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**INSURANCE SECTOR EDUCATION
AND TRAINING AUTHORITY**

PROGRAMME OFFICE

**The Insurance Sector Education and Training
Authority (INSETA)**

**Request for Bid:
Insurance Sector Skills Plan (SSP)
Research Project**

Tender: IPO/01/2007

Date issued: 13 May 2007

Closure date: 15 June 2007 at 11:00

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The Insurance Sector Education and Training Authority (INSETA)

Request for Bid (RFB): Insurance Sector Skills Plan (SSP) Research Project

1. High level project objective

This project is proposed to provide the Department of Labour, Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Labour, INSETA Council and management team and stakeholders with strategic research information on the sector, as well as critical and scarce skills in the insurance sector, to be used to further skills development of people in the sector.

The research project to be undertaken will produce two (2) sets of reports:

- An Updated and comprehensive insurance Sector Skills Plan (SSP), report, for 2007/2008, in line with the department of labour's (DoL) guidelines, which re-assesses and updates information from the previous SSP research; and
- An updated report pertaining to critical and scarce skills in the sector.

2. Background to INSETA

The Insurance Sector Education and Training Authority (INSETA) was established in terms of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998. INSETA is required to promote, facilitate, monitor and research education and training in the Insurance Sector. To this end, INSETA must:

- Monitor and evaluate employers Skills Planning and Implementation Reports
- Develop, implement and monitor the implementation of the Insurance Sector Skills Plan within the framework of the NSDS
- Fulfill its duties as an accredited Education and Training Quality Authority (ETQA) within the NQF as approved by the South African Quality Authority (SAQA)
- Establish, register, implement and promote Learnerships in the Sector
- Disburse mandatory and discretionary grants within the Sector
- Promote and encourage SMME participation within the spirit and ambit of the Skills Development Act, the National Skills Development Strategy and the National Qualification's framework.

3. Previous SSP Projects conducted

INSETA has been conducting SSP research projects on a yearly basis in line with the DOL requirement related to this item. As such the deliverables from previous projects have provided the insurance sector with strategic research findings and recommendations that have been used to further skills development of people in the insurance sector, and

enable companies to plan their human resource and people development strategies at a strategic level.

4. Requirement for 2007/2008 SSP Project

The requirement for the SSP project originates from the DOL Service Level Agreement with INSETA that states that the following two reports have to be provided -

- An Updated report for 2007/08 re-assessing and updating information pertaining to critical and scarce skills ; and
- An updated and comprehensive report in line with the department of labour's (DoL) guidelines , which takes the form of an insurance sector skills plan (SSP)

5. Tender aim

The objective of this RFB is to invite interested parties to submit bids for consideration , to be appointed subject to the provisions of this RFB, that can deliver research services required and that can compile an updated and comprehensive SSP report and an updated report on critical and scarce skills of the insurance sector according to guidelines provided by DoL

6. General conditions and Information

6.1. Issuer

The RFB is issued by INSETA.

6.2. Contact for Inquiries

Inquiries related to this RFB may only be addressed for the attention of Ms Busisiwe Madlala at the following addresses:

Postal Address:
INSETA Programme Office
PricewaterhouseCoopers
Private Bag x36
Sunninghill
2157

Physical Address:
INSETA Programme Office
PricewaterhouseCoopers
Office E/2/44B
2 Eglin Road
Sunninghill

Enquiries can be submitted by e-mail to insetapo@exordia.co.za or by fax to 011 209 5448, reference "Tender IPO/01/2007"

Only written enquiries, submitted to the e-mail, will be accepted until 8 June 2007. Responses to questions will be global in nature to all Service Providers that requested copies of the RFB.

7. Procurement Schedule

Potential Service Providers (“Service Provider”) to this RFB are to adhere to the following schedule of events in this procurement process. The INSETA reserves the right to change this schedule at any time. Parties concerned will be notified as and when necessary:

Publishing of RFB	Newspapers – 13 May 2007 Tender bulletin – 18 May 2007
Deadline for response to the RFB	15 June 2007 @ 11:00
Selection/short listing	20 June 2007
Bid presentations and final evaluation	29 June 2007
Appointment of Service Providers	13 July 2007

8. Bids

The intention is to appoint a Service Provider to provide the services listed in this RFB.

A Service Provider must submit only one bid.

To be considered, each Service Provider must submit a complete response to this RFB to the INSETA Programme Office, PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2 Eglin Road, Sunninghill by not later than 11:00 (SA Time) on 15 June 2007. Bids can only be submitted via courier or hand delivery, but the date and time of receipt will only be registered when it is physically received by the INSETA Programme Office.

A complete response must include the following;

- A written response to the main criteria described in this document, including audited financial statements for the primary bidder, or any consortium or joint venture members.
- Appendix A the General Conditions of Contract must be attached and must be initialed on **all** the pages
- Appendix B the Application for tax clearance certificate can be used but an **original** tax clearance certificate must be attached.
- Appendix C the Declaration of interest must be filled in and signed by the primary bidder and each consortium or joint venture member.
- Appendix D the HDI preference claim form must be completed and signed, irrespective of whether any points are claimed or not.
- Appendix E: Promotion of small business claim form must be completed and signed, irrespective of whether any points are claimed or not
- Appendix F: Declaration of past supply chain management practices must be completed and signed.

A guideline that defines the expected layout of the response submitted is attached as Appendix G.

Appendix H contains a checklist that must be completed and which must form the first page of the bid submitted

Any response to the RFB that does not include the above listed compulsory information and documentation and format will automatically be disqualified from further consideration.

The bid must include a statement as to the period during which the bid remains valid/firm. The bids must be valid/firm for a period of 3 months from the due date for responses to be submitted (i.e. from 15 July 2007 to 15 October 2007).

The Service Provider must provide seven (7) hard copies and one (1) MS Word copy of the bid.

The submitted bids will not be returned and receipt of all tender bids will be recorded in a register at the point of receipt.

9. Acceptance of Bid Content

The content of this RFB, the selected bid, the General Conditions of Contract (GCC) as well as service level agreements will be included as part of the contractual obligations of the successful Service Provider, if a contract ensues. The GCC is attached to this RFB **and must be initialed on all pages and submitted with the bid.**

Failure of the successful Service Provider to accept the obligations stated within the RFB, GCC and the submitted bid, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by both the Service Provider and INSETA may result in cancellation of the award of the contract.

10. Economy of Bid Preparation

Each bid should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of the Service Provider's ability to meet the requirements of the RFB.

Emphasis should be on a clear, concise, factual bid that provides a total solution, from inception of the research effort to submitting of the reports to INSETA.

11. Service Provider Response

Each Service Provider must respond fully to the RFB noted in the invite. At a minimum, each item must be responded to as prescribed. However, the Service Provider may provide additional information on relevant items.

12. Contract Objectives

In contracting with the Service Provider(s) pursuant to this RFB, INSETA seeks to accomplish the following major objectives:

- To provide the insurance sector with strategic research findings and recommendations to be used to further skills development of people in the insurance sector
- To provide a planning platform for INSETA to use to design projects funded from discretionary grants .
- To market the insurance sector to external stakeholders as a viable contributor to the economy.
- To provide statistics to the insurance sector and government on trends in skills development in the insurance sector.

13. Incurring of Costs

Costs incurred by any party in responding to this RFB are for the responding party concerned and INSETA will not be liable for any such costs.

14. Acceptance/Rejection of Bids

INSETA reserves the right to accept or reject, wholly or in part, any of the bids submitted in response to this RFB within its sole discretion and having due regard to any applicable legislation or regulations.

The Service Provider(s) whose bids are accepted will be required, respectively, to enter into:

- an agreement relating to the provision, implementation and maintenance of the Services defined in this RFB; and
- a business relationship agreement and service level agreement relating to the delivery and maintenance of services as contemplated in this RFB.

These agreements will govern the relationship between the parties and will contain key performance indicators and sanctions for non-compliance.

The terms and conditions of this RFB and the selected bid(s) will be incorporated into the agreements as part of the contractual obligations of the successful Service Provider, it being specifically provided that the respective Service Provider will be bound by any statements and representations made in its bid. Failure by any of the successful Service Provider(s) to accept the terms and conditions contained in this RFB and the submitted bid, or a failure by the parties to conclude the required agreements by the date stipulated will entitle INSETA to cancel the award of the contract without prejudice to any rights or claims for damages which it may have. INSETA will have no obligations whatsoever vis-à-vis the Service Provider(s) should the award of the contract be so terminated.

Should any service be provided by the successful Service Provider prior to the conclusion of the required agreements, such services shall be provided upon the terms and conditions

contained in this RFB as read with the accepted bid, unless agreed otherwise in writing between the parties.

15. Provisions relating to Subcontractors and Consortiums

The Service Providers whose bids are accepted will be required to assume responsibility for delivery of all services required in terms of this RFB, whether or not the bid was a single provider bid, a consortium or joint venture bid, or whether any part of the services are sub-contracted to a third party, it being specifically recorded that any agreements concluded pursuant to this RFB will be concluded only with the successful Service Provider. Further, INSETA will consider the Service Provider whose bids are accepted to be the sole point of contact with regard to all services contemplated in this RFB, including payment of any and all charges resulting from the provision of such services.

A number of Service Providers may respond to the RFB as a consortium or joint venture in order to provide the capabilities to address all the service requirements of INSETA. Should this be the case, there must be a single point of contact with regard to contractual matters, including payment of any and all charges resulting from the anticipated contract. It is further recorded that all such Service Providers shall be jointly and severally liable for all obligations and liabilities arising from any agreements concluded pursuant to this RFB

To be considered a valid bid, it is compulsory that the bid must include the following information for all parties included in the consortium or joint venture, or when any portion of the service are sub contracted:

- List of all consortium or joint venture members or subcontractors.
- Consortium or joint venture members or Subcontractor names and addresses.
- Complete description of work to be conducted by any Consortium or joint venture member or subcontracting party.
- Descriptive information concerning the Consortium or joint venture member or subcontractor's organisation, including HDI Status
- References of each Consortium or joint venture member or subcontractor.
- Last three years Audited financial statements of each Consortium or joint venture member or subcontractor (excluding individual assessors, moderators, and subject matter experts that the learning provider may use)

Tax clearance certificate issued by the South African Revenue Services for each Consortium or joint venture member or subcontractor

INSETA shall have the right to approve or not approve subcontractors for any portion of services required under this RFB and to require the Service Provider whose bids were accepted to replace subcontractors found to be unacceptable.

The Service Provider whose bid is accepted is responsible for adherence by the subcontractor to all provisions of any agreements concluded pursuant to this RFB. In addition, the activities performed by all subcontractors must be integrated with the operations/location of the Service Provider whose bid is accepted, such that INSETA perceives a single service entity from an operational point of view.

It will be expected of the successful tenderer/s to sign and agree to the INSETA's Code of Conduct for Service Providers. Failure to sign this, may lead to INSETA not accepting the tenderer.

16. Late Tenders

Tenders are late if they are received at the address indicated in the tender documents after closing time of 11:00 on 15 June 2007.

17. Tender evaluation process

17.1. Evaluation Process

Any response to this RFB will be fully evaluated in two phases, i.e.:

Phase 1:

- The bid will be verified to confirm that the minimum criteria have been met, i.e. all requested and compulsory documentation has been submitted.
- Bids complying with the minimum criteria scrutiny will be evaluated by an evaluation committee based on the criteria listed below. Use will be made of a predefined question sheet and a scoring matrix. The scores for the bids will be listed and a proposed shortlist submitted to INSETA for consideration.

Phase 2:

- The short listed service providers will be invited for presentations that will form part of the final evaluation.

17.2. Selection Criteria

The following main criteria will be used for evaluation of tenders:

- Proposed approach and response to services required.
- Understanding of the requirements and objectives to be achieved.
- Have previous (recent) experience in research of this nature.
- General business and financial soundness.
- Current and past customer references.
- Historically disadvantaged individual status (HD†status)
- SMME promotion
- Price evaluation

Bids will be evaluated based on the main criteria and a list of questions applicable to each of the criteria.

18. Tender information to be submitted

Each Service Provider must respond in detail to the conditions listed in this section of the RFB. At a minimum, each item must be responded to as prescribed. However, the Service Provider may provide additional information on relevant items.

Failure by the Service Provider to respond to any one or more of the sections may result in exclusion from any further evaluation.

18.1. Proposed approach and response to services required

The Service Provider's approach to providing the research and report compiling services contemplated in this RFB must meet or exceed the requirements laid down by this RFB.

The responding bidder must clearly define how it proposes delivering the required services listed in this RFB, including a description of the proposed plan of action to reach the required deliverables.

Examples of the areas, which will be considered as part of this criteria item, include but are not limited to the following:

- Overall understanding of the Service Provider's experience and a minimum of three years experience Research.
- Fit of Service Provider's existing standards, procedures and operating capabilities with the requirements of INSETA.
- Comprehensiveness and applicability of the proposed approach to conducting research projects.
- Comprehensiveness of the proposed approach to document management.
- Adequacy of the Service Provider's infrastructure, physical and financial resources and expertise for supporting INSETA's requirements.
- The Service Provider's demonstrated physical and electronic security.
- The Service Provider's demonstrated audit standards and procedures.
- The Service Provider's demonstrated ability to provide detailed reporting on progress and service conducted.

18.2. Understanding of the requirements and objectives to be achieved.

The Service Provider's must clearly illustrate their ability to conduct the type of research required by INSETA and to compile the required reports for consideration by INSETA Management and Council, prior to these reports being submitted to DOL and other stakeholders.

The service provider must also indicate their ability to remain economically viable for the duration of the project and should therefore not be dependent on INSETA for their financial survivability.

The service provider must indicate how they plan using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to update the INSETA sector skills plan (SSP). Quantitative information can be obtained from workplace skills plans (WSP) and annual training reports (ATR) submitted to INSETA by levy-paying companies. This data needs to be analysed to yield statistics on the insurance sector profile, skills priorities, skills gaps etc. of the insurance

sector. Qualitative information can be collected through focus group analysis, surveys, questionnaires and one-on-one interviews with stakeholders.

18.3. Previous (recent) experience in research

The Service Provider must demonstrate any previous experience in conducting the type of research for any other SETA

18.4. General Business and Financial Strength

Given the importance of the SSP and Scarce and Critical skills research Project to INSETA, it is interested in the general business and financial strength of the Service Providers responding to this RFB. The financial strength of the Service Provider(s) will be reviewed through an analysis of the last three years' financial statements, including balance sheets and income statements to be submitted by Service Provider(s) responding to this RFB.

It is compulsory for responding bidders to provide the last 3 years audited financial statements.

The Service Provider(s) should describe the last three years' trends in revenues, employees, profitability and investments. The Service Provider(s) must also list its current outstanding contractual liabilities and obligations.

The successful Service Provider(s) should also be able to demonstrate a commitment to conducting research initiatives as an ongoing line of business through the last three years and staff that are directly committed to it.

The length of time the Service Provider has been in business as well as overall business experience will be considered.

The Service Provider must clearly demonstrate that they are financially viable and self sufficient and will not be solely dependant on the INSETA / SSP Project for sustainability.

18.5. Current and Past Customer References

INSETA is interested in Service Provider(s) that have successfully participated in projects such as the SSP Research projects with similar challenges.

Each Service Provider is required to provide information and references for current and past projects of such nature, the industry and products of these customers must be described as well as the types of services provided.

Contact details of the primary contact at each of these references need to be provided in order for INSETA to contact these persons.

The date of service to each customer/clients should be included as well as whether the Service Provider was the primary Service Provider or sub-contractor. If a subcontractor, the Service Provider should list who the primary Service Provider was/is, and should provide information on the portion of service(s) that they were responsible for as subcontractors. The Service Provider should include a summary of all recent Service Provider reviews by their customers/clients and should note the number and type of non-compliance with performance levels that were identified.

18.6. Historically disadvantaged individual status (HDI – Status)

This component is covered by the attached SBD document, Annexure D, which is compulsory for each prospective bidder to complete .

18.7. SMME

This component is covered by the attached SBD document, Annexure E, which is compulsory for each prospective bidder to complete .

18.8. Price

The price structure associated with this project must be broken down per deliverable and must include all cost associated with achieving that deliverable.

INSETA may, based on the responses submitted, only be able to provide a portion of the fee indicated by the respective Service Provider. In such cases fee discussions could form part of the contract negotiation phase.

Please note that all prices quoted must include all costs, taxes, levies, fees and VAT @ 14%.

19. IT Infrastructure

The Service Providers will be required to establish and maintain a database for purposes of the reporting requirements in this RFB.

Software applications should be compliant to MS Word, MS Excel or MS Access to enable INSETA to access reports provided by the Service Provider electronically.

20. Document Management

For the purpose of this RFB, document management refers to a document management system to manage documents and/or their contents in various formats according to business rules through its life cycle from inception to disposal.

20.1 Electronic Document Management

Electronic document management involves the hardware and software supporting the document management process. It is required from the Service Provider to maintain an electronic document management system, since it will be necessary to maintain a database for extracting reports for reporting purposes, etc.

20.2 Central Depository

In order for the INSETA to provide data and reports to DOL it is required that the Service Provider put systems in place ensuring that documents which have been dispatched to the Service Provider are indexed and stored according to general filing system procedures. It is required that the Service Provider maintain a depository system for its own records for auditing purposes.

20.3 Back-Up/Archiving

Reporting and analyses will be dependent on data integrity. It is therefore required that the Service Provider put adequate systems in place to preserve data and prevent data loss.

21. Data Security

It is required that the Service Provider takes all steps to ensure that data is not accessible to any party who is not authorised by either INSETA or the Service Provider to access such data.

22. Audit

It is expected that the Service Provider will apply normal auditing practices and that the applicable audit reports be made available to INSETA upon request.

It is required that the Service Provider maintain at all times full and accurate records (audit trails) of all services provided and shall retain such records for the currency of its contract with INSETA. The latter records should remain the property of the INSETA and should be returned on termination of this contract.

INSETA reserves the right to appoint either its own auditors or agents to audit the Service Provider if it suspects fraudulent practices or the application of incorrect procedures, poor services or the like.

23. Fraudulent or Unlawful Activity (“Fraud”)

Fraud in this context has different dimensions, including, but not limited to-

- Fraud on the side of the selected Service Provider.
- Fraud by subcontractors, if applicable.

Fraud on the side of the selected Service Provider (or its staff) will not be tolerated.

INSETA (including its staff, auditors or authorised agents) reserves the right to gain immediate access to the premises of the selected Service Provider if there is reason to believe that the Service Provider (or its staff) is involved in any fraudulent or unlawful activity. Furthermore, if it has been established and confirmed that the selected Service Provider (or its staff) is involved in such activities INSETA will immediately terminate the selected Service Provider's contract. INSETA will be liable for the costs attached to the above intervention. However, if it happens to be confirmed that the Service Provider (or its staff) is indeed involved in fraudulent or unlawful activities, the Service Provider will be liable for such expenses.

24. Reporting

The following types of reporting will be required from the Service Provider, i.e.-

- Reports on the progress of the project.
- Reports must be made available in hard copy accompanied by an electronic version in a format compliant with MS Word, MS Excel or MS Access.

25. Project Management

INSETA requires that the Service Provider actively participates in project management during the life of the agreements pursuant to this RFB. INSETA will establish the necessary project management mechanisms, inclusive of the reporting schedules and formats stipulated in the contract

In addition, the Service Provider will be responsible for the assembly, assimilation and presentation of key project progress information to INSETA.

26. Staffing

The Service Provider shall provide the personnel necessary to supply the services and service levels specified in the bid and contained in this RFB and shall ensure that it possesses or has access to knowledge and sufficient expertise to enable it to provide the required services in accordance with the agreed service levels.

Service Providers are to submit with their bid the Curriculum Vitae and references of senior and junior personnel to be allocated to the project. The Service Provider will not be allowed to withdraw personnel or key personnel allocated to the project without the written consent of INSETA. Failure to comply may result in cancellation of the ensuing agreement between the Service Provider and INSETA.

27. Service Level Reporting

The Service Provider will be required to agree to achieve specific service levels, which will be equal to or exceed the suggested service levels.

The Service Provider shall implement the necessary measures, monitoring tools and procedures required in measuring and reporting the Service provider's performance of services against the applicable performance standards on a monthly basis. Such measurement and monitoring shall permit reporting at a level of detail sufficient to verify compliance with the performance standards, and shall be subject to audit by INSETA and/or its appointed contract manager or auditors.

The Service Provider shall provide INSETA with the information and access to such tools and procedures upon request, for purposes of verification. Further, the Service Provider shall, on request of INSETA, provide a duplicate of any database used to capture and report on service levels so that appropriate provisions relating to the provision of service reports and the time periods relating thereto will be incorporated into any agreement concluded pursuant to this RFB.

28. Annexures

The following have been attached to this RFB:

- Appendix A: General Conditions of Contract
- Appendix B: Application for tax clearance certificate
- Appendix C: Declaration of interest
- Appendix D: HDI preference claim form
- Appendix E: Promotion of small business claim form
- Appendix F: Declaration of past supply chain management practices
- Appendix G: Framework for bid – a proposal format guideline
- Appendix H: Proposal Checklist
- Appendix I : Map to INSETA Programme Office

It is mandatory for prospective bidders to complete, sign where indicated, and to submit Annexures B to F and to initial and submit Annexure A.