RFP-2026-016 - Provision of senior communication coordination and advisory services

Questions and answers

1. Does the UPU provide support with residence and work authorization in Switzerland for a non-EU consultant working on site in Berne?

Yes. Once the contract is signed, the UPU will request the necessary permits from the Swiss authorities. The selected consultant will be required to provide the documents needed for this purpose.

2. Should the monthly rate include relocation and accommodation costs, or are these handled separately?

The monthly rate must cover all costs associated with the provision of the services in Berne, including any relocation, accommodation and local transport costs. No separate allowance will be paid for these costs.

3. Is any travel outside Berne expected as part of the services?

Regular travel is not expected. The consultant may occasionally be asked to travel, for example to support communication at UPU events held outside Berne. In that case, travel and subsistence costs will be covered by the UPU separately, subject to its prior written consent, and are not to be included in the monthly rate.

4. Will the evaluation committee accept concise case studies describing the assignment, the consultant's contribution and results achieved, together with links to publicly available deliverables?

Yes. Concise case studies with links to publicly available deliverables are accepted as portfolio items. Each case study should clearly indicate the bidder's own contribution.

5. Or is there a preference for complete examples of original communications plans and working documents, even where confidentiality considerations apply?

There is no preference for complete documents. Bidders must not submit confidential documents without the authorization of their owner. Extracts or redacted versions are accepted.

6. What level of responsibility is expected for coordination activities?

The consultant will work under the supervision of the Coordinator for External Relations and Partnerships, in close collaboration with the members of the Communication and Outreach team. The role combines coordination and advisory functions, as described in section 4.1. The consultant will coordinate the programme's annual work plan and the integrated editorial and production calendar, and follow up on deliverables, deadlines and priorities with the team members.

7. Will the consultant be expected to manage internal and external contributors and production workflows?

The consultant will be expected to manage production workflows and the work of external suppliers (briefing, follow-up and quality control). With internal contributors, including members of the

Communication and Outreach team and other directorates, the consultant will have a coordination and follow-up role. The consultant will have no supervisory responsibility over UPU staff members.

8. Or will the role be primarily advisory to the Communication and Outreach team?

The role is not primarily advisory. It combines hands-on coordination, content production and advisory functions, as described above and in section 4.1 of the call for tenders.

9. Does the on-site requirement mean physical presence five days per week throughout the assignment?

No. The services are to be provided on a full-time basis, mainly on site at the UPU headquarters in Berne, for the duration of the contract. Remote work may be agreed with the UPU up to a maximum of two days per week.

10. Can occasional remote working arrangements be considered by mutual agreement?

Yes. Remote work may be agreed with the UPU up to a maximum of two days per week.

11. Should consultants include all travel and accommodation costs associated with working in Berne within their monthly rate?

Yes. The monthly rate must cover all costs associated with the provision of the services in Berne, including any relocation, accommodation and local transport costs. No separate allowance will be paid for these costs.

12. Are separate arrangements envisaged for consultants whose primary residence is elsewhere in Switzerland?

No. The same conditions apply to all bidders, whatever their place of residence. Commuting costs to Berne must be included in the monthly rate.

13. Should the technical proposal describe the bidder's approach to fulfilling each duty listed in section 4.1?

No. A detailed methodology for each duty is not required.

14. Or is it sufficient to describe the skills and experience that qualify the bidder for the assignment?

Yes. Tenders will be assessed exclusively on qualifications, experience and suitability for the role, according to the criteria set out in section 4.4. The technical proposal should clearly demonstrate how the bidder's skills and experience meet the requirements of sections 4.1 to 4.3. A short description of how the bidder would approach the main areas of work is welcome but not required.

15. How many working hours or days per month should be assumed when preparing the financial offer?

The services are required on a full-time basis, i.e. five working days per week. Bidders should quote a fixed monthly rate for full-time services.

16. Should the financial offer include a pro-rated allowance for personal leave and statutory holidays?

The monthly rate is a fixed rate for full-time services. As an independent contractor, the consultant is not entitled to paid leave, and no separate allowance will be paid for leave or holidays. Bidders may take this into account when setting their monthly rate. Absences must be agreed beforehand with the UPU.

17. Given the potentially large size of the portfolio, will the UPU accept a ZIP file?

Yes. ZIP files are accepted. The total size of each e-mail must not exceed 25 MB. If necessary, the tender may be sent in several e-mails, each numbered (e.g. "1 of 3") and using the same subject line. All e-mails must be received before the deadline.

18. Will download links (e.g. WeTransfer or Google Drive) be accepted instead of e-mail attachments?

No. File-sharing links are not accepted, as all tender documents must be received by the UPU by the deadline and must not be modified after submission. Concise case studies with links to publicly available deliverables may, however, be included in the portfolio.

19. Must an individual consultant already hold recognized self-employed status in Switzerland at the time of submission?

No, recognized self-employed status is not required.

20. Or can registration and invoicing arrangements be established before the contract starts?

As a specialized agency of the United Nations, the UPU does not require the consultant to hold any local registration in order to contract with it. However, the consultant is solely responsible for complying with the laws and regulations of their country of residence, including any registration, tax and social security obligations that apply to them. The UPU will not reimburse any national taxes levied on the remuneration paid under the agreement.

21. Does the UPU require a particular contractual or invoicing structure for an individual consultant based in Switzerland?

The UPU will conclude a consultancy agreement with the selected consultant, who will act in a personal capacity and have the legal status of an independent contractor vis-à-vis the UPU. The consultant will not be regarded as a UPU staff member and will not be entitled to any employment benefits from the UPU. The consultant will be solely responsible for any taxes, social security contributions and insurance applicable to them in Switzerland. Services will be invoiced monthly in arrears, in CHF, with reference to the agreement and together with the monthly report and time sheets. Payment will be made within 30 business days of receipt of the invoice, subject to acceptance of the services by the UPU.