



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) FOR THE FOR PROVISION OF CLOUD HOSTING SERVICES FOR MORDINISED SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATION SYSTEMS (SA-SAMS).**

**TENDER NUMBER: NECT/2026/10/01**

**RFP SUBMITTED BY:**

Name of Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

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| <b>NECT: SCM ENQUIRIES</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>TECHNICAL ENQUIRIES</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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| <p><b>CLOSING DATE:</b></p> <p><b>CLOSING TIME:</b></p> <p><b>TENDER VALIDITY:</b></p> <p><b>COMPULSORY BRIEFING:</b></p> <p><b>SUBMISSIONS: HEAD OFFICE (GAUTENG)</b></p> <p><b>Address:</b> 272 West Avenue,<br/>Block D Lakefields office Park,<br/>Centurion, 01632</p> | <p><b>26 October 2026</b></p> <p><b>11:00am</b></p> <p><b>90 Days</b></p> <p><b>6 October 2026; 12pm – 13pm</b></p> <p>A bid posted or couriered (at sender's risk) to the NECT, PO Box 11150, Die Hoewes, 0163, in good time so as to reach the Trust before the above-mentioned closing date and clearly indicated attention supply chain management unit, may be accepted on condition that it is placed in the correct Bid box before the closing time, it being understood that the Trust disclaims any responsibility for seeing that such bids are in fact lodged in the bid box.</p> |



## **1. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT) herewith invites proposals from interested service providers to submit proposals for the supply of cloud services for the South African School Administration System.

## **2. ENTITY BACKGROUND**

The NECT was formed in July 2013 as a response to the call by the National Development Plan (NDP) for increased collaboration among stakeholders to improve educational outcomes.

The NECT is an organisation dedicated to strengthening partnerships with civil society, trade unions and government at national and provincial levels in order to achieve South Africa's national goals for basic education. It strives both to support and to influence the agenda for reform of education.

The organisation is based on the principle that collaboration and focused effort by important role players increases our power as a nation to secure the changes needed to deliver quality education to all our children.

The NECT's point of departure is that government and civil society have different but complementary roles to play in relation to education. The provision of basic education for the general population is the responsibility of the government which is uniquely equipped to fulfil this overarching mandate. Civil society, with its diversity and flexibility, is able to support government by innovation and accelerated delivery. Civil society becomes more relevant and more influential when channelling its efforts in a coordinated way into the national education system.

## **3. SOUTH AFRICA SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

The South African School Administration and Management System (SA-SAMS) is the national administrative backbone for the country's basic education sector. It serves over 12 million learners and 400,000 educators across approximately 23,000 public schools, making it one of the largest education management systems in Africa. SA-SAMS supports the daily operations of schools by enabling data-driven school management and reporting. It underpins four core functional modules:

- a. Manage School – General school-level administration including infrastructure, term planning, and timetable setup.
- b. Manage Learner – Learner registration, attendance, discipline, progression, and learner records.
- c. Manage Staff – Educator and non-educator records, allocations, leave, and HR administration.
- d. Manage Curriculum and Assessment – Class allocation, subject management, mark capturing, and performance tracking.

Additionally, SA-SAMS plays a statutory reporting role, providing the Department of Basic Education (DBE), provincial departments, and government oversight bodies with critical operational and performance data. This information directly informs education budgeting, planning, policy development, and resource allocation nationally and provincially.



However, despite its foundational role, SA-SAMS in its current form is outdated and not well-suited to support the evolving demands of a modern, digitised education system. Technically, SA-SAMS operates as a monolithic application built on PHP 7.4, layered over MySQL databases, and hosted on Ubuntu-based servers. The application is largely deployed on-premise in schools and districts, with many components requiring manual updates and interventions.

This architecture presents several key challenges:

- a. Scalability constraints: The system does not scale effectively to handle surges in usage (e.g., during term-end or year-end processing), affecting reliability and user experience.
- b. Maintenance overhead: Updates and patches must be manually applied, requiring ongoing technical support and field interventions.
- c. Offline dependency: While designed to operate offline, synchronisation with national databases is irregular and often delayed, impacting data quality and responsiveness.
- d. Limited integration: SA-SAMS is poorly integrated with other government systems such as HR, finance, and health services, which restricts holistic education planning.
- e. Data quality and validation: The lack of real-time validation and oversight leads to inconsistent data submissions and downstream decision-making risks.

In response to these systemic challenges, the SA-SAMS Modernisation Project was initiated to replace the legacy system with a more scalable, secure, integrated, and user-friendly platform that can support both operational and strategic needs. The modernised system is being developed using open-source technologies (primarily OpenEMIS) and will feature a modular, service-oriented architecture, enabling cloud hosting, real-time reporting, secure offline capabilities, and integration with other departmental systems (e.g., learner tracking, social services, health referrals, and workforce planning).

The project is a multi-stakeholder initiative led by the DBE with implementation support from the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT). Modernisation is not just a technical upgrade—it is a transformational reform aimed at improving data governance, reducing administrative burdens, improving school functionality, and ultimately enhancing learner outcomes.

This cloud migration project aims to transform SA-SAMS into a high-availability, self-healing platform capable of:

- a. Automated resilience: Instant VM recovery during failures via Managed Instance Groups (MIGs) and health checks.
- b. Dynamic scaling: Seamless resource adjustment during enrollment/assessment cycles.
- c. Enhanced observability: Proactive performance monitoring using VM Insights for CPU, memory, and network metrics.
- d. Zero-downtime updates: Rolling/canary deployments for continuous system improvements.
- e. Disaster recovery: Multi-zonal redundancy for critical production workloads.



The modernised SA-SAMS will retain its core functionality while leveraging cloud-native automation to reduce administrative burdens on schools and district offices, ensuring uninterrupted access to vital education management services.

#### **4. SUBMISSION AND PROCESSING OF PROPOSALS**

Service providers are required to submit their proposals together with the following supporting documentation:

- a. All proposals must be submitted on company letterheads.
- b. All service providers must submit their B-BBEE Verification Certificates from Verification Agencies accredited by the South African Accreditation System or a Registered Auditor approved by the Independent Regulatory Board of Directors (IRBA) OR AN Accounting Officer as contemplated in the Close Corporation Act (CCA) in order to claim preference points or sworn affidavit for B-BBEE exempted micro enterprises.
- c. Late and incomplete submissions will not be accepted.
- d. In bids wherein the consortiums and joint ventures are involved, an agreement fully signed by all partners involved must be submitted.

#### **5. REASONS FOR DISQUALIFICATION**

A service provider may be disqualified for failure to comply with the following:

- a. Provision of a valid Tax clearance certificate by the closing date.
- b. Submitting information that is fraudulent, factually untrue, or inaccurate.
- c. Failure to attach a declaration of interest.
- d. Failure to attach company registration (for both parties in case of joint venture/consortium).
- e. Failure to attach a B-BBEE certificate or sworn affidavit.
- f. Failure to attend a compulsory virtual briefing session.
- g. Failure of service provider to indicate previous experience in software development / application customisation.

#### **6. OBJECTIVE AND SPECIFICATIONS OF THIS RFP**

The purpose of this Request for Proposal is to appoint a service provider for the implementation, support and maintenance of a cloud solution for SA-SAMS. The solution will host the software and database for the development, testing and production environments.

#### **7. SCOPE OF WORK**

Managed Instance Groups (MIs) with Integrated VM Insights

##### **7.1 Overview**

The NECT seeks to design, deploy, and maintain a robust, self-healing, and scalable virtual infrastructure on a Cloud Platform (CP), centred around Managed Instance (MIs). This environment



will support stateful and stateless the SA-SAMS modernisation application and database, enable automatic repair and updates, and deliver high availability through zonal and regional configurations.

In parallel, the solution must include comprehensive VM-level monitoring and alerting through Cloud Monitoring's VM Insights, ensuring the environment is fully observable, cost-efficient, and performance-optimized.

## **7.2 Objectives**

The cloud hosting service should have inter alia following capabilities:

- a. Resilience: Automatically detect, recover from, and replace failed or degraded VMs and applications using MIs.
- b. Scalability: Seamlessly scale in/out VM instances based on demand and policy-driven thresholds.
- c. Observability: Monitor performance indicators like CPU, memory, and network with actionable insights and alerts.
- d. Availability: Deploy across multiple zones for regional high availability and disaster resilience.
- e. Operational Automation: Use auto-updating and health check strategies to minimize manual maintenance.

## **7.3 Scope of Work**

### **7.3.1 Managed Instance Group (MI) Design and Deployment**

The vendor will design and implement both stateless and stateful Managed Instance Groups, tailored to workload characteristics.

#### **7.3.1.1 MI Types**

- a. Zonal MIs: For workloads with simpler High Availability needs.
- b. Regional MIs: For mission-critical applications requiring redundancy across multiple availability zones.
- c. Stateful MIs: For applications requiring persistent instance identity (e.g., databases, legacy systems, checkpointed workloads). Use this capability to support legacy, monolithic, or data-sensitive applications such as databases and batch processors with checkpointing.

#### **7.3.1.2 Instance Template Configuration**

- a. Define and implement instance templates containing:
  - i. VM machine types
  - ii. Boot disk configurations and additional persistent disks



- iii. Metadata and startup scripts
  - iv. GPU configuration if required
  - v. Network tags and IAM roles
  - vi. Autohealing and Health Checks
- b. Configure application-based health checks to detect non-responsive apps, not just system-level issues.
  - c. Use different thresholds and intervals for:
    - i. Load balancing health checks (aggressive)
    - ii. Autohealing health checks (conservative)

#### **7.3.1.3 Auto-repair and Self-Healing**

- a. Enable automatic recreation of failed VMs due to crashes, unresponsiveness, or unplanned deletions.
- b. Test failure scenarios to validate self-healing behaviour.

#### **7.3.2 Load Balancing Integration**

- a. Integrate MIs with external or internal load balancers to ensure traffic is efficiently distributed across healthy, responsive instances.
- b. Define backend service configurations that route requests only to healthy instances.
- c. Align health checks used for load balancing and Autohealing while tuning each independently for optimal behaviour.

### **7.4 Autoscaling Implementation**

#### **7.4.1 Autoscaling Policy Configuration**

- a. Autoscale based on one or more of the following:
  - iii. CPU utilization thresholds
  - iv. Request per second (RPS) via load balancing metrics
  - v. Custom metrics (optional)
- b. Define minimum, maximum, and target utilization parameters.

#### **7.4.2 Specialized Scaling Use Cases**

- a. Deploy GPUs in batch for ML training jobs.
- b. Use scheduled scaling or time-based policies for known usage patterns.

### **7.5 Stateful Workload Enablement**

For applications that require persistent configuration or data:

- a. Configure stateful MIs to retain:
  - i. Instance names



- ii. Attached disks
  - iii. VM metadata
- b. Ensure support for restart and update events without loss of state.
- c. Design MIs to support batch processing jobs that require checkpointing or session persistence.

## **7.6 Rolling and Canary Updates**

### **7.6.1 Update Strategy Design**

- a. Design an update rollout mechanism with:
  - i. Rolling updates (batch-based, safe replacement)
  - ii. Canary deployments (pilot instances before full rollout)
- b. Define
  - iii. Batch size
  - iv. Minimum healthy percentage
  - v. Delay between update batches

### **7.6.2 Testing and Rollback**

- a. Provide rollback procedures and error thresholds.
- b. Automate validation checks post-update before advancing to the next batch.

## **7.7 VM Insights – Monitoring and Observability Layer**

### **7.7.1 VM Insights Enablement**

- a. Enable Cloud Monitoring VM Insights for all instances within each MI.
- b. Validate that metrics collection includes:
  - i. CPU usage (current, trend, prediction)
  - ii. Memory usage (high/low, prediction)
  - iii. Network throughput (received/sent, abnormal drops)

### **7.7.2 Alerting Policies and Thresholds**

- a. Define and implement policies to trigger alerts on:
  - i. High CPU (e.g., >80% for 90% of the time over 7 days)
  - ii. Low memory usage (e.g., <10% usage for 50% of the last 7 days)
  - iii. Network anomalies (e.g., throughput below baseline)
  - iv. Predicted performance issues
  - v. Idle or unused resources

### **7.7.3 Dashboards and Reports**

- a. Build real-time and historical dashboards using:
  - i. System metrics (CPU, memory, disk I/O, network throughput)



- ii. Custom application metrics (if exposed)
  - iii. Configure notifications and escalation policies tied to VM Insights alerts.
- b. Automate dashboard deployment via API for scalability and reuse.

## **7.8 Documentation and Knowledge Transfer**

### **7.8.1 Documentation Deliverables**

- a. Detailed MI deployment architecture and runbooks.
- b. Health check design and autohealing logic.
- c. Scaling and update policies.
- d. Monitoring setup, alerting conditions, and thresholds.
- e. Troubleshooting procedures.

### **7.8.2 Training**

- a. Conduct knowledge transfer workshops.
- b. Provide training on:
  - i. Updating and scaling MIs
  - ii. Monitoring and dashboard usage
  - iii. Responding to alerts and failures

## **7.9 Firewall Requirements**

To ensure secure and controlled communication between virtual machines, services, and external systems, the following firewall requirements must be defined, implemented, and validated as part of the Managed Instance Group (MI) deployment:

### **7.9.1 Firewall Rule Definition and Implementation**

- a. Design and implement VPC firewall rules aligned with the principle of least privilege.
- b. Create and apply network tags on VMs to associate with specific firewall rules.
- c. Configure directional rules (ingress and egress) with explicit source/destination IP ranges, protocols, and ports.

### **7.9.2 Ingress Rules**

- a. Allow only necessary inbound traffic to VMs, such as:
  - HTTP (TCP 80) and HTTPS (TCP 443) for application access.
  - SSH (TCP 22) only from trusted IP ranges or via Identity-Aware Proxy (IAP)
  - Custom ports used by application services (if applicable)
- b. Restrict access to internal services (e.g., databases) to specific subnets or service accounts.
- c. Support private connectivity to load balancers or internal service endpoints. Conduct knowledge transfer workshops.

### 7.9.3 Egress Rules

- a. Permit outbound traffic required for:
  - Package updates and OS patching
  - Logging and monitoring (Cloud Monitoring, Cloud Logging, etc.)
- b. External APIs or third-party services (if needed)
  - Block or log unnecessary outbound connections for auditing and security posture.

### 7.9.4 Firewall Logging and Auditing

- a. Enable VPC Flow Logs for network interfaces associated with the MIs.
- b. Ensure firewall rules include logging for critical ingress and egress rules.
- c. Integrate firewall logs with centralized SIEM or logging dashboards for real-time visibility and analysis.

### 7.9.5 Compliance and Security Best Practices

- a. Use service accounts and identity-based access where applicable instead of IP-based allowlists.
- b. Review and validate firewall rules periodically for relevance and compliance with organisational security policies.
- c. Enforce default deny rules and allow only explicitly permitted traffic.
- d. Adhere to SITA's MIOS security standards.

### 7.9.6 Integration with Managed Instance Operations

- a. Ensure firewall rules support autohealing, autoscaling, and instance recreation without manual intervention.
- b. Verify that health checks (load balancer and autohealing) are permitted through firewall rules, including necessary ports and source ranges.
- c. Support rolling and canary updates by allowing controlled traffic to updated instances during testing.

### 7.9.7 Storing government data/information

Various South African regulations do not allow school and especially learner data to be hosted outside of the South African borders. This is applicable to data only. Only the data/database will have to be hosted within South African borders.

## 8. Deliverables

| Deliverable                     | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| MI Deployment Plan              | Architecture diagrams, workload mapping, zone configuration, architecture design for zonal or regional MIs. Instance templates with defined startup scripts, disks, network configurations, and metadata. Load balancing and health check configuration. |
| Instance Templates              | Templates for stateful/stateless deployments, GPUs                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Autohealing Configurations      | Health checks, thresholds, recovery validation                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Autoscaling Policies            | Configured and tested based on defined metrics                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Update Strategy                 | Rolling/canary update definitions and controls                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| VM Insights Setup               | Metrics, alerting, dashboards                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Documentation Package           | Configuration and operational runbooks                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Training & Handover             | Live or recorded sessions, user guides                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Documentation                   | Configuration guides for MI creation, autohealing, and scaling, update rollout procedures (canary/rolling), monitoring playbooks and alert response guides.                                                                                              |
| Monitoring & Alerting Framework | VM Insights enabled and validated on all MIs, alerts configured for performance degradation, failure conditions, and unused resource detection, custom dashboards for real-time and historical analysis.                                                 |
| Knowledge Transfer              | Operational training sessions, handover of dashboards, alerting policies, and update processes.                                                                                                                                                          |

## 9. Timeline

| Duration  | Phase                      |
|-----------|----------------------------|
| 1 week    | Requirements Gathering     |
| 1 week    | Architecture Design        |
| 2–3 weeks | Deployment & Configuration |
| 1–2 weeks | Monitoring & Optimization  |
| 1 week    | Documentation & Training   |
| 6–8 weeks | Total Estimated Duration   |

## 10. Service Level Expectations

| Metric                    | Target                                |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Availability (MIs)        | ≥ 99.9% uptime                        |
| Auto-repair Response Time | < 3 minutes from health check failure |
| Scaling Lag               | < 60 seconds under demand surge       |
| Update Failure Rate       | < 5% rollback required                |

| Metric              | Target                                       |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Monitoring Coverage | 100% of MIs integrated with VM Insights      |
| Alerting Delay      | Alerts triggered < 60 seconds post-threshold |

## 11. Technical – VM requirements

|                                                                                   |                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Application Identifier NAME                                                       | Modernized SA SAMS           |
| Application layer software and Version                                            | PHP 7.4                      |
| Operating System and Version the application and Database server software runs on | Ubuntu<br>Latest LTS version |
| Operating System Licence, Versions, Upgrades                                      | Cloud Ready                  |
| Database management software and Version                                          | MySQL<br>Latest version -1   |
| Operating System Licence, Versions, Upgrades Recommendation                       | Cloud Ready                  |
| Database Information                                                              | MySQL                        |
| Upgrade/Migration Path                                                            | MySQL Server Latest -1       |

### 11.1 Operating System Target Cloud Platform

| Operating System | Upgrade/Migration Path |
|------------------|------------------------|
| Ubuntu           | Latest LTS             |

### 11.2 Application Layer Target Cloud Platform

| Application | Upgrade/Migration Path |
|-------------|------------------------|
| PHP         | PHP 7.4                |

### 11.3 Environment or Application

| Disaster Recovery                                                | Backup Policy                                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Disaster Recovery needed on proposal with various Recovery Tiers | Backup procedures needed on proposal with various backup Tiers |

The appointed service provider will be required to configure the proposed solutions for both the cloud hosting environment and backup and restore system that will be required to perform backups from the cloud.

Provision of 99.9% availability must be guaranteed for the hosted virtual servers with the datacentre having one or more secondary failover datacentres, should the primary data centre fail.

The requirement is to request a cloud server environment that will enable a staged pilot and ramp-up approach as per onboarding schedule below (estimated).



- 1 to 49 schools
- 50 to 100
- 101 to 499
- 500 to 1499
- 1500 to 2499
- 2500 to 4000

With the current requirements for VM's below in 11.4 up to 11.11, this will be sufficient for the period 2026 to February 2027.

From March 2027 until February 2028, the school onboarding will be double the amount for the period 2026 until 2027.

The proposal response should enable the gradual increase of the environments by double the requested initial year requirements for the cloud infrastructure.

As per second year (2027 – 2028), the upgrade should be broken into 3 upgrade processes with 33% of first initial year upgrades times 3, requiring upgrades every 4 months (March 2027, June 2027, October 2027).

Costing response (proposal) needs to present the intended upgrades based on above schedule.

#### 11.4 Production Environment Virtual Machine Summary (Application Servers)

Two application Servers. One for the accessible Modernized SA-SAMS application and the second for the replicated failover server

|                                               |          |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------|
| Total Number of Primary High Availability VMs | 2        |
| Total vCPU                                    | 24 vCPU  |
| Total RAM (GB)                                | 64 GB    |
| Total Storage - (GB)                          | 2 000 GB |

#### 11.5 Production Environment Virtual Machine Summary (Database Servers)

Two database servers. One for the active current database and the second for the replication server.

|                                               |          |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------|
| Total Number of Primary High Availability VMs | 2        |
| Total vCPU                                    | 24 vCPU  |
| Total RAM (GB)                                | 64 GB    |
| Total Storage - (GB)                          | 2 000 GB |

#### 11.6 Test (SIT) Environment Virtual Machine Summary

|                             |          |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| Total Number of Primary VMs | 1        |
| Total vCPU                  | 8 vCPU   |
| Total RAM (GB)              | 16 GB    |
| Total Storage - (GB)        | 1 000 GB |

### 11.7 UAT Environment Virtual Machine Summary

|                             |          |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| Total Number of Primary VMs | 1        |
| Total vCPU                  | 16 vCPU  |
| Total RAM (GB)              | 32 GB    |
| Total Storage - (GB)        | 1 000 GB |

### 11.8 Datawarehouse Environment Virtual Machine Summary

|                             |          |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| Total Number of Primary VMs | 1        |
| Total vCPU                  | 16 vCPU  |
| Total RAM (GB)              | 64 GB    |
| Total Storage - (GB)        | 4 000 GB |

### 11.9 Sandbox Environment Virtual Machine Summary

|                             |         |
|-----------------------------|---------|
| Total Number of Primary VMs | 1       |
| Total vCPU                  | 16 vCPU |
| Total RAM (GB)              | 32 GB   |
| Total Storage - (GB)        | 1 000GB |

### 11.10 Development Environment Virtual Machine Summary

|                             |          |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| Total Number of Primary VMs | 1        |
| Total vCPU                  | 8 vCPU   |
| Total RAM (GB)              | 32 GB    |
| Total Storage - (GB)        | 1 000 GB |

### 11.11 Document Repository Environment Virtual Machine Summary

|                             |          |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| Total Number of Primary VMs | 1        |
| Total vCPU                  | 8 vCPU   |
| Total RAM (GB)              | 24 GB    |
| Total Storage - (GB)        | 2 000 GB |

## **12. MONITORING & REPORTING**

- 12.1 Complete, real-time monitoring of server environment and services
- 12.2 Usage reporting
- 12.3 Threshold reporting on capacity
- 12.4 Alerting of outages, service interruption, resource availability, capacity thresholds
- 12.5 Downtime monitoring
- 12.6 Monthly uptime reporting per workload
- 12.7 SLA reporting
- 12.8 Billing and usage reporting

## **13. EVALUATION METRICS & CRITERIA**

In terms of good corporate governance, a supplier should not be appointed where there is an existing real or perceived conflict of interest. Confirmation is required from each service provider that there are no existing or perceived conflicts of interest affecting independence.

- a) This RFP will be conducted in accordance with NECT procurement policy.
- b) Shortlisted service providers may be invited to provide a presentation to the NECT on their proposed solution, at their own cost.
- c) In accordance with the NECT procurement policy, the proposal evaluation process shall be carried out in three (3) steps, namely:
  - Step 1: Mandatory requirement
  - Step 2: Functionality evaluation
  - Step 3: BEE and Pricing
- d) Service Providers will be evaluated on functionality as spelled out in Step 2 below. The proposals that score points which exceed the minimum threshold provided on functionality will be invited to proceed to Phase 2 (submission of full and costed proposal).
- e) The evaluation criteria for the assessment of the proposals will be based on qualitative and quantitative aspects of the proposal.

## **14. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

### **14.1 STEP 1: MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS**

The failure to meet the following requirements or to provide the information requested below, may lead to an immediate disqualification.

The following documents must be attached with the submission:

- a) A valid B-BBEE Verification Certificate issued by a SANAS-accredited Verification Agency, or a valid sworn affidavit for an Exempted Micro Enterprise (EME) or Qualifying Small Enterprise (QSE), where applicable.



- b) A valid Tax Compliance Status (TCS) PIN issued by the South African Revenue Service (SARS).
- c) A completed and signed Declaration of Interest.
- d) Company registration documents issued by the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC), together with certified copies of the identity documents of all directors or members.
- e) Original or certified banking confirmation issued by the bidder's bank, or an original bank-generated account confirmation letter issued within the last three (3) months.

Only proposals that comply with all mandatory requirements will proceed to the functionality evaluation.

#### ADDITIONAL EVALUATION CONSIDERATIONS

##### Technical Compliance Checklist

| Requirement                                                 | Compliant | Notes |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------|
| Data hosted within South African borders                    |           |       |
| 99.9% availability with secondary failover datacentre       |           |       |
| Support for phased school onboarding (1,672 schools Year 1) |           |       |
| Doubling capacity in Year 2 (March 2027 - Feb 2028)         |           |       |
| 3-stage upgrade plan (March, June, October 2027)            |           |       |
| Ubuntu Latest LTS operating system                          |           |       |
| Disaster Recovery with multiple Recovery Tiers              |           |       |
| Backup with multiple Backup Tiers                           |           |       |
| Firewall rules aligned with least privilege principle       |           |       |
| VPC Flow Logs enabled                                       |           |       |
| SITA MIOS security standards adherence                      |           |       |
| Identity-Aware Proxy (IAP) for SSH access                   |           |       |



#### Environment Coverage Verification

| Environment              | VMs | vCPU | RAM (GB) | Storage (GB) | Included in Proposal |
|--------------------------|-----|------|----------|--------------|----------------------|
| Production (App Servers) | 2   | 24   | 64       | 2,000        |                      |
| Production (DB Servers)  | 2   | 24   | 64       | 2,000        |                      |
| Test (SIT)               | 1   | 8    | 16       | 1,000        |                      |
| UAT                      | 1   | 16   | 32       | 1,000        |                      |
| Data Warehouse           | 1   | 16   | 64       | 4,000        |                      |
| Sandbox                  | 1   | 16   | 32       | 1,000        |                      |
| Development              | 1   | 8    | 32       | 1,000        |                      |
| Document Repository      | 1   | 8    | 24       | 2,000        |                      |

#### SLA Compliance Verification

| Metric                    | Target                               | Bidder Commitment | Compliant |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|
| Availability (MIs)        | ≥99.9% uptime                        |                   |           |
| Auto-repair Response Time | <3 minutes from health check failure |                   |           |
| Scaling Lag               | <60 seconds under demand surge       |                   |           |
| Update Failure Rate       | <5% rollback required                |                   |           |
| Monitoring Coverage       | 100% of MIs with VM Insights         |                   |           |
| Alerting Delay            | <60 seconds post-threshold           |                   |           |

#### Deliverables Verification

| Deliverable                                                    | Included in proposal | Timeline specified | Notes |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------|
| MI Deployment Plan (architecture, zone config, load balancing) |                      |                    |       |

| Deliverable                                             | Included in proposal | Timeline specified | Notes |
|---------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------|
| Instance Templates (stateful/stateless, GPUs)           |                      |                    |       |
| Auto healing Configurations (health checks, thresholds) |                      |                    |       |
| Autoscaling Policies (configured and tested)            |                      |                    |       |
| Update Strategy (rolling/canary definitions)            |                      |                    |       |
| VM Insights Setup (metrics, alerting, dashboards)       |                      |                    |       |
| Documentation Package (runbooks, configuration guides)  |                      |                    |       |
| Training & Knowledge Transfer (sessions, user guides)   |                      |                    |       |
| Firewall Rule Documentation                             |                      |                    |       |

## 14.2 STEP 2: FUNCTIONALITY EVALUATION

Minimum required score for functionality is 75 points out of 100 points and any bidder scoring less than 75 points will not be considered for further evaluation.

(Minimum score: 75/100 to proceed)

### STEP 2: FUNCTIONALITY SCORING (SUMMARY)

| #        | Criterion                                                                                                              | Max Pts   | Score |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Relevant Cloud Migration Experience (Case studies or project references on letterhead demonstrating experience)</b> | <b>25</b> |       |
| 1.1      | GCP/Azure MIG deployment evidence                                                                                      | 10        |       |
| 1.2      | Stateful workload migration (databases)                                                                                | 8         |       |
| 1.3      | Education sector / large-scale public system experience                                                                | 7         |       |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Technical Solution Design</b>                                                                                       | <b>30</b> |       |
| 2.1      | Autohealing / VM recovery design                                                                                       | 10        |       |
| 2.2      | Multi-zone HA/DR strategy                                                                                              | 8         |       |
| 2.3      | Real-time monitoring (VM Insights) integration                                                                         | 7         |       |



| #        | Criterion                                                                    | Max Pts    | Score       |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| 2.4      | Autoscaling during peak cycles                                               | 5          |             |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Implementation Methodology</b>                                            | <b>20</b>  |             |
| 3.1      | Rolling/canary deployment approach                                           | 7          |             |
| 3.2      | Data migration strategy (offline sync, validation)                           | 7          |             |
| 3.3      | Testing protocols (failure simulation, rollback)                             | 6          |             |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Team Expertise &amp; Certifications (detailed CVs and qualifications)</b> | <b>15</b>  |             |
| 4.1      | Cloud Architect (5+ yrs, GCP/Azure certified)                                | 5          |             |
| 4.2      | DevOps Engineer (5+ yrs, IaC tools)                                          | 5          |             |
| 4.3      | DB Specialist (5+ yrs, MySQL/stateful)                                       | 5          |             |
| <b>5</b> | <b>SLA Compliance &amp; Risk Mitigation</b>                                  | <b>10</b>  |             |
| 5.1      | ≥99.9% uptime commitment                                                     | 3          |             |
| 5.2      | <3-min auto-repair response                                                  | 3          |             |
| 5.3      | Data governance/security (POPIA/GDPR)                                        | 4          |             |
|          | <b>FUNCTIONALITY TOTAL</b>                                                   | <b>100</b> | <b>/100</b> |

**RESULT:** ☐ PASS (≥75) / ☐ FAIL (<75)

Criterion 1: Relevant cloud migration experience (Max 25 Points)

| Sub-Criterion                                                | Max Points | Evidence Required                                                                             | Score         |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1.1 GCP/Azure Managed Instance Groups (MIGs) deployment      | 10         | Case studies or project references on letterhead demonstrating MIG deployment.                |               |
| 1.2 Stateful workload migration (e.g., databases)            | 8          | Evidence of migrating stateful workloads such as databases to cloud                           |               |
| 1.3 Education sector or large-scale public system experience | 7          | References from education sector or comparable large-scale public sector systems (12M+ users) |               |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                                              | <b>25</b>  |                                                                                               | <b>___/25</b> |

*Scoring Guidance:*

- **8 -10:** Multiple relevant projects with measurable outcomes, directly comparable to SA-

SAMS scale

- **6-7:** Some relevant projects but limited scale or different sector
- **1-5 :** Minimal or no directly relevant experience demonstrated

### Criterion 2: Technical Solution Design (Max 30 Points)

| Sub-Criterion                                      | Max Points | Evidence Required                                                                                             | Score        |
|----------------------------------------------------|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 2.1 Autohealing / VM recovery for SA-SAMS modules  | 10         | Detailed architecture showing self-healing mechanisms, health check design, auto-repair logic                 |              |
| 2.2 Multi-zone HA/DR strategy                      | 8          | Multi-zone redundancy design, failover architecture, RTO/RPO definitions                                      |              |
| 2.3 Real-time monitoring (VM Insights) integration | 7          | Monitoring architecture, alerting policies, dashboard design, metrics coverage                                |              |
| 2.4 Seamless scaling during peak cycles            | 5          | Autoscaling policies, capacity planning for school onboarding schedule, handling enrollment/assessment surges |              |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                                    | <b>30</b>  |                                                                                                               | <b>__/30</b> |

#### Scoring Guidance:

| Score Range    | Description                                                                     |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 80-100% of max | Comprehensive, detailed architecture with clear mapping to SA-SAMS requirements |
| 60-79% of max  | Adequate architecture with some gaps in detail or SA-SAMS-specific adaptation   |
| 40-59% of max  | Generic solution with limited customisation for SA-SAMS needs                   |
| Below 40%      | Insufficient or unclear technical proposal                                      |

### Criterion 3: Implementation Methodology (Max 20 Points)

| Sub-Criterion                          | Max Points | Evidence Required                                               | Score |
|----------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 3.1 Rolling/canary deployment approach | 7          | Deployment strategy with batch sizing, minimum healthy %, delay |       |



| Sub-Criterion                                          | Max Points | Evidence Required                                                                              | Score        |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
|                                                        |            | between batches, rollback procedures                                                           |              |
| 3.2 Data migration strategy (offline sync, validation) | 7          | Plan for migrating legacy SA-SAMS data, validation protocols, handling offline/sync challenges |              |
| 3.3 Testing protocols (failure simulation, rollback)   | 6          | Failure scenario testing plan, rollback validation, error threshold definitions                |              |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                                        | <b>20</b>  |                                                                                                | <b>__/20</b> |

#### Scoring Guidance:

| Score Range    | Description                                                                     |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 80-100% of max | Clear phased plan aligned with 6-8 week timeline and school onboarding schedule |
| 60-79% of max  | Reasonable plan but missing detail on phasing or risk mitigation                |
| 40-59% of max  | High-level plan without sufficient operational detail                           |
| Below 40%      | No clear methodology or unrealistic timelines                                   |

#### Criterion 4: Team Expertise & Certifications (Max 15 Points):

| Sub-Criterion                                                 | Max Points | Evidence Required                                                                    | Score        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 4.1 Cloud Architect (5+ years, GCP/Azure certified)           | 5          | CV + certification copies demonstrating 5+ years cloud architecture experience       |              |
| 4.2 DevOps Engineer (5+ years, infrastructure-as-code tools)  | 5          | CV + certification copies demonstrating 5+ years DevOps/IaC experience               |              |
| 4.3 Database Specialist (5+ years, MySQL, stateful workloads) | 5          | CV + certification copies demonstrating 5+ years MySQL/database migration experience |              |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                                               | <b>15</b>  |                                                                                      | <b>__/15</b> |



#### Scoring Guidance:

| Score | Description                                                                              |
|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5     | 5+ years experience with relevant certifications and directly comparable project history |
| 3-4   | 5+ years experience but certifications pending or limited comparable project history     |
| 1-2   | Less than 5 years experience or no relevant certifications                               |
| 0     | Role not filled or no evidence provided                                                  |

#### Criterion 5: SLA Compliance & Risk Mitigation (Max 10 Points)

| Sub-Criterion                                        | Max Points | Evidence Required                                                                               | Score         |
|------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| 5.1 Commitment to ≥99.9% uptime                      | 3          | Written SLA commitment with penalties/remedies for breach                                       |               |
| 5.2 Auto-repair response time <3 minutes             | 3          | Technical evidence of auto-repair capability within 3 minutes of health check failure (         |               |
| 5.3 Data governance/security (GDPR/POPIA compliance) | 4          | Data residency within SA borders, POPIA compliance plan, security controls, SITA MIOS adherence |               |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                                      | <b>10</b>  |                                                                                                 | <b>___/10</b> |

#### Scoring Guidance:

| Score      | Description                                                                       |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Full marks | Clear, measurable commitment with evidence of capability and compliance framework |
| 50-75%     | Commitment stated but limited evidence or vague on enforcement mechanisms         |
| Below 50%  | No clear SLA commitments or non-compliant with data residency requirements        |

#### FUNCTIONALITY SCORE SUMMARY

| Criterion                              | Max Points | Score Awarded | % |
|----------------------------------------|------------|---------------|---|
| 1. Relevant Cloud Migration Experience | 25         |               |   |
| 2. Technical Solution Design           | 30         |               |   |



| Criterion                           | Max Points | Score Awarded  | % |
|-------------------------------------|------------|----------------|---|
| 3. Implementation Methodology       | 20         |                |   |
| 4. Team Expertise & Certifications  | 15         |                |   |
| 5. SLA Compliance & Risk Mitigation | 10         |                |   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                        | <b>100</b> | <b>___/100</b> |   |

**RESULT:** ☐ PASS ( $\geq 75$  points — proceed to Step 3) / ☐ FAIL ( $< 75$  points — not considered further)

### 14.3 STAGE 3 – PRICE AND PREFERENCE POINTS EVALUATION

#### 14.3.1 PREFERENCE POINTS CLAIM FORM IN TERMS OF THE PREFERENTIAL PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS 2022 (SBD 6.1)

This preference form must form part of all tenders invited. It contains general information and serves as a claim form for preference points for specific goals.

**NB: BEFORE COMPLETING THIS FORM, TENDERERS MUST STUDY THE GENERAL CONDITIONS, DEFINITIONS AND DIRECTIVES APPLICABLE IN RESPECT OF THE TENDER AND PREFERENTIAL PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, 2022**

#### 1. GENERAL CONDITIONS

1.1 The following preference point systems are applicable to invitations to tender:

- the 80/20 system for requirements with a Rand value of up to R50 000 000 (all applicable taxes included); and
- the 90/10 system for requirements with a Rand value above R50 000 000 (all applicable taxes included).

1.2 **To be completed by the organ of state**

- a) The applicable preference point system for this tender is the 80/20 preference point system.
- b) The 80/20 preference point system will be applicable in this tender. The lowest/ highest acceptable tender will be used to determine the accurate system once tenders are received.

1.3 Points for this tender (even in the case of a tender for income-generating contracts) shall be awarded for:

- (a) Price; and
- (b) Specific Goals.

1.4 **To be completed by the organ of state:**

The maximum points for this tender are allocated as follows:

|                                                  | POINTS     |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------|
| PRICE                                            |            |
| SPECIFIC GOALS                                   |            |
| <b>Total points for Price and SPECIFIC GOALS</b> | <b>100</b> |

1.5 Failure on the part of a tenderer to submit proof or documentation required in terms of this tender to claim points for specific goals with the tender, will be interpreted to mean that preference points for specific goals are not claimed.

1.6 The organ of state reserves the right to require of a tenderer, either before a tender is adjudicated or at any time subsequently, to substantiate any claim in regard to preferences, in any manner required by the organ of state.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

- (a) **“tender”** means a written offer in the form determined by an organ of state in response to an invitation to provide goods or services through price quotations, competitive tendering process or any other method envisaged in legislation;
- (b) **“price”** means an amount of money tendered for goods or services, and includes all applicable taxes less all unconditional discounts;
- (c) **“rand value”** means the total estimated value of a contract in Rand, calculated at the time of bid invitation, and includes all applicable taxes;
- (d) **“tender for income-generating contracts”** means a written offer in the form determined by



NATIONAL  
EDUCATION  
COLLABORATION  
TRUST

90/10

$$Ps = 80 \left( 1 + \frac{Pt - P_{max}}{P_{max}} \right) \quad \text{or} \quad Ps = 90 \left( 1 + \frac{Pt - P_{max}}{P_{max}} \right)$$

Where

- Ps = Points scored for price of tender under consideration
- Pt = Price of tender under consideration
- Pmax = Price of highest acceptable tender

### 3.3. POINTS AWARDED FOR SPECIFIC GOALS

3.3.1 In terms of Regulation 4(2); 5(2); 6(2) and 7(2) of the Preferential Procurement Regulations, preference points must be awarded for specific goals stated in the tender. For the purposes of this tender the tenderer will be allocated points based on the goals stated in table 1 below as may be supported by proof/ documentation stated in the conditions of this tender:

3.3.2 In cases where organs of state intend to use Regulation 3(2) of the Regulations, which states that, if it is unclear whether the 80/20 or 90/10 preference point system applies, an organ of state must, in the tender documents, stipulate in the case of—

- (a) an invitation for tender for income-generating contracts, that either the 80/20 or 90/10 preference point system will apply and that the highest acceptable tender will be used to determine the applicable preference point system; or
- (b) any other invitation for tender, that either the 80/20 or 90/10 preference point system will apply and that the lowest acceptable tender will be used to determine the applicable preference point system, then the organ of state must indicate the points allocated for specific goals for both the 90/10 and 80/20 preference point system.

**Table 1: Specific goals for the tender and points claimed are indicated per the table below.**

***(Note to organs of state: Where either the 90/10 or 80/20 preference point system is applicable,***



*corresponding points must also be indicated as such.*

**Note to tenderers: The tenderer must indicate how they claim points for each preference point system.)**

| The specific goals allocated points in terms of this tender (for South African Citizens only) | Number of points allocated (80/20 system) | Number of points claimed (80/20 system)<br>(To be completed by the tenderer) |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Black Africans Ownership                                                                      | 10                                        |                                                                              |
| Women Ownership                                                                               | 5                                         |                                                                              |
| Youth Ownership                                                                               | 3                                         |                                                                              |
| People with Disabilities Ownership                                                            | 2                                         |                                                                              |

#### DECLARATION WITH REGARD TO COMPANY/FIRM

3.4. Name of company/firm.....

3.5. Company registration number: .....

3.6. TYPE OF COMPANY/ FIRM

- ☐ Partnership/Joint Venture / Consortium
- ☐ One-person business/sole propriety
- ☐ Close corporation
- ☐ Public Company
- ☐ Personal Liability Company
- ☐ (Pty) Limited
- ☐ Non-Profit Company
- ☐ State Owned Company

[TICK APPLICABLE BOX]

3.7. I, the undersigned, who is duly authorised to do so on behalf of the company/firm, certify that the points claimed, based on the specific goals as advised in the tender, qualifies the company/ firm for the preference(s) shown and I acknowledge that:

- i) The information furnished is true and correct;



- ii) The preference points claimed are in accordance with the General Conditions as indicated in paragraph 1 of this form;
- iii) In the event of a contract being awarded as a result of points claimed as shown in paragraphs 1.4 and 4.2, the contractor may be required to furnish documentary proof to the satisfaction of the organ of state that the claims are correct;
- iv) If the specific goals have been claimed or obtained on a fraudulent basis or any of the conditions of contract have not been fulfilled, the organ of state may, in addition to any other remedy it may have –
  - (a) disqualify the person from the tendering process;
  - (b) recover costs, losses or damages it has incurred or suffered as a result of that person's conduct;
  - (c) cancel the contract and claim any damages which it has suffered as a result of having to make less favourable arrangements due to such cancellation;
  - (d) recommend that the tenderer or contractor, its shareholders and directors, or only the shareholders and directors who acted on a fraudulent basis, be restricted from obtaining business from any organ of state for a period not exceeding 10 years, after the *audi alteram partem* (hear the other side) rule has been applied; and
  - (e) forward the matter for criminal prosecution, if deemed necessary.

.....

**SIGNATURE(S) OF TENDERER(S)**

**SURNAME AND NAME:** .....

**DATE:** .....

**ADDRESS:** .....

#### 14.3.2.1 Once-off Implementation Costs (Itemise all non-recurring expenses)

| Cost Component                 | Deliverable/Description                                     | Amount (ZAR) | Included? (✓/X) |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Solution Design & Architecture | MI group design, workload mapping, zone configuration       |              |                 |
| Environment Setup              | PROD/UAT/DEV/SIT/Sandbox/Data Warehouse/Doc Repo deployment |              |                 |
| Autohealing Configuration      | Health checks, thresholds, recovery validation              |              |                 |
| Autoscaling Implementation     | Policy configuration (CPU/RPS/custom metrics)               |              |                 |
| VM Insights Deployment         | Monitoring setup, alert policies, dashboard creation        |              |                 |
| Data Migration                 | Legacy SA-SAMS data transfer and validation                 |              |                 |
| Knowledge Transfer & Training  | Workshops, operational runbooks, handover                   |              |                 |
| Project Management             | Implementation oversight (6-8 weeks)                        |              |                 |
| Other (Specify):               |                                                             |              |                 |
| <b>Total Once-off Costs:</b>   |                                                             |              |                 |

#### 14.3.2.2 Recurring Infrastructure & Support Costs (Per environment breakdown required)

| Environment    | Service Tier                | Monthly Cost | Annual Cost | Inclusions                                                           |
|----------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PROD           | Compute (96 vCPU/384GB RAM) |              |             | 24/7 monitoring, auto-scaling, security patching, ≤3-min auto-repair |
|                | Storage (16TB)              |              |             |                                                                      |
| UAT            | Compute (24 vCPU/96GB RAM)  |              |             |                                                                      |
|                | Storage (4TB)               |              |             |                                                                      |
| SANDBOX        | Compute (24 vCPU/96GB RAM)  |              |             |                                                                      |
|                | Storage (3TB)               |              |             |                                                                      |
| DEV/SIT        | Compute (32 vCPU/112GB RAM) |              |             |                                                                      |
|                | Storage (4TB)               |              |             |                                                                      |
| Data Warehouse | Compute (16 vCPU/64GB RAM)  |              |             |                                                                      |
|                | Storage (4TB)               |              |             |                                                                      |
| Document Repo  | Compute (8 vCPU/32GB RAM)   |              |             |                                                                      |

| Environment      | Service Tier    | Monthly Cost | Annual Cost | Inclusions                                                  |
|------------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
|                  | Storage (5TB)   |              |             |                                                             |
| Managed Services | Premium Support |              |             | SLA management, incident response, performance optimization |
| <b>Total</b>     |                 |              |             |                                                             |

#### 14.3.2.3 Backup & Disaster Recovery Costs

| Service                       | Frequency/Retention      | Monthly Cost | Annual Cost | DR Tier             |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------------|
| Daily Backups                 | 14-day retention         |              |             | Tier 2 (RTO <4 hrs) |
| Weekly Snapshots              | 4-week retention         |              |             |                     |
| Monthly Archives              | 12-month retention       |              |             |                     |
| Disaster Recovery             | Multi-zone replication   |              |             | Tier 1 (RTO <1 hr)  |
| DR Testing                    | Bi-annual test execution |              |             |                     |
| Total Backup/DR Monthly       |                          |              |             |                     |
| <b>Total Backup/DR Annual</b> |                          |              |             |                     |

#### 14.3.2.4 Summary of Costs (Vendor to complete)

| Cost Category                      | Year 1 Total (ZAR) | Annual Recurring (Years 2-5) |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Once-off Implementation            |                    | N/A                          |
| Annual Infrastructure & Support    |                    |                              |
| Annual Backup & DR                 |                    |                              |
| <b>Total Contract Value (5-yr)</b> |                    |                              |

## **15. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE BIDDERS**

- 16.1 The NECT reserves the right not to award the bid/project/contract.
- 16.2 The NECT reserves the right to call for interviews with short-listed bidders before final selection.
- 16.3 Successful Bidder/s may be invited for presentation when deemed necessary.
- 16.4 The NECT reserves the right to negotiate price with the preferred bidder.
- 16.5 The NECT reserves the right to appoint more than one (1) service provider.
- 16.6 The NECT is entitled to amend any bid condition, bid validity period, RFQ specification, or extend the bid closing date, all before the bid closing date. All bidders, to whom the RFQ documents have been issued and where the NECT have record of such bidders, may be advised in writing of such amendments in good time and any such changes will also be posted on the NECT website under the relevant tender information. All prospective bidders should therefore ensure that they visit the website regularly and before they submit their bid response to ensure that they are kept updated on any amendments in this regard.
- 16.7 The NECT reserves the right not to accept the lowest priced bid or any bid in part or in whole. It normally awards the contract to the bidder who proves to be fully capable of handling the contract and whose bid is functionally acceptable and/or financially advantageous to the NECT.
- 16.8 The NECT reserves the right to award this bid as a whole or in part.
- 16.9 The NECT reserves the right to conduct site visits at bidder's corporate offices and / or at client sites if so required.
- 16.10 The NECT reserves the right to consider the guidelines and prescribed hourly remuneration rates for consultants as provided in the National Treasury Instruction 02 of 2016/2017: Cost Containment Measures, where relevant.
- 16.11 The NECT reserves the right to request all relevant information, agreements, and other documents to verify information supplied in the bid response. The bidder hereby gives consent to the NECT to conduct background checks, including FICA verification, on the bidding entity and any of its directors / trustees / shareholders / members.
- 16.12 The NECT reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to appoint any number of vendors to be part of this panel of service providers, if applicable (i.e., where a panel is considered).
- 16.13 The NECT reserves the right of final decision on the interpretation of its tender requirements and responses thereto.



16.14 The NECT reserves the right to consider professional conduct and experience it had with any bidder which rendered similar services to the NECT in the past 5 years over and above the references put forward by the bidder in its response.