INVITATION TO TENDER

APPOINTMENT OF A SERVICE PROVIDER FOR THE DEVELOPMENT, MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE CERTIFICATION AND VERIFICATION SYSTEMS FOR THE PERIOD OF 24 MONTHS (2 YEARS) FOR THE QUALITY COUNCIL FOR TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS (QCTO)

TENDER NO: QCTO 14 /2023

CLOSING DATE: 06 October 2023 at 11:00

Company Name	
Address	
Contact person	
Contact numbers	(w) (cell)
Email address	

256 Glyn Street, Hatfield, Pretoria, 0083
Private Bag X278, Pretoria, 0001
+27 12 003 1800

www.qcto.org.za

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1. INTRODUCTION

The QCTO is a Schedule 3A Public Entity that was established in accordance with the Skills Development Act, No. 97 of 1998 (as amended) and the National Qualifications Framework Act, No. 67 of 2008 (as amended) and came into operation on 1 April 2010. The main functions of the QCTO amongst others are to develop standards for occupational qualifications including trades and skills programmes, accredit skills development providers, and assessment centres, assessments, quality assurance and issue certificates to qualifying learners. Therefore, the QCTO is responsible for standards generation and maintenance; quality assurance of occupational full and part qualifications registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the Occupational Qualifications Sub-Framework (OQSF) policy, including skills programmes. The QCTO is situated in Hatfield, Pretoria. More information can be obtained from https://www.qcto.org.za/.

Prospective Service Providers who are interested in rendering Development, Maintenance and Enhancement services of the existing Certification and Verification Systems for the period of 24 months for the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) as specified herein; and in accordance with the General Conditions of the offer, as well as the specifications are requested to complete this tender document. This must be submitted, together with all the standard bidding documents in full and submit proposals in sealed Envelopes marked Tender Number QCTO 14/2023 and placed in the tender box at 256 Glyn Street Hatfield, Pretoria, 0083 not later than the closing time and date. **It is compulsory for bidders to attend the virtual briefing session**.

Table: 1.1

Closing Date	Address
Date: 06 October 2023 Time: 11:00	Quality Council for Trade and Occupations Tender Box @ Reception 256 Glyn Street Hatfield Pretoria 0083

NB: Late Submissions will not be considered.

Table: 1.2

Briefing Session Information
Compulsory Virtual Briefing session Date: 20 September 2023 Time: 11:00am – 12:00am Link: To receive the link, kindly email tenders@qcto.org.za before 18 September 2023.   The link will be sent by the end of business on 19 September 2023.

Prior to submission, the bidders must check that all pages are correctly numbered, and that all required documents are signed and initialled. QCTO will hold the duly authorised signatory liable on behalf of the bidder.

NB: Please create an index page for ease of reference. Paginate your proposal submission by using numbered file dividers or a similar system.

Each page should be initialled with black ink.

1.1 PARTNERSHIPS AND LEGAL ENTITIES

In the case of the bidder being a partnership, close corporation or a company, a certificate reflecting the names, identity numbers and address of the partners, members or directors (as the case may be) must be submitted with the tender.

1.2 CONSORTIUMS AND JOINT VENTURES

1.2.1 If the tendering unit emanates from a joint venture or collaborative partnership or consortium (including a newly formed company), which does not have a joint track record of at least three (3) years, the individual entities that make up the tendering unit should each provide all the mandatory requirements. Should all the requirements in respect of the tendering unit or the individual entities, as the case may be, not be met, the tendering unit will be disqualified.

1.2.2 It is recognised that bidders may wish to form consortia to provide the services.

1.2.3 In response to this invitation to tender, a consortium shall comply with the following requirements: -

1.2.3.1 A copy of the agreement entered into by the consortium members shall be submitted with the tender. It shall be signed so as to be legally binding on all consortium members.

1.2.3.2 The tender document shall be signed so as to be legally binding on all consortium members;

1.2.3.3 One of the members shall be nominated by the others as authorised to be the lead member and this authorisation shall be included in the agreement entered into between the consortium members;

1.2.3.4 The lead member shall be the only authorised party to make legal statements, communicate with QCTO and receive instructions for and on behalf of any or all the members of the consortium;

1.3 ACCEPTANCE OF TENDERS

The QCTO does not bind itself to accept either the lowest or any other quote and reserves the right to accept the bid which it deems to be in the best interests of the organisation. QCTO reserves the right to accept the offer in full or in part or not at all.

2. AIM OF PROPOSAL

The aim of this bid is for QCTO to appoint a suitably qualified and experienced service provider for the rendering of Development, Maintenance and Enhancement of the existing Certification and Verification Systems services for the period of 24 months (2 years) for the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO).

The QCTO is responsible for the establishment and management of the Occupational Qualification Sub-framework (OQSF) and therefore;

- Occupational Qualifications development and maintenance;

- Accreditation of Skills Development Providers and Assessment Centres;

- Assessment;

- Certification;

- Research and Knowledge Development; and

- Stakeholder Management and Advocacy.

It is against this background that QCTO requires certification and verification systems for the issuing of:

- Occupational certificates (including Skills Programmes)
- Legacy Trade Certificates
- Verification of the authenticity of certificates for employment/and or study purposes

These systems are used for issuing certificates for trades and occupations, including skills programmes. The electronic verification system of the QCTO is operational with real-time feedback to its registered verification clients. Data from these systems must interface with the QCTO Management Information System (MIS) for submission of data to the National Learner Records Database and requests for replacement certificates and other systems as identified by the QCTO.

Data migration to the apprentice certification system from other sources are managed. The importance of these systems are acknowledged in managing the certification process.

The Certification systems are web-based and process driven systems with the following capabilities:

- User and group collaboration internally,
- Business rules management,
- System management and administration

MINIMUM RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

Two (2) C# senior developers (one on site at least 1 day per month at the QCTO and a substitute resource familiar with the processes to support where required)

3. SCOPE OF SERVICES

3.1 **The scope of services includes but is not limited to:**

3.1.1   Convert use cases and application design into functional applications.

3.1.2   Identify hindrances and bugs, and formulate and implement solutions to these problems

3.1.3   Maintain code quality.

3.1.4   Ensure the best possible performance, quality, and responsiveness of applications

3.1.5   Gather technical requirements through light requirement documents and conversations

3.1.6   Testing of systems

3.1.7   Develop and maintain the user manual

3.1.8   Provide training to end users

3.1.9   Monthly progress reporting on activities assigned

3.1.10   Design, build, and maintain efficient, reusable, and reliable C# code

3.1.11   Migration of data where required

3.1.12   Documentation of all code including strict adherence to version control.

3.1.13   Co-sourcing; This shall be a 24month co-sourcing arrangement with 2 QCTO software developers embedded in the successful service provider's team. The expectation is for skills transfer to occur within that period and any training gaps to be highlighted for resolution by QCTO and the service provider.

3.1.14   Migration from on-premise to Azure cloud; Currently the CVS system runs on-premise using MS Windows Server2019 and MS SQL Server 2017. The QCTO expectation is to migrate this to the Azure cloud 6 months after appointment of the service provider.

3.1.15   The appointed service provider shall ensure that the system is upgraded and optimised to work with the latest stable releases of Microsoft operating systems**.**

3.2 **Background of the Systems**

3.2.1   The service provider must ensure that the lead staff member assigned to this project is in possession of least a Master's Degree in Education/Social Sciences or a related discipline, with a demonstrated track record of working in and publishing in the field of Occupational/Vocational training.

3.2.2   The service provider must also be able to demonstrate a large and sophisticated data gathering workflow with sufficient staff to work through and compare a large number of qualifications across the various sub-frameworks of the NQF

3.3 **Service provider responsibilities for the Occupational, Apprentice Certification and Verification Systems**

3.3.1   The Service Provider shall ensure adequate capacity to deliver services as quoted

3.3.2   The Development support resource must have C# and entity framework knowledge.

3.3.3   The Service Provider equip the IT developer with the necessary computer equipment and licensed software, to be used by the IT developers, with regard to development (C#, etc) and will ensure that no unlicensed software is used in the development process.

3.3.4   The Service Provider will ensure that an up to date antivirus programme is installed on the computer equipment used by the IT developers allocated to work on site at the QCTO.

3.3.5   The Source Code is updated by the service provider and owned by QCTO.

3.3.6   Back-up space will be identified and made available by QCTO.

3.4 **Ownership of the customer's intellectual property:**

The Service Provider acknowledges that any and all Intellectual Property proprietary to the Customer are and shall remain the property of the Customer. The Customer has a very specific agreement with the Service Provider regarding Intellectual Property Rights in the context of this agreement and have full and exclusive intellectual property rights to the source code. The Service Provider shall not for the duration of this Agreement, or at any time after termination or cancellation or expiration of this Agreement, acquire or be entitled to claim any right or interest therein or in any way question or dispute the ownership thereof.

3.5 **QCTO Responsibilities**

3.5.1   Compliance with Service Provider recommended technical standards and specifications;

3.5.2   Providing the Service Provider with accurate information when completing and submitting service request applications and current system documentation;

3.5.3   Advising the Service Provider of significant changes in usage forecasts, planned implementation of future changes or new service requirements where Service Provider shall be impacted;

3.5.4   Ensure the availability of a QCTO staff member or appointed representative on site to determine the service required, guide and ensure that the allocated resources by the Service Provider understands the requirements and support to ensure fully effective certification systems;

3.5.5   The QCTO shall do all things reasonably required to provide the Service Provider with free and uninterrupted access to the premises as required in order to fulfil its obligations in terms hereof, during office hours and to provide the necessary information, documentation, research reports and data as may be reasonably required by the Service Provider to enable the Service Provider to provide the Services and comply with its obligations set out in this Agreement;

3.5.6   Provisioning of a work station (desk and chair); and access to perform tasks will be provided by the QCTO

3.5.7   QCTO Project manager will be responsible for the allocation of work to the IT Developer/s and for managing the IT Developer's completion of tasks.

3.5.8   The QCTO will make available the hardware and software platform as required.

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4. SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

No.	Description
1. Performance Requirements	
1.1 Response and turnaround times	For all staff that will be accessing the system out of the QCTO environment (remotely) by searching and editing information must have reasonable response times.
1.2 Scalability	The system must be enhanced to ensure that it can match increased processing demands.
1.3 Reliability	System availability 24/7 and 365 days at 99.03 % by connecting within the UPS and generator in case power fails.
1.4 Support Services	The service provider must have on-line and telephonic support. The service provide must able to provide support whenever required on site (minimum of at least once a month meeting on site).
1.5 Disaster Recovery	The system server should be backed up daily and fall under the juristic limit of the DR plan.
2. Conformance and Compliance	
2.1 Legislation that require conformance	The system must conform to requirements of the Disclosure of Information Act, SDLC best practice methodologies. Secure coding practices must be used to ensure information security.
2.2 Technology	The system interfaces/have the possibility to interface with the following system services: i. Any web browser ii. Sage Evolution iii. QCTO MIS system iv. MS SQL database v. MS SharePoint
2.3 Maintainability	Changes and configuration must be documented. Technical or organisational standards compliance

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	Solution has the ability to integrate in the majority of Microsoft platforms and interface standards
2.4 Ergonomics	Interface does not require average staff to undergo any major training to use it.
2.5 Operational Environment	The systems operate under the measure / extreme conditions and must continue to do so.
3. Control Requirements	
3.1 Security	Users use a password to log on the system. i. Only names that are in the Active Directory are allowed to access the system. ii. Registered members are able to access their profiles remotely. Changes are saved to the SQL server directly.
3.2 Auditability	Access to documents and images have audit trail and log files and must be maintained. The IT Administrator should have the ability to see all the users logged into the system
3.3 Integrity	Ability to produce defined reports for management No batches to be validated until the exception report is cleared
3.4 Archiving and Backup Strategy	Database have rollback/ roll forward capability The Systems must automatically backup daily or as scheduled
3.5 Recoverability	The System must be recoverable within 30 minutes of possible power failure

5. PRICING

5.1.1 The bidder must submit details regarding the tender price for the services on the pricing schedule provided in SBD 3.3. The completed form/s must be submitted together with the price proposal.

5.1.2 Pricing should clearly indicate the cost of the maintenance, support and development as a breakdown covering the period of 24 months (2 years) supplying the services at a senior developer level.

5.1.3 Bidders are required to indicate their rates (costs) inclusive of all applicable taxes.

5.1.4 It is a requirement of this tender that the tender price is based on a fixed price.

5.1.5 The prices quoted must be VAT inclusive.

5.1.6 The bidder shall provide the services required based on the set timelines and as per the schedule provided by the QCTO.

5.1.7 Reference checks will be conducted as part of due diligence.

5.1.8 Bidders will not be remunerated for submitting proposals.

5.1.9 All other cost increases will be negotiated, not exceeding the actual inflation rate (CPI).

5.1.10 QCTO will not provide upfront payments.

NB: FAILURE TO PROVIDE THE PRICING PROPOSAL WILL INVALIDATE THE BID AND RESULT IN IMMEDIATE DISQUALIFICATION OF THE PROPOSAL

One (1) original pricing proposal must be submitted in **a separate sealed envelope**: 'The pricing schedule must be submitted adjacent to the SBD3.3 form in the bid proposal'.

6. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

The appointment of the successful bidder will be for a period of 24 months (2 years) commencing on the date as prescribed in the Letter of Award and signed Service Level Agreement.

The successful bidders will be expected to enter into a service-level agreement with the QCTO. The service level agreement will include, amongst others, the following:

     i.   Period of agreement;

    ii.   Changes to the proposed team;

   iii.   Method of communication and reporting;

   iv.   Non-performance;

   v.   Financial penalties and termination of the contract;

   vi.   Procedures relating to payments;

   vii. Procedures relating to management reports;

   viii. Terms of deliverables;

   ix.   Reviews;

   x.   Confidentiality; and

   xi.   Disputes.

7. EVALUATION CRITERIA

QCTO may request additional information, clarification, or verification regarding any information contained in or omitted from a bidder's proposal. This information will be requested in writing, and the bidder must provide the requested information within forty-eight (48) hours after the request has been made; otherwise, the bidder may be disqualified.

QCTO may conduct due diligence on any bidder, which may include interviewing customer references or other activities to verify a bidder's or related information and capabilities and, in these instances, the bidders will be obliged to provide QCTO with all necessary assistance and/or information which QCTO may reasonably request and to respond within the given time frame set by QCTO.

The 80/20 principle will be applied in terms of the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act.

The tender will be evaluated in Two stages:

- Stage 1: Mandatory
- Stage 2(a): Functionality A: Industry Experience, expertise and capacity
- Stage 2 (b): Price and Specific goals

Stage 1: Mandatory Evaluation

During this stage, proposals will be reviewed to determine compliance with all mandatory requirements, and such documents must be signed by a duly authorised representative.

I/We have attached to this document:	Tick if submitted		Office use
• Four hard copies of the technical bid document including the duly completed terms of references document (initialled by authorised signatories)	Yes	No	
• Submission of the tender pricing together with the completed SBD 3.3 (Separately sealed in an envelope labelled **PRICING**).	Yes	No	
• One (1) USB Submission of the technical bid document including the duly completed terms of references document (initialled by authorised signatories)	Yes	No	
• Proof of company/closed corporation registration and a copy of CM/CK certificates	Yes	No	
• Copies of the identity documents of those with equity/shares	Yes	No	
• Duly Completed Standard Bidding Documents (SBD 1, SBD 4, SBD 6,1)	Yes	No	
• CSD Registration (National Treasury)	Yes	No	
• Letter of Good standing (COIDA) issued by Department of Labour	Yes	No	

Note: Failure to meet or submit any or all the above mandatory requirements will lead to bidder being disqualified.

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Stage 2 (a): Functionality (First Phase)

No.	Evaluation Criteria	Guideline	Scoring	Points
1	Company Capability	The company must provide detailed information with regard to development, maintenance and support service on systems • Give a brief description of each system that was developed/supported/maintained and contract period	• A bidder with no experience in development/maintenance/support of systems = **0 points** • Developed/maintained/supported three (3) systems = **10 points** • Developed/maintained/supported 4 to 5 systems = **20 points** • Developed/maintained/supported 6 or more systems = **30 points**	**30**
2	Company experience in the education and training environment	The bidder has developed/maintained/support system/s in the education and training environment • Reference letter dated and signed must be provided as supporting evidence	● A bidder no experience in development/maintenance/support of systems in the education and training environment= **0 points** ●Developed/maintained/supported one (1) system in the education and training environment in the last 5 years = **5 points**	**05**
3	Organisation Team in rendering support and development services with CVs (2 senior developers and 1 substitute resource	Proposal clearly states who is on the bidders' team; (Detailed Project organogram) with • Qualifications and experience of team members and, • Roles and responsibilities of team are clearly outlined.	●No project organogram submitted = **0 points** ●Detailed organogram without clear roles and responsibilities for all team members and CVs of developers included = **10 points**	**30**

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No.	Evaluation Criteria	Guideline	Scoring	Points
	of a similar standard)	• CVs of the developers and experience clearly stipulated The team should all at minimum be in possession of an NQF level 7 or equivalent qualification in Education and Training/Social Sciences or a related discipline. The bidder must attach • The CVs of the team which details experience • A minimum of two years of experience in large-scale data gathering and analysis is required for all team members • Relevant Qualifications/ Certificates	●Detailed organogram with clear roles and responsibilities for all team members but no CVs of developers included = **20 points** ●Detailed organogram with clear roles and responsibilities for all team members and CVs of developers included = **30 points**	
4	Reference letters	Verification of the references submitted. Provide four (4) contactable references on **signed and dated** Client's Company Letterhead supported by an award letter and completion letter where similar services have been provided in the **past five** (5) years. Clearly signed and dated. The letter **must** reference the quality and satisfaction of the product submitted and must refer	• 0 Reference provided = **0 points** • 1 Reference provided = **5 points** • 2 References provided = **10 points** • 3 References provided = **15 points** • 4 References provided = **20 points**	20

No.	Evaluation Criteria	Guideline	Scoring	Points
		to both the development and maintenance of systems as applicable.		
5	Approach methodology	Project approach and methodology to co-sourcing, reporting and skills transfer.	• No project approach or methodology submitted = **0 points** • Project approach and methodology submitted but not realistic or logical in accordance with the Scope of work = **5 points** • Detailed Project approach and methodology submitted, and it is realistic and logical in accordance with the Scope of work = **15 points**	**15**
				100

Each criterion will be assessed and scored on the evaluation sheet using the above points.

Threshold: Bidders who score less than 70 out of 100 points on functionality will not be considered for presentation/demonstration and will be disqualified for this project.

Stage 3: Price and Specific Goals

Only bids that achieved the minimum qualifying score/percentage for functionality will be considered further in terms of the **80/20 preference point system**.

The formulae to be utilised in calculating points scored for the preference point system will be included in the tender document.

Step 1 will be the calculation of points for price where the lowest bid will score 80 points for price, while bids with higher prices will score lower points for price on a pro-rata basis.

The following formula will be utilised to calculate the points for price in respect of tenders with a Rand value below R50 000 000 (all applicable taxes included):

$$Ps = 80\left[1 - \left(\frac{Pt - P\ min}{P\ min}\right)\right]$$

Where:

Ps = Points scored for comparative price of proposal or offer under consideration;

Pt   = Comparative price of proposal or offer under consideration; and

Pmin = Comparative price of lowest acceptable proposal or offer.

Step 2 will be the calculation of points for the Specific goals contribution where 20 points will be awarded to a Bidder as per table below:

Specific goals	Definitions	Number of Points
Women	**5 points can be claimed by bidders who have owners/directors who are Black women regardless of percentage of ownership**	5
Youth	**5 points can be claimed by bidders who have**	5

	owners/directors who are Black persons from the age of 16 to 35 regardless of percentage of ownership	
Historically Disadvantaged Individuals (HDI)	**10 points can be claimed by bidders who have owners/directors that are Historically Disadvantaged Individuals, females or disabled South African person regardless of percentage of ownership**	10

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Note: Non-compliant contributors or failure to provide certification or affidavit substantiating the attainment of any of the Specific goals criteria will result in the Bidder being awarded zero (0) points for the Specific goal. In the case of B-BBEE certificates, the bidder must also submit the full verification report, which shows the percentage of Women ,Youth and HDI ownership.

8. CALCULATING THE FINAL SCORE

The points scored for the price (step 1) will be added to the points scored for the Specific goals (step 2) to obtain the bidder's total points scored out of 100.

AREAS OF EVALUATION	POINTS
Price	80
Specific Goals	20
Total	**100**

9. TENDER VALIDITY PERIOD

The validity period for this tender is 180 days.

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10. ENQUIRIES

Any technical enquiries regarding the terms of reference shall be directed in writing to the following:

1. Reuel MacPherson
2. Nonhlanhla Dlamini

E-Mail: Certification@qcto.org.za

Any SCM enquiries regarding the terms of reference shall be directed in writing to:

Mr Lekhotla Motloung
Telephone Numbers: 012 003 1847
E-mail address: tenders@qcto.org.za

Kindly indicate tender reference number and full description on the subject line for all enquiries