



UPU | UNIVERSAL
POSTAL
UNION

Call for tenders

Market study – UPU technology roadmap

22 May 2024

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1 Introduction

1.1 Profile of the UPU

The Universal Postal Union (UPU) was founded in 1874 in Berne, Switzerland, with the main goals of establishing a single postal territory for the reciprocal exchange of letter-post items and adopting common principles for the international postal service in a non-discriminatory manner. Currently comprising 192 member countries, the UPU became a specialized agency of the United Nations in 1948.

The main mission of the UPU is to stimulate the lasting development of efficient and accessible universal postal services of quality, in order to facilitate communication between the inhabitants of the world. It does this by guaranteeing the free circulation of items over a single postal territory composed of interconnected networks, encouraging the adoption of fair common standards and the use of technology, ensuring cooperation and interaction among stakeholders, promoting effective technical cooperation, and ensuring the satisfaction of customers' changing needs. The UPU is thus expected to play a major role in the continued revitalization of postal services.

Furthermore, the UPU facilitates the development of worldwide postal services by providing an information and communication technology framework that allows the designated operators¹ of UPU member countries to concentrate on the delivery of postal services to their customers. In this context, the UPU provides a global network with value-added services, as well as computerized applications for the management of international mail and international postal money orders.

2 Terms and conditions

Unless otherwise indicated in this call for tenders, the term "Bidder" shall refer to any person, company or legal entity submitting a proposal in response to this call for tenders. The term "Vendor" shall refer to any selected bidder.

2.1 Confidentiality

Bidders shall treat in strict confidence all information contained in this call for tenders and its attached documents that is not already publicly known or generally accessible, particularly any documentation marked as confidential and distributed by the UPU to Bidders as additional confidential tender documentation. Bidders shall prevent the disclosure or distribution of all such information to third parties and other entities and persons not expressly authorized herein. In case of doubt, these confidentiality provisions shall nevertheless be observed. All Bidders are obliged to observe these confidentiality provisions before, during and after the tender process. These provisions shall not affect the legal obligations of the UPU and Bidders to disclose information.

Bidders shall not use such information for any purposes other than those associated with this call for tenders. The call for tenders and all attached documents may be distributed or made available only to persons directly involved in the tender process on behalf of Bidders. If external agents or subcontractors are involved in the preparation of the tender documents, this must be indicated and their names provided in the participation notification (see section 2.14).

Bidders shall assume full responsibility for the compliance of their agents, consultants, employees and subcontractors, as well as any third parties involved on their behalf in this tender process, with these rules of confidentiality, and shall be liable for any damages resulting from misconduct or unauthorized disclosure.

If a Bidder violates the confidentiality provisions contained herein, it shall be liable to pay a penalty to the UPU unless it can prove that no fault is attributable to it. This penalty shall not exceed 50,000 CHF per infringement. Payment of any such penalties shall not release Bidders from their obligation to observe these confidentiality requirements.

¹ In accordance with article 2.1.6 of the UPU Constitution, a designated operator is any governmental or non-governmental entity officially designated by the member country to operate postal services and to fulfil the related obligations arising out of the Acts of the Union on its territory.

Bidders wishing to submit a proposal in response to this call for tenders must contact the person(s) specified in section 2.15 below and may, if necessary, request additional information from the UPU in relation to this call for tenders.

Without prejudice to the confidentiality provisions set out above, Bidders agree that the receipt of any such information may be subject to the prior signature of a non-disclosure agreement between the Bidder and the UPU, under conditions to be determined and communicated by the latter.

2.2 Legal status of the Vendor

The Vendor shall be regarded as having, in law, the legal status of independent contractor. The Vendor and its agents, consultants, employees and subcontractors (as authorized by the UPU) shall in no way be regarded as employees of the UPU. Such agents, consultants, employees and subcontractors of the Vendor shall not be entitled to any employment benefits from the UPU. The Vendor alone shall be responsible for due payment of all compensation owed to such agents, consultants, employees and subcontractors, including payment of any employment taxes, benefits, compensation and insurance. The Vendor shall represent and warrant that it will comply with all laws, rules and regulations required by the relevant authorities, including the appropriate withholding, reporting and payment of all necessary taxes.

The Vendor shall be liable for all work performed, including any acts or omissions, by its agents, consultants, employees and subcontractors.

2.3 Scope of the call for tenders

This call for tenders concerns the provision of specialized consulting services for the conduct of: i) a market study of the global postal information technology (IT) sector and the major trends thereof; ii) an evaluation of the existing IT solutions developed and provided by the UPU (including an analysis of their relevance and sustainability); and iii) an assessment of any potential opportunities for the UPU to develop new IT solutions, along with recommendations as to the technologies to be used in such solutions.

2.4 Background

In the areas of mail operations, payment services, service quality, interoperability and business-critical intelligence, the UPU currently offers highly effective and cost-efficient IT solutions and services to its members and other eligible entities from the wider postal sector.

The IT framework under which those solutions are developed and delivered is essentially as follows:

- Provision of IT solutions and services to member Posts, with a focus on UPU-defined international and domestic postal services (addressing solutions, e-commerce, physical services (letter post, parcel post, EMS), postal payment services, customs declarations, quality and compliance, supply chain integration etc.). The purpose of such IT solutions is to support member Posts in the delivery of certain UPU-defined international postal services. In an attempt to enhance postal services and to provide services to broader postal sector players (e.g. airlines and customs agencies), the UPU has recently expanded its IT portfolio to include interoperability solutions, electronic advance data (EAD), and domestic mail processing and tracking;
- Provision of IT solutions to the UPU secretariat (International Bureau). These solutions comprise corporate IT systems (enterprise resource planning, office solutions) and quality of service monitoring and statistical analysis systems.

The Postal Technology Centre Directorate (DCTP) of the UPU International Bureau is responsible for the creation of IT solutions for member Posts. The Telematics Cooperative is a body of elected Union member countries, which oversees information and communication technology. In collaboration with various UPU programmes, the Telematics Cooperative employs a collective and committed approach to maximize the implementation of IT projects, in order to help all member Posts adapt quickly to rapidly evolving IT needs.

The principal IT solutions and services offered by the UPU can be grouped as follows:

- UPU applications

- Logistics: development, deployment and support of UPU applications, including the International Postal System (IPS), Customs Declaration System (CDS) and Domestic Postal System (DPS)
- Financial: the UPU Interconnection Platform (UPU-IP), the International Financial System (IFS) and associated services
- Mobile apps for EAD, mail delivery and payment services
- Cloud services
- UPU postal IT network
 - Management, implementation and maintenance of the UPU's secure postal network (POST*Net) and the supplementary services that it provides
 - Quality of service reporting
 - Technologies to support compliance with anti-money laundering, EAD and, in general, any regulations applicable to the postal sector
- Integrated solutions: E-commerce APIs designed to facilitate e-commerce integration with a business's current IT systems
- Support services: Support and helpdesk services available to users of the UPU's IT products, services and applications, as well as training and deployments carried out through the DCTP and its many regional training centres

2.5 Objectives

The purpose of this call for tenders is to identify a service provider capable of conducting the market study outlined in section 2.3 and set out in detail in section 4 (Service requirements). It is expected that the services will be provided over a period of two months.

2.6 Use of subcontractors

The Vendor shall not assign, sublicense, subcontract, pledge or otherwise transfer or dispose of its tender, or any of the rights and obligations contained therein or in an associated contract with the UPU, without the prior written consent of the UPU.

The approval by the UPU of the engagement of any subcontractor shall not relieve the Vendor of any of its obligations or responsibilities concerning the work performed by such subcontractors.

2.7 Use of the emblem, name and initials of the UPU

Bidders shall not advertise or otherwise make public the fact that they intend to provide, are providing or have provided services to the UPU, or use the emblem, name or initials of the UPU in connection with their business for purposes of commercial advantage or goodwill, without prior and explicit permission from the UPU. Bidders shall take all reasonable measures to ensure compliance with this provision by their agents, consultants, employees and subcontractors.

2.8 Collusive bidding, anti-competitive practices and any other similar conduct

Without prejudice to the provisions in sections 3 and 4 below, Bidders (including their agents, consultants, employees and subcontractors) shall not engage in any collusive bidding, anti-competitive practices or any other similar conduct in relation to:

- the preparation and submission of tenders;
- the clarification of tenders;
- the conduct and content of any negotiations, including final contract negotiations.

For the purposes of this call for tenders, collusive bidding, anti-competitive practices and any other similar conduct may include the disclosure to, or exchange or clarification with, any other Bidder of information (in any form), whether or not such information is confidential to the UPU or to any other Bidder, in order to alter the results of the call for tenders in such a way that would lead to an outcome other than that which would have been obtained through a competitive process. In addition to any other remedies available to it, the UPU

may, at its sole discretion, immediately reject any tender submitted by a Bidder that, in the UPU's opinion, has engaged in any collusive bidding, anti-competitive practices or any other similar conduct with any other Bidder in relation to the preparation or submission of tenders, whether with respect to this call for tenders or other procurement processes conducted by the UPU.

2.9 Intellectual property

This call for tenders and all its attached documents, including any content, forms, statements, concepts, projects and procedures explicitly or implicitly forming part of the call for tenders, constitute the exclusive intellectual property of the UPU. This call for tenders is communicated to the various Bidders with the sole purpose of assisting them in the preparation of their respective tenders. Any hard copies of this call for tenders shall be destroyed or returned to the UPU by unsuccessful Bidders at the request of the UPU.

2.10 Privileges and immunities

Nothing in or relating to this call for tenders, the activities described herein or any potential agreements related thereto shall be deemed as a waiver, expressed or implied, of any of the privileges, immunities and facilities that the UPU enjoys as a specialized agency of the United Nations system, pursuant to the Swiss Host State Act and the Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations (on Swiss territory), the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies (outside Switzerland), and any other conventions and laws recognizing and/or granting such privileges, immunities and facilities to the UPU and its officials (such as the International Organizations Immunities Act in the case of the United States of America).

Accordingly, the Vendor shall expressly acknowledge and agree that the property and assets of the UPU, including any archives, data, documents and funds belonging to the UPU or held by it (including, without limitation, the data/hosting environments and servers pertaining to or associated with the provision of the services, as well as any data or documents in any form belonging to or held by the UPU on behalf of UPU member countries and their designated operators), are inviolable and shall be immune from search, requisition, confiscation, expropriation and any other form of interference, whether through executive, administrative, judicial or legislative action. The Vendor shall immediately contact the UPU in the event of any attempt to violate or any violation of the UPU's privileges and immunities, and shall take all reasonable measures to prevent such violations.

In the light of the UPU's status as a specialized agency of the United Nations (and without prejudice to the observance, by the UPU, of any sanctions established by the United Nations Security Council), Bidders shall expressly certify their legal and operational willingness and ability to provide the services on a non-discriminatory basis for the benefit of all eligible entities established and/or situated in the territory of any UPU member country, irrespective of the existence of diplomatic relations between a Bidder's country of incorporation and/or operation and any UPU member country (including its designated operators).

2.11 Tax exemption

Pursuant to article III, section 9, of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies, the UPU is exempt from all direct taxes and from customs restrictions, duties and charges of a similar nature in respect of articles imported or exported for its official use.

Furthermore, as an intergovernmental organization and a specialized agency of the United Nations, the UPU is exempt from value-added tax (VAT) in Switzerland (OLTVA, article 22; *Instructions 2001 sur la TVA*, articles 574, 816 and others), as well as in other countries. Therefore, all prices shall be indicated in "net" form, without VAT or similar taxes.

2.12 Language

Bidders must submit all tender documents entirely in English.

2.13 Signature

Tender documents shall be signed by a representative (or representatives) duly designated and authorized to act on the Bidder's behalf and with the authority to legally bind the Bidder and accept the terms and conditions of this call for tenders.

2.14 Participation notification

Upon receipt of this call for tenders, Bidders shall send confirmation of participation to the contact person(s) listed in section 2.15 by the deadline indicated in section 2.20.

2.15 Contact persons

Secretary of the Tenders and Procurements Committee
Universal Postal Union
International Bureau
Weltpoststrasse 4
3015 BERNE
SWITZERLAND

E-mail: caa@upu.int

2.16 Further inquiries and questions

Bidders must send any questions regarding the content of this call for tenders or any requests for clarification in writing to the contact person(s) listed in section 2.15 by 21 June 2024.

Answers to questions submitted by Bidders, as well as any additional information and updates relevant to this call for tenders, shall be published on the UPU website at www.upu.int/en/Universal-Postal-Union/Procurement.

2.17 Delivery of tenders and deadline

All tenders must be submitted to the UPU by e-mail only at RFP-2024-006@upu.int with "RFP-2024-006 – Market study – UPU technology roadmap" as the subject line.

The deadline for the submission of tenders is **5 July 2024 at 16.00 CEST**.

The UPU shall not take into consideration any tenders received after this date and time. Furthermore, it shall not accept any tenders sent to any e-mail address other than that specified above or sent by any other means.

There shall be no charge to the UPU for the preparation and submission of tender documents by Bidders.

2.18 Evaluation procedure

The evaluation procedure serves to determine as objectively as possible the best solution from the UPU's perspective, based on the tenders received. The prescribed structure of tenders, i.e. the response format set out in sections 3 and 4, is therefore mandatory for all Bidders. The UPU shall not take into consideration any tenders that do not fulfil the mandatory criteria.

Bidders should identify any aspects where they envisage modifications being necessary or consider elements to be missing.

Tenders will be evaluated and the winning tender selected based on a non-exhaustive list of criteria, with different weightings, as set out in section 4. Bidders should therefore consider how their tender corresponds with the criteria listed and clearly indicate this in their response document.

The deliberations of the UPU Tenders and Procurements Committee (TPC) are strictly confidential. The TPC shall submit a report on its evaluation of the tenders received to the Director General of the UPU International Bureau, together with its final recommendation, for his assessment and authorization.

The UPU is not bound to accept the lowest tender and reserves the right to accept all or part of a tender. In awarding the contract, account will be taken of both the overall costs of the work and of the nature and quality of the services to be provided. The UPU reserves the right to negotiate prices and terms and conditions of contract after receipt of tenders.

Bidders will be informed of the outcome of their tender as soon as possible after the UPU has made its final selection.

2.19 *Modification, suspension or cancellation of the call for tenders*

The UPU reserves the right, at its sole discretion and at any time before the conclusion of the tender process (i.e. at any time prior to the signature of the relevant contract with the Vendor), to modify, suspend or cancel all or part of this call for tenders.

2.20 *Tentative schedule*

Publication of call for tenders	22 May 2024
Deadline for submission of queries	21 June 2024
Deadline for provision of responses to queries	28 June 2024
Deadline for submission of tenders to the UPU	5 July 2024 at 16.00 CEST
Estimated start of engagement	19 August 2024

3 **Tender structure – Response format**

All information provided by Bidders must be fully compliant with the terms and conditions set out in section 2 above, as well as the provisions of this section and the service requirements listed in section 4 below.

Moreover, the requirements stipulated in this call for tenders must be met in their entirety, according to the structure defined below and following the sequence and numbering provided in this section. The UPU shall evaluate all Bidder responses in accordance with the structure defined herein and shall have the right to reject any tenders that do not fulfil the requirements of this call for tenders.

For each of the requirements listed in this call for tenders, Bidders shall answer with one of the following statements:

- Covered;
- Covered with limitations (explaining relevant limitations);
- Not covered.

Where the answer is “covered” or “covered with limitations”, Bidders shall provide further details and/or examples of existing implementations of their solution in the field (existing use cases).

3.1 *Cover letter*

Bidders shall submit a cover letter including:

- A statement that the Bidder has read, understands and accepts all provisions of this call for tenders;
- The Bidder’s name, telephone number, postal address and e-mail address, and the name(s) of its representative(s);
- A statement that the Bidder’s tender documents are valid for a minimum period of 120 days.

The cover letter shall be signed by a representative (or representatives) duly designated and authorized to act on the Bidder’s behalf and with the authority to legally bind the Bidder and accept the terms and conditions of this call for tenders, and shall also include a confirmation of such authorization by the Bidder.

3.2 *Executive summary*

Bidders shall provide an executive summary highlighting the most important aspects of their tender.

3.3 *Bidder information*

Bidders must provide the following information:

- Company structure, locations/subsidiaries;
- Financial data (turnover, profit, etc.);
- Partners and equity holders of the company;
- Company history;
- Market position and share in relevant markets.

3.4 *Subcontractor information*

Not applicable.

3.5 *Functional proposal*

Bidders shall submit a proposal addressing all of the requirements set out in section 4 (Service requirements). The UPU shall evaluate the tenders based on the structure therein.

3.6 *Pricing structure*

Bidders shall provide a detailed pricing structure for the services proposed, as set out in section 4 (Service requirements), including the following:

- Daily rates for provision of the services;
- Discount structure;
- Pricing options.

Bidders shall not include VAT in their pricing structure (see section 2.11 above). All pricing information shall be set out exclusively in Swiss francs CHF.

3.7 *Delivery and payment schedule*

The target dates for provision of the services are as follows:

Start date: 19 August 2024

End date: 18 October 2024

The delivery and payment schedules should be proposed by Bidders in their pricing structures, and must be agreed with the UPU.

The services provided by the Vendor shall be invoiced in arrears on a monthly basis. The UPU will make payment within 30 business days of receipt of invoice, subject to its acceptance of the services provided and the Vendor's transmission to the UPU of any and all documentation clearly detailing the services to which the invoice pertains (in a format to be established by the UPU).

3.8 *UPU General Terms and Conditions*

Bidders shall include in their tender a statement of acceptance of the UPU General Terms and Conditions for the Provision of Services, attached hereto for reference.

The final terms of any contract arising from this call for tenders shall be defined by the UPU and accepted by the Vendor. Contract negotiations shall commence only after the final selection of a Vendor by the UPU.

4 Service requirements

4.1 Description of the services

The Vendor must demonstrate a thorough understanding of the typical IT environment and landscape, current innovation trends and business strategies applicable to the international postal sector and, in particular, the make-up of intergovernmental and cooperative structures, including member Posts and other stakeholders in the postal sector.

In addition, the Vendor must demonstrate a thorough understanding of the legal, regulatory and technological aspects pertaining to the UPU as an intergovernmental entity and the above-mentioned structures, and relevant stakeholders. This includes the ability to identify the most important technological features and to conduct a SWOT analysis of IT solutions used in the transportation, logistics, e-commerce and payment sectors, as well as in other emerging markets that rely heavily on technology (e.g. e-government, digital business).

The Vendor's main goal will be to share its expertise with the UPU to assist in creating a strategic IT plan for the upcoming Congress cycle. In order to meet customers' IT needs, address their business IT concerns and support member Posts in seizing current and future market opportunities (through the creation of new UPU IT services and solutions), the plan must serve to precisely define three components of the strategy, namely "how", "what" and "why".

In particular, the "how" component focuses on analysis of whether the DCTP's current governance, operational and resource framework is fit for purpose in view of the DCTP's current and future growth and success within the wider context of the UPU. Where necessary, the Vendor should recommend improvements to optimize the DCTP's governance, operational and resource arrangements in order to ensure the success of the DCTP's organization during the 2026–2029 cycle and beyond.

The Vendor will also be required to identify and classify major gaps and/or missing features in the UPU's existing IT solutions portfolio that could potentially be addressed by one of the UPU's existing IT products and services. The objective in this regard is to identify major market changes or broad trends affecting member Posts and other wider postal sector stakeholders, and thus define corresponding IT solutions that could fall within the scope of the UPU's portfolio of products and services.

First-hand information from member Posts, vendors and other stakeholders will be collected by the UPU and the Vendor, and will serve as the basis for this market study.

For the groups of UPU IT services listed in section 2.4, the Vendor shall ascertain:

- The level and extent of current user satisfaction and how this affects their roadmap, IT budget and plans to continue using UPU IT products
- Gaps and limitations in existing UPU IT solutions and offerings that may reduce the relevance of the solutions for users in coming years
- In the event of dissatisfaction, the major concerns of member Posts as users of UPU IT solutions, such as:
 - software development cycle: delivery delays, the UPU's capacity and agility in terms of reacting to new business requirements in a timely manner
 - functionality gaps in existing IT solutions
 - quality/reliability of UPU IT solutions
 - data security
 - helpdesk and IT support services available for UPU IT solutions
 - other
- In the event that the current offering fails to fulfil needs or allows for only limited adaptation, the main concerns of member Posts as users of UPU IT solutions, such as:
 - functional or product gaps

- inadequate or unavailable technical or subject matter expertise
- inability to offer a solution as a result of changes in the postal and logistics industry
- trust
- factors explaining limited success:
 - cost of solutions
 - lack of interest (optional service by the UPU, not provided by the Post)
 - regulatory and compliance complexity and costs
 - better solutions available on the market
 - data security
 - other
- Measures that the UPU can implement to improve its portfolio and/or make it more attractive to potential customers

Finally, the Vendor will examine and evaluate the current software platform support policy on which the UPU IT services are based, in order to:

- Check, comment on and challenge the UPU IT policies and roadmap
- Highlight possible risks relating to the existing IT platforms, such as:
 - costs
 - obsolescence
 - availability of expertise (possibility of recruiting new trained staff if needed)
 - security
- Recommend possible technological changes, either to the existing portfolio or with regard to new services identified

4.2 Bidder requirements

Bidders should ideally have proven IT-related consulting experience in at least one of the following sectors:

- Postal;
- Logistics/e-commerce/transport;
- Payment networks.

Bidders must present:

- A full description of their project methodologies for provision of the services;
- A full schedule for delivery of the services within the defined lead time.

Bidders may also provide separate optional offers for:

- A summary analysis of member Posts' IT environment, and opportunities and major trends in new markets;
- A product maturity map and SWOT analysis for the existing IT solutions provided by the UPU;
- Evaluation of the current platform and roadmaps, with recommendations as to new technologies (and methodologies to introduce such technologies).

Bidders shall demonstrate a record of satisfactory performance in similar activities (i.e. a list of similar projects and realizations, as well as at least two references for projects not older than two years). The business transactions and activities carried out by the Bidder must be compliant with the mandates and principles of the UPU.

4.3 Consultant requirements

Bidders not operating as an independent consultant should propose at least three individual consultants in accordance with the requirements specified in this call for tenders for the performance of the services and activities described herein. Bidders are required to provide the CVs and diplomas of the said consultants, as well as a letter of motivation and a brief write-up (maximum 1,000 words) of the consultants' approach and methodology with regard to the project, for further verification and evaluation by the UPU. The UPU shall have the right to reject a proposed consultant if the individual does not fulfil the UPU's requirements as defined in this call for tenders.

Bidders not operating as an independent consultant should describe any relevant procedures concerning the replacement of individual consultants if so requested by the UPU.

4.4 Assessment criteria

Bidders will be assessed on the basis of a scoring system of up to 70 points for their functional proposal and 30 points for their pricing structure.

The functional proposal shall be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Points obtainable</i>
Established consulting practice in logistics operations, transportation and supply chain management	30
Expertise and understanding of IT environments in large global postal and logistics organizations	20
IT business strategy, consulting and service management experience	20

Bidders shall provide evidence of their ability to meet these requirements by means of a list of references.

4.5 Duration of services

The services are scheduled to commence on 19 August 2024 for a total contract term of two months.

4.6 Location of the services

The Vendor or its assigned consultant shall in principle work from its own premises or his/her home office.

The Vendor or its assigned consultant shall liaise and work closely with the UPU (as instructed by the latter) and may be required from time to time to carry out certain tasks from the headquarters of the UPU in Berne, Switzerland.

4.7 Reporting

The Vendor shall provide the UPU with weekly reports setting out the relevant services performed by the Vendor during that time frame. Such reports shall be prepared in accordance with a structure and format defined by the UPU (i.e. time sheets).

The UPU may contest the Vendor's time sheets within 10 business days of receipt thereof. If the time sheets are not contested by the UPU within the said time frame, the services detailed therein may be deemed as duly provided by the Vendor and accepted by the UPU.

4.8 Other requirements

Bidders shall describe any relevant procedures for ensuring the continuity of the services provided and for appropriate backup and retraining, as well as any relevant procedures pertaining to project management and communication.

Bidders shall also confirm that their tender covers all costs associated with the provision of the services referred to herein. Any other costs to be incurred by the Vendor, including any travel and subsistence costs incurred in the provision of the services at locations other than its own premises and specifically designated by the UPU, shall be subject to the prior written consent of the UPU. No other fees shall be paid, with the exception of reimbursement of other unavoidable costs incurred for successful delivery of the services, which shall also be subject to the prior written consent of the UPU.

4.9 Additional information

Bidders may include any additional information that they deem necessary or relevant in order for the UPU to gain a clear and detailed understanding of the services being offered.