Call for supply of services

EmpowerED

Accessibility consultancy and audit WCAG 2.1/2.2

March 2024
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1. BACKGROUND

EUN Partnership aisbl (EUN) is a Belgian international non-profit association based in Brussels. Over the last 25 years, it has become one of the key organisations involved in transforming teaching and learning at school and in using the integration of ICT as a force for improvement. It consists of a network of 34 Ministries of Education from across Europe which organises its activities around three main areas: exchange experience gained at national level; gather evidence to feed policy development and implement innovative pilot projects for schools. EUN also operates key European services in education on behalf of the European Commission and develops private-funded initiatives such as the Future Classroom Lab. More information is available on our website: http://www.eun.org.

EUN typically manages between 30 to 35 projects at any time funded by EU programmes and/or private partners. All projects include a dissemination and communication plan including online and print products, as well as video production and media campaigns.

2. SERVICES TO BE SUPPLIED

EUN would like to appoint a company to provide consultancy on accessibility and an audit for compliancy based on the WCAG 2.1 standard for the online platform of the EmpowerED project.

*Please note the platform is currently under development. The current website is just a temporary static site featuring basic project information.*

The company selected shall have substantial experience in the activities to be carried out, they should be able to work in English, and work during standard office hours (9.00-18.00 Brussels time), with the necessary staff and resources to provide the services covered by this call.

The method of appointment of the tenderer(s) and the contractual conditions are more particularly described in section 3 and 4 of this Call.

The EmpowerED platform pilot version is currently being finalized and the new portal should comply with the WCAG 2.1, level AA standard, as set out by the Web Accessibility Directive (Directive EU 2016/2102) and the latest version of EN 301 549 v3.2.1.

Whilst WCAG 2.2 was published on 5 October 2023, it is not yet used in a version of EN 301 549 that has been harmonised by referencing it in the Official Journal of the European Union. If the process to update and reference a harmonised standard was finalized before the contractual
period, the standard framework may also be updated. Please note this is expected to be completed by 2025 at the earliest.

The EmpowerED platform is composed by the following parts:

- Public site
- Online Community
- Matchmaking tool (prototype within the community)

**Description of work**

- Kick-off meeting on scope and work plan with the project team – April/May 2024
- Definition of an accessibility testing plan for the pilot platform and its sections based on the standard WCAG 2.1, level AA (website and community) – June 2024
- Consultancy on the accessibility criteria to apply (questions and answers or short meetings with the project team – 4 meetings) - in the period September – December 2024
- Testing of sample pages across the portal during the implementation period and feedback reports to the project team - in the period September-November 2024
- First audit of the platform and its sections – latest December 2024.
- If WCAG 2.2 were to be added to a version of EN 301 549 that has been harmonised by referencing it in the Official Journal of the European Union, apply necessary checks within a follow up audit in 2025 to the final version of the website.
- Testing of sample pages across the portal during the implementation period and feedback reports to the project team - in the period February-September 2025.
- Final audit of the updated platform and its sections – in the period September/October 2025.

For all outputs:

- In addition to supplying the finished product, the contractor will make available references to the tools used to perform each step of the testing and audit.
- EUN will have full copyright ownership on reports and findings.
- We expect the contractor to do the work itself.

**3. CONDITIONS**

In order to reply to this call, the applicants should supply the following information and details:

- The offer must be made in English
- The general background information on the company including resources available
Experience and examples of work carried-out for the activities, preferably related to the type of work, and type of organisations the company has worked for (including services performed for EU funded projects)

- Details and experience of the staff which will be supplying the service(s)
- The price in Euros of the offer
- Approx. delivery timetable for the key work steps
- The quality assurance process applied to each type of task and the method of delivery

The selection of the successful applicant will be based on the following criteria:

- The quality and experience of the company performing the services, in particular related to the standard WCAG 2.1 (and WCAG 2.2 where relevant)
- The cost of the services concerned and the timeliness of the delivery of each product
- Geographical location of the company
- The resources that the company has available
- The experience of working for EU funded projects and similar projects

The EUN Evaluation Committee may decide, at its entire discretion, to give a weighting to the various selection criteria.

In terms of the fees and charges they must be comparable with market prices and values.

Please note that EUN is not bound to make a selection if the offers received are not of sufficient quality or the prices quoted are not within the budget allocated to EUN by the funding body or not within the budget allocated by Schoolnet for this type of work. In such circumstances, EUN may re-issue this Call or cancel it completely. It may also cancel the call for business or operational reasons.

The EUN Evaluation Committee may, at its entire discretion, decide to call the highest scoring candidates for an online interview, in order for them to present their offer directly to the Evaluation Committee and to resolve any outstanding issues or questions.

Upon completion of the process of evaluation the results of the selection will be communicated to all the applicants both successful and unsuccessful. A contract will be signed with the successful applicant(s). No obligation will arise with any applicant until a contract has been signed.

4. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Applicants will be automatically excluded for selection and from an award if it falls within one of the situations listed below:
(a) They are subject to a conflict of interest;

(b) They are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;

(c) They have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;

(d) They have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of, social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established;

(e) They have made false declarations in supplying information required by any public organization as a condition of participation in a procurement procedure or grant award procedure or fail to supply this information.

(f) They have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which can be justified.

The applicant shall also be automatically excluded if the application together with any supporting documents is not received by EUN by the deadline listed in the section, Timescales and Deadlines.

5. TIMESCALE AND DEADLINE FOR TENDERING

The deadline for receipt of applications is 17.00 CEST on 12 April 2024 by e-mail.

Interested suppliers may send questions until 5 April 2024 17.00 CEST to the address below and answers will be provided by email by 9 April.

Following the evaluation of the submitted proposals, the decision will be communicated via e-mail to all applicants.

Interested applicants are invited to send their applications with the information requested by e-mail to EUN at the following addresses:

Enrique Martin – enrique.martin@eun.org