vendor feels that it enhances the product while another vendor may omit the same item. An implementation which does not include a particular option **MUST** be prepared to interoperate with another implementation which does include the option, though perhaps with reduced functionality. In the same vein an implementation which does include a particular option **MUST** be prepared to interoperate with another implementation which does not include the option (except, of course, for the feature the option provides.)

## **2.0 Preliminaries**

### **2.1 Copyright**

This document and its contents belong to the ACS and must be used in confidence and solely for the purpose it was prepared and supplied. It must not be reproduced in whole or in part or used for any other purpose than which it was intended. No information relating to the contents of this document shall be given to or communicated in any manner to any third party without the prior consent or approval of the ACS.

### **2.2 Confidentiality**

This document constitutes confidential and proprietary information of the ACS and shall not be disclosed in whole or in part by the bidder to any third party or to any other, other than those that would be required to have access to such information. The information contained within it shall not be duplicated or used for any other purpose than to supply a response to this Request for Proposal (RFP). This restriction does not however limit the bidder's right to use the information contained herein to obtain information or requirements from another source such as suppliers, contractors, insurance agents, financial institutions, or other service providers as may be necessary for the submission of a comprehensive proposal. The bidder shall however exercise a duty of care when exposing or sharing such information and ensure that confidentiality is communicated and maintained at all times.

### **2.3 Ethical Behaviour**

The ACS requires that all bidders engaging in this process adhere to the highest ethical standards, both during the procurement process itself and throughout the performance of the contract arising from it. The participation in and encouragement of corrupt or illegal practices inclusive of but not limited to bribery, fraud, extortion, or collusion are all deemed unacceptable. If it is demonstrated or discovered that a bidder or an agent acting on its behalf, during the performance of the resulting contract committed or encouraged corrupt or illegal practices in relation to this project, the ACS will take appropriate measures including but not limited to the termination of any awarded contract and the cessation of all relationships with the relevant organisation or company and the agents or employees which would have been involved.

### **2.4 Terms & Conditions**

**2.4.1** The issuance of this document does not constitute an offer to trade and the ACS is not bound to conduct any business based on any submissions or responses to it. Any subsequent arrangements are subject to contract negotiation and such contracts must be issued and agreed upon prior to commencement of any business and with confirmation in writing from the Office of the Secretary General at the ACS Secretariat headquarters based in Trinidad and Tobago.

**2.4.2** The ACS expects that in response to this request, all respondents will provide relevant and appropriate responses to the specific requirements in a concise and comprehensive manner. Any response which does not fully address or comply with the stated requirements may be considered incomplete and possibly rejected.

**2.4.3** The respondent shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of its response and any attendant documentation supplied. The ACS will not be responsible or liable for any such costs, regardless of the outcome of this process.

**2.4.4** This RFP is intended for informational purposes only. Submitted responses to this RFP will not be returned, including all submitted drawings, diagrams, literature, and documents, and shall become the property of the ACS upon receipt by the ACS.

**2.4.5** Respondents submitting documents do so on the basis that the ACS may use, retain and copy the information contained in those documents for purposes related to RFP Background & Scope of Work details, including to assist the ACS identify, refine and determine cost capability options, develop any aspect of the acquisition and sustainment implementation strategy and / or prepare any future capability development and / or solicitation documentation.

**2.4.6** Respondents should identify all materials that are Confidential or Trade Secrets that are included in their RFP responses as "Confidential", "Secret", etc. that they determine to be sensitive commercial information. Subject to the respondent's demonstrated compliance with this clause 2.4.6, the ACS may agree to treat this sensitive commercial information on different terms to those outlined in clause 2.4.7, including by obtaining an appropriate confidentiality undertaking from the third party prior to disclosure to that party.

**2.4.7** Subject to clause 2.4.6, the ACS may disclose all or part of the response documents to a third party for the purposes described in clause 2.4.5.

**2.4.8** Nothing in clause 2.4 and its sub clauses affects the ownership of the Intellectual Property in the information contained in a response.

**2.4.9** To assist in the evaluation of all submitted proposals, the ACS may at its discretion, issue a Request for Clarification in writing, which shall also be responded to in writing. No amendments in the pricing or contents of the proposal shall be sought, offered, or permitted.

**2.4.10** Any proposal or submission received by the ACS after the stated deadline date and time for submission may or may not be considered.

**2.4.11** Respondents to this RFP consent to the ACS incorporating any ideas, concepts, approaches, or strategies into any design, procurement or contractual activities related to any aspect of the project scope without any liability or consideration on the part of the ACS.

**2.4.12** Any question submitted by any respondent is submitted on the basis that the ACS may circulate the respondent's questions and the ACS's answers to all other respondents without disclosing the source of the questions or revealing Confidential Information or the substance of the proposed response.

**2.4.13** All price estimates shall be quoted in United States Dollars (USD) with any applicable Value Added Tax (VAT) clearly identified in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars (TTD).

**2.4.14.** The ACS may at any time seek additional information on, or clarification of, a response from a respondent.

**2.4.15.** ACS reserves the right to undertake a due diligence exercise, aimed at determining to its satisfaction, the validity of the information provided by respondents. Such exercise shall be fully documented and may include, but need not be limited to, all or any combination of the following:

- a) Verification of accuracy, correctness and authenticity of information provided by the respondent;
- b) Validation of extent of compliance to the ACS requirements and evaluation criteria based on what has so far been found by the evaluation team;
- c) Inquiry and reference checking with Government entities with jurisdiction on the respondent, or with previous clients, or any other entity that may have done business with the respondent;
- d) Inquiry and reference checking with previous clients on the performance on ongoing or completed contracts, including physical inspections of previous works, as deemed necessary;
- e) Physical inspection of the respondent's offices, branches or other places where business transpires, with or without notice to the respondent;
- f) Any other means that ACS may deem appropriate, at any stage within the selection process, prior to awarding any contract if such contractual engagement is contemplated.

**2.4.16** ACS shall be under no obligation to enter into any discussions or correspondence for the purpose of seeking clarification to the proposals of each respondent. However, ACS reserves the right to request any, or all, respondents to explain or elaborate their offers without incurring any obligations whatsoever.

**2.4.17** No direct award of the contract will result from this RFP. The submission and evaluation of estimates and proposals in response to this RFP, is not to be construed or interpreted as a commitment to acceptance of any proposal.

**2.4.18** Responses to this RFP will be competitively evaluated. Consistent with the terms of this RFP, responses will be reviewed and considered by the ACS as an information source for the purposes described in this RFP.

**2.4.19** The ACS may add to, vary, modify or amend this RFP by giving the respondents timely written notice of such addition, variation, modification or amendment.

**2.4.20** Responses to this RFP including all attachments and supporting documentation, should be written in English.



## 3.0 Scope of Work

The ACS Secretariat has maintained an internet website since 1998 and is desirous of completing a re-design and upgrade of the current platform to improve the public posture of the organisation and facilitate key communication objectives for the Office of the Secretary General. The developed solution will be used as a primary spearhead for the outreach mandates within the Communications Unit and it must deliver on the following strategic demands:

- **Adaptable, flexible, extendable:** This solution will be a long term strategic investment that must be able to adapt to circumstances where requirements may evolve.
- **Usability & Accessibility:** This solution must facilitate flexible user interfaces to support accessibility compliance for the broad range of device form factors available in addition to rendering content in the three working languages of the ACS, English, French and Spanish.
- **Value for money:** The ACS is an Intergovernmental organisation and any licensing or deployment arrangements for the solution must be able to qualify to key regional stakeholders as a responsible use of public money whilst not impeding any opportunities for innovation.
- **Systems Integration:** This solution should be able to integrate with existing on premise and cloud based technologies or external systems via a multitude of protocols.
- **Community & Security:** The solution should have an active base of clients who can attest to the security, performance reliability and long term stability of the platform.

The primary operational goal of the project effort is to deploy a fit for purpose solution whilst adopting best practices in order to maximize the following benefits:

- Improve Public Posture;
- Increase Productivity and Accessibility;
- Reduce or minimize Risk;
- Streamline Support and Compliance.

The Contractor will be responsible for ensuring that the project is completed on time, within scope, budget, and in accordance with the performance requirements and expectations of the ACS. It is similarly expected that the selected Contractor would implement the minimum measures required to safeguard the health and well-being of all personnel, agents, visitors, and ACS staff during the execution and performance of the following Scope of Work. The following constitutes the activities that will be required to be completed.

### 3.1 General Scope

- The Contractor must provide service design, operation and transition as defined in the ITIL documentation (<https://www.axelos.com/best-practice-solutions/itil>) for the ACS website and back-end database as well as a Content Management System (CMS).
- The Contractor must identify and provide a team with the necessary know-how and experience required to perform all the tasks (webmaster, web designer, web developer etc.) in order to complete the redesign of the website and subsequent implementation of any approved new solution.
- A single programme manager contact point as well as a back-up programme manager must be identified and provided by the Contractor. The Contractor must be able to respond to the ACS staff during ACS business hours.

### 3.2 Service Design, Operation and Transition Requirements

#### Content Management System

- Provide an updated Content Management System (CMS), including the plug-ins/extensions and any other web application used or that can be needed in the framework of the contract. The CMS must provide functionalities and technical features equivalent or superior to the current system used by the ACS, namely Drupal version 6.x. The preference is for the use of the latest production version of Drupal, however consideration for other CMS solutions will be given once the appropriate guarantee of no loss of existing data which must be migrated can be provided. The CMS must be user-friendly and easy to understand for people with no web management background. The CMS must include a secure framework that provides for user management functions that will allow secure authorized updating of the website using the CMS.
- The Contractor will be responsible for various tasks which will include but not be limited to those detailed below:
  - a. Creating and changing templates;
  - b. Developing and implementing website functions and/or feature sets;
  - c. Acting as a helpdesk for the ACS staff for resolving all issues related to the operation and management of the new website;
  - d. Cooperating and coordinating with other ACS Contractors that provide related services if necessary or where applicable.
- The website must be fully available for all major browsers (Microsoft Edge, Microsoft Internet Explorer, Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Apple Safari etc.).

## **Re-design of the website: Service Design and Transition**

- The ACS intends to initiate a re-design of its website to make this solution modern, more user-friendly, improve its ability to better inform on the ACS tasks and responsibilities and act as the primary spearhead for the outreach mandates of the ACS Communications Unit.
- The new site design must provide a solution that renders display all the documents and information released on the website in a modern, innovative and intuitive manner. Any new written content will be provided by the ACS most probably in Word, Excel, PowerPoint or PDF format. The new website must also be automatically available in a version suitable to use on mobile devices.

## **Design and Layout for the Re-design of the website**

- The Contractor must propose at least five (5) new design layouts for the ACS website. The new layout must be developed especially for the ACS and must not be a standardized layout. It must be clear, intuitive and facilitate easy access to information. All designs are expected to reflect the institutional image of the ACS.
- The ACS will evaluate the options provided in terms of design, layout and ease of use. This feedback will be provided to the Contractor in order to facilitate an iterative process aimed at arriving at a preferred or chosen option. Based on the chosen option, the Contractor will finalize the design and layout following inputs from the ACS.
- The ACS and the Contractor will exchange views on the options for an unlimited number of times in order to finalize the design and layout. If the design and layout includes images or other material that cannot be provided by the ACS, the Contractor will need to provide them without extra-charge for the ACS. The new design and layout must be implemented on the entire new website.

## **Menu and Organisation of the Content**

- The Contractor must advise on and propose to the ACS an organisation of the content (menu, organisation of the homepage and the different pages) that will meet the objectives of the ACS.
- The Contractor must, in particular, propose a technical solution to allow some specific pages and elements to be visible at different places of the website without having to copy/paste the content in the CMS.
- The Contractor must propose and implement templates to accommodate the different types of content of the ACS website (news content, vacancy announcements, project content, meeting document, pages presenting governing bodies etc.)
- The new menu and content organisation must be implemented on the entire website. ACS staff must be able to easily rearrange or modify the menu in accordance with future needs.

## **Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)**

- The Contractor must provide advice and implement solutions in terms of Search Engine Optimisation (SEO).

## **Google Analytics**

- The supplier shall ensure that Google Analytics is installed and configured on the new website in accordance with the objectives of the ACS.
- Likewise, the provider shall provide the necessary tools for the ACS to access the data provided by Google Analytics in order to regularly monitor user activity on the site with the objective of helping to measure and understand visitor behaviour and improve website performance.

## **RSS Feeds/PDF/Print Facility**

- RSS feeds must be implemented on the website. Every page must include a print friendly format function and, where applicable, an easy PDF function.

## **Reference Sites**

The following Website portals have been identified to serve as preferred references relative to the features, structure, international posture and functionality desirable for the new ACS Secretariat website.

- [Association of Southeast Asian Nations](#)
- [Regional Cooperation Council](#)
- [World Wide Fund For Nature](#)
- [Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank](#)
- [The World Bank](#)

## **Estimated number of pages**

A preliminary estimate of a minimum number of two hundred (200) pages of content has been forecasted for provisioning within the solution.

However, this estimate should not be used as a limit for the purposes of any deliverables applicable to the new website.

### 3.3 Technical Tasks

1. Provide design and technical assistance to facilitate the mapping and site layout of the proposed new ACS website in conjunction with a designated representative from the ACS.
2. Migrate and/or convert substantial amounts of existing text and image content to new website.
3. Deploy tools from within the CMS to promote social media integration and search engine optimisation.
4. Provide search capabilities using key words or phrasing that will facilitate end users ability to find content throughout the site.
5. Provide document library/database for publications and reports with interactive search functionality.
6. Use simple, cost-effective techniques to test the sample designs with representatives of target audience prior to launch of site. The selection of the sample audience will be done in conjunction with the ACS project team.
7. Conduct thorough acceptance testing of the new website as evidenced by any W3C validator or other applicable toolset.
8. Ensure the solution meets baseline security requirements for the Association of Caribbean States' public facing websites.
9. Conduct and complete migration of the new website to the existing ACS website URL as per task information identified in **Section 4.0**

## 4.0 Standards, Specifications and Requirements

The Contractor will also be responsible for ensuring that the works are completed in accordance with the provision of service design, operation and transition as defined in the ITIL documentation (<https://www.axelos.com/best-practice-solutions/itil>). A single programme manager contact point as well as a back-up programme manager must be identified and provided by the Contractor. The Contractor must be able to respond to the ACS staff during ACS business hours.

The new website must include all the features and technical functions already implemented on the current ACS website, among those: support for multilingual publishing, forms, specifics templates, specific features (e.g. templates for Press Releases, search bar, the templates for vacancy notices, support for three (3) ACS official languages etc.).

In addition to these, the Contractor must advise the ACS and provide new features to meet the ACS needs. All the features proposed must be user-friendly for both the users and the ACS staff that will manage them through the CMS.

- **Character Sets**

The Contractor needs to ensure that all special characters -like ü, ç, Õ or é- are valid.

- **Calendar**

The new website must provide a calendar so that the ACS staff can easily upload information on events organised by the ACS or in which a member state is involved. The visitors must be able to view information through a calendar or through a list gathering of events related to the same subject or taking place during the same time frame. The ACS must be able to make some specific events more visible than others.

- **Document Registry**

The Contractor will be asked to propose and implement an improved solution for the new ACS website to facilitate a document registry which would include press releases, printed publications, electronic communiqués and any other communications material identified by the ACS Communications Unit.

- **Social Media**

The new website must include a function that allows users to share any content of the website directly on social networks (LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc.) with a single click.

- **Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)**

All intellectual property rights and the complete website content, as well as all work performed under the contract are the express and exclusive property of the ACS.

- **Web accessibility policy**

The new ACS website must follow international guidelines for accessible web content. The site must meet the criteria for Level A (Priority 1) compliance – the basic standards recommended by the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2. Detailed information can be found on this link: <https://www.w3.org/TR/2022/CR-WCAG22-20220906> .

- **Transfer**

The Contractor is expected to migrate/transfer specific image and text content from the current website to the redesigned website and must ensure they operate and render correctly in the new Website. During the transfer, the Contractor shall make sure no links are broken, especially external links leading to the main website.

- **Training**

A specific training exercise on the use and management of the new website must be provided by the Contractor to the ACS staff, at the ACS Secretariat. This effort must at a minimum comprise up to eight (8) days of total time committed. The Contractor will be responsible for its own travel expenses for this effort whether any training is delivered on-site and/or on-line. The eight (8) days can be divided into half day sessions if needed and may be recorded for learning library purposes. The Contractor must also deliver comprehensive documentation on the management, maintenance and design of the website including project closure instructional documents that clearly guide end users on how to use the new solution. The end user instructional documentation must not be overly technical and should be easy to understand for the ACS staff with minimum background on web management.

- **Testing**

A test/demonstration system will be required to be made available for ACS staff to follow and continuously evaluate the work of the Contractor. This system will also be used for preliminary acceptance testing prior to any final staging and production solution deployment.

- **Staging Services:**

The Contractor will be responsible for the transfer/redeployment of website from the Contractor's servers (if applicable) via FTP or any other approved means to approved server(s) identified for production deployment to ensure uninterrupted service. At completion of contract term and after the successful transfer of all content to the new web server, the Contractor will certify deletion of all the ACS website-related content from Contractor's servers.

## 4.1 General Scope for Service Design and Service Support

The Contractor must provide additional service design and support as defined in the ITIL documentation (<https://www.axelos.com/best-practice-solutions/itil>) on an “**as needed**” basis for the new ACS website and Content Management System (CMS). The Contractor must identify and provide a team with the necessary know-how and experience required to perform all the tasks (webmaster, web designer, web developer etc.) in order to provide service design and support requirements.

The Contractor may be asked to provide the following support services:

- i. Offering professional advice concerning website content, structure and design.
- ii. Designing and implementing new templates for the website and related documents based on any new technological features available.
- iii. Testing and validation of CMS security patches or version updates for website compatibility in addition to provision of any technical guidance for deployment of such patches or updates.
- iv. Cooperating and coordinating with other ACS Contractors providing related services if necessary

The Service Design and Service Support effort is expected to last for at least one (1) year, with an option for a further renewal period thereafter.

Any expenses or products needed to perform this contract must be included in the proposed price.

Any software code used that is either proprietary or subject to specific license requirements must be disclosed and properly registered for authorized solution use.



## 5.0 Timescale and Activity Schedule

The following timetable constitutes a tentative schedule for the pre-qualification and the RFP evaluation process. The ACS reserves the right to modify this schedule at any time.

Activity	Description	Date / Period
Publication	RFP is issued and published on the ACS's website and circulated to Member States;	December 14, 2023
Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference	Videoconference to address respondents inquiries and provide technical information;	January 16, 2024
Deadline for RFP Questions	<b>Final date and time</b> for respondents to submit their questions to this RFP	January 23, 2024
Deadline for RFP Answers & Clarifications	<b>Final date and time</b> for issuance of answers, clarifications and addenda to this RFP;	January 30, 2024
<b>Deadline for RFP Submission</b>	<b>Final date and time</b> for respondents to submit their responses to this RFP;	<b>February 6, 2024</b>
Review of Submissions and Completion of Evaluations	Completion of Technical & Price Evaluations inclusive of any other ancillary RFP Technical assessment requirements;	February 13, 2024
Due Diligence of Ranked Finalists	Completion of Due Diligence for the top three (3) ranked respondents;	February 16, 2024
Expected date for Service Award	Notice of Award communicated to best ranked respondent. <b>* Reply to notice requested within two (2) working days.</b>	February 23, 2024
Contract Execution	Expected date to complete contract negotiation and formal execution	February 28, 2024
<b>Expected date for Project Start</b>	Expected Project Start Date	<b>March 4, 2024</b>
Maximum expected duration of contract	Maximum expected duration of contract	4 Months
<b>Expected Deadline for Project Completion</b>	Expected Project End Date	<b>June 28, 2024</b>

## 6.0 Proposal Outline

### 6.1 RFP Response

The responses to the RFP should be prepared in a manner that would aid in the making of an informed decision regarding the acquisition and implementation of the proposed solution and any equipment applicable. If a joint venture or consortium is submitting a response, the agreement between the parties relating to such joint venture or consortium should be submitted with the response. Authorized signatories from each party comprising the joint venture or consortium must complete a separate declaration included in the Request for Proposal (RFP) Response Form included with this document as Annex A and a Bid Submission Compliance and Risk Data Annex Form included with this document as Annex C.

### 6.2 RFP Response Form and Format

#### i. Completed Request for Information (RFP) Response Form | Annex A

All respondents should provide the following Corporate Information, Technical and Organisational Support and Experience information within the applicable sections of Request for Proposal (RFP) Response Form as part of their submission:

1. A Company Profile inclusive of the official name and address of the company;
2. Name(s), title(s), telephone number(s) and email address of all primary points of contact;
3. An outline of your company's experience in initiating and successfully completing similar projects and services highlighting any technical, organisational support and applicable experience or client references.;
4. The resources that will be assigned to the project, inclusive of roles, titles, numbers, and applicable experience.
5. A clear statement or list of exclusions and assumptions.
6. A minimum of five (5) testimonials from current or past client engagements which are of a similar size and nature to scope of services potentially required for this effort.

#### ii. Completed Bid Submission Compliance and Risk Data Annex Form | Annex C

The respondent must provide a completed Bid Submission Compliance and Risk Data Annex C.

#### iii. Rough Order of Magnitude or Definitive Cost Proposal | Annex D

Respondents must submit their summary Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) or Definitive cost proposals in accordance with the ROM Price Sheet(s) included in this RFP as Annex D. All Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) or Definitive cost proposals responses must conform to the instructions in the workbook attached as Annex D.

## 6.3 RFP Response Delivery

Respondents are requested to submit their proposals via email to ACS at [tenders@acs-aec.org](mailto:tenders@acs-aec.org). The subject of the email should be: "**Response to Web Development RFP 2024**".

Respondents submitting responses are cautioned to allow adequate delivery time to ensure timely delivery of information and should request a delivery receipt in their email communication to verify successful delivery of your expressions of interest and accompanying information.

**CAUTION:** No hard copy postal or facsimile submissions will be entertained. The respondents are instructed to clearly identify any requirement of this RFP that the respondents cannot satisfy.

The response should be submitted as a combination of Microsoft Word, Excel and Adobe Acrobat PDF document formats no larger than four megabytes (4MB) in size. If your response exceeds this size you should submit your response in separate email messages not exceeding 4MB. The response should follow the format indicated in Section 6.2 of this RFP. The respondents should limit their response to one volume, if at all possible.

## 7.0 Events and Communication Protocols

All respondents should attend an online Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference identified in item 7.3 and scheduled for **January 16, 2024** via ZOOM/WebEx videoconference. Respondents must confirm their attendance via email to [tenders@acs-aec.org](mailto:tenders@acs-aec.org) on or before **January 13, 2024**. The email must have the subject heading "Pre-Bid Conference for website" and must state the name and contact details for the representatives that will be in attendance.

### 7.1 Deadline for inquiries

A Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference has been scheduled for this project; therefore, the cut-off date for submission of questions will be **five (5) business days** after the conclusion of the Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference. While all questions will be entertained at the Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference, it is strongly urged that questions be submitted in writing prior to the Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference. It is requested that respondents having long, complex or multiple part questions submit them via email as far in advance of the Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference as possible. This request is made so that answers can be prepared prior to the Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference and circulated to all potential respondents.

## 7.2 Question Protocol

Questions must be submitted in writing and should be directly tied to the RFP by the writer. Questions should be asked in consecutive order, from beginning to end, following the organisation of the RFP. Each question should begin by referencing the RFP page number and section number to which it relates. Please use **Annex B - Question Template** when submitting questions.

Respondent(s) shall **not** contact any person within ACS directly, in person, or by telephone concerning this RFP. All communication must be conducted via the designated email address identified in this RFP.

## 7.3 Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference

The purpose of the Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference is to provide a structured and formal opportunity for respondents to meet with Representatives of the ACS Secretariat to raise questions and clarify any of the proposal requirements prior to submission of Bids for Examination and Review by the Tenders Committee at the ACS Secretariat. The date, time and location are provided as follows:

**DATE:**           **January 16, 2024**  
**TIME:**           To be confirmed  
**LOCATION:**   Virtual Meeting (Zoom/WebEx)

**CAUTION:** Proposal bids **may be** automatically rejected from any respondent that was not represented or failed to properly register at the Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference.

It is the responsibility of the bidder to identify and address any additional requirements or information needed to submit a proposal. No special consideration shall be given to any respondent, because of the bidder's failure to be knowledgeable of all the requirements of the proposal after the Mandatory Pre-Bid conference date.

## 8.0 Pricing & Payments

All estimates submitted should be valid for a period of at least **ninety (90) days** after the closing date of the request for proposal to allow for the evaluation of bids and the selection of the contract awardee.

All payments shall be made via cheque or wire transfer subject to any contract that arises from this procurement process.

## 9.0 Examination of RFP Contents

Respondents are responsible for examining, with appropriate care and attention, the invitation package and are also responsible for informing themselves with respect to all conditions that may, in any way, affect the cost or the performance of any proposed solutions. Failure to do so shall be at the sole risk of the respondents, and suppliers can be given no relief for error or omission.

In the event that it becomes necessary to clarify or revise this RFP, such clarification or revision will be by addendum. Any RFP addendum will be distributed as follows:

1. A Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference has been scheduled for this procurement, any addendum issued before the Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be distributed to all prospective respondents who were sent the initial RFP.
2. Any addendum issued at the time of or after the Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be distributed **only** to those respondents represented and properly registered at the Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference.

## 10.0 Evaluation of Proposals & Correspondence

Proposals that meet the requirements will be given a thorough and objective review. Respondents are to assume that the Evaluation Panel has no previous knowledge of your organisation, its activities or experience. The tendered prices will be assessed together with qualitative and compliance criteria to determine the most economically advantageous outcome for the ACS.

A scoring system will be used as part of the assessment of the qualitative and pricing criteria. The extent to which a proposal demonstrates greater satisfaction of each of these criteria will result in a greater score. The aggregate score of each proposal will be used as one of the factors in the final assessment of the qualitative criteria and in the overall assessment of value for money. All submitted proposals will be evaluated in accordance with the table outlined below which details how each criterion will be weighted to indicate the relative degree of importance placed on the technical aspects of the goods or services requested.

Category	Description	Weight (%)
<b>Proposal Meets Technical Requirements</b>	Bidder has demonstrated a clear understanding of the project requirements and has proposed services and/or solution(s) that maybe fit for purpose.	<b>5</b>
<b>Technical Capabilities &amp; Competencies</b> (to include Bios or Profiles of all key personnel involved in the project)	Bidder has demonstrated that it has the necessary resources evidenced by the personnel profiles assigned to the project, inclusive of roles, titles, numbers, and applicable experience, capabilities, and competences required to undertake the work. Bidder has demonstrated that it is familiar with and can satisfy the identified standards, requirements, regulations, and specifications.	<b>20</b>
<b>Experience</b>	Bidder has demonstrated through past projects and efforts, the necessary experience in initiating and undertaking similar works.	<b>25</b>
<b>Methodology</b> (to include Milestones with estimated completion dates)	Bidder has demonstrated its capability to bring similar contracts to a satisfactory conclusion by describing the methodology of approach to accomplish the project's required outcomes.	<b>15</b>
<b>Cost of Proposal</b> (in US\$)	Bidder has demonstrated a competitive costing structure which will ensure the best value and outcome for the Client.	<b>35</b>

**Note:** Whilst pricing will be considered a part of the Evaluation Criteria, the submission of the lowest price is not essential for the award and, large pricing differentials between respondents will be carefully examined. Price may be used as a final indicator for determining an awardee when all other criteria have been normalised.

### 10.1 Contact Information

Respondents are requested to use the following contact details for all correspondence with the ACS concerning this RFP.

**Attention:** Mr. Rodolfo Sabonge  
Secretary General  
Association of Caribbean States  
Office of the Secretary General | Web RFP 2024  
Tel: 622-9575  
Email: [tenders@acs-aec.org](mailto:tenders@acs-aec.org)

Should there be the need for any clarification of information, discrepancies in or omissions from this Request for Proposal, or should the intent or meaning appear unclear or ambiguous, or should any other question arise relative to this Request for Proposal, the respondent must notify the ACS of such finding by email.

### 10.2 Contract Award and Notification

The selected Supplier(s) will be notified in writing by an authorised representative of ACS and will be invited to negotiate a contract.

### 10.3 Contract Award Requirements

Requirement	Description	Status
Liquidated Damages	Will be imposed as follows:  Percentage of contract price per day of delay: <b>1%</b> <b>Maximum number of days of delay is 20</b> , after which ACS may terminate the contract.	Required

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