RFP No: 202003/02

RFP for Selection of Consultant

Support LabCoP country teams in developing strategies for a hashtag campaign to improve viral load demand creation and uptake
# Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASLM</td>
<td>African Society for Laboratory Medicine</td>
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<tr>
<td>LabCoP</td>
<td>Laboratory systems strengthening community of practice</td>
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<td>MoH</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
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<td>PLHIV</td>
<td>People living with HIV</td>
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<td>RFP</td>
<td>Request for Proposals</td>
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<td>RVLT</td>
<td>Routine viral load testing</td>
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<td>SSA</td>
<td>sub-Saharan Africa</td>
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<td>SME</td>
<td>Subject Matter Expert</td>
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<td>US</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<td>VL</td>
<td>viral load</td>
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3 Introduction

The African Society for Laboratory Medicine (ASLM) is a Pan-African professional body, working to advocate for the critical role and needs of laboratory medicine and networks throughout Africa. Medical laboratories play a pivotal role in global disease diagnosis, surveillance, outbreak investigation, initiation and monitoring of therapy, as well as research and development. Unfortunately, medical laboratories in Africa are underdeveloped and cannot meet the testing demands of rapidly growing health delivery services in the 21st century. Inadequate resources and diagnostic services compromise the quality of patient care due to misdiagnosis and consequently under or over-treatment of disease, which presents significant economic and public health challenges.

The Laboratory Systems Strengthening Community of Practice (LabCoP) project is a learning network, designed to link multidisciplinary teams (Laboratorians, clinicians, policy-makers, patients and communities) from 11 member countries to exchange knowledge experiences and best practices in order to strengthen laboratory systems, scale up viral load (VL) testing and promote the utilization of test results. In August 2018 LabCoP facilitated the rapid self-assessment of laboratory systems, supporting the scale-up of HIV VL services of LabCoP’s member countries. The results of this assessment showed that demand creation and results’ utilization are among the weakest thematic areas along the VL cascade. As a result, demand creation and results’ utilization were prioritized for intervention by the multidisciplinary country groups during the first LabCoP face-to-face meeting held in Uganda in October 2018.

Successful scale-up of VL testing depends heavily on creating sufficient demand for VL testing and correct VL result utilization which builds on patient education, sensitization, and awareness of VL testing. People living with HIV (PLHIV) education and awareness efforts are minimal in most of LabCoP’s participating countries, as indicated by the country teams’ rapid self-assessment. In theory, county teams include representative of the civil society, but in practice, their collaboration with the laboratorians and clinicians to adequately educate communities, remains laborious. To address this deficit, LabCoP has established a viral load awareness campaign and friendly competition among the participating countries with the goal of increasing VL demand in their countries and local communities. LabCoP anticipate that the hashtag campaign will provide a useful opportunity for country teams to work on an awareness campaign in a multidisciplinary way.

4 Objective of the Request for Proposal

ASLM is soliciting a vendor (consultant, subject matter expert) to support LabCoP country teams in developing strategies for a hashtag campaign to improve viral load demand creation and uptake. The vendor is expected to be well versed in conducting campaigns towards HIV demand creation. Successful bidders will sign an agreement with ASLM to complete the work within 3 months.

5 Scope of Work

The message to be used in the campaign is, ‘I need to know my viral load for my health, the health of my partner(s), and my unborn/breastfeeding baby. VL helps determine if I need to change my ARVs. Visit your clinic and demand a VL test today! #NeedToKnowMyViralLoad’.
The strategy should include a plan for spreading the social media hashtag and paired message with the assistance of like-minded organizations and include methods for disseminating the message through traditional media like print, radio, and other communications channels that will reach those who do not have access to the internet.

The plan may identify ongoing activities in country, to complement and not duplicate them. Teams should include in their plans the types of community organizations and locations where PLHIV may be reached. Such locations may include:

1) Community clinics
2) Community recreation centers
3) Community faith centers
4) Social service centers
5) Other health facilities – e.g. Pharmacies, etc.
6) Bars and nightclubs
7) Anywhere where people living with HIV may visit.

6 Deliverables

- Campaign proposal for 2-3 countries,
- Hashtag media campaign endorsed by MoH communication teams with a roll-out plan over several months
- Support Campaign roll out in 2-3 countries
- Develop a monitoring and evaluation plan for measuring the impact of the campaign.
- Provide a virtual orientation (1-hour webinar) to all LabCoP Countries on how to roll out such as campaign

Period of performance: 1 March 2020 to 31 May 2020

Approximate total budget: $15,000

N.B. This consultancy shall be paid on a task basis and is NOT a monthly consultancy; as such it shall be paid as and when the assigned tasks are undertaken.

7 Qualifications for the position

1. Strong track record of supporting demand creation campaigns
2. Experience with developing strategies for HIV demand creation
3. Excellent proficiency in the English language
4. Resume that documents work in SSA countries
5. The individual should be able to start immediately
6. The individual should have at least seven years’ experience in HIV programming in low- and middle-income countries

The review shall include checking deliverables in relation to the scope of work and feedback from the Project team.
8 Instructions for submitting proposals

A. The format of the submission, in response to this RFP, must include, but is not limited, to the following:

   I. Background on the Respondent and qualification and experience. Indicate how these qualifications and experience relate to the proposed functional areas applied for.

   II. Capability Statement. The Capability Statement is a description of the Respondent’s work history and/or experience with similar projects in the past five (5) years. This should include but is not limited to, a narrative description of the principal results achieved, how they were achieved and how those results related to the problem statement being addressed.

   III. How the Respondent proposes to achieve the deliverables. Include specific activities and strategic approach that will be conducted under each objective.

B. Completed proposals shall consist of typewritten pages utilizing a minimum 12-point font. A maximum of 10 pages for the proposal is allowed.

C. An authorized individual representing the Respondent will sign and date the proposal cover sheet. The signatory agent’s printed name, title, name of the organization, address, phone and fax numbers and email address must be provided. Failure to provide a signed copy of the affirmation statement below will be cause for the proposal not to be considered.

   I affirm that the information within this proposal, to the best of my knowledge, is true and accurate. Further, I am duly authorized to sign and submit this proposal on behalf of this agency. I fully affirm and understand that failure to meet the requirements of this proposal at the submitted price may result in my organization’s contract being terminated.

D. Include at least two (2) current references and their contact information from organizations that have used Respondent’s services within the last twelve (12) months.

E. Send your completed application by email to the point of contact indicated below as early as 3 February 2020 and no later than 28 February 2020 (11:59 pm East African Time).

   Point of contact:
   Direct any written questions or request for information about this RFP to:
   Pascale Ondoa
   Director of Science and New Initiatives
   Email: pondo@aslm.org
   Phone Number: +31 6394 758 18

9 Evaluation and Award Process

A team of ASLM staff and outside experts will evaluate the applications based on preset standards relevant to the specific project and its correlation with the RFP objectives. An evaluation matrix with assigned weighted numerical values will be used to rate each applicant. The following represents some, although not all, of the criteria that will be used to the assessed feasibility of each Respondent.
1. Does the organization/individual have the right skillset and expertise to accomplish the required assignments?
2. Does the organization/individual demonstrate adequate and verifiable past experience in similar projects?
3. Are the Respondent’s proposed activities (strategy of implementation) current, feasible and cost-effective?
4. Are the proposed outcomes measurable and feasible?
5. Did the application include references that attest to the Respondent’s personal and professional integrity and competency?
6. Did the Respondent demonstrate knowledge of ASLM’s project needs and objectives?

ASLM reserves the right, but is under no obligation, to enter into discussions with one or more Respondents in order to obtain clarifications or additional details, to suggest service delivery refinements in the proposal or other aspects of the proposal, or to negotiate the cost of the proposal. Formal notification to award the contract and the actual execution of the contract are subject to receipt of funds from the Fleming Fund.

Each Respondent submitting a proposal will be notified in writing or via e-mail of ASLM’s decision concerning their proposal. Should you be recommended for acceptance, the contract shall be effective on the contract execution date and shall run until 31 May 2020. All work must be scheduled and completed within the contract period timeframe. Any modifications or extensions must be negotiated in advance and submitted to ASLM for review and approval. The selected Respondent’s proposal, and any subsequent material submitted in response to requests for additional information, will become the basis of contractual agreements with said Respondent.

10 Contractual Terms and Conditions

Responses must be in accordance with the guidelines as specified in this RFP. This RFP does not commit ASLM to accept any proposals submitted, nor is ASLM responsible for any costs incurred in the preparation of responses to this RFP. All materials submitted in response to this RFP or developed during the life of the contract will become the property ASLM. The detailed itemized budget must be submitted in US dollars and will be evaluated in terms of best value to ASLM.

ASLM reserves the right to delay, amend, reissue or cancel all or part of this RFP at any time without prior notice. ASLM discourages ex parte communication with any Board member, the public and/or staff member after the deadline for the receipt of proposals. ASLM will be under no obligation to reveal, or discuss with any Respondent on how a proposal was assessed, or to provide any other information relative to the selection process. Respondents whose proposals are not selected will be notified in writing and shall have no claim whatsoever for any kind of compensation.