



**SINDH ECONOMIC ZONE MANAGEMENT COMPANY**

**RESPONSES TO REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATIONS / QUERIES SUBMITTED BY PROSPECTIVE BIDDERS  
IN RELATION TO THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS DOCUMENT**

**FOR**

**Hiring of Advisory Consortium  
MARBLE CITY KARACHI**

**DATED: 31 JANUARY 2025**

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

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This RESPONSE TO PROSPECTIVE BIDDERS' QUERIES (this "**Response Document**") is in furtherance to the queries and requests for clarifications received from the prospective Bidders in respect of the NIT issued on Jan 12, 2025.

*Unless expressly specified otherwise, all capitalized terms used herein shall bear the meaning ascribed thereto in the RFP.*

This Response Document is not to be construed as an addendum/corrigendum to the RFP; its sole purpose is to provide responses to the prospective Bidders' queries / requests for clarifications on the RFP, received by SEZMC. Bidders should independently satisfy themselves with the responses set out herein and should not rely on this Response Document. To the extent any changes to the RFP are required, such changes will be made through an addendum / corrigendum (as applicable) to the RFP, which will be issued prior to the Bid Submission Date.

No SEZMC Party makes any representation (express or implied) as to the accuracy or completeness of the information contained herein, or in any other document made available by any SEZMC Party to the prospective Bidders in connection with the Project (including with regards to the Bidding Process). No SEZMC Party shall have any liability for this Response Document or for any other written or oral communication transmitted or made to the prospective Bidders.

No SEZMC Party shall be liable in any manner whatsoever to reimburse or compensate the prospective Bidders for any costs, fees, damages or expenses incurred by the prospective Bidders in evaluating or acting upon this Response Document. Each prospective Bidder should conduct its own independent investigations and analysis and should check the accuracy, adequacy, correctness, reliability and completeness of the statements and information contained in this Response Document or in any document issued by SEZMC in connection with the Project.

By submitting the Bids, Bidders shall be deemed to have independently examined and verified, understood and accepted, all the terms and conditions stated in the RFP (including any addendum/corrigendum issued by SEZMC to the RFP) and this Response Document.

SEZMC reserves its right, in its full discretion, to modify the RFP, the requirements of the Project and/or the information contained in this Response Document at any time as per the applicable law and shall not be liable to reimburse or compensate any prospective Bidder for any costs, taxes, expenses or damages incurred by the prospective Bidder in such an event.

**RESPONSES TO THE PROSPECTIVE BIDDERS' REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION/QUERIES**

SR. NO.	REFERENCE	QUERY / CLARIFICATION REQUESTED	RESPONSE
1.	6B – Scoring System (3. Financial Capability)	<p>This overly stringent financial requirement disproportionately favors a limited group of firms, including large multinational firms. While these firms undeniably possess robust capabilities and impressive financial standings, such criteria may unintentionally exclude other highly qualified firms that have delivered exceptional results in local and regional markets. It is important to note that this RFP does not involve any construction at this stage. Referring to the SPPRA guidelines for procurement of works, clause 2.16(iv) specifies:</p> <p><b>“2.16(iv) Financial - Documentary evidence of financial position, e.g., a bank statement or audited accounts of the last two to three years. Annual turnover for construction should be either equal to or twice the estimated cost of the project.”</b></p> <p>For example, in the RFP issued by SEZMC in June 2023 for the project titled <b>“Hiring of Consultants for Feasibility Studies &amp; Transaction Advisory Services for the Development of New Industrial Enclaves in Sindh (Hyderabad, Shaheed Benazirabad, and Sukkur),”</b> the financial capability requirement was set at threshold of Rs. 500 million, with a maximum score of 5 assigned. This was despite the fact that the project was purely advisory in nature.</p> <p>The second example, in the RFP issued by SEZMC in March 2020 for the project titled <b>“Hiring of Consultants for Transaction Advisory Services for MARBLE CITY PROJECT”</b> the financial capability requirement was set at threshold of Rs. 200 million, with a maximum score of 5 assigned. This was despite the fact that the project was purely advisory in nature.</p>	Not Agreed, as per RFP

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		<p>We, therefore, reiterate our earlier suggestion to relax the financial turnover requirements for this consultancy project. Specifically, we recommend lowering the average annual financial requirement to PKR 20 million or allowing a consolidated average turnover of Rs. 200 million for consortiums. This adjustment would encourage broader participation from capable firms, promote healthy competition, and open the door for innovative solutions.</p> <p>Lastly, we draw your attention to recent RFPs with maximum turnover requirements of no more than Rs. 500 million. (Copies attached.)</p>	
2.	<p>Section 2: Instruction to Consultants</p> <p>2.1 Definition (Lead Member / Lead Advisor)</p>	<p>We would like to bring to your attention that limiting the project to <b>Chartered Accountancy (CA) firms</b> as lead firms significantly reduces the pool of eligible participants, thereby restricting competition. A project of this nature would greatly benefit from the inclusion of a diverse range of <b>qualified consultants</b> with relevant expertise.</p> <p>In light of this, we kindly request you to reconsider the eligibility criteria and remove the restriction limiting lead firms to CA firms only. This adjustment would foster greater competition and enhance the overall quality of project execution.</p> <p>We appreciate your consideration and look forward to your response.</p>	As per RFP
3.	Page 69: (Age limit <= 50 years)	The age limit for the positions of Financial Expert and Commercial Expert has been capped at 50 years. We respectfully request that this limit be	As per RFP

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		<p>increased to 60 years to allow a wider pool of experienced professionals to participate.</p> <p>Setting such an age restriction may unintentionally exclude highly skilled and seasoned experts who could make significant contributions to the success of the project. Considering the critical nature of these roles, experience and expertise are key, and raising the age limit would enable the inclusion of professionals with extensive industry knowledge and valuable insights.</p> <p>As the standard retirement age in Pakistan is 60 years, we kindly urge you to take this into account and appreciate your consideration. We look forward to your response.</p>	
4.		<p>In terms of reference, it is stated that, to conduct evaluations of all applications in accordance with the approved criteria and submit the recommendations on fortnightly basis. However, in the deliverables section, it is stated that, quarterly report on evaluation of the applications is required. Please clarify whether the reports are required on a quarterly basis or fortnightly basis.</p>	<p>Payment to be submitted quarterly basis. Report to be made on fortnightly basis or as and when required</p>
5.	-	<p>There is a list of valuers mentioned in the RFP document by the Pakistan Banking Association, please clarify which category of the valuers are required as the list is extensive.</p>	<p>From the Panel. 1: Agricultural, Residential &amp; Commercial Land &amp; Buildings,</p>
6.	Fees and Financial Terms	<p>1.1. As the project is of a long-term nature and taxes may change during the course of the project, we recommend requesting the quote exclusive of any taxes. This will help ensure that the financial scope remains flexible and accurately reflects the true costs of the project.</p> <p>1.2. Given the long-term nature of the project, we recommend including an escalation clause to account for inflation and other potential cost increases over time.</p>	<p>As per RFP / Applicable Laws</p> <p>As per RFP / Applicable Laws</p>

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		<p>1.3. In case the fee cap is not agreed to be exclusive of taxes, we propose that any changes in tax rates be treated as policy changes, with the Government of Sindh covering any associated expenses to prevent unforeseen financial impacts.</p> <p>1.4. We seek further clarification regarding the statement in "FORM FIN-3 SUMMARY OF COSTS Yearly (PKR)" that "Payment shall be made on an annual basis for a maximum of 8 acres," as the meaning and structure of this payment arrangement are unclear to us.</p>	<p>Not Agreed</p> <p>Payment will be made for to a maximum 8 acers per annum. However, consortium may bring any project beyond more than 8 acres in a calendar year.</p>
7.	Contract Term and Re-Tendering	<p>2.1. We recommend setting the contract duration to 6 years, with options for re-tendering, re-appointment, or other flexible arrangements for subsequent terms. This would provide both parties with the necessary flexibility and ensure continued project alignment.</p>	Not Agreed
8.	Valuation and Land-Related Terms	<p>3.1. We suggest that the valuation of land and financial consultancy be handled through two separate agreements for better clarity and efficiency.</p> <p>3.2. We recommend that land valuation not be conducted annually, but rather every 3 to 5 years, reducing the administrative burden while still ensuring accurate assessments.</p> <p>3.3. It is also critical that the land valuers involved are from top-tier firms, with a proven track record and significant turnover, to ensure high-quality and reliable valuation services.</p> <p>3.4. If the valuation team remains part of the consortium, we request a breakdown of the payment structure,</p>	Not Agreed

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		<p>particularly for subsequent years. For example, we understand that 6% of the fee is allocated to the valuation for the first year. We would need a similar breakdown for the payments in the following years to clearly assess the payment milestones.</p> <p>3.5. We would like to propose that instead of engaging two independent valuers, as per the requirement, only one experienced land valuer be engaged for the first year of the project. This approach would ensure a more streamlined process and allow for consistency in the valuation work, while still meeting the project's needs.</p>	
9.	Other Terms	<p>4.1. We suggest including a clause that allows for termination at ease and that termination by the advisory consortium be incorporated into the contract, ensuring flexibility in case of unforeseen circumstances.</p> <p>4.2. We recommend aligning the submission of recommendations with the quarterly reporting schedule, rather than the proposed fortnightly basis, to allow for a more realistic reporting cycle.</p> <p>4.3. We propose that travel expenses incurred by survey officers when traveling outside the city be reimbursed, to ensure all necessary travel is appropriately compensated.</p> <p>4.4. We request clarification regarding the scope and role of the survey officer, to ensure all responsibilities are clearly defined and manageable throughout the course of the project.</p>	Not Agreed

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10.		<p>. Sub-section 1(b) of Section 6(B) (Scoring System) of the RFP stipulates a minimum project cost of PKR five (5) billion for relevant advisory consultancy experience. We request that this threshold be reduced to PKR one (1) billion. This adjustment is proposed because historical projects, while smaller in nominal terms, would meet the intended scale requirements when adjusted for current inflation rates. This modification would better reflect the consortium's demonstrated capability in handling projects of comparable magnitude.</p> <p>2. Section 2.16.3 of the RFP states that "Technical Proposal shall be submitted [...] in a sealed envelope clearly marked "TECHNICAL PROPOSAL". Similarly, the original Financial Proposal shall be submitted [...] in a sealed envelope clearly marked "FINANCIAL PROPOSAL" [...]" . Recently, it has been observed that electronic submission of bids has been the mode of submission for procurements in Sindh. Clarity is requested in this regard; is SEZMC considering changing the mode of submission to electronic submission or both electronic and physical submission?</p> <p>3. Item no. 15 (Contract type) of the data sheet mentions that the duration of the Project is twelve (12) years. Additionally, as per the RFP, the deliverable millstones are yearly instead of monthly. However, we have observed that Column 5 of 'Form Tech 7. Staffing Schedule' (the Form 7) says 'Months' instead of 'Years'. We request clarity in this regard; does SEZMC intend on requesting the bidders to showcase the staffing schedule in months or will years suffice?</p> <p>4. Section 9 (Law Governing Contract and Language) of the draft consultancy services contract (the Consultancy Contract) states that the Consultancy Contract shall be governed by either the "Islamic Republic of Pakistan or the Provincial Government". It is recommended to amend section 9 to include only Islamic Republic of Pakistan.</p> <p>5. Section 5.1(a) (Scope of Work) of the terms of reference state "To conduct evaluations of all applications in accordance with the approved</p>	<p>As per RFP</p> <p>Physical submission would be required</p> <p>Form Tech 7 is a standard form which is to be filled on monthly basis.</p> <p>As per RFP</p>



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		criteria and submit the recommendations on fortnightly basis". SEZMC is requested to elaborate on this point.	Refer to point no 4
11.	2.3 Timetable	We are striving to build very competitive team for this assignment, and considering the diverse experiences required we request a 2-week extension in the submission of the bid beyond the current deadline of 11 February,2025 enabling the bidders to submit robust proposal.	Not Agreed
12.	5.1.(a) Scope of Work	<p>1) We understand that the scope requires engaging at least two independent land valuers, as per the approved list of the Pakistan Banking Association, to conduct valuations and develop a pricing strategy/framework for all land parcels of the project.</p> <p>2) As per our understanding, the pricing strategy/framework scope will be covered by the financial advisor, and the valuator's role will be confined to the valuation/pricing of zones only. Please confirm.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
13.	6B Scoring Criteria	<p>1) In category 1 you have mentioned that credentials should be for 'Financial Member' of the consortium whereas in category B, it is mentioned as any member of the consortium. Since, it is a project which is supposed to be led and delivered by a financial firm, please clarify if the category 2 also refers to a financial firm and not any member of the consortium member.</p> <p>2) You have requested a completion certificate for a project. For an advisor, the completion of an infrastructure project (Category B) is defined as the point at which the project has achieved financial close.</p>	<p>The nature of the project is to be led by Financial firm. Therefore the required credentials of financial firm will be essential.</p> <p>As per RFP</p>
14.	6B Notes Eligible Experience	The roles necessary to fulfill the scope of work are better suited for individual engagement rather than consortium partnerships, as forming a	Agreed

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		<p>consortium may not be feasible. Given the 12-year duration of the assignment, engaging firms could prove to be more costly.</p> <p>Therefore, it is recommended to permit sub-consultancy and to take into account the experience and credentials of sub-consultants when evaluating scores.</p>	
15.	Form Fin-3 Summary of costs yearly (PKR)	The proposed fee schedule does not accurately reflect the effort required for the work. Since a significant portion of the work will be completed in the first two to three years, it is suggested that 50% of the fees be allocated for this initial period.	Not Agreed
16.	Additional Comments Inflation	Considering the 12-year duration of the contract and the inflation fluctuations experienced in Pakistan over the past decade, along with the inherent uncertainties associated with such a long-term agreement, it is recommended that an inflation adjustment mechanism be incorporated into the fee structure.	Not Agreed
17.	Additional Comment Out of Pocket Expenses	Scope of work includes site visits by survey officer. We suggest that these be limited to Karachi, and if out of city travel is required, it can be managed with out of pocket expenses to be borne by the client.	Not Agreed