Request for Proposal (RFP)

RFP Number: CPA-20-003-TECH
Issuance Date: August 6, 2020
Deadline for Offers: August 21, 2020
Description: Financial Advisory Services (Solar Project and Transmission Line)
For: USAID Clean Power Asia
Funded by: United States Agency for International Development
Contract No.: AID-486-C-16-00001
Implemented by: Abt Associates, Inc.
Points of Contact: Ms. Thida Ruengsit, Finance & Administration Manager

*** ETHICAL AND BUSINESS CONDUCT REQUIREMENTS ***

Abt Associates is committed to integrity in procurement, and only selects suppliers based on objective business criteria such as price and technical merit. Abt Associates does not tolerate fraud, collusion among offerors, falsified proposals/bids, bribery, or kickbacks. Any firm or individual violating these standards will be disqualified from this procurement, barred from future procurement opportunities, and may be reported to both USAID and the Office of the Inspector General.

Employees and agents of Abt Associates are strictly prohibited from asking for or accepting any money, fee, commission, credit, gift, gratuity, object of value, or compensation from current or potential vendors or suppliers in exchange for or as a reward for business. Employees and agents engaging in this conduct are subject to termination and will be reported to USAID and the Office of the Inspector General. In addition, Abt Associates will inform USAID and the Office of the Inspector General of any supplier offers of money, fees, commissions, credits, gifts, gratuities, objects of value, or compensation to obtain business.

Offerors responding to this RFP must include the following as part of the proposal submission:

- Disclose any close, familial, or financial relationships with Abt Associates or project staff. For example, if an offeror’s cousin is employed by the project, the offeror must state this.
- Disclose any family or financial relationship with other offerors submitting proposals. For example, if the offeror’s father owns a company that is submitting another proposal, the offeror must state this.
- Certify that the price in the offer have been arrived at independently, without any consultation, communication, or agreement with any other offeror for the purpose of restricting competition.
- Certify that all information in the proposal and all supporting documentation are authentic and accurate.
- Certify understanding and agreement to Abt Associates prohibitions against fraud, bribery and kickbacks.

Please contact Ms. Thida Ruengsit, Finance & Administration Manager, with any questions or concerns regarding the above information or to report any potential violations. Potential violations may also be reported directly to Abt Associates U.S. office.
Section 1: Instructions to Offerors

1. **Introduction**: USAID Clean Power Asia is a United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded program, implemented by Abt Associates, Inc. from its office in Bangkok, Thailand. The goal of USAID Clean Power Asia is to accelerate the regional transition to a high performing, low carbon power sector, and this goal is being accomplished through three outcomes: high renewable energy scenarios included in energy planning; an improved enabling policy, regulatory, and technical environment for renewable energy deployment; and increased investment in and deployment of grid-connected renewable energy projects. Abt Associates leads the implementation of the program, in collaboration with subcontractors and consultants.

USAID Clean Power Asia plans to conduct a financial analysis for two projects under development by Convalt Energy LLC: (1) 250 MW solar project in Attapeu, Southern Laos, (2) 500 kV power transmission line between Hatxan in southern Lao PDR and Pleiku in central Vietnam. A prospective subcontractor should assess the bankability of the projects, support Convalt in meetings/interaction with government authorities in Laos and Vietnam, and assist in the identification of potential equity partners, with an emphasis on Japanese companies.

Offerors are responsible for ensuring that their offers are received by Abt Associates in accordance with the instructions, terms, and conditions described in this RFP. Failure to adhere to instructions described in this RFP may lead to disqualification of an offer from consideration.

2. **Offer Deadline and Protocol**: Offers must be received no later than 17.00 ICT on Friday, August 21, 2020, by email addressed to Ms. Thida Ruengsit, Finance & Administration Manager, at Thida_Ruengsit@abtassoc.com. Please reference RFP number CPA-20-003-TECH Financial Advisory Services in any response to this RFP. Offers received after the specified time and date will be considered late and will be considered only at the discretion of the procurement manager for this RFP.

3. **Questions**: Questions regarding the technical or administrative requirements of this RFP may be submitted no later than 17.00 ICT on Thursday, August 13, 2020 by email to Thida_Ruengsit@abtassoc.com. Questions must be submitted in writing; phone calls will not be accepted. Questions and requests for clarification— and the responses thereto—that Abt Associates believes may be of interest to other offerors will be circulated to all RFP recipients who have indicated an interest in bidding. Only the written answers issued by Abt Associates will be considered official and carry weight in the RFP process and subsequent evaluation. Any verbal information received from employees of Abt Associates or any other entity should not be considered as an official response to any questions regarding this RFP.

4. **Qualifications**: The offeror must be able to demonstrate substantial experience in the areas delineated in the scope of work at the end of this document. The offeror must specify the proposed final price for all of the services outlined in the provided statement of work. The selected service provider must have excellent communication skills and methods, and be able to communicate clearly at every step of development of work under contract in providing information to the USAID Clean Power Asia team as well as requesting, understanding, and closely following guidance.
5. **Proposals/Quotations**: Proposals in response to this RFP can be presented in Thai baht or U.S. dollars and priced on a fixed-price, all-inclusive basis, including delivery and all other costs. Offers must remain valid for not less than thirty (30) calendar days after the offer deadline. Offerors are requested to provide quotations on their official quotation format or letterhead. In addition, offerors responding to this RFP are requested to submit the following according to the status of the bidder:

- Copy of official registration or business license if a business.

6. **Delivery**: The delivery location for the items described in this RFP is:

   Abt Associates  
   Abdulrahim Place, Suite 501  
   990 Rama IV Road  
   Bangrak, Bangkok, 10500

   As part of its response to this RFP, each offeror is expected to agree to the timelines and deliverables described in the scopes of work. The delivery presented in an offer in response to this RFP must be upheld in the performance of any resulting contract for the delivery of goods or services.

7. **Source/Nationality/Manufacture**: All goods and services offered in response to this RFP or supplied under any resulting award must meet [USAID Geographic Code 937](#) in accordance with the United States Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), 22 CFR §228. The cooperating country for this RFP is Thailand. Offerors may not offer or supply any commodities or services that are manufactured or assembled in, shipped from, transported through, or otherwise involving any of the following countries: Myanmar, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, and Syria.

   The winning bidder for this RFP must be a U.S.-based company or be based in a developing country listed at the link above or in the list at the end of this RFP. If a company from an excluded developed country submits a proposal, the company should submit through a subsidiary located in a developing country for priority consideration.

8. **Warranty**: Warranty service and repair within the cooperating country is required for all commodities under this RFP. The warranty coverage must be valid on all commodities for a minimum of twelve (12) months after delivery and acceptance of the commodities, unless otherwise specified in the technical specifications.

9. **Taxes and VAT**: The agreement under which this procurement is financed is not exempt from the payment of taxes, VAT, tariffs, duties, or other levies imposed by any laws in effect in Thailand. Therefore, offerors must include taxes, VAT, charges, tariffs, duties, and levies in accordance with the laws of the Thailand.

10. **Eligibility**: By submitting an offer in response to this RFP, the offeror certifies that it and its principal officers are not debarred, suspended, or otherwise considered ineligible for an award by the U.S. government. Abt Associates will not award a contract to any firm that is debarred, suspended, or considered to be ineligible by the U.S. government.
11. **Evaluation and Award**: Responses to this RFP will be evaluated against several criteria, including the following:

- a. Response to RFP follows the specified instructions.
- b. It meets the eligibility requirements.
- c. Offeror provides sufficient proof of capabilities, as evidenced through past projects of a similar nature and may include reference checks of those or other clients of the offeror.

All of these factors being equal, the offeror whose response is deemed to provide the best value to the U.S. government is likely to be selected. Price is a key determinant, and offerors are encouraged to provide their best and final price for all services provided. Abt Associates reserves the right to make a selection without negotiation with any offeror. Offerors are required to provide sufficient budget detail in their response to allow Abt Associates to determine the reasonableness of overall costs proposed.

Please note that if there are significant deficiencies regarding responsiveness to the requirements of this RFP, an offer may be deemed “non-responsive” and thereby disqualified from consideration. Abt Associates reserves the right to waive immaterial deficiencies at its discretion.

Best and final offer quotations are requested and it is anticipated that an award will be made solely on the basis of these original quotations. However, Abt Associates reserves the right to any or all of the following:

- Abt Associates may conduct negotiations with and/or request clarifications from any offeror prior to award.
- While preference will be given to offerors who can address the full technical requirements of this RFP, Abt Associates may issue a partial award or split the award among various suppliers, if in the best interest of the USAID Clean Power Asia program.
- Abt Associates may cancel this RFP at any time.

Please note that in submitting a response to this RFP, the offeror understands that USAID is not a party to this solicitation and the offeror agrees that any protest hereunder must be presented—in writing with full explanations—to the USAID Clean Power Asia program for consideration, as USAID will not consider protests regarding procurements carried out by implementing partners. Abt Associates, at its sole discretion, will make all final decisions regarding this procurement.

12. **Terms and Conditions**: This is a request for a proposal only. Issuance of this RFP does not in any way obligate Abt Associates, the USAID Clean Power Asia program, or USAID to make an award or pay for costs incurred by potential offerors in the preparation and submission of an offer.

This solicitation is subject to Abt Associates’ standard terms and conditions. Offerors should note that these include U.S. government terms and conditions that flow down to Abt Associates as a U.S. government contractor and subsequently no changes or deviations from these terms and conditions is allowed. Offerors are advised not to propose any other terms and conditions as they will not be considered. Any resultant award will be governed by these terms and conditions; a copy of the full terms and conditions is available upon request. Please note the following terms and conditions will apply:
a. Abt Associates standard payment terms are net 30 days after receipt and acceptance of any commodities or deliverables. Payment will only be issued to the entity submitting the offer in response to this RFP and identified in the resulting award; payment will not be issued to a third party.
b. Any award resulting from this RFP will be firm fixed price, in the form of a Purchase Order.
c. No commodities or services may be supplied that are manufactured or assembled in, shipped from, transported through, or otherwise involving any of the following countries: Myanmar, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, or Syria.
d. Any international air or ocean transportation or shipping carried out under any award resulting from this RFP must take place on U.S.-flag carriers/vessels.
e. United States law prohibits transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to, individuals and organizations associated with terrorism. The supplier under any award resulting from this RFP must ensure compliance with these laws.
f. The title to any goods supplied under any award resulting from this RFP shall pass to Abt Associates following delivery and acceptance of the goods by Abt Associates. Risk of loss, injury, or destruction of the goods shall be borne by the offeror until title passes to Abt Associates.

Section 2: Offer Checklist

To assist offerors in the preparation of proposals, the following checklist summarizes the documentation to include in response to this RFP:

- Official quotation, including specifications as applicable (see Section 3).
- Copy of offeror’s registration or business license and/or work permit, as applicable.
- CV(s) of potential staff to provide these technical services indicating work/consulting history with examples of past work of a similar nature.
- Contact details (name, company, email, phone) of at least two references (firms, organizations, individuals) for whom the offeror has completed projects of a similar scope in the past two years. Abt Associates reserves the right to contact these references.

Section 3: Specifications and Technical Requirements

To assist bidders in establishing costs for this work, the scope of work in Attachment A provides an outline of the work being sought.
I. **Introduction/Overview**

The primary objective of USAID Clean Power Asia is to work with Lower Mekong Countries and other Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) developing member states to encourage power sector investments in environmentally friendly, clean energy sources, specifically focusing on scaling up investment in grid-connected renewable power. USAID Clean Power Asia is a program funded by USAID and implemented by Abt Associates. When any reference is made to approvals or authorizations, it will be stipulated whether those decisions are contractually made by USAID or Abt as implementer. As the client, any decisions made by USAID and communicated to Abt are final.

USAID Clean Power Asia plans to conduct a financial analysis for two projects under development by Convalt Energy LLC: (1) 250 MW solar project in Attapeu, Southern Laos, (2) 500 kV power transmission line between Hatxan in southern Lao PDR and Pleiku in central Vietnam. The subcontractor should assess the bankability of the projects, support Convalt in meetings/interaction with government authorities in Laos and Vietnam, and assist in the identification of potential equity partners, with an emphasis on Japanese companies.

II. **Background**

With ample resources for renewable energy power generation, including hydro and solar, Lao PDR has a large potential to generate and export power to neighboring countries. The country has attracted considerable private sector investment in power generation in recent years, particularly from large hydro. In the coming years, multiple hydro projects are expected to start commercial operation. However, with limited domestic demand and insufficient transmission infrastructure, Électricité du Laos (EDL) has limited opportunities to sell the electricity it will be purchasing from the generators.

There is an urgent need to upgrade and expand the country’s transmission infrastructure, but so far the development of transmission infrastructure has been slow, largely due to EDL’s limited ability to invest in transmission. Several multilateral development banks (MDB) and international donors have been supporting the Lao government in this regard, with a focus on encouraging private sector investment in transmission, without burdening government finances.

In particular, there is significant potential for power trade between Lao PDR, which has multiple hydro power plants in operation and under development, and Vietnam, which is facing power shortages in the near future. The two countries have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in which Vietnam expressed its intention to import as much as 1,000 MW by 2020, 3,000 MW by 2025, and 5,000 MW by 2030.

Convalt Energy LLC is developing the 250 MW solar plant and the 500kV Hatxan - Pleiku Transmission line in order to import electricity from a number of hydropower and solar power plants in the south of Lao PDR to Vietnam. According to the plan, the transmission line will transmit the corresponding power
capacity as follows:

- Phase to 2025: transmitting about 1,000 MW
- Phase to 2030: transmitting about 2,000 MW
- Phase to 2035: transmitting about 3,000 MW

Convalt submitted the feasibility studies for the two projects to the relevant authorities in Laos and Vietnam in June and July 2020 respectively. USAID Clean Power Asia is supporting Convalt to perform a financial analysis of the projects and to identify potential debt providers and equity investors.

III. Scope of Work

The subcontractor shall provide financial advisory services for the 250 MW solar project and the 500kV Hatxan - Pleiku transmission line, covering the following activities:

1. Financial analysis
   a. Review project documents\(^1\) and identify the issues that could have an adverse impact on the bankability of the solar and transmission projects and recommend mitigation measures related to financing and bankability.
   b. Review and update financial assumptions\(^2\) to be used in the project financial model for the solar and transmission projects.
   c. Prepare financial model\(^3\) for the solar and transmission projects based on the project information and the sponsor’s inputs, and prepare comprehensive financial analysis with requested sensitivity studies.

2. Meetings
   a. Prepare presentation material summarizing the financial feasibility and potential financing plans for the solar and transmission projects.
   b. Participate in initial meetings between sponsor’s and government authorities in Laos and Vietnam as required to support negotiations and clarifications related to the financial assumptions and analysis.
   c. Provide recommendations on proper risk allocation in the project documents with counterparties to improve bankability of the project.

3. Partnerships\(^4\)
   a. Develop high level financing plan with 2-3 scenarios and advise on potential financing sources.
   b. Develop an optimal equity partner strategy and structure, and assist the sponsor with identification, evaluation, negotiation, selection and onboarding of such partners during the project development stage.

Notes:

\(^1\) Convalt will provide the related project documents including but not limited to Build-Operate-Transfer Agreement (BOT), Power Purchase Agreement (PPA), Land Lease Agreement (LLA), Government Guarantee, Environmental Certificates, preliminary cash flow model etc.
\(^2\) Convalt will provide its financial models and a comprehensive list of all assumptions used.
\(^3\) Advisor shall develop the financial model and financing term sheet with assistance from the tax, accounting and legal advisors engaged by Convalt or tax, accounting and legal inputs from Convalt.
\(^4\) These activities are related to the project development stage, covering the signing of MOUs or JVs agreements, but not to financial close. All activities need to be completed and invoiced before the end of March 2021.
IV. Deliverables and Schedule

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<td>1.</td>
<td>Report on issues that could affect the bankability of the solar and transmission Projects and recommendations for mitigation measures related to financing and bankability</td>
<td>60 days from contract signing</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Financial models for the solar and transmission projects</td>
<td>60 days from contract signing</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Presentation materials summarizing the financial feasibility and potential financing plans for the solar and transmission projects</td>
<td>90 days from contract signing</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Recommendations on proper risk allocation in the Project documents with counterparties to improve bankability of the Project</td>
<td>Within 60 days of Convalt providing necessary Project documents</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Optimal equity partner strategy and structure</td>
<td>120 days from contract signing</td>
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V. Assumptions

Subcontractor should assume review and approval by Abt of the deliverables shall occur within 10 business days after receipt. In the event that Abt does not approve a deliverable and rework is required by subcontractor, subcontractor shall either 1) rectify the deficiency(s) within 5 business days of notification by Abt; or 2) provide to Abt justification for an extension (at no cost) for additional time therefore.

VI. Miscellaneous Information

The report and supporting activities are to support the project development activities of Convalt Energy LLC, and the subcontractor will submit deliverables to Abt Associates and Convalt Energy LLC.
List of Developing Countries
A Mandatory Reference for ADS Chapter 310

New Edition: 02/06/2012
Responsible Office: GC
File Name: 310maa_020612
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