



AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

TERMS OF REFERENCE:

THE APPOINTMENT OF A SUITABLY QUALIFIED AND EXPERIENCED SERVICE PROVIDER TO COMPILE THE ANNUAL REPORT FOR THREE FINANCIAL YEARS.

1. BACKGROUND

The ARC seeks to appoint a suitably qualified and experienced service provider to compile the Annual Report for three financial years (2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29). The appointed service provider will be responsible for the professional development, production and delivery of the organisation's Annual Report for each applicable financial year during the contract period.

The service provider will work closely with the organisation's designated project team to transform approved content and information into a high-quality, accurate, accessible and professionally designed Annual Report that complies with applicable legislative, regulatory, governance and reporting requirements.

2. PURPOSE OF THE BID

The Agricultural Research Council (ARC) invites suitably qualified and experienced service providers to submit quotations to compile the Annual Report for three financial years (2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29).

3. SCOPE OF WORK

3.1 Project Planning and Coordination

- Develop an annual production schedule and detailed project plan in consultation with the organisation.
- Establish key milestones, deadlines, review stages and approval points.
- Coordinate the various stages of the Annual Report production process.
- Participate in project meetings and progress meetings as required.
- Provide regular progress updates to the designated project team.
- Identify and communicate potential delays, risks or dependencies that may affect delivery.

3.2 Content Development and Editorial Services

- Develop an annual production schedule and detailed project plan in consultation with the organisation.



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- Review and edit supplied content for clarity, consistency, grammar, language and readability.
- Ensure consistency in terminology, style, tone and formatting throughout the report.
- Identify gaps, inconsistencies, duplication or apparent factual discrepancies in supplied content and refer these to the organisation for verification.
- Assist with the structuring and sequencing of content to ensure a logical and coherent report.
- Develop or refine headlines, sub-headings, captions, pull-outs and other editorial elements where required.
- Ensure that editorial changes do not alter the substantive meaning of approved organisational information.
- Incorporate amendments and feedback from the organisation through the review and approval process.

Note: The organisation will remain responsible for the accuracy and final approval of factual, financial and governance information contained in the Annual Report.

3.3 Design and Layout

- Develop an appropriate visual concept and design direction aligned with the organisation's corporate identity and communication objectives.
- Design three design concepts per financial year.
- Apply consistent typography, colour, imagery, infographics, tables, charts and other visual elements.
- Ensure that complex information is presented in a clear and accessible manner.
- Design appropriate data visualisations and infographics where required.
- Ensure consistency with the organisation's corporate identity and brand guidelines.
- Provide design concepts for approval before full production.
- Apply amendments arising from the review and approval process.

3.4 Data Visualisation and Infographics

- Convert approved data into appropriate charts, graphs, diagrams, timelines, infographics and other visual representations.
- Ensure that visual representations accurately reflect the underlying approved data.
- Ensure that all charts and graphics are clear, legible and suitable for both digital and print publication.
- Incorporate relevant photography, icons, illustrations or other visual assets supplied or approved by the organisation.

3.5 Photography and Visual Assets

- Source, curate, edit and prepare photographic and other visual material for inclusion in the Annual Report.
- Provide professional photography where specifically required and agreed.



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- Ensure that appropriate permissions, licences and usage rights are obtained for third-party visual material.
- Optimise images for both print and digital publication.

Note: Any additional photography or externally sourced visual assets must be approved by the organisation.

3.6 Corporate Identity and Brand Compliance

- Comply with the organisation's approved corporate identity and brand guidelines.
- Use approved logos, colours, fonts and other brand elements.
- Maintain consistency with the organisation's broader corporate communication materials.
- Present the organisation in a professional, credible and contemporary manner.

3.7 Proofreading and Quality Assurance

- Proofread the complete document.
- Check spelling, grammar, punctuation and formatting.
- Check consistency of headings, numbering, tables, captions, references and terminology.
- Check page numbering and cross-references.
- Check the contents page against the final document.
- Check charts, graphs, tables and infographics against approved information.
- Identify formatting or production errors.
- Conduct a final pre-publication quality check.

The final printer's proof must be submitted to the organisation for approval before publication.

3.8 Review and Approval Process

- Submit draft versions according to agreed milestones.
- Incorporate consolidated comments from the organisation.
- Participate in review meetings where required.
- Produce revised versions following each review cycle.
- Maintain version control throughout the project.
- Clearly identify outstanding issues requiring organisational input or approval.

3.9 Digital Annual Report



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- Produce a final digital version of the Annual Report suitable for publication on the organisation's website and other approved digital platforms.
- Provide a high-resolution digital master.
- Provide a web-optimised PDF.
- Provide a print-ready PDF where applicable.
- Include hyperlinks and interactive elements where appropriate.
- Optimise file size without materially compromising quality.
- Provide final source files and associated digital assets to the organisation.

4. THREE-YEAR CONTRACT REQUIREMENT

The appointed service provider will be required to provide Annual Report production services for a period of three years, covering three annual reporting cycles, subject to the applicable procurement, budgetary and contractual requirements of the organisation. Each annual reporting cycle will be initiated in accordance with an agreed annual production schedule and will be subject to the organisation's approval processes.

Each year's Annual Report will constitute a separate annual deliverable, notwithstanding the three-year contract period.

5. KEY DELIVERABLES

Deliverable	Requirement
Project plan	Annual production plan, milestones and timelines
Editorially refined content	Edited and proofread Annual Report content
Design concept	Proposed visual direction for approval
Draft Annual Report	Fully designed report for review
Revised drafts	Incorporation of consolidated organisational comments
Infographics/data visualisations	Where required
Final digital report	Approved web-ready PDF
Accessible digital report	Where required
Print-ready artwork	High-resolution production files
Sources files	Editable final artwork and relevant assets
Final quality assurance	Proofreading and pre-publications

6. PRICING SCHEDULE



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Quotations must be submitted on the official company letterhead as per the template below.

Item no.	Description	No of Resource	Quantity/ Hours	Unit Cost	Amount
1	Production – Concept & Development				
2.	Layout and Design of ±300 pages				
3.	Editing				
4.	Illustrative elements such as stock pictures				
	Sub-total for Year 1				
	Sub-total for Year 2				
	Sub-total for Year 3				
	VAT@15%				
	Grand-total				

NB: All prices must be quoted in South African Rand (ZAR). The rates quoted should be firm for the full period of the three-year contract.

7. BID EVALUATION CRITERIA

This bid will be evaluated in four phases.

The bid evaluation process will be conducted, and the bidder must qualify at each stage to be eligible to proceed to the next stage of the evaluation as follows:

- Phase 1: Compliance with the administrative bid requirements.
- Phase 2: Mandatory requirements.
- Phase 3: Technical/Functionality
- Phase 4: Price and BBBEE.

7.1. Phase 1: Administrative Requirements

The following shall be submitted with the bid proposal or adhered to throughout the RFQ:

- Valid Tax PIN number from SARS.
- Valid B-BBEE certificate or affidavit.
- Latest CSD report (full report).



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- Submit Standard bidding documents (SBD) completed in full and signed off by a duly authorised person.

7.2. Phase 2: Mandatory Requirements

Bidders will be evaluated against the mandatory requirements listed below; failure to meet these requirements will result in **disqualification**, and bidders will not proceed to the functionality evaluation.

- Submit the CVs and portfolios of the proposed project team that will be allocated to this project, with experience relevant to the scope of services (layout, design and editing services).
- Minimum five years' experience in compiling, layout, design and editing services.
- The bidder must provide three (3) samples of similar completed work for public or private companies. The samples can be provided as attachments to a PDF document.

7.3. Phase 3: Functional /Technical Evaluation

The bidder must meet the following functional/technical criteria. Bidders who do not meet all the functional/technical criteria will be disqualified from further evaluation:

Bidders who do not obtain a minimum score of **70%** or more out of 100 on the functionality threshold will be disqualified and will not be evaluated for price and B-BBEE.

The functionality of the proposals will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria below:

FUNCTIONALITY EVALUATION CRITERIA The rating will be as follows: Non-submission-1=poor; 2=Average;3=Good;4= Very Good and 5= Excellent	WEIGHT
1. Provide CVs and portfolios of the proposed project team that will be allocated to this project to enable evaluation of their experience relevant to the scope of services. (layout, design and editing services). • CVs submitted with portfolios and 1 year up to 3 years = 1 point • CVs submitted with portfolios and 3 years up to 5 years = 2 points	35



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- CVs submitted with portfolios and 5 years up to 6 years experience = 3 points - CVs submitted with portfolios and 6 to 8 years' experience = 4 points - CVs submitted with portfolios and more than 8 years' experience = 5 points	
2. The bidder must demonstrate that they can render the required service. Proof of experience in similar projects. Must provide three (3) signed reference letters for similar work done that should contain the following: - The name of the client. - On their Company letterhead. - Contact Person, e-mail/telephone. - Description of the service provided. - Duration of the contract (start-end date) and value of the contract N.B. Reference letters that do not contain all the above requirements <i>will not be considered</i>. - One reference letter =1 point - Two reference letters for projects = 2 points - Three reference letters for projects = 3 points - Four reference letters for projects =4 points - Five and more reference letters =5 points	35
3. Detailed project (The project plan should include a detailed plan of how the service provider will conduct the task, including time frame per phase and a clear outline). - No plan provided = 1 point - Plan provided with limited information = 2 points - Plan provided with details as required - 3 points - Plan provided with substantially more than required - 4 points - Plan provided with value-added services - 5 points	30
Functional Total	100
Threshold	70%



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7.4. Phase 4: Price and B-BBEE

Bidders that do not meet the minimum threshold as indicated above will not be evaluated for pricing and B-BBEE.

Technical Functional Criteria	Weightings
Total technical/functional	100
Minimum threshold	70
Points allocated for price	80
Points allocated for specific goals	20
Total points for price and specific goals	100

The 80/20 principle will apply under the Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act.

Specific Goals

Specific Goals	Percentage Ownership (1%)	Points (20)	Points (10)
Ownership by HDIs	51%+	6	3
Ownership by Women	51%+	4	2
Ownership by Youth	51%+	4	2
Ownership by PwD	51%+	2	1
BEE Status	Level 1 – 4	2	1
RDP Goals	Points will be allocated to enterprises located in rural areas.	2	1
TOTAL POINTS		20	10