

Responses to Queries Received on RFP

Request for Proposal (RFP) - Consulting Services for a Landscape Study on Financial Interventions for Women-Led Enterprises in Nepal

S. No.	Query Details	Response
1.	Given the scope and significance of this study, we are keen to thoroughly understand all the requirements and expectations outlined by CPI. To ensure that our proposal aligns with CPI's objectives and deliverables for this project, we would appreciate if you could provide us with the detailed RFP document and any other relevant background materials or guidelines for submission. Additionally, if there are specific formats or templates that need to be followed for the proposal submission, please include those as well.	The detailed Scope of Work and Additional Terms and Conditions are appended herewith. Please refer to all the responses provided in this document.
2.	Eligibility Criteria: Under section 3.1 (Eligibility Criteria), instead of stating that organizations must have prior experience in Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) and WLEs, the Request for Proposal (RFP) should emphasize having the necessary resources. It should include a requirement for an Environmental Economist, specifying that the individual must hold a PhD in the Valuation of Ecosystem Services. Proposals from organizations that do not have an Environmental Economist with prior experience in PES will not be considered.	The required eligibility criteria for the applicant as stated in the RFP remains unchanged.
3.	Qualification and Experience of Proposed Team: Given the significance of the study, the qualifications and experience of the team members should be strengthened as follows:	The qualifications and experience listed in the RFP are the minimum requirements for the applicant. However, proposals from a group of entities forming a joint venture (JV)/consortium, sub-contracting arrangement, or other types of associations or partnerships, will be

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Finance Expert should be a Chartered Accountant with over 10 years of experience. • The Women-led Enterprise Building Expert should also have more than 10 years of experience. • The Environmental Economist should hold a PhD in Environmental Valuation of Natural Resources, with over 10 years of experience and a background in valuation studies with government and international organizations. 	<p>considered (also refer to the response to query 6). For such proposals, the qualifications and experience of the JV/ Consortium members/ prospective sub-contractors/participating entities will be considered collectively.</p>
4.	<p>Extension of Submission Deadline: Under 3.2 Please Extend the Proposal submission date until 6 pm IST on 10th March 2025. Any proposals received after this date and time will not be accepted.</p>	<p>The proposal submission deadline is revised to 10:00 AM (IST) on March 10, 2025, consequently, the Award of Project is set for March 14, 2025, and project commencement for March 21, 2025.</p>
5.	<p>Evaluation Criteria Transparency: Please relax the evaluation criteria outlined in point (2), which currently states that the applicant must have completed at least one PES or PES-like project/assignment, as well as one survey-based research or landscaping project in gender-centric domains. Additionally, please relax the credential requirements for the proposer in point (a), which pertains to experience in PES or PES-like projects/assignments.</p>	<p>The evaluation criteria as outlined in the RFP remains unchanged. However, it is clarified that for proposals submitted by JVs/ consortiums/ subcontracting arrangements/ other associations or partnerships, all participating entities will be collectively assessed based on the specified criteria (also refer to the response to query 6).</p>
6.	<p>Furthermore, please allow for Consortium, Association, Joint Ventures (JV), or Collaboration.</p>	<p>If the applicant is a group of legal entities that will form or have formed a Joint Venture (JV), Consortium, or Association submitting the proposal, they shall be considered. They will confirm in their Proposal that: (i) they have designated one party to act as a lead entity, duly vested with authority to legally bind the members of the JV, Consortium or Association jointly and severally, which shall be evidenced by a duly notarized Agreement among the legal entities, and submitted with the Proposal; and (ii) if they</p>

		are awarded the contract, the contract shall be entered into, by and between CPI and the designated lead entity, who shall be acting for and on behalf of all the member entities comprising the joint venture. After the Deadline for Submission of Proposal, the lead entity identified to represent the JV, Consortium, or Association shall not be altered without the prior written consent of CPI.
7.	Is there an Indicative budget for the project?	The financial proposal of the project is aligned with the defined timelines and outlined scope of work and should include all costs that an applicant expects to incur on the assignment. An indicative project budget is estimated to be USD 60,000 approximately. However, applicants are expected to rely on the knowledge of their own resource costs and process efficiencies for their financing proposal.
8.	Is it required to have a physical office in Nepal?	As stated in the RFP, the applicant should have had a permanent or representative office in Nepal for a minimum two years. However, in case of proposals from a group of entities forming a joint venture/consortium (JV/C), sub-contracting arrangement, or other types of associations or partnerships, the specified criteria should be fulfilled by either the lead entity or a participating entity (also refer to the response to query 6).
9.	Can the field surveys be outsourced?	The consultant (or the lead entity, in the case of JVs, consortiums, subcontracting arrangements, or other partnerships) will bear complete responsibility for the quality and execution of all aspects of the landscape surveys.
10.	Page No. 4 Section 2	As outlined in the scope of work, the study will begin with desk research to identify women-led enterprises (WLEs) across

	<p>RFP Clause - Map existing women-led enterprises and community-based activities in Nepal that contribute to ecosystem services....</p> <p>Remarks/queries – Can you clarify whether the study is expected to cover all provinces of Nepal? Additionally, is there a number of WLEs to be identified, and should representation from each province be ensured?</p>	<p>Nepal relevant to the project. (The term 'enterprises' is meant as economic units, and includes cooperatives, CFUGs, self-help groups, collectives, etc. that are engaged in income-generating activities). Such selection is expected to prioritize regions and enterprises with the highest potential for financial and ecosystem services interventions as well as maximum impact. Consequently, coverage of all provinces may or may not be necessary. Similarly, no specific number of WLEs is mandated. The regional distribution of identified WLEs will be captured in the survey itself.</p>
11.	<p>Page No. 5 Section 3.1 a)</p> <p>RFP Clause - This Request for Proposal (RFP) outlines the requirements for an open and competitive bidding process. This RFP is intended for firms only; individual consultants are not eligible to apply.</p> <p>Remarks/queries – Is CPI open to joint proposals from multiple organizations or consortiums?</p>	<p>Refer to the response to query 6.</p>
12.	<p>Page No. 7 Section 4.1 2.</p> <p>RFP Clause - The applicant should have completed at least one PES or PES-like project/assignment and one....</p> <p>Remarks/queries – What types of projects or assignments would be deemed comparable to PES-like project/assignment for eligibility?</p>	<p>PES or PES-like projects/ assignments would include valuation of ecosystem services, interventions that may be categorized into nature-based solutions (NbS) for ecosystem services, biodiversity and habitat conservation PES, watershed services and water quality PES, climate change mitigation and carbon PES, sustainable agriculture and land use PES, urban and cultural ecosystem services PES, etc.</p>
13.	<p>Page No. 9 Section 4.3</p>	<p>Refer to the response to query 7.</p>

	<p>RFP Clause - The financial bid shall be a lump sum bid inclusive of all expenses.</p> <p>Remarks/queries – Is there an expected budget range for the landscape study? What is the budget ceiling for this assignment?</p>	
14.	<p>On Eligibility Criterion #2, which states: "The applicant should have completed at least one PES (Payment for Ecosystem Services) or PES-like project/assignment and one survey-based research or landscaping project in gender-centric domains (certification required)."</p> <p>Our Situation: We are currently implementing a PES-like project (October/2025). We have successfully conducted survey-based research in gender-centric domains.</p> <p>Question: Given that our PES-like project is ongoing but not yet completed, are we still eligible to apply under Criterion #2, provided we submit documentation of active progress (e.g., interim reports, partner testimonials).</p> <p>We are committed to aligning with the grant's objectives and would appreciate guidance on whether partial fulfilment of Criterion #2 (completed survey + ongoing PES-like project) meets eligibility requirements.</p>	<p>As outlined in the RFP, only completed projects of the applicant will be considered for eligibility. If proposal is submitted by JVs/ consortiums/ subcontracting arrangements/ other associations or partnerships, then completed projects of participating entities can be considered (also refer to the response to query 6).</p>
15.	<p>Page No 5</p> <p>Section 3.2 Submission deadline</p> <p>RFP Clause - Proposals will be accepted until 6 pm IST on 03rd March 2025. Any proposals received after this date and time will not be accepted.</p>	<p>Refer to the response to query 4.</p>

	<p>Remarks/query - Given the comprehensive nature of the study and the requirement for detailed proposal preparation, we kindly request an extension of the proposal submission deadline by one week, from March 3, 2025, to March 10, 2025.</p>	
16.	<p>Page No 7</p> <p>Section 4.1. Eligibility criteria (pre-qualification), point 2</p> <p>RFP Clause - The applicant should have completed at least one PES or PES-like project/ assignment and one survey-based research or landscaping project in gender-centric domains.</p> <p>Supporting documents required: Self-certified statement indicating name of the project/ assignment, name of the client for whom the work was completed and date of completion. Copies of the satisfactory work completion certificate by the client should be enclosed.</p> <p>Remarks/query - We request consideration of executed agreements or contracts as an acceptable alternative proof of experience. Agreements serve as legally binding documentation of engagement and can provide substantial evidence of project execution.</p> <p>Most of our clients are Government and getting completion certificate from them become a challenge.</p>	<p>The evaluation of applicant's eligibility (PES or PES-like project experience) will be based on valid proof and documentation as specified in the RFP. However, recognizing challenges in obtaining project completion certificates, the submission of an award letter and project agreement (provided the completion date is in the past) will be acceptable as sufficient proof.</p>
17.	<p>Page No 7</p> <p>Section 4.1. Eligibility criteria (pre-qualification), point 4</p>	<p>Refer to the response to query 8.</p>

	<p>RFP Clause - The applicant should have had a permanent or representative office in Nepal for a minimum two years.</p> <p>Remarks/query - We understand that the partner organization (sub-contractor) that have an established office in Nepal, would be considered in case the Lead Firm does not have its office.</p> <p>This would enable broader participation while ensuring local presence and execution capability. Kindly confirm if our understanding is correct; we request your kind consideration in case the understanding is not right.</p>	
18.	<p>Pg Number 4 Section 2 RFP Clause - Scope of Work</p> <p>Remarks/query –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could you kindly provide more detailed information with respect to sampling of specific regions or district in Nepal where the mapping of Women-Led Enterprises (WLEs) should be focused? What is sampling consideration in terms of size and stratification is expected for the quantitative survey? This information will be instrumental in enabling us to design an effective sampling strategy for the study • Will CPI or its partners (e.g., Forest Action Nepal, SIAS) provide access to existing data, reports, or studies on WLEs and PES in Nepal to support this study? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the response to query 10. • CPI or its partners ((e.g., FA-N, SIAS) will extend the necessary support for the study. However, access to existing data, reports, or studies will be limited to publicly available sources. Please note that CPI does not guarantee access to proprietary or restricted data. Nevertheless, we remain committed to facilitating the research process to the best extent possible within these limitations.
19.	<p>Pg Number 7 Section 4.1. Eligibility criteria (pre-qualification)- point 4</p>	<p>Refer to the response to query 5 and 8.</p> <p>The RFP specifies that the applicant must not have been blacklisted or debarred by any national or subnational government,</p>

	<p>RFP Clause - The applicant should have had a permanent or representative office in Nepal for a minimum two years.</p> <p>Remarks/query – If we propose to participate through a consortium or joint venture to meet the eligibility criteria, could you clarify whether the experience and eligibility criteria—such as years in operation, completed projects, and non-blacklisting—would be evaluated based on the consortium as a whole?</p>	<p>multilateral or bilateral organization, or public institution as of the RFP issuance date. Yes, this requirement will also be strictly applicable to proposals submitted through Joint Venture (JV), Consortium, subcontracting arrangement, or other types of associations or partnerships, collectively (also refer to the response to query 6).</p>
<p>20.</p>	<p>Pg Number 7 Section 4.1. Eligibility criteria (pre-qualification)- point 2</p> <p>RFP Clause - Self-certified statement indicating name of the project/ assignment, name of the client for whom the work was completed and date of completion. Copies of the satisfactory work completion certificate by the client should be enclosed.</p> <p>Remarks/query –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We seek clarification on whether the requirement to provide copies of satisfactory work completion certificates by the client applies to all assignments mentioned in the proposal. ● We have observed that in some cases, particularly for ongoing assignments (which may be long-term), it may not be possible to provide completion certificates, as clients often do not issue such documentation. In this regard, we kindly request CPI's team to consider relaxing this requirement and confirm whether a self-declaration, certified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Refer to the response to query 16. ● Refer to the response to query 14. In addition, any ongoing and relevant project experience may be included in the proposal as part of the applicant's credentials.

	<p>by an authorized signatory, would be acceptable in lieu of completion certificates when they are unavailable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additionally, we would appreciate it if CPI could allow the inclusion of ongoing assignments in our proposal, as these often represent significant and relevant experience. This flexibility would ensure that our submission accurately reflects our capabilities and fully aligns with your project objectives. 	
21.	<p>Pg Number 10 Section 3. Proposal Submission Guidelines</p> <p>RFP Clause - 3.2. Submission Deadline: Proposals will be accepted until 6 pm IST on 03rd March 2025. Any proposals received after this date and time will not be accepted.</p> <p>Remarks/query – We would request for an extension (one week) for submission of our technical proposal.</p>	Refer to the response to query 4.
22.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We are non-profit, NGOs. Are we eligible to apply as you are inviting research organizations and consulting firms to apply? 2. Can we form a joint venture to apply for this RFP? 	<p>Refer to the response to query 6.</p> <p>In addition, it is clarified that all entities (whether for-profit or non-profit) are welcome to apply for the RFP.</p>
23.	<p>Serial no. 3.1 (b), Page no. 5</p> <p>RFP Clause - Applicants must have prior experience in WLEs and PES. Proposals from applicants without prior experience with WLEs and PES experience will not be considered.</p>	Refer to the response to query 2 and 3.

	<p>Remarks/query – We understand that the consulting firm having prior experience in PES as well as financial inclusion and entrepreneurship development among women SHGs are also eligible for this opportunity.</p> <p>Kindly confirm if our understanding is correct?</p>	
24.	<p>Serial no. 3.2 (b), Page no. 5</p> <p>RFP Clause - Proposals Submission deadline - 6 pm IST on 03rd March 2025</p> <p>Remarks/query – We request clarification from the client regarding mode of submission.</p> <p>Whether we need to submit the proposal over online or offline mode? For Online submission we need communication email details while for offline mode we need communication address details.</p>	<p>As stated in clause 3.3 of the RFP, the proposals should be submitted online via email by the applicant or the lead organization to Debal Mitra debal.mitra@cpiglobal.org and Saurabh Chandra Rai saurabh.raai@cpiglobal.org.</p>
25.	<p>3.2. Submission Deadline</p> <p>RFP Clause - Proposals will be accepted until 6 pm IST on 03rd March 2025. Any proposals received after this date and time will not be accepted.</p> <p>Remarks/query – We request to extend the submission timeline at least two weeks i.e, 17th March 2025 for resource augmentation and quality proposal submission.</p>	<p>Refer to the response to query 4.</p>
26.	<p>3.3 – V, Page no 6</p> <p>RFP Clause - Expert 2: Women-led Enterprise Building Expert Qualifications Masters (Gender Studies/ Management/ Economics/ Public Policy)</p> <p>Remarks/query – We requested you to consider master's in social sciences with</p>	<p>Refer to the response to query 2.</p>

	experience of working with SHGs/ Livelihood promotion.	
27.	<p>Serial no. 5.1, Page no. 10</p> <p>RFP Clause - RFP Timelines: CPI responds to questions on 21st February 2025.</p> <p>Remarks/query – We request clarification from the client regarding this.</p> <p>Is there any pre bid query meeting going to happen on 21st February 2025?</p>	No pre-bid query meeting will be organised. The responses to all queries will be published on the CPI website subsequently.
28.	<p>Serial 4.2. (ii) Experience of Proposed Team, b. Expert -1, Page no. 8</p> <p>RFP Clause - Expert 1: Environmental/ Natural Resource Economist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should have Post Graduate qualification in Environment Studies/ Environmental Engineering/ Watershed Management/ Natural Resources/ Economics • Should have minimum 10 years of overall experience with minimum seven years of relevant experience ('relevant experience' as defined previously) <p>Remarks/query – Request to make change in desired qualification as below:</p> <p>Minimum Qualification: Post Graduate qualification in Forestry/ Environment Studies/ Environmental Engineering/ Watershed Management/ Management/ Science/ Economics/ Public Policy/Social Science/Rural Development/Agribusiness</p>	Refer to the response to query 2.
29.	Serial 4.2. (iii) a. Credentials of the Proposer, Page no. 9	Refer to the response to query 5.

	<p>RFP Clause - Specific experience of PES or PES-like projects/assignments in Nepal: 5 bonus marks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No such project/ assignment in Nepal: 0 marks. • 1-2 such projects/ assignments in Nepal: 2 marks. • More than 2 such projects/ assignments in Nepal: 5 marks. <p>Remarks/query – We request to consider removing specific relevant experience in Nepal (at least one project): 5 bonus marks.</p>	
30.	<p>Serial 4.2. Scoring methodology for technical evaluation, (iii) b. Credentials of the Proposer, Page no. 9</p> <p>RFP Clause - Specific experience of survey-based research or landscaping project in gender-centric domains in Nepal: 5 bonus marks</p> <p>a. No such project/ assignment in Nepal: 0 marks.</p> <p>b. 1-2 such projects/ assignments in Nepal: 2 marks.</p> <p>c. More than 2 such projects/ assignments in Nepal: 5 marks.</p> <p>Remarks/query – We request to consider removing specific relevant experience in Nepal (at least one project): 5 bonus marks.</p>	Refer to the response to query 5.
31.	<p>Serial no. 4.1. Eligibility criteria (pre-qualification)</p> <p>RFP Clause - Supporting documents required:</p> <p>Self-certified statement indicating name of the project/ assignment, name of the client for whom the work was completed and date of completion. Copies of the satisfactory work</p>	Refer to the response to query 16.

	<p>completion certificate by the client should be enclosed.</p> <p>Remarks/query – We request to consider limiting this requirement to self-certified statement of completed work or completion certificate, because many of our eligible projects for this assignment are with government agencies which typically do not issue satisfactory work completion certificate.</p>	
32.	<p>Page No. 7</p> <p>Section and point No. 4.1 2.</p> <p>RFP Clause - The applicant should have completed at least one PES or PES-like project/assignment and one....</p> <p>Remarks/queries - Are the eligibility criteria applicable to the applicant organization or does the experience of individual team members also qualify?</p>	Refer to the response to query 3.