

**OJ S 71/2026 13/04/2026**  
**Call for tender : AA-011951-004 - Gender-Smart Financing - Advisory and  
Capacity Building Programme for commercial banks**

**Clarifications to the Instructions to tenderers and Assignment Terms of reference**

**QUESTION 6:**

In relation with the Component 1 of the project, can you please clarify the following points:

○ **Task 1.1 – Programme design and curriculum development**

Task 1.1 states that the Service Provider shall design and deliver a package of learning formats, including virtual master classes, webinars, training workshops, knowledge-sharing events, and regularly updated advisory guidance materials such as case studies, FAQs, and manuals.

Could the Contracting Authority please clarify whether the curriculum is expected to be primarily built around synchronous learning formats, such as live virtual master classes, webinars, workshops and knowledge-sharing events? Or may tenderers also propose asynchronous and self-paced learning formats, such as interactive e-learning modules, recorded video lectures, quizzes, exercises and similar formats that would allow participants to access the learning content flexibly, at any time and from any location?

**CLARIFICATION 6**

As indicated in the Terms of Reference, the Service Provider is expected to design and deliver a package of learning formats, including, inter alia, virtual master classes, webinars, training workshops and knowledge-sharing events, as well as advisory guidance materials.

The Terms of Reference do not prescribe a specific balance between synchronous and asynchronous formats. Tenderers are therefore invited to propose the mix of delivery formats they consider most appropriate to achieve the objectives of the assignment, and to justify their approach in the Organisation and Methodology section of their Offer.

**QUESTION 7:**

In relation with the Component 1 of the project, can you please clarify the following points:

○ **Task 1.2 – Set-up and management of capacity building programme delivery platforms**

Task 1.2 refers to the establishment and management of dedicated online “platforms” in the plural, serving as the central hub for learning resources, programme updates and interactive engagement opportunities.

Could the Contracting Authority please clarify whether it expects the Service Provider to propose and manage multiple separate platforms, or whether a single integrated platform may be proposed, provided that it can serve as the central point for programme delivery, learning resources, updates and engagement?

In addition, could the Contracting Authority please clarify whether there are any minimum functional, technical, accessibility, data protection, hosting, security, branding, reporting/analytics, or user-management requirements that the proposed platform or platforms must fulfil?

**CLARIFICATION 7**

As indicated in the Terms of Reference, the Service Provider is expected to establish and manage dedicated online platforms to support the delivery of learning resources, programme updates and engagement activities, and to identify and recommend the most suitable solutions taking into account the characteristics of the programme and target audience.

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The Terms of Reference do not prescribe a specific number of platforms. Tenderers are invited to propose and clearly describe their approach in this regard in the Organisation and Methodology section of their tender, demonstrating how the proposed solution will support the objectives of the assignment.

No detailed minimum functional or technical requirements are defined in the tender documentation. Tenderers are invited to propose solutions they consider appropriate, ensuring that these are aligned with applicable regulatory and contractual requirements. In particular, tenderers shall take into account the data protection and confidentiality obligations set out in the draft service contract.

**QUESTION 8:**

In relation with the Component 1 of the project, can you please clarify the following points:

o **Task 1.3 – Production of knowledge materials**

Task 1.3 requires the Service Provider to contribute to the development of high-quality knowledge materials, including studies, factsheets and case studies.

Could the Contracting Authority please clarify whether these knowledge materials are expected mainly to be static reading materials, such as PDF, Word or similar document formats, or whether they may also include more interactive and engaging formats, such as e-learning modules, short videos, mini-games or other types of interactive/engaging formats?

**CLARIFICATION 8**

As indicated in the Terms of Reference, the Service Provider is expected to develop a range of knowledge materials. The Terms of Reference do not prescribe specific formats for these materials. Tenderers are therefore invited to propose and clearly describe their approach in the Organisation and Methodology section of their tender, including the types of formats they consider most appropriate to effectively achieve the objectives of the assignment.

**QUESTION 9:**

With reference to the provisions on incidental expenditures in the ToRs, pages 22–23, could the Contracting Authority please clarify whether costs incurred by a consortium partner for the in-house development, configuration and/or management of the e-learning platform and webinar delivery tools may be eligible as reimbursable incidental expenditures, subject to the applicable prior approval and supporting documentation requirements? Could the Contracting Authority also clarify whether this would include costs related to the technical delivery of webinars, such as platform setup, hosting, technical support, recording, editing and uploading of webinar materials, when these services are provided in-house by a consortium partner rather than by an external supplier?

**CLARIFICATION 9**

As indicated in the Terms of Reference, expenses eligible for reimbursement are those explicitly set out in Section 9.3.4, subject to prior authorisation by the Contracting Authority and the submission of supporting documentation.

These include, inter alia, the purchase of license to enable the service provider to implement eLearning platforms, webinars, and online knowledge hub platforms

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Other activities related to the performance of the tasks defined in the Terms of Reference, including the set-up and management of capacity building programme delivery platforms, and contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the assignment are expected to be covered by the remuneration of the experts and should be appropriately detailed in the Organisation and Methodology section of the tender.

**QUESTION 10:**

It is not entirely clear whether the scope refers to supporting 60 additional banks (beyond those included in Phase I), or to a total of 60 banks comprising the original 42 from Phase I plus 18 new institutions. We would appreciate it if you could kindly clarify this point.

**CLARIFICATION 10**

As indicated in the Terms of Reference, at the start of the implementation period it is expected that up to 60 EIB Group financial institutions (FIs) will be engaged in the Gender Finance Lab community of practice. The Service Provider is expected to contribute to maintaining the engagement of already on-boarded FIs, as well as to expanding the outreach of the programme to the wider financial sector.

**QUESTION 11:**

Geographic scope of participating banks  
Ref. ToR §§1.2, 4.1  
Does the programme target commercial banks from all EU Member States without geographic prioritisation, or does the EIB foresee a focus on specific regions or country groups (e.g. cohesion or lower-income Member States)?

**CLARIFICATION 11**

No geographic prioritisation or focus on specific regions or country groups is foreseen in the ToR.

**QUESTION 12:**

Eligibility of banks without EIB relationship  
Ref. ToR §§1.2, 4.1  
Is participation in the programme (including capacity building and customised advisory support) limited to EU commercial banks with an existing or planned EIB/EIB Group financing relationship, or may banks without prior EIB links also be eligible?

**CLARIFICATION 12**

As indicated in the Terms of Reference, the programme is designed to increase awareness and support financial institutions, in particular commercial banks, across the European Union, in line with its overall objective of improving access to finance for women entrepreneurs in the EU.

**QUESTION 13:**

Operations Director – status and scoring  
Ref. ToR §5.2  
Will the Operations Director's CV be scored in the technical evaluation, and must the

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<p>Operations Director be in-house staff of the Service Provider, or may the role be filled by an external expert?</p>
<p>CLARIFICATION 13</p> <p>The Operation's Director CV will not be scored independently.</p> <p>The relevance of the qualifications and experience of the candidate offered for the position of Operation's Director will be assessed together with elements related to the "description of the support facilities (backstopping) that the team of experts will have from the contractor during the execution of the contract" (see AA-011951-004 14. Section D TAEVALGRID)</p>
<p><u>QUESTION 14:</u></p> <p>Technical evaluation grid <i>Ref. ToR §6</i> Could the EIB please share the detailed technical evaluation grid? We couldn't access it from the tender dossier.</p>
<p>CLARIFICATION 14</p> <p>Please refer to Clarification n°1</p> <p>Missing annex is now available for download on the dedicated EIB webpage: <a href="#">Gender-Smart Financing Advisory and Capacity Building Programme for commercial banks</a></p>
<p><u>QUESTION 15:</u></p> <p>Format for project references <i>Ref. ToR §5.1</i> Is there a specific format or template required for presenting project references?</p>
<p>CLARIFICATION 15</p> <p>See template presented in the Tender File: AA-011951-004 04. Section C. Template - Tender submission form.docx</p>
<p><u>QUESTION 16:</u></p> <p>Geographic eligibility of project references <i>Ref. ToR §5.1</i> Must project references be EU-based, or are non-EU gender finance references also eligible? Are EU-based references scored more favorably, or is scoring driven primarily by relevance to scope?</p>
<p>CLARIFICATION 16</p> <p>As specified in the Instructions to Tenderers (Section 5.3 – Technical capacity of tenderer), tenderers shall refer to the requirements set out therein regarding the eligibility and assessment of project references.</p>

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**QUESTION 17:**

Declarations of non-conflict of interest  
Do non-key experts and the Operations Director also need to submit a Declaration of Non-Conflict of Interest, or key experts only?

**CLARIFICATION 17**

Tenderers are reminded that, as specified in section 7.1.3. of the TOR (AA-011951-004 03. Section B. Gender Smart Financing Programme TOR 20260407.pdf), CVs for non-key experts shall not be submitted in the tender but the tenderer will have to demonstrate in the Organisation & Methodology Part of their Tender that they have access to experts with the required profiles, providing explanations on how these non-key experts can be selected and mobilized.

Non key experts and the Operations Director are not required to submit a Declaration of Non-Conflict of Interest at this stage of the Process. Such declarations may be required from the EIB Activity Responsible during the implementation of the contract.

**QUESTION 18:**

Indicative activity volumes  
*Ref. ToR Components 1–3*  
Could the EIB provide indicative volumes over the 24-month period for:  
(i) number of webinars;  
(ii) number and typical size of master classes/workshops;  
(iii) indicative scope/duration (person-days) of each customised advisory assignment under Component 3;  
(iv) indicative number and type of knowledge products under Task 1.3?

**CLARIFICATION 18**

Section 4.1 the ToR define the components 1 to 3 define the scope of activities and tasks to be performed, including certain indicative elements (e.g. number of in-person events or indicative number of bilateral advisory assignments) where relevant.

Beyond these elements, the Terms of Reference do not prescribe detailed indicative volumes for the various activities listed. Tenderers are therefore invited to propose and clearly describe their approach, including the scale and configuration of activities, in the Organisation and Methodology section of their tender, demonstrating how these will effectively contribute to achieving the objectives of the assignment.

**QUESTION 19:**

In-person events (Task 1.4)  
*Ref. ToR Task 1.4*  
For the five in-person events, could the EIB indicate the typical number of participants, expected format, and geographic distribution (Luxembourg vs. other EU locations)?

**CLARIFICATION 19**

As indicated in the Terms of Reference, the Service Provider is expected to organise and deliver a tentative number of five in-person events. Further aspects, such as the number of participants, format and geographic distribution, will be agreed with the Contracting

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Authority during implementation of the assignment. Tenderers are invited to propose and describe their approach to the organisation and delivery of such events in the Organisation and Methodology section of their tender, demonstrating how it will support the objectives of the assignment.

**QUESTION 20:**

Size of community of practice at project start  
*Ref. ToR §4.1 and Task 2.1*  
Could the EIB clarify the expected size of the community of practice at the Effective Date, given the references to *up to 60* and *up to 42* EIBG financial institutions?

**CLARIFICATION 20**

See answer to Question 10

**QUESTION 21:**

Intellectual property and branding  
*Ref. ToR §7*  
Could the EIB clarify the IP arrangements for materials developed, including whether the Service Provider may build on existing assets and whether outputs will be EIB/InvestEU-only or co-branded?

**CLARIFICATION 21**

Tenderers are invited to refer to the provisions on intellectual property, ownership of outputs, and visibility requirements as set out in the draft service contract (and its general terms and conditions) and the Terms of Reference.

**QUESTION 22:**

Hosting of the Knowledge Central Hub  
*Ref. Component 1, Deliverable Month 4*  
Is the Knowledge Central Hub expected to be hosted on EIB infrastructure, Service Provider infrastructure, or third-party infrastructure?

**CLARIFICATION 22**

As per Terms of Reference, the Service Provider is expected to establish and manage the knowledge hub and related learning platforms, identifying and recommending the most suitable solutions for their delivery.

The hosting arrangements for such platforms will be agreed with the Contracting Authority during the implementation of the assignment. Tenderers are therefore invited to include proposals to the hosting and management of the knowledge hub and related platforms in their Organisation and Methodology, taking into account the objectives of the assignment.

**QUESTION 23:**

Would it be possible to get an extension of deadline for submission of offers by 1 week, considering there are a number of public holidays in May?

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<p>CLARIFICATION 23</p> <p>The deadline for the submission of tenders will not be extended.</p>
<p><u>QUESTION 24:</u></p> <p>Would it be possible to grant an extension to the submission deadline in light of the regional holidays in May?</p>
<p>CLARIFICATION 24</p> <p>The deadline for the submission of tenders will not be extended.</p>
<p><u>QUESTION 25:</u></p> <p>Is it permissible to use project references from subcontractors (e.g., performing up to 20% of the contract) to demonstrate the tenderer's technical capacity, provided that all requirements for suitable references are fully met?</p>
<p>CLARIFICATION 25</p> <p>Tenderers are allowed to rely on Project references from sub-contractors.</p> <p>See section 4 (participation and sub-contracting) and section 5 (Selection Criteria) of paragraph entitled "Relying on the capacity of other entities" of the Instructions to Tenderers for further details.</p>
<p><u>QUESTION 26:</u></p> <p>We have previously sent our expression of interest and requested access to the SharePoint on April 16. Will there be a SharePoint platform shared for submission of the proposal?</p>
<p>CLARIFICATION 26</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><u>QUESTION 27:</u></p> <p>Considering the public holidays in May, could you consider extending the submission deadline by min 2 weeks?</p>
<p>CLARIFICATION 27</p> <p>The deadline for the submission of tenders will not be extended.</p>
<p><u>QUESTION 28:</u></p> <p>Are there specific requirement for the CV format, length, etc of the operation director</p>
<p>CLARIFICATION 28</p> <p>Tenderers can use the template provided for the key experts for their proposed Operations Director.</p>

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QUESTION 29:

Some of the documents to be filled refer to other tender procedures: ex Tender submission for refers to “Framework Agreement to support EIB Advisory Activities - Public and Infrastructure Finance”; first bullet of the template declaration refers to a Framework contract, etc. These are obvious typos. Can we correct them or will you issue new corrected templates?

CLARIFICATION 29

Corrected template will be provided, but tenderers can also edit the documents

QUESTION 30:

Could the Contracting Authority indicate which existing Gender Finance Lab materials, curricula, participant feedback, needs assessments, evaluation data, contact lists and/or community engagement insights will be made available to the Service Provider at inception? This would help us determine the starting point.

CLARIFICATION 30

As indicated in the Terms of Reference, the Contracting Authority will provide the Service Provider, upon request, with relevant information available to it and not subject to confidentiality constraints, in order to support the implementation of the assignment.

At the start of the assignment, the Service Provider will be provided with the necessary materials and information required to effectively carry out the tasks, in line with the objectives of the assignment.

QUESTION 31:

For the indicative five in-person events, could the Contracting Authority provide assumptions on expected participant numbers, and likely locations?

CLARIFICATION 31

See answer to question 19