REQUEST FOR QUOTATION

Financial Intelligence Centre

You are invited to submit a quotation in response to the requirements specified by the Financial Intelligence Centre.

RFQ number	FIC/RFQ/DATA SCIENTIST/35/26-27
Issue date	3 July 2026
Closing date	17 July 2026
Closing time	11:00
Description	Provision of a Data scientist resource to the Financial Intelligence Centre for a period of twelve (12) months.
Direct quotations and enquiries to	
Contact person	Pelisa Landule
Contact number	012 641 6000
E-mail address	Pelisa.Landule@fic.gov.za

NOTE:

- Late or incomplete submissions will be disqualified.
- Failure to comply with the stated requirements may result in the bid being deemed invalid.

1. QUOTATION REQUIREMENTS

Bidders are required to submit written quotations that include the following information:

- Quotation validity period
- Company name
- Central Supplier Database MAAA number
- Company registration number
- Physical address
- Contact person
- Telephone number
- E-mail address

2. BACKGROUND TO THE FIC

2.1 The Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC) was established in 2003, through the promulgation of the Financial Intelligence Centre Act, No. 38 of 2001 (FIC Act) as amended, with the purpose of inter alia identifying the proceeds of unlawful activities and combating money laundering and financing of terrorism.

2.2 The FIC is South Africa's national financial intelligence unit tasked to provide financial intelligence to relevant stakeholders including law enforcement agencies, intelligence agencies and the South African Revenue Service. Furthermore, the FIC Act introduces a regulatory framework which requires certain categories of business to register with the FIC, take steps regarding client identification, keep records, appoint a compliance officer, provide relevant training, have internal rules and submit various types of intelligence reports to the FIC.

2.3 The FIC is a member of the international AML/CFT (Anti Money Laundering and Counter Financing of Terrorism) standard-setting body, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). At regional level, the FIC is a member of the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG). The FIC is also South Africa's representative on the Egmont Group - an organisation of more than 150 Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) which provides a platform for the secure exchange of expertise and financial intelligence to combat money laundering and terrorist financing.

3. BACKGROUND TO THE REQUIREMENT

3.1 This document constitutes the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the engagement of a Data Science specialist to:

a. Lead the establishment and operation of the AI Centre of Excellence (AI CoE). The AI CoE is responsible for driving artificial intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) adoption, governance, capability uplift across the organisation and the execution of the MLOPs Life Cycle.
b. Lead research projects with engagement with internal and external stakeholders
c. Support the service provider for the delivery of the big data analytics (BDA) solution
d. Provide on-the-job and structure training within these role's speciality for the FIC team

3.2 This ToR defines the scope of work, deliverables, required qualifications, and contractual expectations for the specialist role. All engagements are subject to

applicable procurement policy, security clearance requirements, and probity obligations.

3.3 Key Performance Activities

The Data Scientist is expected to perform the following:

3.3.1 Lead the establishment and operation of the AI Centre of Excellence (AI CoE).

i. Collaborate with executives to develop strategies that align with organisational imperatives.

ii. Partner with AI Champions, ICT and Data Engineers to integrate AI into operational workflows smoothly.

3.3.2 Research Project Lead and BDA Solution Support Activities

For this scope item, the following activities will be required:

a. Problem Framing & Impact

i. Work with business to analyse user requirements and ensure the technical solution aligns with business needs.
ii. Lead the implementation of AI Capabilities within the FIC
iii. Engage with external entities like the universities on innovation work
iv. Provide support to external partners on the implementation of AI
v. Collaborate with the PMO and technical teams to alignment with the Big Data Analytics core project.
vi. Engage stakeholders to translate business objectives into analytical problems.
vii. Define hypotheses, success metrics (KPIs), and guardrails aligned to strategy.
viii. Prioritize opportunities based on feasibility, impact, and data readiness.

b. Data Exploration & Feature Engineering

i. Explore, clean, and analyse data to discover drivers, patterns, and anomalies.
ii. Engineer robust features from structured and unstructured sources (text, logs, images, events).
iii. Partner with Data Engineering to address quality, lineage, and gaps.

c. Modelling & Experimentation

i. Build and evaluate models (supervised/unsupervised, time series, NLP/LLMs, recommendation).
ii. Apply sound validation (CV, leakage prevention, proper splits) and error analysis.

iii. Design and run experiments (A/B, multi-armed bandits) and causal inference where appropriate.

d. MLOps Collaboration for Production

i. Package models for deployment with ML engineers (APIs, batch/stream scoring).
ii. Contribute to model monitoring plans: drift, performance, bias, stability, and retraining cadence.
iii. Document assumptions, limitations, and data dependencies.

e. Communication & Decision Enablement

i. Present insights, experiment results, and trade-offs to technical and non-technical audiences.
ii. Create clear narratives, visualizations, and actionable recommendations.
iii. Influence product and process changes using evidence from analyses and experiments.

f. Governance, Ethics & Risk

i. Ensure privacy-by-design, fairness testing, and regulatory alignment (e.g., POPIA).
ii. Maintain reproducibility, reviewable code, and auditable analysis artifacts.

3.3.3 Provide on-the-job and structure training

i. Provide mentorship and guidance in best practice and project direction.
ii. Foster professional development and growth of team members by providing guidance on technical matters and business acumen.

4. Mandatory Requirements/ Submissions

4.1 Bidders are required to submit complete curricula vitaes (CVs) for a maximum of three (3) proposed candidates, together with all relevant supporting documentation.

4.2 Only candidates who meet the mandatory requirements outlined below will be shortlisted and invited to participate further in functionality that includes oral interviews, which will be conducted in accordance with the evaluation criteria.

4.3 The FIC reserves the right to verify information submitted.

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS	**INDICATE COMPLIANT OR NOT COMPLIANT**
EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS	

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS	INDICATE COMPLIANT OR NOT COMPLIANT
6+ Develop models to generate insights and support business decisions	
6+ years applying statistical methods, machine learning, and domain knowledge to solve complex business problems	
Minimum 1 year's knowledge of foundational Large Language Models and agentic AI	
6+ years Python/R, SQL, notebooks, visualization tools (Power BI), experimentation frameworks	
QUALIFICATION	
Postgraduate qualification in a quantitative field (Statistics, Computer Science, Mathematics, Engineering) or similar qualification.	
Relevant cloud certification in Data Science or Machine Learning or Artificial Intelligence - mandatory	

5. LOGISTICS AND SCHEDULE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

5.1 Location where the Service are required will be at the FIC's Centurion Head Office.

6. DURATION OF THE CONTRACT

6.1 The professional services are required for a total of 1920 hours over a period of twelve (12) months.

7. EVALUATION CRITERIA

7.1 Bidders are required to familiarise themselves with the process described herein, as it will govern how their submissions and nominated candidates are assessed.

7.2 Overall Evaluation Process

The evaluation will be conducted in the following stages:

- **Stage 1:** Functionality/ Technical Evaluation (including candidate interviews)
- **Stage 2:** Price and Specific Goals (B-BBEE Status Level of Contribution) Evaluation

7.2.1 **Stage 1**: evaluates the technical suitability and competency of the nominated candidates including: technical knowledge, experience, communication skills, professionalism, and responsiveness during the interview.

a. Each candidate will be evaluated and must achieve a minimum interview score of 14 out of 20 points (70%). Candidates who fail to meet the minimum threshold will not be considered for further evaluation.

b. <u>After applying the minimum threshold</u>:

- Candidates who meet the minimum threshold and rank within the top three highest scores will proceed to Stage 2 of the evaluation. Where scores are tied within the top three, all such candidates will be included.
- If fewer than three (3) candidates meet the minimum threshold, all qualifying candidates will proceed to Stage 2 of the evaluation.
- If no candidate meets the minimum threshold, the bid may be declared non-responsive and may be re-invited.

c. <u>The interview will focus on the following areas but not limiting:</u>

- Business Problem Framing & Understanding
- Statistics & Experimental Design
- Data Preparation & Preprocessing
- Machine Learning Modelling
- Communication & Storytelling

d. <u>Rating Scale</u>

1.	Poor – no evidence of competence
2.	Areas of concern – little evidence of competence
3.	Satisfactory – reasonable evidence of competence
4.	Excellent – strong evidence of competence

7.2.2 **Stage 2:** Price **and Specific Goals (B-BBEE Status Level of Contribution)**

- Only candidates who qualified in Stage 1 will proceed to Stage 2 of the evaluation. This stage will be conducted in accordance with the 80/20 Preference Points System.
- Bidders must submit a valid B-BBEE certificate or sworn affidavit, as well as a duly completed and signed SBD 6.1 form.
- Points for price (maximum of 80 points) will be allocated based on the estimated total cost for the qualifying candidate(s). Points for B-BBEE status level of contribution (maximum of 20 points) will be awarded in accordance with the criteria outlined in the SBD 6.1 form.
- The final score will be calculated by combining the price points and the specific goals (B-BBEE) points. The contract will be awarded to the service provider that achieves the highest combined total score for the specific candidate.
- Interviews may be conducted virtually or in person.
- Should the nominated candidate withdraw after award, the FIC may request a replacement or cancel the award.

ANNEXURE A

1. FINANCIAL PROPOSAL/PRICING SCHEDULE

The proposal prices **MUST** be provided in the format as per the table below:

Description	Estimated Quantities (Hours)	Rate Per Hour (Incl .VAT)	Estimated Total cost (Incl .VAT)
Data Scientist:			
Name and Surname			
1.	1920hrs	**R**	**R**
2.	1920hrs	**R**	**R**
3.	1920hrs	**R**	**R**
Estimated Total Cost for twelve (12) months Inc. VAT	**R**		

Please Note:

1. The FIC requires the services of one (1) data scientist for a period of twelve (12) months, with an estimated total of 1920 hours.
2. Provision has been made on the Pricing Schedule for up to three (3) candidates to allow bidders to propose a maximum of three candidates for consideration. The hourly rates may differ per candidate.
3. While the actual number of hours utilised over the contract period may vary, the hourly rate quoted for each candidate must remain fixed for the duration of the contract.
4. The pricing schedule annexure to be submitted separately from other bid documents, as only pricing submitted by qualifying bidders will be evaluated.