Embassy of India
Washington D.C.
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Request for Proposal for outsourcing of services related to issuance of Indian Visa/OCI/Renunciation/Passport and Global Entry Programme (GEP) verification services at Embassy of India, Washington DC and its Consulates in the USA
(Published on 10 July 2020)

Responses to Questions asked by Prospective Bidders

S. No.	Clause	RFP Clause	Query	Response
1	Page. 5 Chapter II: Introduction Pt. 5	The Mission and Post(s) combined handled approximately 1,473,032 (No. of Services) transactions in the last three years (2017-2019) (equivalent to 1,964 transactions / services per working day, assuming 250 working days in a year).	Please provide monthly city-wise and service-wise application count break-up for the past 3 years Also, please confirm % of applications that are received in person and by post in each VAC?	Data enclosed as Annexure. Data not available. However, at present, in view of COVID-19 pandemic, all the applications are being received by mail only.
2	Page. 26 Pt. k	The Mission shall arrange a Pre-bid Conference about the bidding process, about 10-15 days prior to the last date for submission of bids. The pre-bid conference should be followed by presentations by Bidding Companies as per the date and time fixed by the Mission. These are to enable the Bidding Companies to prepare the proposals with full knowledge of the requirements of the Mission and for the Mission to clearly assess the capabilities of the Service Provider. Presentation will also be evaluated in Annexure E of RFP.	Please confirm that the presentation will be held privately between the Mission and the bidder as our presentation will contain confidential information. How many participants per company are permitted to be present at the oral presentation?	Yes. Two.

3	Page 21, CHAPTER X:	The staff of the ICAC should have appropriate qualification for the relevant job they will be handling and must have a minimum graduate qualification.	Please clarify minimum acceptable qualifications in the US that would be equivalent of the Graduate requirement defined in the RFP? Would a high school graduate be acceptable for Submission Officer level ?	Minimum a Bachelor's Degree Graduate.
4	Page 18 o) Consular Camps	The OSP will be required to organize at least six Consular Camps per year for each of the six locations as per the instructions of the Mission/Posts and at no additional cost to Government of India.	It is our interpretation that all six camps will be in the city where the ICACs are located. Please confirm?	No; these camps are to be organized in cities other than the location of the centre.
5	Page 22 , P iii	The OSP's shall not capture any data/information from the applicant on/through its website or insist upon service seekers to apply for services at its own website. OSP should provide link of the website of Government of India (GoI) for the service(s) concerned and guide the applicants to apply at the website of the GoI.	In order to facilitate Postal applications, scheduling of appointments, online payment and courier label generation, the OSP website will need to capture minimal data from the applicant. Please confirm that this is permitted.	Yes; only basic data like name, phone number, email ID will be permitted. Attention is also drawn to Chapter XIII: Confidentiality and Privacy Laws of the RFP.
6	Page 12, iv) CHAPTER VII: SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES REQUIRED	The Service Provider should install the software 'CONSPROM' provided by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) whenever required by Mission	Does the mission have a definitive timeline to implement CONSPROM in the USA ?	No; NIC prepared software system CONSPROM should be installed as soon as possible.

7	Page 14, Biometric Enrollment, i(i)	The OSP is responsible for enrolment of ten finger and facial, biometric data of the applicants, as prescribed by the Indian Mission/Post in Annexure-B and transmitting the same electronically along with the case file of the applicant to enable the Indian Mission/Post to upload them on the IVFRT platform.	In the ICACs should all 4 counters in all cities provision for a Biometric set up? Which Visa types / categories require Biometric capture? What is the implementation timeline?	This could vary from location to location depending on the volume. All categories of long-term visas (5 years and above) For visa and OCI, it is to be done immediately. For passport, as instructed by Ministry, subsequently.
8	Page 34 CHAPTER XV: SERVICE LEVEL METRICS/ PENALTIES	The OSP shall be responsible to open all the ICACs as per schedule along with the requisite infrastructure to the satisfaction of the Mission/Post to ensure smooth taking over of the operations from the previous OSP, or in the case of initial outsourcing, to avoid any inconvenience to the Mission/Post or the applicants.	There could be delays due to local Government imposed forced closures of businesses and stay at home orders. Each state is governed independently and closures are imposed differently based on spikes in Covid, Protests and Curfews. We are classified as a non– essential business, thus we will be subject to restrictions. Secondly, required City permits could be delayed, as administrative departments in City councils are working with skeletal staff. Contractors are taking all safety measures. Therefore the opening on schedule may be delayed due to extenuating circumstances. Will a waiver of penalty be granted for any COVID-19 related delays?	Yes, any such issue(s) must be brought to the notice of the Mission/Ministry well in advance and explicit prior confirmation obtained from the Mission/Ministry.

9	Page 22 Chapter X Pt. k)	The Service Provider should at the time of submission of Technical Bids, have certification namely, ISO-9001-2008 (QMS-Quality Management System), ISO-2127001-2013 (ISMS-Information Security Management system) and ISO 230262015 (Website Quality Certification).	Please confirm that the ISMS standard required is ISO 27001:2013 not ISO 21270012013.	ISO 27001:2013
10	Pg.8 – Chapter 5 - Mandatory Criteria	The Bidding Company must provide a list of all the cases in the past as well as present pending litigations in Indian and foreign courts pertaining to outsourcing services or other services based on which the bidding company became eligible to take part in the present tender process	Please clarify if the list of litigation cases, should include only those in reference to GoI contracts? With Reference to "Cases in the past" how far back does this reflect?	No; for all the contracts, including other than GoI. From the incorporation of the company.
11	Page 9 CHAPTER VII: SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES REQUIRED.. 9.a.ix Annexure E: Proforma for Evaluation of Technical Bids - Grading companies giving marks Criteria. Page 81. Point 7	No caller should be made to wait for more than eight minutes Call Centres Call waiting times - not more than 3 minutes response period	Please clarify the 3-minute response time.	There is typographical error. The sentence should be: "No caller should be made to wait for more than three minutes and waiting time should not be chargeable."
12	Page 14 CHAPTER VII: g)	Issuance of Visas – IVFRT System and Biometric Enrolment i. In order to provide an integrated and secure visa issuance system, the Government of India's IVFRT (Immigration, Visa, Foreigners' Registration and Tracking) System is used for provision of visa services. As per this system, it is	Our understanding that the Embassy will provide the IVFRT Sample files immediately on signing the contract. Please confirm.	Yes.

		mandatory for the applicants to fill up the visa application online and present the hard copy along with passport and other enclosures to the Service Provider (SP). The OSP shall scrutinise the application forms, passport and enclosures and send them to the Mission/Post concerned as per standing instructions. Any shortcomings in the documentation should be pointed out to the applicant and rectified before despatch to the Indian Mission/Post.		
13	Page 15 Chapter VII iii)	iii. The OSP shall be required to work on the PSP platform of Government of India or any other centralised platform for passport services if introduced. Detailed guidelines/procedures in this regard shall be intimated to the OSP.	Is there a plan to implement PSP in USA. Files format for PSP and earlier passport system is very different. Please provide both formats.	It has already been implemented.
14	Page 15, CHAPTER VII: ii.	The software for biometric enrolment and uploading will be provided by NIC, while the hardware shall be the responsibility of the OSP as per the standards prescribed by NIC,	Biometric applications are provided by NIC. Please provide list of compatible models and system requirements for Biometric application.	Annexure-A and Annexure-B of the RFP refer. For further clarifications NIC will be approached immediately.
15	Page 12 CHAPTER VII Para 9 c (i) Transfer of amounts to Mission's account.	Deposit fees due to the Mission/Post i.e. Government of India Fee for CPV services and Consular surcharge fees in Mission/Posts' bank account on the day of receipt (or the next working day in case of delayed receipts as agreed upon with Mission).	What is the mode of payment to local posts?	By Check every day along with the applications

16	Page 19 Chapter VIII, 10 (iv)	The OSP will effect and maintain insurance sufficient to cover its obligations under the Agreement, properties of the ICAC, staff obligations etc., for the respective buildings of the ICACs for the Missions/Posts concerned including those obligations which survive the expiration or termination of the Agreement/Contract. Any default on this account could lead to imposition of penalties as appropriate and imposition of a ban against the bidding company in future bids.	How does the OSP demonstrate this? Will a self-declaration be sufficient to show compliance with this clause?	No; copies of the insurance along with self-declaration will need to be submitted to the Mission/Posts.
17	Page 14 Pt h Digitization	All supporting documents/enclosures submitted by the applicant at ICAC are required to be scanned/digitized/indexed and electronically attached on IVFRT portal with the application form of the applicant.	Kindly confirm the approximate number of pages to be digitized per service per application?	15-20 pages for Visa/OCI and 20-25 for passport on an average.
18	PAGE 05 CHAPTER II: Introduction, point 3	The Mission and Post(s) combined handled approximately 1,473,032 transactions in the last three years.	Please provide a) Yearly breakup preferably month wise b) Bifurcation of applications for passport, visa, OCI, Renunciation and GEP verification services. c) Please provide details on volume of applications received at Washington	Available data enclosed as Annexure.

			Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, New York, San Francisco	
19	Page 18 Chapter 11, Bank Guarantee, 10.1	The OSP shall provide a Bank Guarantee for the Government funds held by it temporarily, after collection and safety and safety of documents.	Kindly provide clarification on the calculation. Is it possible to fix the BG amount. We would request if the Average Revenue figures could be shared.	Will be clarified during the pre-bid conference.
20	Service Fee		Kindly confirm whether bidder has to quote different service fees for different services.	No. Service fee for all the services will be the same.
21	Postal Applications		Please advise percentage of applications received by post at each center.	Data not available.
22	Bidding Schedule & Process		Given the current situation because of Covid 19, will there be any change in date of submission.	Every effort will be made to maintain the timeline. However, a decision on any change in the timeline will be taken as required.
23	Page 5 Chapter II: Introduction Point 3 -	The Mission handled approximately 14,73,032 No. of Services) transactions in the last three years (2017-2019)	Please provide the centre wise application breakup for each year	Data enclosed as Annexure.
24	Page 5 Chapter II: Introduction Point 3 –	The Mission handled approximately 14,73,032 No. of Services) transactions in the last three years (2017-2019)	Please provide the category wise volume of services offered for each centre on yearly basis.	Data enclosed as Annexure.

25	Page 6 Chapter III point no 5. –	The contract will also include provisions regarding Force Majeure, unusual situations like COVID-19 pandemic or any other similar unprecedented emergency situation which may affect normal working conditions during which the OSP would be required to provide minimum specified services as per the requirements of the Mission/Post, termination of contract, and the consequences of termination.	Please elaborate "minimum specified services"	This will depend on the then prevailing situation affecting the normal working. However, this will be done as required with the approval of the Mission/Posts.
26	Page 18 Chapter VII point no (o). - Consular Camp of India	The OSP will be required to organize at least six Consular Camps per year for each of the six locations as per the instructions of the Mission/Posts and at no additional cost to Government	Please provide the details on services offered at each consular camp to be organized by the successful bidder and can successful bidder will charges additional services for these camp.	OSP will be required to provide services, including scrutiny of applications for visa, passport, renunciation, GEP etc. and acceptance of fees. Same Service Fee should be levied on applicants. No additional service charge will be paid to the OSP.
27	Page 14 Point g Chapter VIII -	Issuance of Visas IVFRT System and Biometric Enrolment	Please confirm the categories of application (visa/pass port/GEP) requires biometric enrolment	OCI, long-terms visas (5 years and above). This is to be done immediately. Biometrics for passports and GEP (if required) is to be implemented.

28	Page 14 Point h Chapter VIII -	Digitization All supporting documents/enclosures submitted by the applicant at ICAC are required to be scanned/digitized/indexed and electronically attached on IVFRT portal with the application form of the applicant.	Please consider the timeline for digitization of application and submission as 15 days from the date of submission.	No; it is not acceptable.
29	Page 15 Point j Chapter VIII -	Digitization Issuance of Passports and Acceptance of GEP Background Verification Forms	Please elaborate more on GEP Background Verification process. Also, can we quote separate price for GEP applications.	The process of applying GEP through GPSP portal for Indian citizens staying abroad would be similar to that of applying for Passport services. The filled up GEP application form through GPSP portal can be submitted at the respective Outsource Service Provider engaged by the Mission/Posts along with required documents and requisite GEP background verification fee of US$ 25.00 by Government of India. The OSP should charge their processing fee equal to the fee being currently charged for

				processing of the Passport application. No separate price to be quoted for this.
30	Page 20 Chapter IX - Point 11	Optional Services Courier service (per package, one way) (FedEx Standard Overnight, UPS Next Day Air Saver)	Considering the variation in per packet charges for respective counties and the size of courier packet, we may request you to kindly consider US$ 20 as courier charges for per package (one way).	No; it is not acceptable.
31	Page 52, Chapter XXII, Statement of Services -	The Service Provider shall establish Indian Consular Application Centres (ICACs) adhering to good industry practice standards in USA	Considering the new COVID-19 norms and guidelines issued, can we encourage the applicant for postal application.	Yes, under unusual situations like outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic. Not in normal conditions.

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Data of Consular Services

2017-2019

Year	Atlanta			
	Visa	**OCI**	**Renunciation**	**Passport**
2017	20877	15420	5664	12616
2018	19394	13554	5984	11848
2019	13562	8408	6192	12837
Total	**53833**	**37382**	**17840**	**37301**

Year	Chicago			
	Visa	**OCI**	**Renunciation**	**Passport**
2017	28939	21108	7087	19769
2018	25304	16102	7883	18695
2019	17837	11294	7646	18705
Total	**72080**	**48504**	**22616**	**57169**

Year	Houston			
	Visa	**OCI**	**Renunciation**	**Passport**
2017	23872	23108	6993	19565
2018	21962	19389	7488	18473
2019	15322	15572	9079	18091
Total	**61156**	**58069**	**23560**	**56129**

Year	New York			
	Visa	OCI	Renunciation	Passport
2017	52089	50418	20454	37331
2018	37990	28524	19844	34054
2019	32492	33803	18317	35457
Total	122571	112745	58615	106842

Year	San Francisco			
	Visa	OCI	Renunciation	Passport
2017	51514	36842	13383	37835
2018	44009	26928	17433	35589
2019	32506	21407	14220	35675
Total	128029	85177	45036	109099

Year	Washington DC			
	Visa	OCI	Renunciation	Passport
2017	20799	17252	6784	14681
2018	20034	17636	5981	13928
2019	14925	7658	6458	13143
Total	55758	42546	19223	41752

Year	Total			
	Visa	OCI	Renunciation	Passport
2017	198090	164148	60365	141797
2018	168693	122133	64613	132587
2019	126644	98142	61912	133908
Total	493427	384423	186890	408292