



USAID Competitiveness Project
USAID Projekat za razvoj konkurentnosti

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) # 50003/08

SKILLS GAP ANALYSIS IN ICT, EDUCATION, APPAREL, FILM AND PRODUCTION IN SERBIA

Date of Issuance of RFP:	April 15, 2008
Deadline for Letter of Confirmation:	April 23, 2008
Deadline for Submitting Questions:	April 18, 2008
Due date for Submitting Proposals:	May 6, 2008



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP):
Skills Gap Analysis in ICT, Education, Apparel, Film and Production in Serbia**

The USAID Competitiveness Project is seeking proposals from qualified organizations interested in providing the services to implement a Skills Gap Analysis as described in the attached Scope of Work.

The USAID Competitiveness Project plans to award a fixed price -type contract for an initial period of approximately six weeks, with payments subject to the satisfactory acceptance of the deliverables stated in the TOR.

Each institution that will be submitting a proposal is required to send a letter of confirmation electronically to office@compete.rs by April 23, 2008. The email transmission should have the subject line: "Confirmation of participation in RFP for Skills Gap Analysis". Any amendments to this RFP will be issued and sent to all institutions that have confirmed interest in submitting a proposal. Interested institutions may submit questions related to this RFP in writing, by email to office@compete.rs. The email transmission containing questions and/or requests for clarifications should have the subject line: "Questions related to RFP for Skills Gap Analysis". The deadline for receipt of questions and/or requests for clarifications is April 18, 2008. No questions will be accepted after this date. Oral instructions or explanations given before the award of the contract resulting from this solicitation shall not be binding. Proposals are due on May 6, 2008.

Issuance of this solicitation does not in any way obligate the USAID Competitiveness Project to award a contract nor does it commit the USAID Competitiveness Project to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal. Furthermore, the Project reserves the right to reject any and all offers, if such action is considered to be in the best interest of the U.S. Government.

Thank you for your interest in the USAID Competitiveness Project.



SECTION A. SCOPE OF WORK

BACKGROUND

The USAID-funded Competitiveness Project is a four-year \$14.7 million program that seeks to improve the competitiveness of leading sectors in Serbia. The project objectives are to generate rapid, sustained, economic growth in Serbia; to substantially increase the productivity, competitiveness, and growth of private enterprises in high potential sectors; and to substantially improve the business enabling environment through policy and institutional development.

Program Components

The following is a more detailed description of expected program components as well as anticipated results, which form the basis for this SOW.

Core Component: Increased Private Sector Productivity and Competitiveness in High Potential Sectors

- Sub-Component 1: Improved Policy and Institutional Development for better Private-Public Dialog and Advocacy
- Sub-Component 2: Improved Human and Institutional Capacity Development including Workforce Development
- Sub-Component 3: Public Information and Media Activities Increasing Public Awareness and Supporting Other Components
- Sub-Component 4: Small Grants Supporting Other Components

The overall, broad development objectives of the Project are to:

- Generate rapid, sustained, and broad based economic growth in Serbia that results in more globally and regionally competitive private enterprises in high potential sectors, with special emphasis on high potential, export-oriented, job creating SMES; increased higher value-added cross-border and international trade and investment; and more and better employment opportunities in high potential sectors.
- Substantially increase private enterprise growth, especially the growth of SMEs in high potential sectors resulting in substantially increased capacity of key sectors and businesses to compete effectively in global, regional and domestic markets; an improved business climate, including the local business climate, viewed from the sector specific perspective in which these high potential enterprises operate.
- Improve private sector competitiveness by improving the capacity of targeted sectors to penetrate and integrate into domestic and international markets through increases in productivity and improvements of the business enabling environment.



SKILLS GAP ANALYSIS

In December 2007 the project completed an in-depth Opportunities and Constraints Study (OCS) of twelve sectors in Serbia that included over 150 research reports, a survey of more than 500 relevant Serbian firms, and in-depth interviews with over 80 companies to evaluate prospects and identify barriers to growth in key sectors.

Against these findings, a program objective is to address obstacles to economic growth in the following areas:

- Sales & Marketing – USAID Competitiveness Project is to provide assistance to counterparts to participate in trade shows, develop promotional materials and campaigns, conduct market research and foster contacts between companies, and support introduction of new technology and equipment.
- Education & Training – USAID Competitiveness Project will work with private and public educational institutions, business associations and NGOs to develop curricula in vocational and technical fields, and Executive Education in management, marketing, HR and financial planning.
- Policy Advocacy & Reform – USAID Competitiveness Project will support business associations and other formal or informal groups in advocacy efforts to improve the regulatory environment for specific sectors.

Objective of the Skills Gap Analysis

In this OCS, it became clear that targeted support to human capital development will contribute to improved competitiveness and productivity in some Serbian sectors. In sectors that are based on innovations in technology and processes, skills and education of workers are particularly critical to growth.

The project will undertake a Skills Gap Analysis as the first step in identifying the strategy and sector specific initiatives that will be undertaken by the project to address workforce development needs. As such, the USAID Competitiveness Project will engage a Subcontractor to support this effort. The Subcontractor will build on a number of existing and publicly available sector analyses and research conducted in Serbia in the past few years, and conduct relevant field research that will include, but not be limited to interviews with target sector companies and stakeholders, and education providers.

The Subcontractor is expected to examine the following key issues:

- Labor and skills availability and gaps that are reported in terms of supply of relevant skills in the following sectors: Information and Communication



- Technologies, Education (focus on Executive Education, particularly management and marketing courses), Apparel, and Film & Production.
- Existing education industry in Serbia, main constraints, developments and trends in this sector in general.
 - The degree to which existing academic programs match the needs of business, and what can be done to approximate education programs to the market needs (e.g. curriculum changes) in the four sectors listed above.
 - Involvement of the private sector in support to education needs and production of competitive workforce in the four sectors listed above.
 - Availability of trainers and administrators of various certification programs that are critical to exporting the relevant goods and services in the four sectors listed above to more demanding markets such as the European Union.
 - Weaknesses and obstacles in the institutional or regulatory environment, short term actions and policy changes in the four sectors listed above.
 - Similar programs being carried out in the same field by important international and national stakeholders.
 - Other considerations relevant to bridging the current skills gap in Serbia.

The activities described above will be conducted under the direction USAID Competitiveness Project Staff.

Deliverables

1. Detailed final report. The Subcontractor is expected to conduct a detailed analysis addressing the issues above and taking an investor perspective of the skills availability. As a final outcome, the Subcontractor is expected to submit a detailed report to include the following:

- Detailed and comprehensive analysis of market demand, labor availability and skills supply in key positions relevant to sectors listed above. A detailed report that will contain assessment and quantification of the skills availability and gaps in skills supply is expected. The report should also contain a list of education or training providers with a brief (one-two paragraphs) description of the key education providers.
- Identification of specific interventions/activities that could be implemented by the USAID Competitiveness Project in the context of matching skills demand and supply. The Subcontractor should provide specific recommendations on changes in policy, university level education process and programs (e.g. specific changes to existing curricula, noting what needs to be changed and how in as much detail as possible), adult education and training (e.g. how current training centers should be assisted), and private sector involvement that are necessary to approximate skills supply and market demand. This should include specific advice on structuring internship programs in relevant sectors and role in adapting education programs or assisting training centers.



When defining interventions focus should be on technical assistance rather than assistance in providing equipment and refurbishing space but these should also be noted for the sake of a complete assessment.

2. *Presentation.* The Subcontractor will also be expected to make a presentation summarizing the findings of the skills gap analysis and the recommendations for specific activities that the USAID Competitiveness Project could implement as part of its overall workforce development strategy.

Time Schedule

The assignment is to begin by May 12, 2008 with final deliverables and presentation submitted by June 30, 2008 (this is estimated to be around 60 person days effort). The Consultant shall regularly brief the USAID Competitiveness Project management on progress.

Consultant Qualifications

The Consultant should demonstrate strong expertise in education and HR trends, market needs and strong understanding of shortcomings of the education industry in Serbia. Consultant should also possess advanced reporting and research skills.

SECTION B. INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

Bidders are requested to submit a proposal in English consisting of the following elements:

1. Technical proposal (maximum of four pages), elaborating the methodology and work plan for performing the assignment.
2. CVs of two to three experts that will be working on the assignment. An explanation as to which tasks would be assigned to each team member, and their timing is to be included in the technical proposal. Each expert should have a minimum of 5 years experience in education consulting related to workforce development issues in Serbia.
3. Summary (maximum of two pages) of the Subcontractor's relevant experience and background. Experience should be demonstrated by listing the name and contact information for at least three references who can attest to the quality of the services performed on similar projects the subcontractor has implemented.
4. Financial proposal in US Dollars with detailed labor costs and other direct costs associated with performing the scope of work.



Submission of Bids

Three hard copies of complete proposals must be sent by post or submitted in person to the **USAID Competitiveness Project** office in Dalmatinska 17, 11000 Belgrade. Proposal must be submitted in a sealed envelope and cannot be altered after the submission deadline has expired. The complete and final proposal must also be submitted electronically to office@compete.rs with the subject line “[Name of Institution] Proposal for Skills Gap Analysis”. Proposal submission deadline expires on May 6, 2008.

Evaluation Criteria

All bids that meet the predefined conditions will be evaluated and ranked by the commission set up by the **Ordering Party** in accordance with the following criteria:

Criterion	Max. number of points
Technical Proposal and Methodology	30
Qualifications of proposed staff	35
Demonstrated Experience	15
Price	20
TOTAL	100

SECTION C. GENERAL COMPETITION RULES

The **USAID Competitiveness Project** (hereinafter referred to as ‘**Ordering Party**’), collects bids for the implementation of the activity #50003/08 titled as: ‘Skills Gap Analysis in Serbia’. Description of the activity is included in the Statement of Work in Section A of this document.

Bids are collected in accordance with all the requirements stated in this Bid Invitation, Bidding Form and attached documents. Bid must be submitted in person or sent by post in a sealed envelope with the following note marked on the outside of the envelope:

BID FOR COMPETITIVENESS PROJECT #50003/08 – DO NOT OPEN!!!
ACTIVITY NAME: SKILLS GAP ANALYSIS IN SERBIA



1. **THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE COMPETITION:** The bidders that meet the general conditions specified by law, have proven professional experience and references have the right to participate in the competition.
2. **COMPLETENESS OF BIDS:** Incomplete bids will not be taken into consideration. The attached specification of work includes the items for which unit prices and position prices should be offered. The minimum quality of the final deliverable must correspond to the statement of work. Changes in the statement of work can be made only with the prior consent of the **Ordering Party**.
3. **THOROUGHNESS OF BIDS:** Bids where the requested attached documents are missing will not be considered as thorough. Failure to supply the requested documents can be the reason for the elimination of bids.
4. **VALIDITY OF BIDS:** Bids are valid for a minimum of 30 calendar days.
5. **STATEMENT OF EXPENSES:** The price offered should include all expenses related to the completion of work, namely, visit to the locations to conduct surveys/interviews, desk research expenses and dues together with all responsibilities and obligations relating to the completion of contracted work.
6. **OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION MEASURES:** The **Ordering Party** pays special attention to the environmental protection and the measures of personal and collective occupational safety, and insists on strict application of local laws and regulations in the field in question.
7. **TERMS OF PAYMENT:**
 - a. After the selection notice has been delivered, the **Ordering Party** will proceed to signing a contract with the **Selected Bidder** in accordance with the accepted bid.
 - b. For each payment, the **Selected Bidder (Executing Party)** shall submit a Pro forma Invoice on a sheet of paper with the company's memo, name and address, PIB number (Tax Identification Number), bank account number and the name of the commercial bank where the company has an



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account. The Pro forma Invoice should contain a clearly stated contracted value, a separately stated VAT amount and the total GROSS sum.

8. **COMPETITION RULES ALTERATION:** Bid must be submitted in a sealed envelope and cannot be altered after the bid submission deadline has expired, namely, the conditions that the Bidder stated in the Bid are **definite** and cannot be changed subsequently.
9. **SELECTION NOTICE:** All bidders who have submitted bids will be notified of the results of the solicitation.
10. **DESISTING FROM AWARDING THE CONTRACT:** The **Ordering Party** reserves the right to examine technical and organizational capacity of the company that submitted the best rated bid. If the **Ordering Party** determines that the technical and organizational capacity of the company to meet all competition requirements, at the moment of contract signing, is for any reason insufficient, they reserve the right not to take the offer in question into further consideration.
11. **THE RIGHT OF THE EVALUATION COMMISSION TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS:** The **Ordering Party** reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids at any time prior to awarding the contract or annul the competition procedure without accepting any obligations towards the bidders.
12. **BIDDING DOCUMENTATION ADDENDA:** The **Ordering Party** can modify bidding documentation by the means of addenda, at any time before the deadline for the submission of bids expires, in which case the addendum shall be assigned a special number and sent in writing (by post, fax or e-mail) to all invited bidders. Therefore the addendum shall be considered as binding. The Bidder must acknowledge the receipt of the Addendum immediately (by post, fax or e-mail).