

Technical Specifications

Invitation to Tender Travel Agency Services

June 2023

1. **Introduction:** The EU-LAC Foundation plans to conclude a service contract with one or more companies specialised in corporate travel management in accordance with the general conditions and specifications set out below.

The procedure will conclude with the signing of a (2) two-year framework contract. The contract will be awarded on non-exclusivity terms, meaning that in any time and form the EU-LAC Foundation may require similar services to other agencies, including signing other framework contracts.

2. **Background:** The European Union – Latin America and the Caribbean Foundation (EU-LAC Foundation) is an international organisation created by the Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the European Union and the States of Latin America and the Caribbean.

The EU-LAC Foundation has 61 members: the 33 states of Latin America and the Caribbean, the 27 members of the European Union, and the European Union itself. Its object is to encourage further mutual knowledge and understanding between EU and Latin America and Caribbean regions and its peoples, and it was conceived as a useful tool for strengthening the biregional partnership.

The EU-LAC Foundation's headquarters are located in Hamburg, Germany.

3. **Subject of the contract:** The purpose of the contract is to entrust to a provider of travel services the organisation and management of the business trips carried out by the EU-LAC Foundation's executive and managerial staff, as well as its invitees and attendants to events. These business trips will be mainly flights of intercontinental (EU to Latin America & Caribbean or vice versa), intra-Americas, and intra-Europe nature.

4. **Services to be provided:** The contractor must therefore provide the human and material resources necessary to provide the services according to the requirements set forth in the list below (other additional detailed services may be reasonably included, if needed).

The service will be provided in Spanish and English. Fluent agents in Spanish and English are essential for services delivery.

A Service Level Agreement (SLA) will be signed along the contract contemplating the main services and response responsibilities from the agency, based on the details expressed at the winning proposal.

Booking of travel

a) Reserve and issue tickets for air (mainly), rail, and road travel, as requested by the

- EU-LAC Foundation staff, at the best possible price (most direct and most cost-effective routes);
- b) Same day response (< 4 hours) to EU-LAC Foundation's requests, taking into account working hours below;
 - c) Present at least 3 travel options/routes to a destination as requested;
 - d) Fare and reservation hold for at least 48 hours, allowing the EU-LAC Foundation to confirm before ticket issuance; clearly state the reservation deadline.
 - e) Deliver tickets electronically, as soon as possible after confirmation by the Foundation and the latest 24 hours before departure time;
 - f) Manage travellers' profiles and preferences, such as frequent flyer numbers, airplane seat preference, etc;
 - g) Clearly state if there are any visa or health requirements based on traveller's personal data and itinerary;
 - h) Clearly state if there are any restrictions or special terms related to the booking of flights with low-cost companies: no baggage, specify the need to issue boarding passes, other needs and / or limitations;
 - i) Apply EU-LAC Foundation's booking protocol and criteria (Annex 2)
 - j) Ensure travel insurance is included for every trip and communicated to traveller;
 - k) Direct ticket managing with the travellers acting under the standard Foundation's defined protocol for travel (Annex 2). In case the travellers are external to the Foundation, the appointed Foundation staff member(s) will be included in copy of the communications. There will be always the need to receive the Foundation's staff confirmation for ticket issuance, and always consult the Foundation managers in the case of non-standard situations (e.g. dates not adjusted to the activity agenda).

Hotel Reservation

- l) Booking of hotels (providing detailed information on the services offered, location and quality); offering preferential negotiated hotel rates.
- m) At least three hotel options in the proximity of the activity location.
- n) Provide invoicing detailed for rooms and services: names, dates, unit prices, units and total prices.
- o) Contracting additional services with the hotels: transfers, dinner vouchers, early and late checkouts.

Working Hours

- p) Phone and electronic (e-mail) booking service in English and/or Spanish, Monday through Friday from 9h00 to 18h00 (Central European Time);
- q) Emergency booking and reservation amendments' service in English and/or Spanish, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year;
- r) Assign one customer service representative who will act as a single point of contact with a designated contact within the EU-LAC Foundation. Provide and clearly identify backup procedures and personnel names, in case of absence of the single point of contact.

Credit Term

- s) Offer the EU-LAC Foundation a credit term of at least thirty (30) days after receipt of the properly drawn invoice, allowing payment by bank-to-bank transfers.

Statistics

- t) Provide, when so requested by the EU-LAC Foundation, a detailed overview of the services provided at the end of each semester;
- u) Such statistics may include purchases by month, by staff members, and/or particular events or destinations.

Cancellation and communication of interest to the EU-LAC Foundation

- v) In case of cancellation at a short notice, the service provider shall endeavour to minimise any penalties applicable to the EU-LAC Foundation;
- w) Penalties attributable to the fault of the service provider will not be admitted;
- x) Immediately notify the traveller (cc: EU-LAC Foundation) about strikes or other important issues concerning the travel, and provide/suggest alternative travel options.

In addition, the following services would be considered an asset:

- y) Allow booking of airport transfers;
- z) Allow booking of group buses and private taxis;
- aa) Assist EU-LAC Foundation in negotiations with airlines, hotel groups and other service providers to obtain the best discounts possible;
- bb) The potential service provider is invited to highlight in its offer any particular or additional features that might benefit the EU-LAC Foundation.

THE CONTRACTOR MUST SUBMIT THE TAILORED PROPOSED SERVICES DESCRIPTION USING THE ANNEX 3 TEMPLATE. THIS SERVICES PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION SHOULD ALSO INCLUDE ANY VALUE-ADDED SERVICES.

THIS DOCUMENT WILL BE THE MAIN REFERENCE FOR THE TECHNICAL PROPOSAL EVALUATION.

THE PROPOSALS SET FORTH AT THIS DOCUMENT WILL BE BINDING FOR THE WHOLE CONTRACT.

THE TENDERES MUST SUBMIT AS PART OF THEIR TENDER, THE ANNEX 3 DULY FILLED AND SIGNED.

CONCISE AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES WILL BE AN ADVANTAGE FOR THE PROPOSALS EVALUATION.

5. **Duration:** This framework contract will be concluded for a period of (2) two years from the date on which it enters into force (expected start date is August 1st, 2023). This contractual period and all other periods specified in the Contract are calculated in calendar days unless otherwise indicated.

After the period of 2 years, the contract may be extended for one more year if so agreed in writing by both parties.

6. Prices (Services Fees):

- a) The contract currency is the euro (EUR);
- b) Cross border services within the EU shall be invoiced without VAT to the EU-LAC Foundation (reverse taxation);
- c) Services from outside the EU shall be invoiced according to their local fiscal practice;
- d) Prices must be firm and not subject to revision during the duration of the contract.

The agency proposed fees should be presented using the attached **Annex 1 – Financial Proposal Excel file**.

This table presents range of possible services. Most of the services along the contract will be the booking and purchasing of flights; moreover the EU-LAC may rely on the travel agency to contract a wide range of other services (see point #4).

Using this table as a reference, the applicant should include its proposed service fee to be used along the contract. **The price of the service fee can be expressed terms of unitary cost, or as a total for that type of service, or with none or zero cost.**

The resulting sum or total of the proposed agency service fees multiplied by the number of possible occurrences of that service along the contract will be comparatively evaluated according to the formula expressed below at the “award criteria” section.

7. **Subcontracting:** The contractor shall not subcontract without prior written authorisation from the EU-LAC Foundation nor cause the contract to be de facto performed by third parties.
8. **Criteria:** There are three types of criteria under this call for tenders: (i) exclusion criteria, (ii) selection criteria, and (iii) award criteria:

Exclusion criteria

In order to demonstrate their eligibility, tenderers must submit as part of their tender, the **“Declaration of honour on exclusion criteria and absence of conflict of interest” duly filled and signed - Annex 4.**

Selection criteria

Tenderers should have the necessary financial, economic, technical and professional capacity to perform its obligations under the contract. In particular, the tenderer must:

- a) Be a company duly established either in the EU, Latin America or Caribbean region, under the laws of the country of its incorporation;
- b) Have a IATA number registration;
- c) At least two-year experience in providing the services required to medium/large organisations;
- d) Have executives specialized and devoted to group travel. Possesses especial products, services and company agreements to support group travel.

The tenderer must provide a description of the fulfilment of the selection criteria using the **Annex 5 – Selection criteria declaration page**.

Award criteria

The tenders determined to be consistent with the requirements laid down in the exclusion and selection criteria above will be evaluated according to the following:

Award Criteria	Weighting (out of 100)
Overall appraisal on the characteristics of services proposed, according to requirements under # 4 above – Technical Offer (Annex 3)	45
Financial Proposal (Annex 1)	40
Value added services proposed	15

9. Submission: Tenders should be submitted in either English or Spanish by post or e-mail not later than **July 16th, 2023, end of day CEST (Central European Summer Time)**

CALL FOR TENDERS Travel Services
EU-LAC Foundation
ABC-Straße 2, 20354 Hamburg
Germany
jetchart@eulacfoundation.org

11. The period of validity of the tender, during which tenderers may not modify the terms of their tenders in any respect, is (2) two months from the final date for submission.

Submission of a tender implies acceptance of all the terms and conditions set out in this tender specification, where appropriate, waiver of the tenderer's own general or specific terms and conditions. Submission of a tender is binding on the tenderer to whom the contract is awarded for the duration of the contract.

All costs incurred during the preparation and submission of tenders are to be borne by the tenderers and will not be reimbursed.

Contacts between the EU-LAC Foundation and tenderers are prohibited throughout the procedure save in exceptional circumstances and under the following conditions only:

- Before the final date for submission of tenders:
- * At the request of the tenderer, the EU-LAC Foundation may provide additional information solely for the purpose of clarifying the nature of the contract. Any requests for additional information must be made in writing only to jetchart@eulacfoundation.org. Requests for additional information received less than (5) five working days before the final date for submission of tenders will not be processed.

- * The EU-LAC Foundation may, on its own initiative, inform interested parties of any error, inaccuracy, omission or any other clerical error in the text of the call for tenders.

- After the opening of tenders
- * If clarification is required or if obvious clerical errors in the tender need to be corrected, the EU-LAC Foundation may contact the tenderer provided the terms of the tender are not modified as a result.
- * The EU-LAC Foundation may negotiate with tenderers the offers submitted, in order to adapt them to the requirements set out in the contract notice, tender specifications or any additional document and in order to find the tender offering best value for money. During negotiations equal treatment of all tenderers will be ensured.

This invitation to tender is in no way binding on the EU-LAC Foundation, whose contractual obligation commences only upon signature of the contract with the successful tenderer. Up to the point of signature, the EU-LAC Foundation may either abandon the procurement or cancel the award procedure, without the candidates or tenderers being entitled to claim any compensation. This decision must be substantiated and the candidates or tenderers will be notified.

You will be informed of the outcome of this procurement procedure by e-mail. It is your responsibility to provide a valid e-mail address together with your contact details in your tender and to check it regularly.