

**Replies to written queries and queries raised in the Pre-bid Conference**

Sl. No.	RFP Reference	RFP Statement	Clarification Required	Comments of Mission
1.	CHAPTER I: Request for Proposal (RFP) Point 1, Page 3	The award of the Contract will be, as per provisions indicated in the succeeding paragraphs, on the L1 basis of Financial Bids in the two-tier tender process consisting of Technical Bids and Financial Bids.	Please advise how will the Authority ensure that the price quoted by any bidder is viable?	<b>The only criteria for selection of SP are minimum technical qualification as per provisions of RFP and L1 criteria.</b>
2.	Chapter – I Request for Proposal (RFP) Point 3, Page 3	The proposal of the bidding company will constitute an offer to enter into a contract with the Mission, based on the terms and conditions stated in this RFP. The proposal may form part of the final contractual documentation if the bidding company is invited by the Mission to enter into an Agreement. The Agreement inter alia will include provisions for the SP to adhere to all local laws applicable to the operation of the ICAC, including on employment of staff and their remuneration, banking operations, environment, safety, insurance, privacy, payment of local taxes, etc.	Does this clause indicate that the SP should ensure that for staff employment and remuneration, banking operations, environment, safety, insurance, privacy, and local tax payments strict adherence to all local laws and requirements be a mandatory condition when quoting the Single Service Fee?	<b>Yes. SP is required to adhere to all local laws applicable to the operations of ICAC</b>
3.	Chapter V, clause 1 (x):” Page 17	“The Bidding Company must provide certification that its operations are compliant with local labour laws and the relevant tax regime and shall continue to be compliant with such regime.”	As the operations of the bidding company would only stand initiated post the award of the tender, would a bidder whose bid is unable meet viability standards based on local labour laws read with labour requirements as stipulated in the	<b>The SP will have to submit self certification in this regard.</b>

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			present RFP, stand to be declared as non-responsive. Further, what would be the procedure for such determination?	
4.	Chapter VII, Clause 1 (A) (xi) (a): Page 21	“The SP is required to set up a new Indian Consular Application Center (ICAC) in prominent locations as specified in the following table under the jurisdiction of Mission/Post, in well-connected commercial complexes with ample parking facilities for applicants. The proposed locations for the ICACs should have an area of minimum office space as specified in the table below sufficient for Reception desk/ counters/ workstation/walk-in applicants, seating of waiting people, space for smooth movement of incoming and outgoing visitors, separate exit/entry to ensure smooth flow of people, etc.”	Are the bidders required to advance documents/calculations supporting the financial viability of any ‘service fee’ so submitted by the bidder, to show that the same is sufficient to finance not only the market rental values for the requisite ICACs and meet the specified requirements? If there are no such documents to be provided by the prospective bidders, how will the tendering authority determine this aspect?	<b>The bidder is required to submit its financial bid, strictly as per the Annexure-K of the RFP.</b>
5.	Indian Consular Application Centre (ICAC): Point a. Page 21	The SP is required to set up a new Indian Consular Application Center (ICAC) in prominent locations as specified in the following table under the jurisdiction of Mission/Post, in well-connected commercial complexes with ample parking facilities for applicants.	Please advise what constitutes a new ICAC in terms of the RFP? Does it mean creating a new VAC from a bare-shell situation, irrespective of location	<b>SP is required to set up an entirely new ICAC having new civil infrastructure (including Chairs, tables and furnishings) and IT infrastructure (including desktops, workstations, POS, token machines etc) and other necessary equipment’s/facilities/utilities.</b>  <b>The marks for the proposed ICAC will be assigned based on the</b>

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				relative quality of location submitted by bidders, as per the technical evaluation Proforma-Part III of the Annexure-J.
6.	Chapter XI Service Level Metrics/Penalties Page65, point 41	Personal Records (PII Data)	Please advise purging policy for Personal data for the applicant.	Data handling and storage requirements are explicitly mentioned in the RFP. Please refer.
7.	Annexure:K, Financial Bid Page137	Note: Proforma of Service Fee is to be filled correctly, without any omission. Any vague details /no response may lead to rejection of the bid.	If there is just one consolidated Service Fee to be quoted by the bidder. Please advise what specific details are considered under vague here. And what are mandatorily required to be shared.	Only a singular Service Fee has to be quoted as per Annexure K.
8.	Chapter XV, Clause B (II) (d): Page 74	<p>"The Lowest Financial Bid (L1) will be determined based on the Service Fee quoted by the bidders, as per Annexure-K of this RFP. The bidder who has quoted the lowest 'Service Fee' will be ranked as L1 and the contract will be awarded to the L1.</p> <p>In the case of a tie, where more than one company has quoted the same Service Fee, the Bidding Company graded higher in the evaluation of Technical Bids will be declared L1."</p>	<p>On the date on which the financial bids are opened, is the bidder with the lowest financial bid automatically ranked as "L1" and resultantly automatically the bidder to whom the award/contract shall be granted?</p> <p>Are no viability studies/analysis to be conducted by the MEA/Mission against the financial bids of the technically responsive bidders, to ensure that the lowest financial bid is a value which can validly and viably provide the services stipulated in the RFP and meet the quality stipulations of the same, as also defined in the RFP?</p>	<p>Opening of Financial Bids shall not construe to be declaration of "L1".</p> <p>Results of Financial Bids will be declared subsequently after necessary internal process, based on L1 criteria only.</p> <p>The only criteria for selection of SP is minimum technical qualification as per provisions of RFP and L1 criteria.</p>

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9.	Chapter XV, Para B (II)(b) Page 73	Before the opening of the Financial Bids, the marks obtained by the various bidders in the Technical Bid stage will be communicated by email.	For the sake of transparency, will the Mission also provide the scores provided to the bidder for each of the respective items in the technical bid?	<b>The total cumulative marks obtained by the bidders at the technical bid stage will be communicated to the respective bidders only.</b>
10.	Generic Query	NA	The present RFP does not stipulate any criteria for determining viability of bids. What is the process which the MEA seeks to follow, post receipt of bids, to determine the viability of a bid to ensure quality of services offered and to ensure complete adherence of all the local laws?	<b>RFP provision for selection is minimum technical qualification score and L1 criteria only.</b>  <b>Quality of implementation and technical solution offered will be measured against service level metrics as defined in the RFP.</b>
11.	Generic Query	Mission has provided the application count category wise for past three years	Mission has provided us the volumes for past three years, can the mission provide the guidelines on the projected application volume for the next three-year alia contractual period	<b>The numbers cannot be projected and quantified.</b>
12.	Chapter 1: Request for Proposal (RFP)	The Mission/Post handled approximately 4,87,320 no. of services/ transactions during the three years from Jan-2022 to Dec-2024 (equivalent to 649 transactions/ services per working day, assuming 250 working days in a year.	Please be kind to share the transactions Centre wise details during the three years from Jan-2022 to Dec-2024.	<b>Please See attached Annexure-1</b>
13.	Chapter III Clause (vi)	Instructions to Bidders	a. Please clarify whether Bidding companies which have received a Show cause notice for levying of penalties/notice demanding penalties are eligible to bid in the present RFP if the Bidding	<b>The proposal of Bidding Companies that have outstanding penalties levied by any Indian Mission/post shall not be considered and summarily rejected.</b>  <b>Provision of the RFP will be applied</b>

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			<p>company in question has responded to the Show cause notice for levying of penalties/notice demanding penalties and a final communication qua said penalties has not been received from the Mission/Post MEA.</p> <p>b. Please clarify whether Bidding companies who have challenged the levying of any particular penalties against them whether before Mission/Post MEA or before a court or before an arbitral tribunal are eligible to bid?</p>	<p><b>to all, appeal or otherwise of outstanding penalty cases in earlier contracts of respective bidders.</b></p>
14.	Chapter III clause (vi)	Instructions to Bidders	Please be kind to clarify whether the penalties that are contested by the Bidding Company including but not limited to for lack of proof and a reply from the Mission is awaited, will be considered as outstanding penalties for the purpose of Chapter III, clause (vi)	<p><b>The proposal of Bidding Companies that have outstanding penalties levied by any Indian Mission/post shall not be considered and summarily rejected.</b></p> <p><b>Provision of the RFP will be applied to all, appeal or otherwise of outstanding penalty cases in earlier contracts of respective bidders.</b></p>
15	Chapter V: Mandatory Eligibility Criteria Point (ii) and (iii) and Annexure –D 1, 2 and 3	The Bidding Company shall provide audited financial information certified by an external auditing agency to substantiate the claim of its turnover	Please be kind to clarify about the external audit agency which will be acceptable to the Mission.	<p><b>Here external means the recognized audit agency in the country where the company is registered.</b></p>
16	Chapter VII:	The SP shall also maintain the	The Tender specifies the turnaround	<p><b>30-minute turnaround time is the</b></p>

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	Scope of Work and Deliverables Required Clause 1B (ix)(b)	turnaround time of 30 minutes for any applicant from token generation to acceptance of application and payment at the counter of ICAC.	time for 30 minutes and as per our understanding, the turnaround time will be only for submitting the application and a separate time would be allotted for form filing, photocopy, photograph services.	<b>standard requirement for the processing of applications, which includes capturing photographs and providing photocopies as well. Separate time could be considered for Form filling if required.</b>
17.	Chapter VII: Scope of Work and Deliverables Required Clause C - Acceptance of Fee (ii)	The SP shall collect bank/agency charges from the applicants for the transaction wherein the service fee is paid via debit/credit card.	Please be kind to clarify if the applicants are liable to pay the bank/agency charges as per the local law of land or the SP is supposed to bear the charges.	<b>Kindly refer to the RFP.</b>
18.	Chapter VII: Scope of Work and Deliverables Required Clause G (c)	Despatch the document(s)/passport/PCC to applicants via courier in a secured manner on the same day (or the next working day in case of delayed receipt).	Please be kind to clarify if the courier service is mandatory or optional.	<b>Courier service is a mandatory deliverable to be provided by the SP, with the option for applicant to collect passport/document from ICACs</b>
19.	Part III: Technical Bid Evaluation Performa Point 1(b)	Parking facilities with capacity and type of parking.	Please be kind to clarify, what is the maximum number of parking slots to be considered as adequate slots in ICAC.	<b>Exclusive parking means parking space exclusively reserved for applicants coming to centre for CPV services. Bidders are to arrive at the number of parking slots as per the number of applicants anticipated to visit ICAC and based on existing local norms. Marks under Technical bid evaluation will be awarded based on the information/presentation provided by the bidder.</b>
20.	Part III: Technical Bid Evaluation Performa Point 4	Provision of Application Facilitating Services at ICACs Photocopying	Please be kind to clarify what explanation/solution for the provision of Application Facilitation	<b>Necessary counter, hardware and manpower facilities have to be provisioned for Application Facilitating services such as</b>

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	(a)	Photograph Form Filling Courier Services Refer to Chapter VII, para (3) of the RFP (7 marks)	Services is expected from the Service provider. This will enable us to incorporate the necessary details into our Technical Bid accordingly.	<b>Photograph, photocopy, form filling etc. Refer to Chapter VII, Para (3)</b>  <b>As regards Courier service, Bidder has to provide information regarding the courier despatch process, the courier company to be hired, etc., in its technical bid.</b>  <b>Technical Bid evaluation marks will be awarded, based on the solution/explanation provided by the bidder, as per Annexure J (Part-III) of the RFP.</b>
21.	Part III – Technical Bid Evaluation Proforma, Point 8	Record of Past Performance with Mission.	Please clarify how bidders will be rated in this parameter.	<b>Refer to Part-III, Annexure-J of the RFP.</b>
22.	Part III: Technical Bid Evaluation Performa Point 9	Reputation of the bidding company in the market and quality of non-GOI client list and references received from them.	Please be kind to clarify the Reference Letters provided to the bidding company by foreign client governments will be considered in assessing market reputation	<b>This will be acceptable.</b>
23.	Annexure-K	Financial Bid Note: 1 – Service Fee quoted above is the ‘Service Fee per application’ payable to the Service Provider. Bidder shall quote the Service Fee as per deliverables of the RFP including digitization and indexation of documents, enrolment of fingerprint biometrics, facial Biometric capture, and provision of four Application Facilitating Services viz,	a. Please be kind to clarify how the charges for the courier services to be computed given they vary based on distance and local circumstances.  b. Please be kind to clarify whether an average of the courier rates is to be taken or a separate disclosure is to be made qua the	<b>Bidders need to factor in courier charges, variability of distances amongst other factors to offer a singular all-inclusive service fee.</b>  <b>The bidder has to provide information regarding Courier dispatch process, the courier company to be hired etc. in its Technical bid.</b>  <b>Marks under Technical bid</b>

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		<p>photocopying, photographs, Form filling, and Courier Services.</p>	<p>differential courier rates and ultimately differential service fees.</p>	<p>evaluation will be awarded, based on the information provided by the bidder, as per part III, Annexure-J of the RFP.</p>
24.	Annexure-K	<p>Financial Bid            Note: 1 – Service Fee quoted above is the ‘Service Fee per application’ payable to the Service Provider. Bidder shall quote the Service Fee as per deliverables of the RFP including digitization and indexation of documents, enrolment of fingerprint biometrics, facial Biometric capture, and provision of four Application Facilitating Services viz, photocopying, photographs, Form filling, and Courier Services.</p>	<p>If the Service Fee has multiple components including digitization and indexation of documents, enrolment of fingerprint biometrics, facial Biometric capture, and provision of four Application Facilitating Services viz, photocopying, photographs, Form filling, and Courier Services, please clarify how is the service fee to be quoted if for instance an applicant does not avail any or all of the 4 Application Facilitation Services.</p>	<p><b>A singular all-inclusive service fee per application, as quoted in Annexure K, shall be collected from applicants, regardless of applicants avails any or all of the application facilitation services.</b></p>
25.	Annexure: K, Point 1	<p>Financial Bid            Note: 1 – Service Fee quoted above is the ‘Service Fee per application’ payable to the Service Provider. Bidder shall quote the Service Fee as per deliverables of the RFP including digitization and indexation of documents, enrolment of fingerprint biometrics, facial Biometric capture, and provision of four Application Facilitating Services viz, photocopying, photographs, Form filling, and Courier Services.</p>	<p>Since the courier charges change depending on the location of the ICAC and the distance from the ICAC to the delivery address, please clarify on how to incorporate these variable courier charges into the service fee, as the service fee is fixed for all applicants.</p>	<p><b>Bidders need to factor in courier charges, variability of distances amongst other factors to offer a singular all-inclusive service fee.</b></p> <p><b>The bidder has to provide information regarding Courier dispatch process, the courier company to be hired etc. in its Technical bid.</b></p> <p><b>Marks under Technical bid evaluation will be awarded, based on the information provided by the bidder, as per part III, Annexure-J of the RFP.</b></p>



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26.	Chapter III Point No. xii, Page No. 11	EMD and other Bank Guarantees (BGs) can be furnished through SWIFT (including e-Bank guarantee)	Details of the Embassy Bank account duly mentioning Account No / Address of Bank / Details of swift / IBAN	<b>Details of the bank account will be shared through email with companies who have shared their organizational profile.</b>
27.	Chapter XIV, Page No. 71 Point No. 1(ii)	Envelop 2: A separate closed envelope containing the Technical Bid comprising of Bid Cover Letter and Declaration (Annex-F), Mandatory Eligibility Criteria (Annex-D), Technical Bid (Annex-J) and a Declaration by the Bidder (Annex-E). All these annexures should be duly filled in Four Copies of technical bid. To be enclosed.	Kindly advise how many original and copies of technical bid are required.	<b>One copy of the Technical bid should be original and three copies should be in duplicate.</b>
28.	Chapter VII point No xi page No22	As per Chapter VII point No xi page No22 in Note under point ©SP shall also operate on a regular basis, an exclusive submission counter each at the Mission with adequate number of staff for processing of applications.	Please share an estimate or indication as to how many counters and staff will be required.	<b>Staff for one submission Counter at Mission for all working days is in addition to the minimum staff requirement as spelt out in Chapter VII 1A. (xi) (a) of RFP.</b>  <b>Separately, minimum of two backend staff is required to process handing/taking over of applications on all working days, as per Chapter VII 1A. (xi) (b)</b>
29.	Chapter X Page No 45 point No 1(i)	The SP shall provide a Bank Guarantee in Kuwaiti Dinar for the Govt funds held by SP.	Kindly advise amount for the same.	<b>The details will be provided to the bidder who is awarded the contract, at the time of signing of Agreement.</b>
30.	Chapter VII  Page No. 26, Point No. xii (a)	The SP shall provide an efficient and courteous telephonic enquiry system through Toll-free numbers / Voice Over Internet Protocol	Please provide number of calls / emails received for planning of call center.	<b>The numbers vary and cannot be quantified.</b>

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31.	Chapter XIV Page No 71 point No 1(iv)	The proposal must contain the information required by the RFP, in original, signed.	Can the BID docs be signed by DSC or physical signatures are reqd.	<b>Physical signature is required.</b>
32.	General Query		Will there be a single Service fee for Consular / Passport / Visa / OCI / PCC / Surrender Certificate / GEP Verification Services / Misc Attestation.	<b>The service fee for all the CPV services will be the same.</b>
33.	Chapter V Point No 1(x) page No 17	The Bidding Company must provide certificate that its operations are compliant with local laws and relevant tax regime.	Kindly clarify from whom the said certificate is to be provided?	<b>Self-Certification</b>
34.	Chapter VII Point No 1(S), page No 41	Consular Camps	How many consular camps will be conducted during a calendar year.	<b>It may be noted that the number and location of Consular camps may vary based on the decision of Embassy.</b>
35.	Annexure H page No 102 Note 1	Bidder should ensure that the seal and Code No of the signatory is put by the bankers before submission of BG.	Since the BG can be furnished through SWIFT (including e-Bank guarantee) hence affixing of bank seal is not possible. Pls clarify on the same.	<b>e-BG and SWIFT transactions will be accepted as per banking norms</b>
36.	Annexure H page No 102Note 2	Stamp paper is required for BG issued by the Banks located in India.	Since the BG can be furnished through SWIFT (including e-Bank guarantee) hence Stamp paper requirement does not exist. Pls clarify on the same.	<b>e-BG and SWIFT transactions will be accepted as per banking norms.</b>
37.	Annexure J, Part iii Page no: 118, Point 9	Reputation of the bidding company in the market and quality of non-GOI client	Please advise whether non-GOI clients have to be other foreign governments giving the service of visa outsourcing services or it can be any commercial companies in India like travel agents or logistic	<b>Reputation will be assessed based on past association with corporate and non-GOI clients including foreign governments.</b>

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			companies with whom we have dealings.	
38.	CHAPTER VII: SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES REQUIRED 1 A. Dealing with Applicants and Documents	OSP shall provide space/ working station for officials of the Mission for attestation or other services as specified by the Mission.	Is the required workstation for officials intended for the public dealing area or the back-office area? Please clarify.	<b>Back- office area.</b>
39.	CHAPTER VII: SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES REQUIRED Indian Consular Application Centre (ICAC)	Kuwait City : 6000 sqft Fahaheel : 5000 sqft Jleeb Al Shuwaikh (Abbasiya) : 5000 sqft Jahra : 1000 sqft	Based on the minimum counter numbers required for each location, the current size of the VAC appears to be oversized. Could the mission reevaluate once again for the sizes?	<b>Provision in the RFP stands as such.</b>
40.	CHAPTER VII: SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES REQUIRED 1 B. Acceptance and forwarding of application to Mission/Post (ix)-(b)	The SP shall also maintain a maximum turnaround time of 30 minutes for any applicant from token generation to acceptance of application and payment at the counter of ICAC.	Does the 30-minute TAT include Application Facilitating Services such as photographs, form filling, photocopying, etc.?	<b>30-minute turnaround time is the standard requirement for the processing of applications, which includes capturing photographs and providing photocopies as well. Separate time could be considered for Form filling if required.</b>

**Annexure -1**

**Centre-wise number of applications (approx) handled from January 2022 to December 2024**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Kuwait City</b>	<b>Fahaheel</b>	<b>Jaleeb Al Shuwaikh</b>	<b>Jahra</b>
2022	64468	43041	47894	---
2023	56530	42352	48590	---
2024	69256	54267	56699	3536
<b>Total</b>	<b>190254</b>	<b>139660</b>	<b>153183</b>	<b>3536</b>

\*above data does not include no of services provided in OCI and related Services + Renunciation of Citizenship.