

TERMS OF REFERENCE

THIRD-PARTY EVALUATIONS OF THE STEPWISE PROCESS FOR IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF HIV RAPID TESTING (SPI-RT) AS WELL AS THE NATIONAL CERTIFICATION OF ALL COUNSELLORS AND TESTERS TO PERFORM HIV RAPID TESTING BY AFSA BEYOND ZERO AND NACOSA, PRINCIPAL RECIPIENTS OF THE GLOBAL FUND

1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024

Call for proposals | March 2023

Reference: CFP-01-JPR2-03-2023

SUMMARY	
Title	SPI-RT Quality Assurance and Reporting
Call reference	CFP-01-JPR2-03-2023
Description	AFSA, Beyond Zero and NACOSA (Three Principal Recipients of an HIV grant in South Africa seek to appoint a service provider to perform quality assurance evaluations on SPI-RT and to assess counsellors and testers to perform rapid HIV testing.
Questions by email only to	13h00 on 20 March 2023. Prospective bidders to email questions on clarity to queries@nacosa.org.za . No discussions with PR staff allowed.
Submission by email to	proposals@nacosa.org.za
Submission must include	Cover letter together with <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completed Bidding Template 2. Company profile 3. PIN for Tax clearance 4. Valid B-BBEE certification 5. Signed Code of Conduct for suppliers of services related to Global Fund financing 6. Completed and signed Declaration of Interest 7. Experience and Reference Letters/Testimonials 8. Detailed project proposal with implementation plan 9. Costing schedule 10. Confirmation of banking details 11. Certified copies of company registration documents
Deadline for submission	17h00 on Monday, 27 March 2023

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Acronyms

AFSA	AIDS Foundation of South Africa
AYP	Adolescents and young people
BZ	Beyond Zero
CCM	Country Coordinating Mechanism
HTS	HIV testing services
IQC	Internal Quality control
NACOSA	Networking HIV & AIDS Community of Southern Africa
NDoH	National Department of Health
NHLS	National Health Laboratory System
NSP	National Strategic Plan for HIV, TB and STIs, 2017 – 2022
PT	Proficiency testing
RDT	Rapid diagnostic test
SANAS	South African National Accreditation System
SANAC	South African National AIDS Council
SAPC	South African Pharmacy Council
SPI-RT	Stepwise Process for Improving the Quality of HIV Rapid Testing

1 | Background

The AIDS Foundation of South Africa (AFSA), Beyond Zero (BZ) and the Networking HIV/AIDS Community of Southern Africa (NACOSA) are three Principal Recipients of investments from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria to implement HIV and TB programmes in South Africa over a 3-year period covering April 2022 to March 2025. HIV prevention and treatment programmes implemented by the Principal Recipients and their Sub-Recipients include an Adolescent and Young People Programme, Sex Worker Programme, Men who have sex with Men Programme, Transgender Programme and People who Use Drugs Programme. The programmes are implemented by contracted local Sub-Recipients across thirty eight district municipalities in all nine provinces of South Africa. The rationale of the HIV programmes is to optimise the realisation of the UNAIDS 95-95-95¹ strategy to end the AIDS epidemic as a public health threat by 2030.

HIV testing services, as an entry point to all programmes, require stringent quality assurance processes related to correct testing procedures, suitable environmental conditions and that the HIV rapid diagnostic assays are working as expected.² The National Department of Health's Rapid Testing Continuous Quality Improvement (RTCQI) programme aims to improve quality management systems for HIV rapid testing at HIV testing sites or point-of-care testing level. Components of this programme include the requirement of competency certification for testing personnel, internal quality control (IQC) of HIV rapid tests (RDTs) at site level, proficiency testing (PT) of testing personnel through the National Health Laboratory System (NHLS) and external evaluation of organisations' quality management systems.

The purpose of this call for proposals is to invite external Service Providers to conduct the Stepwise Process for Improving the Quality of HIV Rapid Testing (SPI-RT) tool to evaluate quality assurance processes of implementing sub-recipient organisations for HIV rapid testing. A consolidated report of all sub-recipients assessed must also be submitted. Additionally, Service Providers are invited to submit quotations towards the certification of selected HIV testing personnel on behalf of the three Principal Recipients.

2 | Scope of Work

This Section describes the work that is expected from Service Providers over the 12-month period of April 2023 to March 2024. Please note that the work required by individual Principal Recipients for each of the sub-sections may differ and this must be considered when costing the bid. Separate contracts will be signed between each Principal Recipient and the appointed Service Provider. Service Providers should quote per district/province based on Appendix A, considering the following:

- Principal Recipients may have different programmes in the same geographical area, for example programmes for sex workers, adolescents, and young people etc.
- Baseline assessments will be performed from April to June 2023
- Follow-up assessments will be performed from January to March 2024

¹ To diagnose 95% of all HIV-positive persons, provide HIV treatment for 95% of those diagnosed, and achieve viral suppression for 95% of those treated.

² National Department of Health. 2016. National HIV Testing Services: Policy.

2.1 Deliverables

The successful Service Provider will perform:

2.1.1 SPI-RT assessments

- Baseline SPI-RT assessments on mapped Sub-Recipients (Appendix A) in April – June 2023.
- Follow-up SPI-RT assessments after ± 9 months on mapped Sub-Recipients in Jan – March 2024.

The Service Provider must use the SPI-RT checklist (refer Appendix B) to provide a detailed report on the performance of each sub-Recipient based on the following domains:

- Personnel training and certification
- Physical facility
- Safety
- Pre-testing phase
- Testing phase
- Post testing phase and documentation
- External quality audit
- Detailed quality improvement plans per sub-recipient on areas needing improvement after each assessment
- Reports must be submitted within a week of a sub-recipient being assessed.

Principal Recipients will use the reports to action the recommended quality assurance improvement plans.

2.1.2 Consolidated Reporting on external quality assurance of SPI-RT

The Service Provider must develop and submit a consolidated report on the performance of all three Principal Recipients and their sub-recipients to the Global Fund Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) of South Africa. The format of the report will follow the seven domains of the SPI-RT Checklist and must include a consolidation per PR as well as a combined consolidation of all three PRs. The report will be submitted to the Principal Recipients for review before submission to the CCM.

- Baseline consolidated report should be submitted by 30 July 2023. Should not all SR reports be available by end June 2023, the Service Provider must submit the consolidated report within 20 working days from receiving the last report.

2.1.3 Competency certification of competent HIV-RT Personnel

The Service Provider must use national standard personnel competency assessment tools (observation checklist, 6 PT samples, written test to determine competency) to assess the competency of identified sub-recipient HIV-RT personnel on performing accurate and reliable testing procedures and obtaining reliable results.

The Service Provider must submit the results to the PR and upload the results on the relevant provincial Department of Health database for certification, within two weeks of finalising the assessment.

A Remediation Plan must accompany the results of HIV-RT personnel that have been assessed as not yet competent.

3 | Service Provider Requirements

Service Providers may apply for all or only some of the three deliverables in Section 2 of this Terms of Reference. The successful Service Provider must be able to demonstrate experience on performing the tasks outlined under the Scope of Work as described in Section 2 by complying with the following requirements:

3.1 SPI-RT Assessments

- Ability to perform evaluations on the quality assurance management systems of organisations performing on-site or point-of-care testing and recommending remediation actions.

3.2 Consolidated reporting

- Ability to analyse and consolidate results across a large number of sub-recipients under each PR and formulating recommendations to the CCM.

3.3 Assessing HIV-RT personnel

- Successful completion of training as an Assessor to assess HIV-RT personnel. A certificate of competence or statement of results for each assessor must be submitted with the proposal.

4 | Submission of Proposals

4.1 Service Provider eligibility

- All South African based Service Providers that comply with the requirements listed in Section 3 of this Terms of Reference may apply.
- Service Providers may apply to conduct the SPI-RT assessment services and/or the HIV-RT personnel assessments on a national basis for all 3 Principal Recipients or only for selected districts/provinces.
- Service Providers may sub-contract competent experienced local organisations to conduct the SPI-RT assessments in a smaller geographic area to enable a rapid assessment of the listed organisations as per Attachment A.
- If more than one Service Provider is appointed to perform SPI-RT assessments, a single national Service Provider will be selected and appointed to compile the required consolidated reports (refer Section 2.1.2).
- Service Providers may apply for all or only some of the three deliverables in Section 2 of this Terms of Reference.

4.2 Submission dates

Submit proposals by e-mail to proposals@nacosa.org.za with CFP-01-JPR2-03-2023 in the subject line. The deadline for submissions is **17:00 on Monday 27 March 2023**. No late proposals will be accepted.

If necessary, provide a We Transfer link in your e-mail and test that it is working. Upon receipt of the application, NACOSA will check the We Transfer link and confirm that all annex documents have been received. Relevant timeframes are:

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	DATE
Call for Proposals	NACOSA	12 March 2023
Due date for Questions	NACOSA	13h00 on 20 March 2023
Due date for Submission of proposals	Bidders	17h00 on 27 March 2023
Selection of Service Providers	Selection Panel	Week of 27 March 2023
Appointment and orientation of Service Provider	Principal Recipients	Week of 3 April 2023

For all applications please ensure:

- Timely submission of all documents and reports requested as part of the assessment of the Service Provider's ability to provide the service.
- That appropriate staff are available on site if an on-site capacity assessment visit is requested.

4.3 Proposal details

The Service Provider's proposal must include the following documents and annexes. Please use this table as a checklist before submitting the pack of information. Please label annexures clearly.

Table 1 Checklist

Cover letter	On business stationery and signed, including Contact Person, Email address and Contact numbers	
Annex 1*	Completed Application Template (refer Appendix C)	
Annex 2*	Company profile	
Annex 3*	PIN for Tax clearance certificate verification (verification will be done with SARS eFiling).	
Annex 4*	<p>Valid B-BBEE Certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of a certificate from a South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) accredited Verification Agency; or • A signed Exempt Micro Enterprise (EME) affidavit with the required information; or • A signed Qualifying Small Enterprise (QSE) affidavit with the required information. <p>Any EME or QSE is only required to obtain an affidavit on an annual basis, confirming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Total Revenue of R10 Million or less for EME or between R10 Million and R50 Million for QSE. • Level of Black Ownership <p>ANY MISREPRESENTATION IN TERMS OF THE ABOVE CONSTITUTES A CRIMINAL OFFENCE as set out in the B-BBEE Act.</p>	
Annex 5*	Signed Code of Conduct for Suppliers of services related to Global Fund financing (sign each page): https://www.nacosa.org.za/2017/03/14/code-of-conduct-for-suppliers	
Annex 6*	Completed and Signed Declaration of Interest	
Annex 7*	<p>Experience</p> <p>a. For Service Providers bidding for SPI-RT assessments:</p> <p>A description of previous SPI-RT or equivalent RTCQI-related quality management system assessment experience including external reference(s) from client(s) who have utilised</p>	

	<p>the Bidder as an external Assessor in the last 5 years. Each client reference must include the following information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Name of the contact person 2. Name of the company or governmental entity 3. Address of the contact person 4. Contact details including Telephone number and Email address of contact person 5. A description of the products/services provided and dates the products/services were provided/ letter commending the quality of services <p>b. For Service Providers bidding for the consolidated SPI-RT assessments: A description of previous experience in analysing and consolidating assessment reports and results across a large number of organisations and formulating quality improvement recommendations to the client/donor/oversight body.</p> <p>c. For Service Providers bidding for competency assessment of HIV-RT personnel A copy of the Assessor Certificate or Statement of Results as well as a description of experienced gained in assessing HIV-RT personnel.</p>	
Annex 8	<p>Detailed Proposal</p> <p>A detailed narrative description of the project plan including a Gantt chart based on the required Scope of Work and deliverables that the Service Provider are bidding for.</p>	
Annex 9	<p>Costing: Bidders should quote a fee on the template (Annexure D) for each of the services required, these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPI-RT assessment fee inclusive of the required report and recommended quality improvement plans. Costing must include transport and all incidental costs related to providing the service. • A fee for producing the required consolidated reports. • Cost per individual fee member HIV-RT assessment inclusive of signed results and submission of competent staff results to the PR and the relevant Department of Health. <p>Bidders to analyse the number of sub-recipients and their sites and staff per provinces to optimise efficiencies as far as possible. Prices should be quoted in South African Rand. VAT should be shown separately. Prices submitted for this bid will be regarded as firm.</p>	
Annex 10	<p>Confirmation of Banking Details not older than 3 months, by means of a stamped letter from the bank or a bank statement.</p>	
Annex 11a	<p>Applicable for Company or CC</p> <p>Company documents (if applicable). The following is required for applications from companies or CCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certified copy of Company Registration Document that reflect Company Name, Registration number, date of registration and list of active Directors or Members; • Certified copy of ID documents of the Directors or Members • Most recent audited annual financial statements (not older than 2 years) showing comparative figures. If older than 2 years, then submit management accounts prepared by an external financial consultant accredited by SAIPA/SAICA or equivalent). • Proof of Public Indemnity Cover for minimum of R1 million 	

	A certificate(s) of insurance as written evidence of ability to meet the insurance requirements in accordance with the provisions listed in Section 2 and Section 3 of this document.	
Annex 11b	<p>Applicable for Sole Proprietorship</p> <p>Owner documents (if applicable). The following is required for applications from Sole Proprietorships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certified copy of ID documents of the Owner • Proof of Public Indemnity Cover for minimum of R1 million • A certificate(s) of insurance as written evidence of ability to meet the insurance requirements in accordance with the provisions listed in Section 2 and Section 3 of this document. 	
<p>Annexes 1-6: These documents form part of pre-qualification requirements and if not included, the bid will be rejected without being submitted to the technical or financial evaluation.</p>		

5 | Proposal Support

Questions about this call for proposals may be submitted by email up to 20 March 2023 at 13h00. Please direct questions/queries in writing (only) to queries@nacosa.org.za with the subject line “CFP-01-JPR2-03-2023 - Bid Query.”

The questions will be anonymised and published together with answers on the NACOSA website: www.nacosa.org.za/latest

To ensure fairness, no personal communication with any Principal Recipient staff about the proposal will be entertained.

6 | Evaluation of Bids and Awarding of Contract

6.1 Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation of submissions will be managed by an Evaluation Committee which will prepare a shortlist of applicants that meet the threshold for appointment. The evaluation process will be conducted in three stages:

Stage 1:

Assessment of compliance with pre-qualification/eligibility criteria. Applications that do not comply will not be evaluated further.

Stage 2:

Assessment of technical competency focusing on the ability to fulfil the required scope of work. Service Providers need to achieve a score of at least 70% on technical competency requirements in order to progress further.

Table 2 Functionality table: SPI-RT Assessment of Sub-recipients

FUNCTION	RATING	WEIGHTING
<p>Technical proposal demonstrates <u>ability</u> to implement the Scope of work (SPI-RT quality assessments inclusive of a report per SR). (Annex 8)</p>	<p>1 point = Satisfies the requirement with major reservations. Considerable reservations regarding the ability of the Service Provider to meet this requirement, with little or no evidence to support the response.</p> <p>2 points = Satisfies the requirement with minor reservations. Some minor reservations regarding the ability of the Service Provider to meet this requirement, with limited evidence to support the response.</p> <p>3 points = Satisfies the requirement. Service Provider demonstrated its ability to meet this requirement. Response identifies factors that demonstrate added value, with limited evidence to support the response.</p> <p>4 points = Satisfies the requirement with minor additional benefits. Above average demonstration by the Service Provider of its ability to meet this requirement. Response identifies factors that demonstrate added value, with evidence to support the response</p> <p>5 points = Exceeds the requirement. Exceptional demonstration by the Service Provider of its ability to meet this requirement, with evidence to support the response.</p>	<p>50%</p>
<p>Demonstrable <u>experience</u> with external SPI-RT assessments. Contactable/ verifiable references, in a letter format, must include tender/project details, telephone or cell phone numbers, email address and contact names. (Annex 7)</p>	<p>1 point = Testimonials/reference letters provided but no evidence of experience.</p> <p>2 points = Testimonials/reference letters provided but limited evidence of experience.</p> <p>3 points = Testimonials/reference letters provided but adequate evidence of experience.</p> <p>4 points = Testimonials/reference letters provided but ample evidence of experience.</p> <p>5 points = Testimonials/reference letters provided and exceeding experience requirements.</p>	<p>30%</p>
<p><u>Capacity</u> to deliver external SPI-RT assessments. The Service Provider must be able to demonstrate that it has adequate trained staff to deliver the Scope of Work in the districts included in their technical proposal/bid. (Annex 8)</p>	<p>1 point = Service Provider provided no evidence of a sufficient number of experienced staff to deliver the Scope of Work in the district(s) of their technical proposal.</p> <p>2 points = Service Provider provided limited evidence of a sufficient number of experienced staff to deliver the Scope of Work in the district(s) of their technical proposal.</p> <p>3 points = Service Provider provided adequate evidence of a sufficient number of experienced staff to deliver the Scope of Work in the district(s) of their technical proposal.</p> <p>4 points = Service Provider provided ample evidence of a sufficient number of experienced staff to deliver the Scope of Work in the district(s) of their technical proposal.</p>	<p>20%</p>
		<p>100%</p>

Table 3: Functionality table: Consolidated SPI-RT Report

<p>Ability and experience to analyse and consolidate a national SPI-RT report. The Service Provider has previous experience in analysing and consolidating assessment reports and results across a large number of organisations and formulating quality improvement recommendations to the client/donor/ oversight body.</p>	<p>1 point = Satisfies the requirement with major reservations. Considerable reservations regarding the ability of the Service Provider to meet this requirement, with little or no evidence to support the response.</p> <p>2 points = Satisfies the requirement with minor reservations. Some minor reservations regarding the ability of the Service Provider to meet this requirement, with limited evidence to support the response.</p> <p>3 points = Satisfies the requirement. Service Provider demonstrated its ability to meet this requirement. Response identifies factors that demonstrate added value, with limited evidence to support the response.</p> <p>4 points = Satisfies the requirement with minor additional benefits. Above average demonstration by the Service Provider of its ability to meet this requirement. Response identifies factors that demonstrate added value, with evidence to support the response</p> <p>5 points = Exceeds the requirement. Exceptional demonstration by the Service Provider of its ability to meet this requirement, with evidence to support the response.</p>	<p>100%</p>
<p>TOTAL</p>		<p>100 %</p>

Table 4: Functionality Table: HIV-RT Personnel Assessment

FUNCTION	RATING	WEIGHTING
<p><u>Capacity</u> to deliver. The Service Provider must provide evidence that s/he is an assessor or that the organisation has certified assessors to deliver the Scope of Work in the districts included in their technical proposal/bid. (Annex 7 & 8)</p>	<p>1 point = Service Provider does not provide evidence of trained assessors to deliver the Scope of Work in the districts included in their technical proposal/bid.</p> <p>2 points = Service Provider provides limited evidence of trained assessors to deliver the Scope of Work in the districts included in their technical proposal/bid.</p> <p>3 points = Service Provider provides adequate evidence of trained assessors to deliver the Scope of Work in the districts included in their technical proposal/bid.</p> <p>4 points = Service Provider provides ample evidence of trained assessors to deliver the Scope of Work in the districts included in their technical proposal/bid.</p> <p>5 points = Service Provider provides exceptional evidence of trained assessors to deliver the Scope of Work in the districts included in their technical proposal/bid.</p>	<p>70%</p>
<p>Demonstrable <u>experience</u> with assessing HIV-RT personnel A copy of the Assessor Certificate or Statement of Results as well as a description of experienced gained in assessing HIV-RT personnel. (Annex 7)</p>	<p>1 point = No evidence of experience.</p> <p>2 points = Insufficient evidence of experience.</p> <p>3 points = Adequate evidence of experience.</p> <p>4 points = Ample of experience.</p> <p>5 points = Experience exceeds requirements</p>	<p>30%</p>
		<p>100%</p>

Stage 3:

Shortlisted service providers demonstrate exceptional capability to meet the requirement supported by evidence will be assessed with the 80/20 Preference Point System (PPS). *A maximum of 80 points is allocated for price on the following basis:*

Criteria	Number of Points
Price	80
B-BBEE	20
Total Points	100

Price point assessment

The calculation formula for price points will be conducted as follows:

$$PS = P \left[\frac{1 - (Pt - Pmin)}{Pmin} \right]$$

Where:

PS = Points scored for comparative price of tender/offer under consideration P = maximum points

Pt = Comparative price of tender/offer under consideration

Pmin = Comparative price of lowest acceptable tender/offer. Points scored will be rounded-off to the nearest 2 decimal places

Example

P = Maximum points to be obtained is 80.

Pt = Comparative price of tender/offer under consideration, for example John Smith Inc. quoted R520 000.00.

Pmin = Comparative price of lowest acceptable tender/offer, for example Jane Wesson Inc. quoted R430 000.

$$PS = 80 \left[\frac{1 - (520\,000 - 430\,000)}{430\,000} \right]$$

PS = 63.26 scored out of 80 for John Smith Inc.

B-BBEE Assessment

The standard B-BBEE points calculation is used as follows:

B-BBEE STATUS LEVEL OF CONTRIBUTOR	NUMBER OF POINTS ALLOCATED
1	20
2	18
3	16
4	12
5	8
6	6
7	4
8	2
Non-compliant contributor	0

6.2 Awarding of Contract

Additional information linked to awards are listed below:

- Service Providers who are selected could undergo a further organisational and programmatic assessment by Principal Recipients which could lead to disqualification.
- The Selection Committee reserves the right to request the Service Provider to clarify any part of the submission.
- The Principal Recipients are not bound to accept the lowest or any proposal.
- The Selection Committee may, entirely at its discretion, decide to –
 - award contracts to different Service Providers for different sections of the scope of work or for different geographic areas or for different Principal Recipients
 - award contracts for particular sections of the scope of work, but invite new proposals for other sections of the work
 - delay the awarding of contracts for certain sections of the scope of work (considering, among others, timing of funding availability)
 - subject the awarding of contracts to specific conditions as Prime Recipients may determine at the stage of awarding the contract
- This Terms of Reference does not commit the Principal Recipients to award, nor does it commit the Principal Recipients to pay any cost incurred in the submission of the proposal, or in making necessary studies or designs for the preparation thereof, nor procure or contract for services or supplies. Further, no reimbursable cost may be incurred in anticipation of a contract award.

Appendices

APPENDIX A. Mapped Sub-Recipients and sites per Province, Programme and Principal Recipient

APPENDIX B. SPI-RT Checklist and User Guide

APPENDIX C. Application Template

APPENDIX D. Costing Template