
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RFP Number: 2024-ELSA-PROC-0001

Subject: Request for Proposals for Payroll Services for Lebanon

Issuance Date: Revised on September 26th, 2024

Offer Deadline: Extended to October 3rd, 2024 12:00 pm CST

Land O'Lakes Venture37 (Venture37) is soliciting proposals from qualified providers of payroll services as described in this Request for Proposals (RFP). These services are required for USG and other donor funded projects for services to be performed in Lebanon.

Firms invited by Venture37 (hereinafter "Bidders") to submit offers for the services described in this RFP are under no obligation to do so. The Bidder shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of the Proposal; Venture37 will in no case be liable for those costs, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the solicitation.

This Request for Proposal includes the following sections:

1. Instructions to Bidders
2. Technical Specifications
3. Questions and Answers

Submission of offers must be completed in accordance with the Instructions to Bidders and complete offers must be received by the date and time indicated.

All correspondence and/or inquiries regarding this RFP must be requested in accordance with the enclosed Instructions to Bidders.

BACKGROUND

Land O'Lakes Venture37 (www.landolakesventure37.org) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit committed to helping communities around the world thrive through agriculture. We strengthen economies by improving local agriculture, help agribusinesses create jobs, and link farmers to markets. We deliver integrated solutions that help build and improve food and agriculture systems by providing solutions for more competitive markets, more resilient systems, more nutrition-secure communities, and more inclusive societies.

Venture37's long-standing affiliation with Land O'Lakes, Inc. (www.landolakes.com) sets us apart. Land O'Lakes Inc. is one of America's largest farmer-owned cooperatives. It supports Venture37 project implementation with 100 years of experience in dairy, animal nutrition, crop inputs, and agricultural insights and technologies. This gives our development projects a unique global view of agriculture, food, and the power of well-functioning market systems. Land O'Lakes, Inc. supports these efforts as part of its enterprise purpose of Feeding Human Progress at home and around the world.

Venture37 is implementing multiple USAID-funded projects in Lebanon.

SECTION 1: INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

INTRODUCTION

Venture37, is hereby soliciting bids for the supply of comprehensive Payroll Services as described in Section 2, Technical Specifications.

ELIGIBILITY

- a. This RFP is open to firms or other qualified organizations that are legally registered to conduct business in Lebanon. Small and/or disadvantaged businesses, minority-owned, and women-owned businesses are encouraged to submit proposals.
- b. A bidder will be considered ineligible if it has been suspended, debarred, or deemed ineligible, as indicated on (1) the “List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Non-procurement Programs” and/or (2) the “Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List”.
- c. Bidder main contacts must be able to write and speak fluently in English.
- d. All goods and services to be supplied under the resulting award shall have their origin in countries listed under the USAID Geographical Code 937, defined as the following: The United States, the recipient country (Lebanon), and developing countries other than advanced developing countries, but excluding any country that is a prohibited source.

PREPARATION OF OFFERS

- e. Bidders are expected to examine the Technical Specifications and all instructions contained in this RFP. Failure to do so shall be at the Bidder's risk.
- f. The offer prepared by the Bidder and all correspondence related to the offer exchanged by the Bidder and Venture37 shall be in English.

CONTENTS OF OFFER

Submitted bids are required to consist of the following documents:

Technical Proposal.

- a. Organizational background showing evidence of prior performance in supplying payroll services in Lebanon.
- b. Outline of proposed services, solutions, and team, reflecting how the Bidder will undertake all the tasks in Section 2, Technical Specifications.
- c. List and brief description of the names and qualifications of the key personnel proposed to work on the assignment. CVs of proposed professional staff should be included as an annex.
- d. Statement of Qualifications including evidence in support of its technical qualifications and ability to perform the services if its offer is accepted, such as references to successful prior projects of a similar nature.

Price Offer.

- a. Detailed budget outlining Bidder’s Price Offer, in Microsoft Excel, unlocked, and with formulas intact.
 - o Budget must give a detailed unit price breakdown and the total price of the services being offered in response to this RFP. If there is a discrepancy between the unit price and the total amount, the unit price shall be considered correct, and the total amount adjusted accordingly.

- All prices should be indicated in USD.
- b. Budget Narrative explaining calculation and necessity of costs, displaying attribution to the activities proposed. Narrative may be included in the Excel budget or as a separate Word document.

Supporting Documentation.

- a. Provide name of company or firm, website address, office address, main telephone number and email address.
- b. Provide official business registration or license documenting eligibility to do business in Lebanon.
- c. Two references including contact names, e-mail addresses, and telephone numbers of persons who can be contacted regarding the Bidder's prior performance for similar work within the past three years.

The Bidder shall prepare one complete offer with all the required sections of the proposal and supporting documentation typed or written in legible ink. Only complete offers will be accepted and evaluated; incomplete offers will be eliminated.

OFFER VALIDITY PERIOD

Offers shall remain valid for a minimum of sixty (60) days after the offer deadline. An offer valid for a shorter period shall be rejected as non-responsive. Bidders shall clearly indicate their offer's validity period within the proposal documents.

CLARIFICATION OF BIDDING DOCUMENTS

Clarifications may be requested in writing up to three (3) business days prior to the Offer Deadline, September 25th, 2024. The contact for requesting clarifications is:

Tina Vagle, International HR Manager
Email: TSVagle@landolakes.com

OFFER DEADLINE AND LATE BIDS

- a. All offers must be submitted to Venture37 by **October 3rd, 2024 12:00 pm CST**. Please submit electronic proposals to TSVagle@landolakes.com with a copy to CLicari@landolakes.com with the RFP Number referenced in the subject line. Late proposals will not be accepted.
- b. It is the Bidder's sole responsibility to ensure that offers are received by Venture37 on or before the Offer Deadline of **October 3rd, 2024 12:00 pm CST**. Only electronic submissions will be accepted.
- c. Offers received after the deadline for submission shall be rejected. A late offer will be considered only if the sole cause of its lateness was attributable to Venture37, its employees or agents.

AMENDMENT OF BIDDING DOCUMENTS

- d. Venture37 may at its discretion and for any reason, modify bidding documents by amendment. All prospective Bidders that have received bidding documents will be notified of the amendment by e-mail and such amendments will be binding on them.

MODIFICATION OF OFFERS

- a. Any Bidder has the right to withdraw, modify, or correct its offer after it has been delivered to Venture37, provided the request for such a withdrawal, modification, or correction together with full details of such modification or correction is received by Venture37 at the submission point of contact above before the Offer Deadline.
- b. Venture37 may ask any Bidder for a clarification of its offer or conduct negotiations with the apparent winner after evaluation of offers; nevertheless, no Bidder will be permitted to alter its price or make any other material modification to its offer after the deadline unless the RFP has been amended or the deadline extended. Clarifications which do not change the price or other material aspects of the offer may be accepted.

CRITERIA FOR AWARD AND EVALUATION

Venture37 will award the contract to that Bidder whose offer is deemed acceptable, and which offers the best value based upon the evaluation criteria. All complete, eligible offers will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Price (20%)
- Past experience providing payroll services in Lebanon (50%)
- Relevance and experience of the company or firm's core capability/skills of in-country support staff providing services (30%)

*Diverse background: Up to 5 bonus points may be awarded for diverse background, including, but not limited to, businesses owned and/or led by members of a disadvantaged or historically under-represented group, and, for U.S. Bidders, those that qualify as Small Business Concerns as defined by the Small Business Association (visit www.SBA.gov for more information).

In order for a bid to be deemed acceptable, it must comply with all the terms and conditions of the RFP without material modification. A material modification is one which affects the price, quantity, quality, delivery or installation date of the equipment or materials or which limits in any way any responsibilities, duties, or liabilities of the bidders or any rights of Venture37. In addition, the successful bidder must be determined to be responsible. A responsible bidder is one who has the technical expertise, management capability, workload capacity, and financial resources to perform the work.

VENTURE37'S RIGHT TO ACCEPT ANY OFFER AND TO REJECT ANY OR ALL OFFERS

Venture37 will reject any offer that it deems nonresponsive. Further, Venture37 reserves the right to waive any minor errors in any offer received if it is in Venture37's best interests to do so, to reject the offer of any Bidder if, in Venture37's judgment, the Bidder is not fully qualified to provide the services as specified in the contract, or to reject all bids.

NOTIFICATION OF AWARD

- a. Before the expiration of the period of offer validity, Venture37 will notify the successful Bidder in writing that its offer has been accepted. Venture37 may negotiate with the successful bidder on any details and terms of the contract which do not materially change the scope or specifications of the goods or services to be provided.
- b. Upon the successful Bidder acknowledging receipt of the Notification of Award, Venture37 will promptly notify each unsuccessful Bidder that their bids were rejected. If, after notification of

award, a Bidder wishes to ascertain the grounds on which its offer was not selected, it should address its request to Venture37 in writing.

ACCEPTANCE OF PRIVACY POLICY AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS

By submitting a proposal to Venture37, Bidder consents to and provides Venture37 with permission to process the Bidder's personal data specifically for the performance of, and purposes identified in, this solicitation document and in compliance with Venture37's legal obligations under applicable United States and European Union laws, data protection and regulations, and any other applicable legal requirements. The bidder may withdraw their consent at any time by contacting Tina Vagle at TSVagle@landolakes.com. If consent is withdrawn, Venture37 reserves the right to either accept or reject the offer.

SECTION 2: TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

SCOPE OF WORK

Provide payroll services on behalf of Land O'Lakes Venture37 for approximately 20 employees in Beirut, Lebanon as directed by Venture37 including:

- Pay all local income taxes and social insurances on behalf of the employees and Venture37.
- Provide Venture37 written updates to any Lebanese labor law, tax law, or other law changes affecting employment or employee pay in a timely manner and at least twice per year.
- Pay base salary and benefits to employees including allowances, annual thirteenth month bonus, retirement, death benefit, severance, unused vacation time and/or others as identified and directed by Venture37.

SUGGESTED TIMELINE

Land O'Lakes Venture37 anticipates utilizing payroll services for a period of two (2) years.

EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

- Payroll Schedule with all due dates, changes, timesheets, expense reports, payments, etc.
- Monthly payroll including any applicable expense reimbursements, bonuses, leave payouts or other applicable payments accompanied by pay slips to each Worker.
- Written updates about any Lebanese labor law or other law changes affecting employment in a timely manner and at least twice per year.
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SECTION 3: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. What is the percentage of local to foreign as well the nationalities for the employees.
 - All employees are Lebanese nationals
2. Is there a payroll system that is capable of generating the payroll slips and which would list all charges and withholdings? Do you require from your service provider to issue payroll slips to

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employees after deduction of payroll taxes and social security contributions.

- The RFP responder should have a payroll system that should be used.
- Yes, payroll slips should be generated for staff.

3. Update on any complications or inspections with any regulatory authority?

- Nothing noted to date, no

4. Is there a person dedicated for the submission of NSSF returns?

- Yes, we have a local accounting staff that will remit payments from our bank account to staff and the relevant tax agencies

5. Number of employees (local / foreign)

- About 10-15

Volume of work / Transaction per year

- Monthly payroll, any statutory supplemental payment calculations as required by law

Turnover

- Less than 10%

Expenditure

- Approximately \$15,000-\$24,000 per month in payroll

Accounting software used

- Provider to calculate payroll on their software and provide reports/payslips to V37. Our accountant will make the payroll and tax payments via our account and record in our ledger.

The name of the previous auditor of the association

- Compta Group SARL