



RFP No. 202004/01_1

RFP for Selection of Contractor

Improving systems for the diagnosis, treatment and management of people living with HIV and TB (Equipment Maintenance)

1 Acronyms

ASLM	African Society for Laboratory Medicine
EID	Early Infant Diagnosis
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)
LIS	Laboratory Information System
PEPFAR	Presidents Emergency Fund for Aids Relief
RFP	Request for Proposals
SME	Subject Matter Expert
SSA	sub-Saharan Africa
TB	Tuberculosis
US CDC	Unites States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
VL	Viral Load

2 Table of Contents

1	Acronyms	1
2	Table of Contents.....	2
3	Introduction	3
4	Objective of the Request for Proposal	3
5	Scope of Work	3
6	Prerequisite	4
7	Deliverables	4
7.1	Training and certification of equipment maintenance and calibration engineers	4
7.2	Training of Trainers	4
7.3	Training and certification framework.....	4
7.4	Development and implementation of procedures to support equipment maintenance and calibration at national and regional level.	4
7.5	Establishment and accreditation of regional calibration centers	4
8	Qualifications for the position	4
9	Instructions for submitting proposals	5
10	Evaluation and Award Process	6
11	Contractual Terms and Conditions	6

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.

Under the cooperative agreement award, ASLM is working in in close collaboration with the United States Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (US CDC) in leading the implementation of activities to assist PEPFAR-supported countries to further advance and sustain access to quality-assured HIV laboratory services and bridge the gaps towards the 90-90-90 targets. The grant programs will directly contribute to the achievement of the following long-term outcomes:

- Improved capacity for laboratory human resources through establishment of a well-qualified and stable work force with the expertise to support the laboratory-associated component of the HIV continuum of care; and
- Improved linkages between diagnostic and clinical activities in PEPFAR-supported countries.

By the end of the program period, the program will have improved the clinical outcomes, diagnosis, treatment and management of HIV and related diseases; enhanced the accuracy and reliability of diagnostic results and the continuity of testing services; and improved clinicians' trust in and reliance on test results for patient management in all PEPFAR-supported sub-Saharan Africa countries.

4 Objective of the Request for Proposal

ASLM is soliciting contractors, with subject matter expertise to support the implementation of activities aimed at improving systems for the diagnosis, treatment and management of people living with HIV and TB. Specifically, the contractor will lead activities to build regional and national capacity for the maintenance and calibration of equipment used for HIV testing to ensure the quality and accuracy of HIV-related testing results in targeted PEPFAR countries. The contractor is expected to be well versed in current HIV priorities and have a history of working on PEPFAR funded programs. Successful bidders will sign an agreement with ASLM to complete the work within 6 months.

5 Scope of Work

Proper standards for equipment maintenance and calibration is a vital, but often neglected, component of continuous quality improvement necessary to ensure the quality and accuracy of HIV and HIV-related testing results. The goals and objectives of this project are to support the development of local capacity for equipment maintenance and calibration for HIV and HIV-related testing in targeted PEPFAR –supported countries.

The anticipated outcome of this project is to ensure local human resource capacity for equipment maintenance. This intervention is anticipated to contribute to the reliability and the continuity of HIV testing for the achievement of the 90 90 90 targets of UNAIDS. The contractor will provide their knowledge and expertise to lead the implementation of the following activities:

- Support completion of training certification of 49 maintenance and calibration Engineers and their equipment. Provide mentorship and technical support for the initiation of field activities.

- Identify and train trainers of trainers (ToT) from certified engineers and the development of ToT training manual.
- Support completion of a training and certification framework for maintenance and calibration engineers in collaboration with national and regional stakeholders
- Works with subject matter experts to develop, train and disseminate to manuals, procedures and tools for equipment maintenance and calibration.
- Support capacity building in selected centers in Nigeria, Ethiopia and Cameroon with the provision of technical support, equipment and supplies for their establishment as regional calibration centers. Provide technical support and mentorship to selected sites to gain accreditation to ISO 17025.

6 Prerequisite

Contractor should have successful experience of implementing HIV related activities in PEPFAR countries.

7 Deliverables

7.1 Training and certification of equipment maintenance and calibration engineers

- Completed training and certification of 49 equipment maintenance and calibration engineers
- Completed certification of equipment for maintenance and calibration
- Mentorship and technical support for the initiation of field activities by certified engineers.

7.2 Training of Trainers

- Trainers of Trainers identified and trained
- Completed training manual

7.3 Training and certification framework

- Training and certification framework completed and disseminated.

7.4 Development and implementation of procedures to support equipment maintenance and calibration at national and regional level.

- Manuals, procedures and tools for equipment maintenance and calibration completed and disseminated.

7.5 Establishment and accreditation of regional calibration centers

- Regional calibration centers established in Nigeria, Ethiopia and Cameroon
- Selected centers accredited to ISO 17025

Period of performance: 20th April 2020 – 30th September 2020

Approximate total budget: \$372,000.00 (Three Hundred and Seventy-Two Thousand US Dollars, including travel)

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.

8 Qualifications for the position

1. Strong track record of working on PEPFAR projects
2. Knowledge and experience in HIV global action plans and surveillance systems

3. Knowledge related to developing and executing training programs in low- and middle-income countries
4. Excellent proficiency in English language
5. Publication track record
6. Resume that documents work in SSA countries
7. Should be able to start immediately
8. Should have at least seven years' experience in laboratory strengthening in low- and middle-income countries

9 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 (organization) and staffing qualifications and experience. Indicate how these qualifications and experience relate to the proposed functional areas applied for. Where the organization is affiliated/has partnerships with other institutions, a description of how this will result in effective implementation of the proposed areas of work should be included.
 - 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 **2nd April 2020 and no later than 9th April 2020 (11:59 pm East African Time)**.

Point of contact:

Direct any written questions or request for information about this RFP to:

Beatrice van der Puije
Program Manager
Email: BPuije@aslm.org
Phone Number: +233 20 5180708

10 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 have the right skill set and expertise to accomplish the required assignments?
2. Does the organization 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 Respondents 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 US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (US CDC).

Each Respondent submitting a proposal will be notified in writing or via e-mail of ASLM's decision concerning their proposal. Should your organization be recommended for acceptance, the contract shall be effective on the contract execution date and shall run until **30th September 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.

11 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.