



Citizens Advice 1066

Request for Quotation

Project Name: SHINE First Level Controller

Date of Quotation:

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Department	
Job Title	CEO
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SUMMARY OF CITIZENS ADVICE 1066

Citizens Advice 1066 is a local charity offering residents information and advice on some of the most pressing issues they face today, including debt, housing, benefit entitlement, employment and relationship problems. The service is independent, confidential, impartial and free of charge, and is run with the help of around 40 trained volunteers supported by a core team of staff.

A dedicated Money Advice Unit at the bureau provides tailored help with more complex debt problems, including working with clients to manage down their debt. Specialist money advisers at the bureau work with clients - sometimes over months - to review their expenditure, maximise their income, prioritise their debts and agree a manageable repayment plan with their creditors. If necessary, they can help clients with applying for a debt relief order or bankruptcy.

A mental health programme provides debt and more general advice to clients who are experiencing mental health issues. Other bureau services include help with reducing energy costs under the Energy Best Deal programme.

A bureau Research and Campaigns team uses the experiences of our clients to lobby local and central government for system-wide improvements for the benefit of everyone. Aside from debt, the problems most frequently presented by clients locally include obtaining suitable housing - particularly in the private rented sector, poor practices by local employers and scams.

Going forward we have been busy developing our new Financial Capability service to help clients to better deal with short term financial shocks and build financial (and therefore personal) resilience over the longer term.

Further information can be found by visiting our website at www.citizensadvise1066.co.uk

REQUEST FOR QUOTATION

1. Description of Requirement

Citizens Advice 1066 is seeking to procure the services of a qualified person to deliver accountancy and audit services in the role of a First Level Controller (FLC) for the EU funded Sustainable Houses in an Inclusive Neighbourhood (SHINE) project. Claims for this project are submitted every six months and each claim requires a FLC to review supporting documents for verification of expenditure prior to the submission.

2. The Project

Citizens Advice 1066 has been awarded grant funding from the European Union Interreg 2 Seas programme to deliver activities for the SHINE project. Information about the Interreg 2 Seas programme can be found at <http://www.interreg2seas.eu/>. The project involves multiple partners from organisations in the UK, France, Germany, The Netherlands and Belgium. In order to deliver the aims of the SHINE project, Citizens Advice 1066 will deliver a behaviour change programme in St. Leonards-on-Sea. Citizens Advice 1066 is required to commission the services of a First Level Controller on behalf of its own activities.

3. First Level Control System background

European Territorial Cooperation (ETC), better known as Interreg, provides a framework for the implementation of joint actions and policy exchanges between national, regional and local actors from the 28 different European Union Member States. The overarching objective of ETC is to promote a harmonious economic, social and territorial development of the Union as a whole. Interreg is built around three strands of cooperation: cross-border (Interreg A), transnational (Interreg B) and interregional (Interreg C). The funding is provided by the European Commission and the Programmes are managed by Member States. Article 125 of EC Regulation 1303/2013 requires a Managing Authority of a Programme to verify that the grant provided to beneficiaries has been spent on financing products and services in compliance with applicable Programme rules and applicable national and EU legislation. Under Article 23 of EU Regulation 1299/2013 for ETC Programmes requires a participating Member State to designate a person to carry out these verifications in relation to beneficiaries on its territory. The Member State responsibility for the UK (excluding Northern Ireland) rests with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) which is responsible for checking the suitability of the First Level Controller (FLC) proposed by the beneficiary and confirming the appointment. DCLG is accountable for the efficient working of the verification system that it has put in place.

4. Requirement to be a First Level Controller

The FLC is a named person within a firm or organisation. The FLC must meet two requirements:

a. Professional Qualification

The FLC should be a practicing certificate holder meeting the Companies Act requirements to be a company auditor. The FLC should belong to one of the following professional bodies:

- The institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales
- The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland
- The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants
- The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
- The Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland
- The Association of Authorised Public Accountants
- The Association of International Accountants

b. Independence

The FLC has to be completely independent from all aspects of the project management and delivery. The FLC should also not take on any new role which could compromise this independence during the life of the project.

5. Responsibilities of a First Level Controller

The verifications to be carried out would cover administrative, financial, technical and physical aspects of the project, as appropriate. Verifications would ensure that the:

- expenditure declared is real;
- products or services have been delivered in accordance with the approval project decision;
- applications for reimbursement by the beneficiary are correct;
- project partner and expenditure have complied with the applicable Programme, EU and national rules.

The FLC is required to provide assurance on the eligibility of the 100% of the expenditure included in each claim. FLCs can use their professional judgement how to do this but must provide assurance on the 100% of the expenditure in the claim. The verification of expenditure is, therefore, not similar to an audit where the prime purpose is to form an opinion on the information in the financial report taken as a whole, and not to identify all possible irregularities. FLCs can reject items of expenditure if they do not meet the eligibility requirements and use their professional judgment to apply financial corrections if some aspects of procedures, such as with public procurement, have not been complied with in accordance with the guidelines provided. An important aspect of the work would be to check compliance with public procurement rules when obtaining goods and services.

Verifications will include the following procedures:

- administrative verifications (based on documentation provided) in respect of each application for reimbursement by the project partners
- on-site verification at least once in the life of project to check the reality of the project delivery and those aspects of compliance that cannot be done through administrative checks

Each expenditure verification would be end-to-end. This means checking the:

- relevance of the expenditure to the project;
- eligibility according to programme rules;
- provision within the approved budget;
- methodology for claiming costs such as overheads and staffing;
- compliance with procedures for buying goods and services;
- defrayment through accounting and payroll evidence;
- compliance with publicity requirements.

The FLC must be able to complete the verification work within two months from the end of each claim period. It will be the responsibility of the project partner to provide all the supporting documents for each expenditure claim. The FLC will use guidance and tools, including on-line applications, provided by the Programme authorities to conduct the verifications and report the findings. Training will be provided on the use of the tools and the Programme rules. The expenditure would be reported in Euros and the conversion from Sterling would be done using exchange rates provided by the European Commission.

The standard of verification is expected to be high to prevent any irregular expenditure being claimed. As a guide the European Commission considers any errors above 2% of the expenditure verified as material. The work of the FLC may be subjected to higher level audits conducted on behalf of the European Commission and DCLG. FLCs would be expected to fully co-operate with these audits.

6. Budget

The SHINE project runs from 1st September 2016 to 31st August 2020. The overall budget for the project is €7,066,533.27 (Euros) and, of this amount, Citizens Advice 1066's allocation is €353,000 (Euros).

The project budget is divided into six categories for the purpose of making claims. These are as follows:

- staff costs
- office and administration
- travel and accommodation
- external expertise and services
- equipment
- infrastructure and works

During the project there will be eight financial claims to be covered by the FLC as follows:

FLC 1: 01.09.2016-31.12.2016 (submission 30.04.17)

FLC 2: 01.01.2017-30.06.2017 (submission 31.10.17)

FLC 3: 01.07.2017-31.12.2017 (submission 30.04.18)

FLC 4: 01.01.2018-30.06.2018 (submission 31.10.18)

FLC 5: 01.07.2018-31.12.2018 (submission 30.04.19)

FLC 6: 01.01.2019-30.06.2019 (submission 31.10.19)

FLC 7: 01.07.2019-31.12.2018 (submission 30.04.20)

FLC 8: 01.01.2020-31.08.2020 (submission 31.10.20)

Please note that these half year reporting periods have been set by the Interreg Programme and therefore are not flexible. Last payments related to invoices (apart from the FLC invoice) have to be completed by 30.06.2020. After this the project will go into administrative closure.

7. Approach and Methodology

Citizens Advice 1066 would like potential service provider to set out their approach to the verification of the project claims. Please include details of any support staff who will be used to deliver this work and how the work of the support staff will be validated. The approach and methodology should include a description of how the following actions will be achieved.

- a. Verification that the expenditure reported in each progress report and expenditure claim fulfils the conditions laid down by the Interreg Programmes.
- b. Indication of what has been checked and what the conclusions are for each claim.
- c. Completion of verification visits to check that the reported activities have been undertaken by on-the-spot checks.
- d. Provision of a guarantee for the Managing Authority, the Certifying Authority and the project itself that costs co-financed under the Interreg programmes are accounted for and eligible.

In addition to the above, the tenderer should describe any activities that add value to the service being offered.

8. The role of Citizens Advice 1066 and its sub-partners

- a. Citizens Advice 1066 will be supporting the FLC to submit the project claims by the due deadlines and information will be provided to the FLC by **both** the company's Finance Department (payroll, invoices, calculation of costs and defrayal dates) and the SHINE Project Coordinator (partner/sub-partner liaison and partner budget spend/forecast expenditure).
- b. A clear timeline established and confirmed for the reporting procedure with all information ready to enable the FLC to perform checks and submit a validated claim to Citizens Advice 1066 one month before submission date. This will allow time for the controller to perform any additional checks and raise any questions with the other partners/sub-partners.
- c. There will be a full audit trail of the expenditure claimed by Citizens Advice 1066.
- d. All corrections, if any, will be fully documented on any revised claim.

9. Location of work

The documentation relating to the project will be sent by Citizens Advice 1066 to the FLC electronically for the purposes of verifying the expenditure for each claim. Hard copies of the relevant documents will be stored by Citizens Advice 1066 at their Renaissance House offices in St. Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex and will be available for inspection as required.

The claims for the project will be submitted electronically by the FLC through the Interreg 2 Seas EEP system. The FLC will be required to register on the EEP system immediately after being appointed to the role.

10. Fees

- a. The tenderer should state a fixed hourly rate and will be required to keep a timesheet of hours worked on the project.
- b. Travel costs incurred by the FLC to Citizens Advice 1066's premises or for on-the-spot checks will be an additional cost and will be allowable expenses on their claim (within the FLC costs).
- c. It is expected that FLC role for first two claims of each project may take up to three days per claim. This is based on the assumption the full partner is able to satisfactorily fulfil its role. Providing any issues arising from the first two claims are addressed by Citizens Advice 1066 for future claims it is envisaged that future claims can be checked in two days.

11. Commencement, duration and award

The first claim will relate to the period 1st September 2016 to 31st December 2016. The time allocated for the preparation and submission of the claim runs for two months from 20th January 2017. However, Citizens Advice 1066 has joined the project late and will be making its first claim in October 2017 for the period 01.01.2017 to 30.06.2017. The final partner claim will be made no later than 31st August 2020. The FLC appointment is for the duration of the project unless it is terminated by DCLG or with mutual agreement between the FLC and Citizens Advice 1066. The contract will be formalised through a service agreement or letter of engagement.

12. Scoring

Proposals will be scored on the following criteria:

- Value for money (40%)
- Experience of providing the services detailed in this brief (40%)
- Proposal for addressing delivery risks (10%)
- Added value of engaging your company (10%)

13. Information to be returned:

- Total cost and a detailed pricing schedule (please include VAT and costs such as travel and expenses)
- A detailed project plan for completion of this work
- Relevant experience of your organisation and staff of providing the services identified in this brief
- Summary of key project delivery risks and how you'll mitigate them
- The added value of the services that you've identified in your proposal
- Environmental policy.

14. Pricing (Supplier to complete)

Total Cost *	<input type="checkbox"/>	£
Refer to Pricing Schedule	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>If Appropriate</i>

* tick as appropriate

Company:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
Contact Name:	
Email:	
Signature:	
Date:	

15. Citizens Advice 1066 Contact Details (CA 1066 to complete)

If you have any queries regarding this quotation please contact:

Name:	Tracy Dighton
Telephone:	07802 724259
Email:	tracydighton@citizensadvice1066.co.uk

16. RETURN DETAILS

Please send completed quotations to Tracy Dighton. Contact details as above.

17. DECLARATION

If your company is not an approved supplier you will need to go through the full supplier approval process before any orders are placed

I/We accept that if we are not currently a Citizens Advice 1066 approved supplier we will require full approval prior to any orders being placed or works carried out.

I/We agree that I/we shall commence the Project when instructed to do so.

I/We confirm that the rates and prices set out in the Pricing Schedule shall remain fixed for three (3) months from the date of this Request for Quotation.

Standard Terms & Conditions of Purchase

1.0 Definitions

“Buyer” means Citizens Advice 1066.

“Seller” means the person, firm or company to whom the Purchase Order is addressed

“Goods” means the materials, articles, works & services described in the Contract

“Package” means any kind of packaging

“Authorised Officer” means the Buyer’s employee authorised, either generally or specifically, by the Buyer to sign the Buyer’s Purchase Order.

“Authorised” means signed by one of the Buyer’s Authorised Officers

2.0 The Contract

The Seller agrees to sell and the Buyer agrees to purchase the Goods in accordance with the Contract. The Contract shall comprise any order amendments, the Purchase Order, these General Conditions of Purchase, and any other document referred to on the Purchase Order. The Contract shall not include any of the Sellers conditions of sale, notwithstanding any reference to them in any documents.

3.0 Price

The Seller will sell to the Buyer the Goods for the firm and fixed Price stated in the Contract or Purchase Order. The price shall include storage, packing, insurance, delivery & installation, but shall exclude VAT

4.0 Variations

The Buyer shall have the right before delivery, to send the Seller an order amendment adding to, deleting or modifying the Goods subject to the order. If the order amendment will cause a change to the price or delivery date then the Seller must suspend performance of the Contract and notify the Buyer without delay. The Seller must allow the Buyer at least 10 working days to consider any new price and delivery date, and the Contract shall take effect when the Buyer’s authorised officer accepts in writing the new price and/or delivery date.

5.0 The Buyers Right of Cancellation

The Buyer may cancel the Purchase Order and any order amendment thereto at any time by sending the Seller a notice of termination. If the Seller submits a termination claim then the Buyer will pay to the Seller the cost of any commitments, liabilities or expenditure, which in the Buyer’s reasonable opinion were incurred in performance of the Contract at the time of termination.

6.0 Quality & description

The Goods shall:

- (i) conform in every respect with the provisions to the Contract:
- (ii) be capable of all standards of performance specified in the Contract

- (iii) be fit for purpose
- (iv) be new and be of sound materials and skill and careful workmanship
- (v) correspond with their description or any samples, patterns, drawings, plans & specification referred to in the Contract
- (vi) be of satisfactory quality
- (vii) comply with current legislation

7.0 Work on the Buyers Premises

If the Contract involves any work or services which the supplier performs on the Buyers premises then the following conditions apply:

The Seller shall ensure that the Seller's employees, the Seller's sub-Contractors and their employees and any other person associated with the Seller will adhere to the obligations imposed on the Seller by current safety legislation or any regulations that the Buyer may notify to the Seller in writing.

8.0 Safety

The Seller shall observe all legal requirements of the UK, EU and relevant international agreements in relation to health, safety & environment, and in particular to the marking of hazardous Goods, the provision of data sheets for hazardous materials and all provisions relating to food.

9.0 Delivery

The Goods shall be properly packed, secured and despatched at the Sellers expense to arrive in good condition at the time or times and the place or places specified in the Purchase Order or Contract.

10.0 Late Delivery

If the Goods or any part of them are not delivered by the time or times specified in the Contract then the Buyer may be written notice cancel any undelivered balance of Goods. In the case of services, the Buyer may have the work performed by alternative means and any additional costs reasonably so incurred shall be at the Seller's expense.

11.0 Property & Risk

- a) The Seller shall bear all risks of loss or damage to the Goods until they have been delivered and shall insure accordingly
- b) Ownership of the Goods shall pass to the Buyer when the Goods have been delivered but without prejudice to the Buyer's right of rejection under this Contract.

12.0 Acceptance

The Buyer shall have the right to reject the Goods in whole or in part whether or not paid for in full or in part within a reasonable time of delivery if they do not conform with the requirements of this Purchase Order or Contract. The Buyer shall give the Seller a reasonable opportunity to replace the Goods with new Goods that conform to this Contract, after which time the Buyer shall be entitled to cancel the Purchase Order and purchase the nearest equivalent Goods elsewhere.

13.0 Payment

The Buyer shall pay the Seller within 30 days of receipt of a correctly rendered invoice.

14.0 The Sellers Warranty

The Seller shall promptly make good at the Sellers expense any defect in the Goods that the Buyer discovers under proper usage during the first 12 months of actual use. Such defects may arise from the Sellers faulty design, poor workmanship or use of inadequate or faulty materials. Repairs and replacements will be covered by the above warranty for a period of 12 months from acceptance by the