

## Request for Proposal (RFP)

**For:** Research on TVET governance: The role of the institutional leaders

**Date:** 11.07.2017

### 1 Overview of the British Council

1.1 The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. Its purpose is to promote a friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and people worldwide; making a positive contribution to all the countries we work with; and making a lasting difference to the UK's security, prosperity and influence. It seeks to achieve its aims by working in education, science, governance, English and the arts. In 2014-15, its programmes reached a total audience of 647 million people worldwide, up by 43 million from the previous year. The British Council also had a total turnover of £973 million, which was 13% higher than the previous year. Its income included a grant-in-aid of £155 million, £637 million from fees and income from services such as English teaching, exams administration and £164 million from contract activity, such as the management of client-funded contracts, and funding from a wide range of public and private sector partners.

1.2 The British Council was established in 1934 and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1940. It is registered as a charity in England and Wales (charity no. 209131) and Scotland (charity no. SCO37733). It is also an executive non-departmental public body, with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as its sponsoring department.

1.3 Its primary charitable objects are set out in the Charter and are stated to be to:

- Promote cultural relationships and the understanding of different cultures between people and peoples of the United Kingdom and other countries;
- Promote a wider knowledge of the United Kingdom;
- Develop a wider knowledge of the English language;
- Encourage cultural, scientific, technological and other educational co-operation between the United Kingdom and other countries; and
- Otherwise promote the advancement of education.

1.4 The British Council works in more than 110 countries around the world and employs over 7000 staff worldwide. It has its headquarters in the UK, with offices in London, Manchester, Belfast, Cardiff and Edinburgh. Further information can be viewed at [www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org).

## 2 Introduction and Background to the Project / Programme

2.1 The British Council's work in skills aims to enhance the quality of skills systems by encouraging closer links between education, employers and policy makers in the UK and worldwide.

The British Council Skills team currently works in 30 countries, prioritising those with fast-developing or emerging economies, fragile states and post-conflict states. Our work in Skills has the following priorities:

- To increase the reputation and profile of the UK skills sector
- To identify and develop opportunities for innovation, co-creation and partnership with the stakeholders we work with in the UK and around the world

This work aims to ensure that skills development better meets the needs of individuals and the economy through high quality, relevant, respected and innovative provision.

In 2016 British Council commissioned two pieces of research analysing governance over skills development. The first one - 'International Reflections on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Governance' - asked which Ministry should lead on Skills Development and looked at different ways of organising skills development in Colombia, England, India, Kazakhstan, South Africa and Vietnam. The second piece - 'Sub-National TVET Governance' - explored the varying methods of devolving power over skills, based on analysis of the UK system and those of five countries chosen for the study – Indonesia, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan and Serbia.

Both studies provided an insight into the key pillars of governance and the relative merits and demerits of different approaches, and developed our understanding of the challenges and opportunities presented by different models of TVET governance at different levels. We are seeking a third piece of research to complete the series, which will look at: **the effect of governance upon institutional leaders in vocational education and how they interact, and desire to interact with governing agencies at different levels.**

We would like to commission research which will review the effects upon delivery that different ways of TVET governance and planning result in. By reviewing a range of countries with different TVET governance models - from centralised to devolved, we are particularly interested in the effects of political, financial, legislative and cultural factors upon the views and behaviours of the institutional leaders. We seek to create a clear set of recommendations informed by consultation for the way in which policy making and implementation should be aligned with regards to TVET governance.

2.2 The purpose and scope of this RFP and supporting documents is to explain in further detail the requirements of the British Council and the procurement process for submitting a tender proposal.

## 3 Tender Conditions and Contractual Requirements

This section of the RFP sets out the British Council's contracting requirements, general policy requirements, and the general tender conditions relating to this procurement process ("**Procurement Process**").

### **3.1 Contracting requirements**

3.1.1 The contracting authority is the British Council which includes any subsidiary companies and other organisations that control or are controlled by the British Council from time to time (see: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/structure/status>).

3.1.2 The appointed supplier will be expected to deliver the goods and/or provide services at the British Council offices in London.

3.1.3 The British Council's contracting and commercial approach in respect of the required goods and/or services is set out at Annex [1] (Terms and Conditions of contract) ("**Contract**"). By submitting a tender response, you are agreeing to be bound by the terms of this RFP and the Contract without further negotiation or amendment.

3.1.4 The Contract awarded will be for a duration agreed by the parties.

3.1.5 In the event that you have any concerns or queries in relation to the Contract, you should submit a clarification request in accordance with the provisions of this RFP by the Clarification Deadline (as defined below in the Timescales section of this RFP). Following such clarification requests, the British Council may issue a clarification change to the Contract that will apply to all potential suppliers submitting a tender response.

3.1.6 The British Council is under no obligations to consider any clarifications / amendments to the Contract proposed following the Clarification Deadline, but before the Response Deadline (as defined below in the Timescales section of this RFP). Any proposed amendments received from a potential supplier as part its tender response shall entitle the British Council to reject that tender response and to disqualify that potential supplier from this Procurement Process.

### **3.2 General Policy Requirements**

3.2.1 By submitting a tender response in connection with this Procurement Process, potential suppliers confirm that they will, and that they shall ensure that any consortium members and/or subcontractors will, comply with all applicable laws, codes of practice, statutory guidance and applicable British Council policies relevant to the goods and/or services being supplied. All relevant British Council policies that suppliers are expected to comply with can be found on the British Council website (<https://www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/transparency/policies>). The list of relevant policies includes (but it is not limited to): Anti-Fraud and Corruption, Child Protection Policy, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, Fair Trading, Health and Safety Policy, Environmental Policy, Records Management, and Privacy.

### **3.3 General tender conditions ("**Tender Conditions**")**

3.3.1 Application of these Tender Conditions – In participating in this Procurement Process and/or by submitting a tender response it will be implied that you accept and will be bound by all the provisions of this RFP and its Annexes. Accordingly, tender responses should be on the basis of and strictly in accordance with the requirements of this RFP.

3.3.2 Third party verifications – Your tender response is submitted on the basis that you consent to the British Council carrying out all necessary actions to verify the information that you have provided; and the analysis of your tender response being undertaken by one or more third parties commissioned by the British Council for such purposes.

3.3.3 Information provided to potential suppliers – Information that is supplied to potential suppliers as part of this Procurement Process is supplied in good faith. The information contained in the RFP and the supporting documents and in any related written or oral communication is believed to be correct at the time of issue but the British Council will not accept any liability for its accuracy, adequacy or completeness and no warranty is given as such. This exclusion does not extend to any fraudulent misrepresentation made by or on behalf of the British Council.

3.3.4 Potential suppliers to make their own enquires – You are responsible for analysing and reviewing all information provided to you as part of this Procurement Process and for forming your own opinions and seeking advice as you consider appropriate. You should notify the British Council promptly of any perceived ambiguity, inconsistency or omission in this RFP and/or any in of its associated documents and/or in any information provided to you as part of this Procurement Process.

3.3.5 Amendments to the RFP – At any time prior to the Response Deadline, the British Council may amend the RFP. Any such amendment shall be issued to all potential suppliers, and if appropriate to ensure potential suppliers have reasonable time in which to take such amendment into account, the Response Deadline shall, at the discretion of the British Council, be extended.

3.3.6 Compliance of tender response submission – Any goods and/or services offered should be on the basis of and strictly in accordance with the RFP (including, without limitation, any specification of the British Council's requirements, these Tender Conditions and the Contract) and all other documents and any clarifications or updates issued by the British Council as part of this Procurement Process.

3.3.7 Format of tender response submission – Tender responses must comprise the relevant documents specified by the British Council completed in all areas and in the format as detailed by the British Council in Annex [3] (Supplier Response). Any documents requested by the British Council must be completed in full. It is, therefore, important that you read the RFP carefully before completing and submitting your tender response.

3.3.8 Modifications to tender response documents once submitted – You may modify your tender response prior to the Response Deadline by giving written notice to the British Council. Any modification should be clear and submitted as a complete new tender response in accordance with Annex [3] (Supplier Response) and these Tender Conditions.

3.3.9 Rejection of tender responses or other documents – A tender response or any other document requested by the British Council may be rejected which:

- contains gaps, omissions, misrepresentations, errors, uncompleted sections, or changes to the format of the tender documentation provided;
- contains hand written amendments which have not been initialled by the authorised signatory;
- does not reflect and confirm full and unconditional compliance with all of the documents issued by the British Council forming part of the RFP;
- contains any caveats or any other statements or assumptions qualifying the tender response that are not capable of evaluation in accordance with the evaluation model or requiring changes to any documents issued by the British Council in any way;
- is not submitted in a manner consistent with the provisions set out in this RFP;
- is received after the Response Deadline.

3.3.10 Disqualification – If you breach these Tender Conditions, if there are any errors, omissions or material adverse changes relating to any information supplied by you at any stage in this Procurement Process, if any other circumstances set out in this RFP, and/or in any supporting documents, entitling the British Council to reject a tender response apply and/or if you or your appointed advisers attempt:

- to inappropriately influence this Procurement Process;
- to fix or set the price for goods or services ;
- to enter into an arrangement with any other party that such party shall refrain from submitting a tender response;
- to enter into any arrangement with any other party (other than another party that forms part of your consortium bid or is your proposed sub-contractor) as to the prices submitted; or
- to collude in any other way
- to engage in direct or indirect bribery or canvassing by you or your appointed advisers in relation to this Procurement Process; or
- to obtain information from any of the employees, agents or advisors of the British Council concerning this Procurement Process (other than as set out in these Tender Conditions) or from another potential supplier or another tender response,

the British Council shall be entitled to reject your tender response in full and to disqualify you from this Procurement Process. Subject to the “Liability” Tender Condition below, by participating in this Procurement Process you accept that the British Council shall have no liability to a disqualified potential supplier in these circumstances.

3.3.11 Tender costs – You are responsible for obtaining all information necessary for preparation of your tender response and for all costs and expenses incurred in preparation of the tender response. Subject to the “Liability” Tender Condition below, you accept by your participation in this procurement, including without limitation the submission of a tender response, that you will not be entitled to claim from the British Council any costs, expenses or liabilities that you may incur in tendering for this procurement irrespective of whether or not your tender response is successful.

3.3.12 Rights to cancel or vary this Procurement Process - By issuing this RFP, entering into clarification communications with potential suppliers or by having any other form of communication with potential suppliers, the British Council is not bound in any way to enter into any contractual or other arrangement with you or any other potential supplier. It is intended that the remainder of this Procurement Process will take place in accordance with the provisions of this RFP but the British Council reserves the right to terminate, amend or vary (to include, without limitation, in relation to any timescales or deadlines) this Procurement Process by notice to all potential supplier in writing. Subject to the “Liability” Tender Condition below, the British will have no liability for any losses, costs or expenses caused to you as a result of such termination, amendment or variation.

3.3.13 Consortium Members and sub-contractors – It is your responsibility to ensure that any staff, consortium members, sub-contractors and advisers abide by these Tender Conditions and the requirement of this RFP.

3.3.14 Liability – Nothing in these Tender Conditions is intended to exclude or limit the liability of the British Council in relation to fraud or in other circumstances where the British Council’s liability may not be limited under any applicable law.

## **4 Confidentiality and Information Governance**

4.1 All information supplied to you by the British Council, including this RFP and all other documents relating to this Procurement Process, either in writing or orally, must be treated in confidence and not disclosed to any third party (save to your professional advisers, consortium members and/or sub-contractors strictly for the purposes only of helping you to participate in this Procurement Process and/or prepare your tender response) unless the information is already in the public domain or is required to be disclosed under any applicable laws.

4.2 You shall not disclose, copy or reproduce any of the information supplied to you as part of this Procurement Process other than for the purposes of preparing and submitting a tender response. There must be no publicity by you regarding the Procurement Process or the future award of any contract unless the British Council has given express written consent to the relevant communication.

4.3 This RFP and its accompanying documents shall remain the property of the British Council and must be returned on demand.

4.4 The British Council reserves the right to disclose all documents relating to this Procurement Process, including without limitation your tender response, to any employee, third party agent, adviser or other third party involved in the procurement in support of, and/or in collaboration with, the British Council. The British Council further reserves the right to publish the Contract once awarded and/or disclose information in connection with supplier performance under the Contract in accordance with any public sector transparency policies (as referred to below). By participating in this Procurement Process, you

agree to such disclosure and/or publication by the British Council in accordance with such rights reserved by it under this paragraph.

4.5 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“FOIA”), the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (“EIR”), and public sector transparency policies apply to the British Council (together the “**Disclosure Obligations**”).

4.6 You should be aware of the British Council’s obligations and responsibilities under the Disclosure Obligations to disclose information held by the British Council. Information provided by you in connection with this Procurement Process, or with any contract that may be awarded as a result of this exercise, may therefore have to be disclosed by the British Council under the Disclosure Obligations, unless the British Council decides that one of the statutory exemptions under the FOIA or the EIR applies.

4.7 If you wish to designate information supplied as part of your tender response or otherwise in connection with this tender exercise as confidential, using any template and/or further guidance provided at Part [2] (Submission Checklist) of Annex [3] (Supplier Response), you must provide clear and specific detail as to:

- the precise elements which are considered confidential and/or commercially sensitive;
- why you consider an exemption under the FOIA or EIR would apply; and
- the estimated length of time during which the exemption will apply.

4.8 The use of blanket protective markings of whole documents such as “commercial in confidence” will not be sufficient. By participating in this Procurement Process you agree that the British Council should not and will not be bound by any such markings.

4.9 In addition, marking any material as “confidential” or “commercially sensitive” or equivalent should not be taken to mean that the British Council accepts any duty of confidentiality by virtue of such marking. You accept that the decision as to which information will be disclosed is reserved to the British Council, notwithstanding any consultation with you or any designation of information as confidential or commercially sensitive or equivalent you may have made. You agree, by participating further in this Procurement Process and/or submitting your tender response, that all information is provided to the British Council on the basis that it may be disclosed under the Disclosure Obligations if the British Council considers that it is required to do so and/or may be used by the British Council in accordance with the provisions provision of this RFP.

4.10 Tender responses are also submitted on the condition that the appointed supplier will only process personal data (as may be defined under any relevant data protection laws) that it gains access to in performance of this Contract in accordance with the British Council’s instructions and will not use such personal data for any other purpose. The contracted supplier will undertake to process any personal data on the British Council’s behalf in accordance with the relevant provisions of any relevant data protection laws and to ensure all consents required under such laws are obtained.

## 5 Tender Validity

5.1 Your tender response must remain open for acceptance by the British Council for a period of sixty days from the Response Deadline. A tender response not valid for this period may be rejected by the British Council.

## 6 Payment and Invoicing

6.1 The British Council will pay correctly addressed and undisputed invoices within 30 days in accordance with the requirements of the Contract. Suppliers to the British Council must ensure comparable payment provisions apply to the payment of their sub-contractors and the sub-contractors of their sub-contractors. General requirements for an invoice for the British Council include:

- A description of the good/services supplied is included.
- The British Council Purchase Order number is included.
- It is sent electronically via email in PDF format to [BC.Invoices@britishcouncil.org](mailto:BC.Invoices@britishcouncil.org) or by post to:  
The British Council, Corporate Services – UK Hub Team, 10 Spring Gardens, London SW1A 2BN

## 7 Specification

### 7.1 Research objective

The objective of this research is to analyse the ways in which different models of TVET governance and planning are perceived by TVET leaders in a broad range of different systems. We are particularly interested in the effects of political, financial, legislative and cultural factors upon the views and behaviours of the surveyed group. Significant thought will be given to the key success factors in implementing different governance arrangements in varying contexts and the implications for policy makers seeking to enact changes to governance, particularly devolution of powers.

The research will inform debate amongst:

- national policy-makers about how aspects of TVET governance and planning can be devolved to sub-national levels and the benefits and challenges associated with such an approach
- institutions about the extent to which they are able to work in a devolved structure and the extent to which they are able to meet the demands placed on them.
- international organisations and national governments about the potential benefits and challenges of TVET devolution and its usefulness in supporting a TVET reform agenda.



The research will consider the alignment between national governance of TVET and motivations of TVET leaders, and examines the way leaders in TVET delivery engage and desire to engage with governance and policy makers. It should also examine to what extent the UK experience might be useful in supporting the reform agendas in countries where the British Council works.

## 7.2 Context

TVET Governance is an issue of key interest to countries across the world as they seek to improve the effectiveness of their vocational education and training systems to meet increasing economic and social demands. In particular, devolution of governance over TVET to regions and cities offers the prospect to tailor skills development to meet local demand and empower local stakeholders, particularly employers, to interact directly with the supply side actors in Skills development.

In 2016 the British Council commissioned two research projects, the first examined the question of which Ministry should lead skills development, and the second looked at the contrasting mechanisms for devolution of skills development policy to regions and cities. Amongst other things, the research raised the issue of the relationship between central and local governing structures and those who will interact directly with them i.e. Institutional leaders of colleges, schools and training providers. This is a topical theme both in the UK and abroad.

In the countries where we work we have noticed an increasing focus on decentralisation of TVET. For example:

- In Pakistan, TVET has been devolved to the state structure with each having its own TVET authority, whilst the national authority is keeping responsibility for the National Qualifications Framework. The exact relationship is still being refined.
- In Nepal, the country is moving to a federal structure and is investigating what changes it should make in its TVET management to prepare for this.
- In Morocco, the government has recently passed a law establishing VET Regional Commissions with responsibility for planning regional TVET.
- In Macedonia, Local Authorities are now required to provide labour market information and influence TVET planning.
- In the UK national devolution has led to an increasingly divergent TVET system across England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. Within nations, particularly England, historically there have been many different approaches to planning TVET and the extent of decentralisation and the models used have varied considerably. Most recently Local Enterprise Partnerships and cities such as Manchester are being given greater autonomy over TVET planning and funding. At a local level FE Colleges in England have been autonomous for some time, although in Scotland FE Colleges are now back under direct control of the Scottish Government. These changes impact on a wide range of issues such as organisational structures, funding approaches and leadership skills.

This research aims to take the findings of the first two governance pieces and examine the implications of the different approaches we found upon TVET delivery in different contexts. This work will look at how institutional leaders in TVET interact with different levels of governance, and create a set of recommendations for policy makers on the mechanisms by which TVET policy is devolved to meet the needs of institutional TVET leaders.

### 7.3 Scope

The proposed research will:

- Examine the previous research pieces and other relevant materials to extract key findings and areas of importance for institutional leaders in interacting with TVET governance.
- Using identified benefits and challenges associated with different models and approaches, design an on and off-line survey for institutional leaders in TVET to gather views of different approaches and how governance should be best managed. (Institutional TVET leaders for the purpose of this survey are principals, directors, senior managers in vocational schools, colleges, training providers). We aim to use a short, focused questionnaire of approximately 10 – 15 questions for the survey, with mostly multiple-choice questions, and 1 or 2 open questions. The questionnaire should allow us to explore:
  - the implications of the different approaches and models of TVET governance upon TVET delivery
  - how different models of TVET governance and planning are perceived by TVET leaders
  - the effect of governance upon institutional leaders in vocational education and how they interact and desire to interact with governing agencies at different levels
  - the level of autonomy of TVET leaders in different context
  - the level to which TVET leaders in different context are empowered and enabled to interact with local skills stakeholders including employers
  - the effect of political, financial, legislative and cultural factors upon the views and behaviours of the surveyed group.

The survey is expected to take place during September 2017.

- Design accompanying guidance for British Council staff in country to disseminate the survey and gather responses. Identified countries for this research include Colombia, Indonesia, India, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, South Africa, UK, Vietnam and the Western Balkans. We expect between 10-40 responses per country. Translations of the survey and responses will be dealt by British Council teams in countries.
- Collate and analyse responses and undertake in depth phone interviews with selected English speaking respondents; design a short guidance for the British Council teams to follow up with non-English speaking respondents.

The final report should include:

- benefits and challenges associated with the different models of governance and the relevance of any country context
- examine to what extent the UK experience might be useful in supporting the reform agendas in countries where the British Council works and what lessons the UK might learn from the experience of other countries.
- Deliver a clear set of recommendations on how governing agencies can and should interact with institutional leaders in different contexts.

#### 7.4 Suggested approach

The commissioned consultant/agency will:

1. Attend a briefing with the skills team to finalise the objectives and approach.
2. Undertake desk research and review of existing materials; design, brief and guide British Council staff to conduct the survey, and analyse the responses including conducting further conversations to interpret results.
3. Produce a cross tabulation report of the results of the survey.
4. Produce a thematic report on the findings of the research (with case studies if appropriate) utilising innovative ways of communicating the findings including infographics/engaging visualisations; include a short 1 page annex of the findings for each country and an Executive Summary with recommendations suitable for external dissemination.
5. Prepare and deliver a presentation on the findings to launch the report to internal and external audience.

All of the above is to be written in plain English.

The Supplier response invites bidders to provide a quote for the number of days and a day rate that they anticipate being necessary to fulfil the above. As guidance, we would approximate the scope of the work to require 19 days.

7.5 The work must be completed by 30th November 2017.

7.6 Intellectual property: The British Council will retain full ownership of any intellectual property created as part of this contract, including any amendments, revisions or edits.

## 8 Mandatory Requirements / Constraints

8.1 As part of your tender response, you must confirm that you meet the mandatory requirements / constraints, if any, as set out in the British Council's specification forming part of this RFP. A failure to

comply with one or more mandatory requirements or constraints shall entitle the British Council to reject a tender response in full.

## 10 Key background documents and further information

10.1 Further relevant background documents / information may be provided to potential suppliers as set out below, as an Annex to this RFP and/or by way of the issue of additional documents / links to additional information / documents. Where no such information / documents are provided, this Section of the RFP will not apply.

10.2 The following additional documentation / information is provided as part of this RFP:

Which Ministry should lead skills development? International reflections on TVET governance (British Council, 2016).

Sub National TVET Governance (British Council 2017)

## 11 Timescales

11.1 Subject to any changes notified to potential suppliers by the British Council in accordance with the Tender Conditions, the following timescales shall apply to this Procurement Process:

Activity	Date / time
RFP Issued to bidding suppliers	11 <sup>th</sup> July 2017
Deadline for clarification questions ( <b>Clarification Deadline</b> )	17 <sup>th</sup> July 2017
British Council to respond to clarification questions	24 <sup>th</sup> July 2017
Deadline for submission of RFP responses by potential suppliers ( <b>Response Deadline</b> )	3 <sup>rd</sup> August 2017
Final Decision	10 <sup>th</sup> August 2017
Contract concluded with winning supplier	11 <sup>th</sup> August 2017
Inception meeting w/c	14 <sup>th</sup> August 2017

## 12 Instructions for Responding

12.1 The documents that must be submitted to form your tender response are listed at Part [2] (Submission Checklist) of Annex [3] (Supplier Response) to this RFP. All documents required as part of your tender response should be submitted to [andrew.hall@britishcouncil.org](mailto:andrew.hall@britishcouncil.org) by the Response Deadline, as set out in the Timescales section of this RFP.

12.2 The following requirements should be complied with when submitting your response to this RFP:

- Please ensure that you send your submission in good time to prevent issues with technology – late tender responses may be rejected by the British Council.
- Do not submit any additional supporting documentation with your RFP response except where specifically requested to do so as part of this RFP. PDF, JPG, PPT, Word and Excel formats can be used for any additional supporting documentation (other formats should not be used without the prior written approval of the British Council).
- All attachments/supporting documentation should be provided separately to your main tender response and clearly labelled to make it clear as to which part of your tender response it relates.
- If you submit a generic policy / document you must indicate the page and paragraph reference that is relevant to a particular part of your tender response.
- Unless otherwise stated as part of this RFP or its Annexes, all tender responses should be in the format of the relevant British Council requirement with your response to that requirement inserted underneath.
- Where supporting evidence is requested as 'or equivalent' you must demonstrate such equivalence as part of your tender response.
- Any deliberate alteration of a British Council requirement as part of your tender response will invalidate your tender response to that requirement and for evaluation purposes you shall be deemed not to have responded to that particular requirement.
- Responses should be concise, unambiguous, and should directly address the requirement stated.
- Your tender responses to the tender requirements and pricing will be incorporated into the Contract, as appropriate.

### **13 Clarification Requests**

13.1 All clarification requests should be submitted to [andrew.hall@britishcouncil.org](mailto:andrew.hall@britishcouncil.org) by the Clarification Deadline, as set out in the Timescales section of this RFP. The British Council is under no obligation to respond to clarification requests received after the Clarification Deadline.

13.2 Any clarification requests should clearly reference the appropriate paragraph in the RFP documentation and, to the extent possible, should be aggregated rather than sent individually.

13.3 The British Council reserves the right to issue any clarification request made by you, and the response, to all potential suppliers unless you expressly require it to be kept confidential at the time the request is made. If the British Council considers the contents of the request not to be confidential, it will inform you and you will have the opportunity to withdraw the clarification query prior to the British Council responding to all potential suppliers.

13.4 The British Council may at any time request further information from potential suppliers to verify or clarify any aspects of their tender response or other information they may have provided. Should you not

provide supplementary information or clarifications to the British Council by any deadline notified to you, your tender response may be rejected in full and you may be disqualified from this Procurement Process.

## 14 Evaluation Criteria

14.1 You will have your tender response evaluated as set out below:

**Stage 1:** Tender responses will be checked to ensure that they have been completed correctly and all necessary information has been provided. Tenders responses correctly completed with all relevant information being provided will proceed to Stage 2. Any tender responses not correctly completed in accordance with the requirements of this RFP and/or containing omissions may be rejected at this point. Where a tender response is rejected at this point it will automatically be disqualified and will not be further evaluated.



**Stage 2:** The completed Qualification Questionnaire (*if used*) will then be reviewed to confirm that the potential supplier meets all of the qualification criteria set out in the questionnaire. Potential suppliers that meet the qualification criteria will proceed to Stage 3. Potential suppliers that do not meet the qualification criteria set out in the Qualification Questionnaire (*if used*) may be excluded from the Procurement Process at this point. Where a potential supplier is excluded at this point, its tender response will be rejected in full and not evaluated further and the supplier will automatically be disqualified from this Procurement Process.



**Stage 3:** If a bidder succeeds in passing Stages 1 and 2 of the evaluation, then it will have its detailed tender response to the British Council's requirements evaluated in accordance with the evaluation methodology set out below. Information provided as part of Qualification Questionnaire (*if used*) responses may also be verified as part of this stage.

14.2 Award Criteria – Responses from potential suppliers will be assessed to determine the most economically advantages tender using the following criteria and weightings and will be assessed entirely on your response submitted:

Criteria	Weighting
Section 1 – Understanding of British Council's Objectives for this work	20%
Section 2 – Strong track record of designing surveys and producing high quality research in the field of education and skills, and a record of working with international stakeholders	25%
Section 3 – Methodology and Approach	25%
Section 4 – Timescale and work plan	10%

14.3 Scoring Model – Tender responses will be subject to an initial review at the start of Stage 3 of the evaluation process. Any tender responses not meeting mandatory requirements or constraints (if any) will be rejected in full at this point and will not be assessed or scored further. Tender responses not so rejected will be scored by an evaluation panel appointed by the British Council for all criteria other than Commercial using the following scoring model:

Points	Interpretation
10	<b>Excellent</b> – Overall the response demonstrates that the bidder meets all areas of the requirement and provides all of the areas evidence requested in the level of detail requested. This, therefore, is a detailed excellent response that meets all aspects of the requirement leaving no ambiguity as to whether the bidder can meet the requirement.
7	<b>Good</b> – Overall the response demonstrates that the bidder meets all areas of the requirement and provides all of the areas of evidence requested, but contains some trivial omissions in relation to the level of detail requested in terms of either the response or the evidence. This, therefore, is a good response that meets all aspects of the requirement with only a trivial level ambiguity due the bidders failure to provide all information at the level of detail requested.
5	<b>Adequate</b> – Overall the response demonstrates that the bidder meets all areas of the requirement, but not all of the areas of evidence requested have been provided. This, therefore, is an adequate response, but with some limited ambiguity as to whether the bidder can meet the requirement due to the bidder’s failure to provide all of the evidence requested.
3	<b>Poor</b> – The response does not demonstrate that the bidder meets the requirement in one or more areas. This, therefore, is a poor response with significant ambiguity as to whether the bidder can meet the requirement due to the failure by the bidder to show that it meets one or more areas of the requirement.
0	<b>Unacceptable</b> – The response is non-compliant with the requirements of the RFP and/or no response has been provided.

14.4 Commercial Evaluation – Your “Overall Price” (as calculated in accordance with requirements of Annex [4] (Pricing Approach) for the goods and/or services will be evaluated by the evaluation panel for the purposes of the commercial evaluation. Prices must not be subject to any pricing assumptions, qualifications or indexation not provided for explicitly by the British Council as part of the pricing approach.

In the event that any prices are expressed as being subject to any pricing assumptions, qualifications or indexation not provided for by the British Council as part of the pricing approach, the British Council may reject the full tender response at this point. The British Council may also reject any tender response where the Overall Price for the goods and/or services is considered by the British Council to be abnormally low following the relevant processes set out under the EU procurement rules. A maximum offer score of 10 will be awarded to the tender response offering the lowest "Overall Price". Other tender responses will be awarded a mark by application of the following formula: (Lowest Overall Price/Overall Price being evaluated) x 10 (rounded to two decimal places) = commercial score.

14.5 Moderation and application of weightings – The evaluation panel appointed for this procurement will meet to agree and moderate scores for each award criteria. Final scores in terms of a percentage of the overall tender score will be obtained by applying the relevant weighting factors set out as part of the award criteria table above. The percentage scores for each award criteria will be amalgamated to give a percentage score out of 100.

14.6 The winning tender response – The winning tender response shall be the tender response scoring the highest percentage score out of 100 when applying the above evaluation methodology, which is also supported by any required verification evidence (to include, without limitation, any updated information or references relating to any Qualification Question responses) obtained by the Authority relating to any self-certification or other requirements referred to in the Qualification Questionnaire (*if used*). If any verification evidence requested from a supplier, or a relevant third party as may be referred to by the supplier in the Qualification Questionnaire (*if used*) as a party prepared to provide such information, is not provided in accordance with any timescales specified by the British Council and/or any evidence reviewed by the British Council (whose decision shall be final) does not demonstrate compliance with any such requirement, the British Council may reject that tender response in full and disqualify the potential winning supplier from the Procurement Process at that point.

**List of Annexes forming part of this RFP (issued as separate documents):**

**Annex 1 - Terms and Conditions of Contract**

**Annex 2 – Which Ministry should lead skills development? International reflections on TVET governance (British Council, 2016); Sub National TVET Governance (British Council 2017)**

**Annex 3 – Supplier Response**

**Annex 4 – Pricing Approach**