

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

### ICEX EKONNECT

**ICEX SPAIN TRADE AND INVESTMENT**, E.P.E. (“ICEX”), in collaboration with the Economic and Commercial Office of the Embassy of Spain in Düsseldorf (“OFECOMES Düsseldorf”), is issuing this Request for Proposal to seek proposals from sustainability consulting firms with proven previous track records in studying value chains.

#### ICEX EKONNECT

ICEX EKONNECT ('the Program') constitutes a public initiative orchestrated to augment the international outreach of Spanish enterprises, premised upon criteria of sustainable value chains within the German market. The Program's objective is to forge enduring commercial alliances between Spanish and German entities, aligning with the sustainability mandates of the value chain of the German corporations. This initiative is under the auspices of ICEX, an entity of the Government of Spain dedicated to the internationalization of businesses.

Eligibility for Spanish corporate participation mandates the possession of a competitive product, adherence to stringent sustainability standards, and a proven track record in international ventures. The Program is designed to facilitate potential supply agreements with German entities in the agrifood and agritech sectors, ensuring compliance with the sustainability standards integral to the German company's value chain. Concurrently, the Program endeavours to enhance future sustainable business relationships, bolstered by mutual understanding, networking, and shared learnings.

A focal challenge addressed by ICEX EKONNECT is the informational barrier faced by Spanish companies in meeting the comprehensive sustainable value chain requirements, thereby limiting potential alignments between Spanish suppliers and German firms. Upon thorough examination of the sustainability prerequisites of the German enterprise(s), the Program will advocate for commercially oriented engagements between Spanish suppliers and the German entity, aiming to foster supply agreements that adhere to the sustainability criteria of the German company's value chain.

In the second quarter of 2024, ICEX will initiate a public solicitation to select and invite Spanish companies to participate in this Program. Sustainability proposals tendered will undergo a rigorous evaluation to ascertain their alignment with the German customer's value chain requirements. Following this scrutiny, executives will proceed to the client's headquarters to explore potential business opportunities.

On behalf of ICEX, OFECOMES Düsseldorf hereby solicits proposals for the provision of managerial services for ICEX EKONNECT.

#### SCOPE OF WORKS

The scope of the contract will be as follows:

- **Information and advisory services.**

The awardee will assist ICEX to identify and select the possible German customer. To this aim, the awardee will deliver a preliminary analysis on the general legal and sectorial sustainability requirements. This analysis will be used to introduce the program to German companies.

The awardee will collaborate with ICEX to facilitate a congruence between the sustainability prerequisites stipulated by the German client and the offerings of the Spanish suppliers, thereby optimizing the prospect of commercial engagement between the respective entities.

Consequently, it is incumbent upon the consulting firm, once selected, to undertake a comprehensive evaluation of the value chain pertinent to the German corporation participating in the program. The culmination of this exercise shall be the production of a report, articulating in detail the sustainability criteria to be adhered to by the Spanish company.

The ability to establish equivalence between German and Spanish sustainability standards, including requirements, certifications, or norms, will be particularly assessed.

ICEX shall furnish the consulting firm with a roster of Spanish entities selected by ICEX within Spain for inclusion in this program. The consultancy shall undertake an assessment of the sustainability criteria of the Spanish suppliers, juxtaposing these with the sustainability requisites inherent to the value chain of the German enterprise. Subsequent to this appraisal, the consulting entity shall categorize and prioritize the Spanish proposals in descending order of congruence. On this basis, ICEX and the OFECOME Düsseldorf shall undertake the selection of companies that will meet the German client. The consulting firm shall apprise these selected entities of the assessment procedures conducted and the pertinent considerations for fostering relations with the client entity.

For Spanish companies not chosen for direct engagement, the consultancy will arrange a concise training session on sustainability within the agrifood and agritech sectors in Germany. The objective of this session is to elucidate the pivotal aspects to be considered in this domain, thereby enhancing prospects for future business endeavors.

- **Preparation of reports.**

Preparation and delivery of, at least, the following reports (in English or Spanish):

- Preliminary analysis of the legal and specific sustainable requirements to be fulfilled by German companies in the selected sectors.
- Analysis of the sustainability requirements inherent to the value chain of the German client, along with the desirable criteria to be fulfilled by the Spanish companies. Where feasible, the consultant shall strive to establish equivalence between German and Spanish standards, certifications, or requisites.
- Evaluation of the eligibility and suitability of Spanish companies concerning sustainable value chain parameters vis-à-vis the stipulations of the German client.
- Prioritization of Spanish companies based on eligibility within the sustainable value chain framework.
- Compilation of materials for the training session intended for companies not selected to meet with the German customer.

**PLACE OF SUPPLY OF SERVICES**

The services will be carried out within the territory of Germany. Provision is made for a potential excursion to Spain, deemed necessary for the purpose of accruing additional information from Spanish enterprises deemed eligible for engagement with the German company. Travel costs are borne by the successful bidder.

**FINANCIAL PROPOSAL**

The financial proposal must be in EURO (€).

The estimated amount of the contract is 50.000 €, taxes excluded. The estimated total contract value of this contracts is 50.000 €.

Offers must include the price with and without taxes.

Maximum budget: 50.000 €. Taxes excluded.

The contract is expected to enter into force in April 2024 and will terminate on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, or failing that, upon completion of the training session.

**Proposals exceeding the maximum available budget of 50.000 €, excluding taxes, will not be considered.**

ICEX is a Spanish institution based in Spain for all purposes.

The proposals should include a breakdown in which the price offered, and taxes must be clearly described and separated.

ICEX will evaluate the proposals based on the offered prices, excluding taxes.

**AWARD PROCEDURE**

The bids will be assessed according to the following criteria:

CRITERIA	MAXIMUM POINTS
<p><b><u>Financial proposal (To be included ONLY in Document 3) –</u></b></p> <p>Bid price assessment shall be conducted in accordance with the ensuing criteria (applicable solely to bids deemed neither disproportionate nor anomalous):</p> <p>The bidder presenting the lowest price shall be awarded the maximum score; subsequent scores will be allotted proportionally to other bidders. The financial proposal shall encompass a detailed breakdown of all costs.</p>	<p><b>30</b></p>
<p><b><u>Technical proposal (To be included in Document 2 of the bid)</u></b></p> <p>The technical proposal provided will be assessed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Report of the sustainability requirements of the German’s supply chain: The technical proposal must incorporate a delineation of the report concerning the sustainability criteria of the German company's supply chain. It shall also detail the methodology to be employed in the execution of the work. Maximum 15 points</li> <li>- Analytical report on the degree of compliance and suitability of the Spanish companies submitted by ICEX, as well as their compatibility</li> </ul>	<p><b>35</b></p>

<p>with the sustainability requirements of the German company and a proposal for a list ordered from highest to lowest compatibility. Maximum 15 points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Proposed training session: in the training session, the consulting company will explain to Spanish companies that are not eligible for the meeting with the German company the main sustainability criteria to be considered to maximize the possibility of entry into supplier chains in Germany in the agritech sector. The training session will be online. The proposal shall detail the methodology to be employed in the training session, which must incorporate an analysis of the main strengths and weaknesses obtained from the previous analysis of the participating Spanish companies. Maximum 5 points</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Improvements (to be included in Document 3 of the bid)</b> The following improvement will be evaluated. This improvement does not imply an increase in the contract price.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In-depth knowledge of sustainability regulations in Germany and in Spain shall be appraised.</li> </ul>	<b>10</b>
<p><b>Team (to be included in Document 2 of the bid)</b> Beyond the minimum requirements (see below), the team members will be assessed as follows:</p> <p>Project manager (fully engaged with the project) -Maximum 20 points-:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Proven track record in sustainability projects and in supply chains analysis, preferably in international contexts. A point will be assigned for each year of experience in addition to the minimum required. Maximum 5 points.</li> <li>- Specific sector knowledge: experience in agrifood and agritech (technology, agribusiness, manufacturing...). Maximum 8 points.</li> <li>- Knowledge in sustainability legislation and regulations, to ensure that the analysis is relevant and complies with local laws. Maximum 7 points</li> </ul> <p>Additional team members -Maximum 5 points-:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Professionals with 3+ years of proven expertise in sustainable practices, sustainability standards, and in supply chain management. A point will be assigned for each year of experience in addition to the minimum required (3). Maximum 3 points.</li> <li>- Professionals with 3+ years of proven expertise in legal and regulatory knowledge in the sustainability field, mainly in the agrifood and agritech sectors. A point will be assigned for each year of experience in addition to the minimum required (3). Maximum 2 points.</li> </ul>	<b>25</b>

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>
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Responses, other than price (Technical proposal and Teams), will be scored as follows:

0% of allocated points	Major Reservations/Constraints	<p><b>Technical proposal criteria:</b> The response simply states that the bidder can meet some of the requirements set out but have not given information or detail on how they will do this.</p> <p><b>Team criteria:</b> No significant improvements beyond the minimum requirements</p>
50% of allocated points	Compliant	<p><b>Technical proposal criteria:</b> The bidder has provided some information about how they propose to meet most of the requirements. There is some doubt regarding their ability to consistently meet the full range of requirements.</p> <p><b>Team criteria:</b> Medium level of the above indicators (number, quality, diversity, etc.)</p>
75% of allocated points	Fully Compliant	<p><b>Technical proposal criteria:</b> The bidder has provided detailed information covering all elements, detailing how they propose to meet all the requirements. This gives full confidence in their ability to consistently meet the full range of our requirements.</p> <p><b>Team criteria:</b> Significant level of the above indicators (number, quality, diversity, etc.)</p>
100% of allocated points	Exceeds Requirements	<p><b>Technical proposal criteria:</b> The bidder meets the required standard in all respects and exceeds some or all the major requirements, which in turn leads to added value within the contract.</p> <p><b>Team criteria:</b> Outstanding level of the above indicators (number, quality, diversity, etc.)</p>

Financial proposals shall undergo evaluation to ascertain whether they may be deemed disproportionate or anomalous.

Bids shall be regarded as disproportionate or anomalous under the following circumstances:

- The financial proposal falls 20% below the maximum budget, should the number of bidders be fewer than three.
- The financial proposal stands 20% below the arithmetic mean of the bids submitted, should the number of bidders be three or more. However, the most expensive bid will be disregarded when computing the arithmetic mean.

In the event a bid is deemed disproportionate or anomalous, the concerned party shall be summoned to substantiate their proposal, inclusive of its terms and conditions, within 72 hours following notification. Upon receipt of the plea or expiration of the time limit, OFECOMES Düsseldorf and ICEX shall, with technical guidance if deemed necessary, determine whether the bid should be deemed disproportionate or anomalous, subsequently excluding it as appropriate.

All bids shall be subject to equitable comparison.

Tie-breaking criteria: In the event of a tie in the points obtained by two or more tenders, this will be resolved by applying the social criteria indicated below, and in the order specified. These will apply to staff working for the agency at the time of the deadline for the submission of proposals. The documentation supporting the tie-breaking criteria referred to in this clause must only be provided if a tie occurs, and not beforehand.

- Highest percentage of workers with disabilities or who are in a situation of social exclusion in the workforce of each of the tied companies, with priority given, if the percentages are equal, to the company with the highest number of permanent workers with disabilities, or the highest number of socially excluded workers.
- Lowest percentage of temporary contracts within the workforce of each of the tied companies.
- Highest percentage of women employed by each of the tied companies.
- If it is not possible to break the tie using the above criteria, lots will be drawn.

### **EVALUATION PROCESS**

Please note that any expenditure incurred by candidate Companies in the preparation of the proposals presentation and quotes will be at the expense of those companies involved. Submission of the offer will not generate any fees or reimbursement of any type of expenses.

Submission of an offer and participation in this tender implies the Company express acceptance of all the points contained in this briefing.

Applications will be evaluated by ICEX in collaboration with the OFECOMES Düsseldorf.

Offers must be sent to: [tenders@icex.es](mailto:tenders@icex.es)

### **REQUIREMENTS**

#### **BIDDERS:**

- **Bidders** must have a proven track record in sustainability projects, preferably in international contexts. It's important that the bidders have experience in the agritech sector to better understand the dynamics and specific challenges of the supply chain. The technical solvency shall be demonstrated by submitting information about similar projects carried out since 2020 in Germany (or from the date of incorporation, if it is later).

- **Financial solvency:** All competing bidders will be required to provide a solvency report, including their financial accounts for the best of the last three accounting (3) years. The minimum annual total income requirement is an amount equivalent to 75.000 euro, in the best of the past three (3) accounting years (2022, 2021 and 2020).
- Bidders **must have a base in Germany as the program where the program will be carried out.**

**TEAM:**

- **Project Manager:** Minimum of 3 years' leading experience in sustainable practices and standards and supply chains in Germany, preferably in the agrifood and agritech sectors. Full English competence required; Spanish is desirable. He or she must be fully engaged with ICEX, with OFECOMES Düsseldorf and with participating companies (the project manager must not be a mere supervisor). He or she could travel to Spain once if deemed necessary unless borders are closed.
- **Additional team members:** Minimum of 2 years' leading experience in sustainability and supply chains management. Full English competence required; Spanish is desirable. Proactive and customer oriented. Additional team members will be assessed only if they have a minimum of 2 years' proven track record in the tasks required.

Non-compliance with any of the requirements established in the present briefing will result in the disqualification of the bidder concerned.

It is expected that the key team members assigned to the project will remain as part of the team for the duration of the contract. Any changes of key personnel should be justified and communicated at least 15 days in advance.

The role of each team member assigned to the project shall be specified in the bid. In addition, their CV must be included in the Document 2 of the proposal.

The awardee must designate a primary contact person that is informed of all aspects of the program, including administrative matters, and has direct continuous communication with ICEX, represented by OFECOMES Düsseldorf.

**PROPOSALS**

Proposals must be detailed and must be divided into **3 separate documents** as follows:

**DOCUMENT 1**

- Brief introduction of the bidder's experience on previous similar projects. Special focus on sustainable supply chains in agrifood and agritech sectors.
- Financial accounts for the best of last three tax years (2020, 2021, 2022).
- Responsible Declaration assuring the minimum team's requirements assigned to the project along with an indication of each person's role as indicated in ANNEX 1.

## DOCUMENT 2

- Technical proposals including the Team CV's lead and role specifying the valuable Team requirements.

## DOCUMENT 3

- Financial proposal in euro. Providing an Excel file following the template in ANNEX 2 with a detailed budget, with a breakdown of all costs.
- ICEX will evaluate tenders based on the prices quoted, excluding taxes. The tenders should include a breakdown in which the price quoted and taxes, if applicable, must be clearly separated.

**IMPORTANT:**

**The price contained in the economic offer must ONLY be included in Document 3. Shall it be included in Documents 1 or 2, the offer may be excluded from the tender.**

**Proposals exceeding the maximum available budget of 50.000 €, taxes excluded, will not be considered.**

This briefing will be circulated to multiple bidders and will be published on the OFECOMES DÜSSELDORF website. Questions can be submitted up to 3 business days before the deadline for submitting offers. Queries regarding this tender must only be addressed in writing, by emailing [tenders@icex.es](mailto:tenders@icex.es). In the interest of fairness, questions posed by participating companies, as well as the answers provided by ICEX, may be shared with all other participating companies. ICEX will not be able to answer questions formulated after the above deadline.

**All documents must be submitted either in English or in Spanish. Interested companies or individuals should send their bids in electronic format to [tenders@icex.es](mailto:tenders@icex.es). Term for submission of offers: 15 calendar days from the day after publication. Check exact date and time in OFECOMES website: <https://www.icex.es/es/quienes-somos/donde-estamos/red-externo-de-comercio/DE/convocatorias>**

**Proposals not submitted within the deadline will be excluded.**

In case the bid is bigger than 4 Mb, please send it via WeTransfer or similar.

ICEX and OFECOMES Düsseldorf may declare no winning bidder if the proposals do not meet the requirements.

All competing companies submitting a proposal should be aware that ICEX Legal Services will review the documentation submitted by each company to ensure that they comply with the requirements of this briefing. After verifying compliance with the prerequisites, the technical offer will be reviewed and evaluated. Once the scores have been assigned, the economic offer will be evaluated. The price will not be known until that moment.

### **AWARD NOTIFICATION DEADLINE**

ICEX and OFECOMES Düsseldorf will assess the proposals submitted within the deadline. The final decision about the award will be notified properly and on time to the bidder that best fits the purposes of this Request for Proposal.



### **SIGNING OF THE CONTRACT**

A contract between the awardee and OFECOMES Düsseldorf will be signed as soon as possible after the bidding process is over and a decision is made.

The contract will expire after the execution of the training session, as planned.

### **PAYMENTS**

The awardee will be entitled to payment for the services provided as set out in the contract.

Three installments shall be disbursed for the payment under this contract. The initial disbursement, constituting 30% of the aggregate contract value, shall be executed upon receipt of the analysis pertaining to the sustainability criteria of the German company's value chain. The subsequent payment, amounting to 50% of the contract sum, shall be affected following the submission of the categorization of Spanish companies, ranked from the highest to the lowest in terms of aptitude and eligibility in alignment with the sustainability criteria of the German entity. The concluding payment, representing 20% of the contract value, shall be disbursed after the execution of the training session.

Payments will be made upon submission of invoice and the acceptance by ICEX of both the services provided on that period and the compulsory report. Invoices will be paid within 30 days of being submitted.

Administrative requirements for billing:

- Invoicing details:

All invoices must be billed to:  
ICEX España Exportación e Inversiones, E.P.E.  
Paseo de la Castellana 278  
E-28046 Madrid (Spain)  
VAT number: ESQ - 2891001F (ICEX is VAT registered in Spain)

And dispatched to:  
Economic and Commercial Office in Düsseldorf  
Jägerhofstrasse, 32 –  
Düsseldorf 40479  
Düsseldorf  
VAT number: ESQ - 2891001F (ICEX is VAT registered in Spain)

Please note that ICEX does not pay any advances.

No expense on behalf of ICEX can be incurred before the date of signature of the corresponding contract and prior written approval.

### **SUPERVISION OF THE WORKS**

ICEX and OFECOMES Düsseldorf will directly monitor the development of the project; for this purpose, the awardee must facilitate examination of any process or phases of the work to ICEX representatives assigned in each case.

**LIABILITIES OF THE AWARDEE**

The awardee will be responsible for the technical quality of the work, performance and services rendered under the contract, and for any consequences for ICEX and third parties derived from omissions, errors, inadequate methods, or incorrect conclusions in the execution of the contract.

The awardee will answer to ICEX and OFECOMES Düsseldorf for any possible claims brought by third parties based on the awardee's activity.

**SUBCONTRACTING**

The awardee will not be allowed to subcontract any of the works assigned hereof, unless ICEX previous authorization. In that event, exclusively the awardee will be held liable before ICEX for the works or omissions of the subcontracted company.

**TERMINATION**

ICEX is entitled to terminate the Contract following a breach of the awardee of any of its contractual obligations, in addition to any claim for damages and legal remedies which may be available.

**APPLICABLE LEGISLATION & JURISDICTION**

Once the Agency has been selected, a contract will be signed between ICEX and the Agency.

German substantive law shall apply to the content of this tender. All disputes arising from the contract, including those concerning its validity, shall be settled by an arbitral tribunal in accordance with the Rules of the German Institution for Arbitration Jurisdiction (DIS Deutsche Institution für Schiedsgerichtbarkeit), to the exclusion of ordinary legal proceedings. The arbitral tribunal shall also decide on the validity of this arbitration and conciliation clause, and in case of invalidity of the arbitration and conciliation clause para. 139 BGB shall not apply. The place of the arbitration proceedings shall be Düsseldorf and the language of the arbitration proceedings shall be German.

In Düsseldorf on the date indicated in the electronic signature

ICEX Board of Directors  
By Delegation (Resolution of September, 30<sup>th</sup> 2021;  
BOE [Official State Gazette] October, 11<sup>th</sup> 2021),

Manuel Ledesma  
Head of the Economic and Commercial Office of Spain in Düsseldorf

## ANNEX 1

### TEMPLATE TO BE FOLLOWED FOR PRESENTING THE EQUIPMENT'S MINIMUM EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

#### IDENTIFICATION DATA OF THE SIGNER OF THE DECLARATION AND OF THE BIDDER

Mrs. ...., with DNI/Passport number ..... and address at ..... as representative of the company ....., with NIF or document to replace it ..... (complete in case of acting on behalf of a company), and address .....

#### DECLARES:

Team assigned to the project comply with the following minimum requirements:

- **Project Manager:**
  - Has minimum of 5 years' leading experience in sustainable practices and standards and supply chains in Germany.
  - Has full English competence for working environments.
  - Desirable Spanish competence for working environments.
  
- **Additional team members: (Complete by the bidder)**
  - Has minimum 2 years' proven track record in the tasks required.

ANNEX 2

TEMPLATE TO BE FOLLOWED FOR PRESENTING THE DETAILED BUDGET OF THE  
FINANCIAL PROPOSAL IN EUR, WITH A BREAKDOWN OF ALL COSTS

ECONOMIC PROPOSAL	EUR
COST CONCEPTS or COST PER ACTIVITIES	
TOTAL (EXCLUDING TAXES)	