REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CONSULTANCY FOR THE LABORATORY SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE (LabCoP)

RFP No. ASLM/LabCoP/Cons/02/13/24

CLOSING DATE: 20 FEBRUARY 2024 @10AM CAT

When replying to the RFP, please mention the RFP No in the subject line

1.0 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. For more information, please visit our website at https://aslm.org.

2.0 OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT | SCOPE OF WORK | EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

Background:

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, and 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. 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 22 member countries to exchange knowledge experiences and best practices to strengthen laboratory systems, scale up viral load (VL) testing and promote the utilization of test results.
The **LabNet scorecard** is a systematic evaluation tool adopted and rolled out by ASLM to assess the capacity and functionality of national laboratory networks inform evidence-based planning and prioritization of investments for improvement interventions.

To date, LabNet assessments have been completed in at least 5 countries baseline and after a 2 year follow up (3 countries). Currently, there is however limited internal capacity of expertise at ASLM to conduct such assessments. This gap represents a bottleneck that is impeding scale up of LabNet assessments to accommodate the significant expansion of LabCoP supported countries (from 11 to 22 over the last 2 years). Moreover, there is a need to streamline institutional level LabNet related processes in order to standardize the way assessments are performed and how outcomes can be effectively communicated for optimal dissemination of results to MoH authorities and across relevant stakeholders to promote uptake of recommendations in national plans and funding requests.

To address these gaps, ASLM, through the LabCoP project would like to engage a competent consultant with relevant expertise to support the activities outlined in the scope of work below:

**Scope of work**

In order to build additional capacity for the LabNet assessment, the consultant will:

- Observe 2 ASLM led LabNet assessments (Ethiopia and Liberia or other country) and provide recommendations to inform the revision of the Labnet scorecard manual as required.
- Support the definition of a profile for prospective LabNet assessors, highlighting required core competency and skills set, as well as a LabNet assessors guidance document.
- Support the development of a standardized LabNet assessment reporting template.
- Support ASLM in conducting LabNet baseline assessments in at least 2 LabCoP countries.
- Support capacity building (TOT training, mentorship) of selected assessors to conduct future assessments.

**Deliverables:**

1. Completed Labnet assement observation report.
5. TOT training for assessors and capacity building report.
7. Completed LabNet assessment reports for 3 countries.

**INITIAL TERM AND OPTIONAL PERIODS:**

Physical Office Address: Joseph Tito Street, Nega City Mall, Suite 800, P.O.Box 5487 Kirkos Subcity, Kebele 08, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (+251) 11-557-1021
The Pivot, Block E, Third floor, Montecasino Boulevard, Fourways, 2055, Gauteng, South Africa (+271) 08-808-592 info@aslmos rlwww.ASLM.org
The initial term (or period of performance) of the service shall be from the 1\textsuperscript{st} March 2024 to the 28\textsuperscript{th} February 2025 (12 months).

ASLM may exercise its right to extend the contract subject to the performance of the consultant and availability of funding.

3.0 MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

- Company profile with Certificate of Incorporation, Tax Clearance and all other applicable licenses, permit, authorizations, affiliations and certifications required per applicable laws and regulations. The company profile should provide additional information such as Registration name and trading name if applicable, physical address, telephone, contact person, period in business, key personnel/management and line of business.
- Individual consultants can also participate, and the above requirements may not be applicable but should conform to in-country tax requirements.

4.0 EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

ASLM will accept proposals from bidders that provide Best Value and satisfy the requirements stipulated in the solicitation. All submissions/proposals will be evaluated against the set Evaluation Criteria provided below. Each proposal should contain the items listed in the Submission Requirements column in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Criteria</th>
<th>Submission Requirements</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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</table>
| 1.Qualifications, Experience, Competencies & language requirements | • Advance degree (PhD, MD or equivalent) in Public Health, clinical laboratory science, pathology, molecular biology  
• At least 7-years’ experience, at coordination level, supporting laboratory networks and system strengthening in Sub-Saharan Africa  
• Advanced and up to date knowledge on latest global and country level norms and standards, regulations, governance (strategic and | 70%    |

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2.Price  Provide the consultancy fees  30%

Total  100%

**5.0 CONTRACT TYPE**

For this procurement, ASLM will issue out a Firm Fixed Price Contract on its terms and conditions indicating the service provider’s quoted firm fixed price, scope of work, deliverables, timelines duration of contract and other instructions.

**6.0 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Completed proposals must be addressed to the Procurement Committee and send electronically on or before the closing date and time to [rfpsubmission@aslm.org](mailto:rfpsubmission@aslm.org) ONLY.

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### 7.0 PROPOSED TIMELINES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 February 2024</td>
<td>Release of RFP and publicly posted on ASLM website:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 February 2024</td>
<td>Deadline for submission of inquiries related to this RFP directed to Email to: <a href="mailto:JShonhe@aslm.org">JShonhe@aslm.org</a> ; <a href="mailto:COtieno@aslm.org">COtieno@aslm.org</a> and all questions must clearly identified with the solicitation #</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indicate the RFP number indicated at the top of this RFP (i.e. RFQ #) in your proposals.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 February 2024</td>
<td>Response to all inquiries released and posted publicly on ASLM website</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 February 2024</td>
<td>Deadline for Proposal submission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 February 2024</td>
<td>Final decision announced and Bidders receive feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 February 2024</td>
<td>Contract confirmed &amp; issued out.</td>
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While ASLM is desirous of maintaining the proposed timelines, delays necessitated by unforeseen circumstances.

### 8.0 ASLM TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The following are the terms and conditions of ASLM and any exceptions to these should be noted in writing at submission:

8.1. This RFP is not an offer to enter into agreement with any party, but rather a request to receive proposals from companies interested in providing the goods or services outlined in this RFP.

8.2. The specifications prescribed are not in any way limited to any specific tenderer as they are based on generally achievable requirements and thus, participation in this solicitation is open to all legal vendors that are registered and comply with the laws of doing business in the applicable country(ies) where services will be rendered. The necessary legal, commercial, technical and financial requirements should be satisfied.

8.3. ASLM does not bind itself to accept the lowest tender price and reserves the right to reject all submissions, in whole or in part, enter into negotiations with any party, and/or award multiple contracts.
8.4. ASLM reserves the right (but is not under obligation to do so) 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 quotation.

8.5. All quotations MUST be typed, on company official letterhead with full contact details including physical address, contact phone, email. Submissions MUST be received on or before the closing date and time and all bids received after the closing date and time may not be considered.

8.6. ASLM shall NOT be responsible for any costs involved in the preparation and submission of bids or proposals. All costs to be borne by the bidder and this is irrespective of the outcome.

8.7. Bid validity of quotation/proposals shall be 90 days.

8.8. Unless otherwise specified in the final contract, full payment will be made by ASLM to the Vendor within 30 days of receipt of invoice from the Vendor and either delivery of goods or completion of required deliverable.

8.9 ASLM provides an equal opportunity for any vendor/supplier to participate irrespective of race, colour, religion, sex, or national origin and will receive equal treatment.

8.10. By participating, preparation and submitting this quotation or proposal, you represent that none from your organization has any conflict of interests.

8.11. To the maximum extent practical and possible, ASLM will strive to ensure that the finances provided in this procurement do not support organisations, companies and individuals associated with acts of terrorism, prostitution and drug trafficking.

8.12. ASLM reserves the right to delay, amend, reissue, or cancel all or part of this RFP at any time but feedback will be provided to the vendors who participated. Additionally, ASLM will be under no obligation to reveal, or discuss with any bidder how a quotation/proposal was assessed, or to provide any other information relative to the selection process. Respondents whose quotations are not selected will be notified in writing and shall have no claim whatsoever for any kind of compensation.

8.13. ASLM reserves the right to waive or permit cure of non-material variances in the bid proposal if, in the judgment of ASLM, it is in ASLM’s best interest to do so. Non-material variances include minor informalities that do not affect responsiveness; that are merely a matter of form or format; that do not change the relative standing or otherwise prejudice other vendors; that do not change the meaning or scope of the RFP; or that do not reflect a material change in the services. In the event ASLM waives or permits cure of nonmaterial variances, such waiver or cure will not modify the RFP requirements or excuse the vendor from full compliance with RFP specifications or other contract requirements if the vendor is awarded the contract. The determination of materiality is in the sole discretion of ASLM.

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8.14. Failure to provide any of the above specifications and requirements may be considered non-responsive and disqualify the bidder from final selection.

8.15. **ASLM ETHICAL STATEMENT**: As part of its commitment to engrain a culture of honesty and integrity in all its business processes, unethical conduct such as undisclosed conflict of interests, bribes and kick-backs and other corrupt activities are strictly prohibited and denounced. No employees at ASLM are not allowed to use their position(s) to pursue personal and unethical gain. In the same vein, bidders or potential suppliers and contractors are proscribed from offering bribes aimed at influencing the process and the outcome(s). ASLM implore vendors to embrace this culture in their interactions with us. Violation of this ethical principle and requirement will result in the supplier or service provider disqualified and ASLM will not solicit or accept bids in the future from the same. Should you experience or suspect unethical behaviour by an ASLM employee, please reach out to: ethics@aslm.org