

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Development of a new public web application for the CLEAN helpdesk

Summary

The Climate, Environment and Nature (CLEAN) Helpdesk is an initiative of the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), which aims to provide dedicated capacity to the various arms of the UK Government for delivering "Paris Alignment" (for example, ensuring that Official Development Assistance, or ODA, aligns with the UK's commitments in terms of the Paris Agreement), and to monitor and evaluate this alignment in order to report on it. In order to deliver this dedicated capacity, the Helpdesk will have a website or portal through which FCDO personnel and other UK Government employees can access existing knowledge resources (articles, videos, research papers etc.), and through which they can submit requests for technical assistance.

The CLEAN Helpdesk seeks one company, or consortia, to build a web application. Full details of the objectives and requirements of these products follow, along with details on how to submit a proposal.

Qualified service providers are invited to submit a response to CLEAN helpdesk by uploading the proposal and any supporting documents on dropbox via this link <https://www.dropbox.com/request/flzSvKolwdWy10PnJBOP>. Kindly also notify us that you have submitted a proposal by sending an email to albert@southsouthnorth.org. Bidders are free to suggest changes/deviations to the Terms of Reference as they see fit for the purpose of the project (both from a technology or project standpoint), but must include an explanation for the change.

The deadline for submissions is 19 April 2024, 17:00 UTC (18:00 British Summer Time, 19:00 South African Standard Time).

Proposals will not be accepted after this date and time. We reserve the right to not make any appointments, extend the above deadline for submission date, change the parameters of this request for proposals, conduct further evaluations, make procurement decisions based on the programme's needs and considerations (which may or maynot be reflected in this document) and not to respond to any queries in relation to any issued outcome in relation to this request for proposals.

A detailed planning phase will begin in May, with the first deliverables expected in June 2024.

Suppliers should be aware that FCDO's programme staff are required to complete a digital proposition form with their partners/suppliers to get approval before the work starts.

Proposals should include:

- a. A technical proposal narrative, including a statement of track record in delivering work of similar specifications and hyperlinks to at least two samples of relevant past work.
- b. A fully costed budget, which adheres to the budgetary guidance provided below.

We particularly welcome proposals from companies with demonstrated progressive hiring policies and a track record of commitment to the career progression of women, young people, and historically disadvantaged groups, who meet our technical criteria.

Any clarification questions should be submitted to the Supplier Query FAQ document by commenting on the provided [Google Docs](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Ese7g82ur4ZAgIU9Gk1LiauQXSrl2kz0O65sii1pGUc/edit?usp=sharing) link, <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Ese7g82ur4ZAgIU9Gk1LiauQXSrl2kz0O65sii1pGUc/edit?usp=sharing>. The deadline for queries is Thursday, April 11th, 2024. We reserve the right not to respond to any clarification question.

Project Overview

The CLEAN Helpdesk seeks to develop a **public web application** that will have two key services.

The **first service will be a comprehensive knowledge repository where officials can access a wide range of resources in a library format**. These resources will include case studies, good practices, guidance documents, infographics, videos, impact stories, advertising flyers, podcasts, and recordings of events. To facilitate ease of use, the resources will be easily searchable by keywords, such as resource type, thematic area, and geography. This repository will serve as a rich source of information for officials seeking to expand their knowledge and skills in technical areas for compliance.

The **second service will be a one-stop-shop for FCDO and Other UK Government Department officials to submit requests for technical assistance**. This platform will provide a streamlined process for officials to make requests for support on specific technical issues. The platform will serve as a central hub for officials to access technical assistance services and, ultimately, connect with relevant experts, enabling them to receive prompt and tailored support. This will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of technical assistance delivery, contributing to the achievement of the project's objectives.

The platform's front end will be designed to be intuitive, user-friendly, and visually appealing. Users will be able to access information and resources quickly and easily without the need for complicated menus or confusing navigation.

The development of both products should be done through a collaborative process led by the service provider. This would be achieved through a series of consultations and/or workshops where architecture, UX, and UI are developed under the service provider's guidance and with final approval from the CLEAN Helpdesk stakeholders (consortium partners and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) as the donor).

The platform will be designed to provide a seamless user experience, with all resources easily accessible and protected from unauthorised access. Users can search for resources, filter them by category or keyword, and view detailed information about each resource.

The platform will be hosted on an international server considering the latency, cost, technical support and geography (i.e. the platform won't be hosted in South Africa where data centres are exposed to continued loadshedding) to ensure platform speed and performance.

Overall, this online platform will be a powerful and flexible centralised point for managing and sharing resources and submitting requests, while providing robust security features to protect sensitive information. This platform will be a valuable tool for FCDO and Other (UK) Government Departments (OGDs) officials looking to access resources in a secure and user-friendly way and receive support when needed.

The platform will need to adhere to the Technology Code of Practice (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-technology-code-of-practice>) which is a set of standards for UK government technology. Additionally, the development of the platform will need to follow the Principles for Digital Development (<https://digitalprinciples.org/>).

Public Web Application

This is the first web application for the CLEAN helpdesk and will hold all relevant information about the programme. The web application will be accessible to the general public and will provide information including, but not limited to: about the CLEAN Helpdesk, its team, its resources, accessing knowledge outputs, accessing technical assistance, its activities, news, and events.

The site should be modern in design, easy to navigate, mobile-friendly, and visually attractive. It should be designed with attention to a global audience of users, including from regions of low bandwidth.

Knowledge sharing platform

The CLEAN helpdesk aims to facilitate information exchange and more communication among users of the CLEAN helpdesk, particularly FCDO and OGDs. We aim to do this with a platform that allows for the sharing of content, communication between users, and uploading of knowledge outputs. This includes:

- Public knowledge repository: a public-facing database holding content from the CLEAN helpdesk and other technical assistance facilities, such as research, reports, and blog posts. Content would be uploaded and moderated by the CLEAN helpdesk in a format with metadata that allows for refined search capabilities.

Technical assistance submission platform

The CLEAN helpdesk aims to be a simple, easily-navigable, and aesthetically pleasing platform for users to submit requests for technical assistance. We aim to do this with a platform that allows for the sharing of

information related to the requested technical assistance, and potential uploading of public or private documents.

About the CLEAN Helpdesk

The Climate, Environment and Nature Helpdesk (CLEAN) helpdesk is a technical assistance facility that provides flexible, on-demand, rapid technical assistance to UK government agencies, embassies and central offices on requests related to Climate, Environment and Nature. The Helpdesk will support the delivery of the UK government's ambitions on Paris Alignment and climate commitments. The CLEAN Helpdesk is a central gateway (repository and access point) for UK government departments to access technical assistance to rapidly bolster the capacity to improve the uptake of climate information and climate risk analysis and adaptation assessment, including for integration, and to enhance compliance with the FCDO Climate and Environment Programme Operating Framework (PrOF) guidance. The CLEAN Helpdesk will simplify access to the full range of central Climate, Environment and Nature (CEN) Technical Assistance (TA), making it quicker and easier for officials to access the appropriate support.

The CLEAN Helpdesk is an initiative of the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), which aims to provide dedicated capacity to the various different arms of the UK Government for delivering "Paris Alignment" (for example, ensuring that Official Development Assistance, or ODA, aligns with the UK's commitments in terms of the Paris Agreement), and to monitor and evaluate this alignment in order to report on it. In order to deliver this dedicated capacity, the Helpdesk will have a web application or portal through which FCDO personnel and other UK Government employees can access existing knowledge resources (articles, videos, research papers etc.), and through which they can submit requests for technical assistance.

Project Audience

As an initiative of the FCDO, the CLEAN Helpdesk has a primarily English speaking and educated audience. The reach of the programme is global (with a focus in the Global South), and an international audience does need to be considered. This means users of the web application may have varying levels of broadband access.

The primary audience are FCDO or OGD officials. The following high-level outline of the user journey is outlined below.

An FCDO or OGD official requires relevant Climate, Environment and Nature information or wants to learn more about the CLEAN Helpdesk. The officials will be able to simply navigate the CLEAN platform, quickly understanding what technical assistance can be accessed and where to submit requests for technical assistance. The official would be able to navigate to the two critical components of the platform, accessing the library of available resources or the tailored forms where the official could understand the technical assistance offered via the Helpdesk.

A breakdown of specific users for the two elements of the web application are as follows below.

Knowledge sharing platform

- FCDO and OGD officials: This is the primary audience. Act as an easy-to-access and navigate source of information.
- Broader public: Provide easy-to-access, logically organised, and attractively presented information that generates awareness in the global community about the CLEAN helpdesk. Specifically this community includes: general public, press & media, researchers, funders, policymakers, development bodies, and community-based organisations.

Technical assistance submission platform

- FCDO and OGD officials: The process to access technical assistance will be tailored by having a separate form with accompanying guidance that are commensurate in required detail to the different service offerings, which are as follows: **same-day support, PrOF5 compliance, mainstreaming, or contact us**. The technical assistance accessible via the Helpdesk will be clearly communicated along the four service channels. Using the provided guidance, an official could quickly realise what technical assistance would best serve their needs, the process to request the relevant technical assistance and the process for the technical assistance to be delivered.

Security/authentication must be in place to submit technical assistance requests.

Project objectives

This project involves two specific elements: a **knowledge sharing** and **technical assistance submission platform**. Both have specific objectives and outcomes, which are broken down below.

Overall, this project should position the CLEAN Helpdesk as a reliable and active platform for users to engage with.

Web application

Objectives of the knowledge sharing platform include:

- **Provide information and support knowledge exchange:** Provide a space for holding, categorising and accessing information on the knowledge that has been developed by the CLEAN Helpdesk and technical support that is accessible to FCDO and OGDs.
- **Streamline communication** about the CLEAN Helpdesk outputs, activities, opportunities, and news in order to easily update an individual.
- **Generate and broaden awareness** about the CLEAN Helpdesk, its work, and outputs through documents, news and information that can be easily accessed by: public, researchers, funders, policymakers, development bodies and community-based organisations.

The objectives of the technical assistance submission platform include:

- **Facilitate ease** of submitting requests for technical assistance.
- **Confirm understanding** of the technical assistance available to FCDO and OGD officials.

Functionality requirements

The web application will be used to generate awareness of the CLEAN Helpdesk as an informational source for FCDO and OGD's officials, a method to submit requests for support, and public facing for researchers, policymakers, and practitioners.

It is envisioned that the CLEAN Helpdesk will become a global knowledge portal for FCDO staff, implementing partners, and the broader community working at the intersection of climate change and development.

Reference examples for web applications include the likes of: such as [ClimateLinks](#), [Adaptation Without Borders](#), and [Climate Policy Initiative](#).

Specifically, the web application should include the following content:

- About us: About the CLEAN helpdesk, Our mission, What we do
- Technical assistance:
 - Overview of services provided;
 - Process description: outline of steps involved from initial consultation to project completion;
 - Case studies or success stories: share real-life examples of past projects or success stories where the CLEAN helpdesk (or Climate Mainstreaming Facility) has helped users overcome challenges or achieve significant results through technical assistance.
 - FAQs: Anticipate common questions that potential users may have about the technical assistance process and provide clear and concise answers to address their concerns. For example, the CLEAN helpdesk's experts have completed non-disclosure agreements and all shared information is treated as confidential.
- Knowledge library:
 - Knowledge outputs such as reports & briefs
 - Events: list/calendar with relevant info for upcoming & past events
 - News: blogs and news articles from the CLEAN helpdesk, including text & multimedia
- Opportunities: Calls for Expressions of Interest, etc.

Key considerations

- **Maintenance:** General maintenance (content updates, reorganisation, etc) should be the responsibility of the CLEAN Helpdesk after launch. The chosen supplier should be available to fix any bugs in the code. If any support is needed outside of the initial scope the preferred approach would be to contract the supplier for hours of work required beyond the initial scope, including both technical and non-technical elements. The maintenance period will be for 1 year after the launch of the platform.
- **Branding:** User interface (UI) should reflect the CLEAN Helpdesk branding and style guides.
- **User literacy:** Because the CLEAN Helpdesk is a UK government tool, primarily FCDO and then OGDs, our users will have a high level of English literacy.
- **Bandwidth:** Further to the above, the FCDO and OGDs include regions with poor bandwidth capabilities. Development should consider that for all products.

- **Intellectual property:** The IP used to develop the web application will remain property of the service provider. However, any content on the web application will remain property of FCDO. Service providers will be subject to terms and conditions including, but not limited to, terms governing Intellectual Property in relation to the web application.

Security

The web application platform must meet all best practices in terms of security.

Budget

The development total budget for the web application is **£ 69,870.00** or the relevant currency equivalent.

When submitting proposals, suppliers are kindly requested to calculate their budget and present the final pricing in GBP or ZAR. Please note that the proposed budget must be within the total budget reflected above. The exchange rate to be utilised for conversions shall be sourced from OANDA's spot rate as of March 21, 2024. At an indicative benchmark of GBP:ZAR rate of 1 GBP = 23.98 ZAR (spot rate provided by OANDA as of 21 March, 2024). This ensures consistency and transparency across international transactions.

Inclusivity & sustainability

Inclusivity

We want our web application to be accessible to a global range of users, with a range of physical and literacy abilities. The CLEAN helpdesk also aims to be gender-responsive and socially inclusive with this project.

To achieve this, we are looking for web developers who could pay special attention to building accessible web applications, principally:

- Text readability (in terms of fonts used: size, colours, background colours etc) must achieve high levels of accessibility for the visually impaired.
- All non-text content should have a text alternative that serves the equivalent purpose.
- Usage of inclusive materials (including images, infographics, and multimedia).

Sustainability

We need to be responsible when creating digital services and ensure our work is sustainable, cleaner and greener. To achieve this, we aim to:

- Host our digital services on clean energy wherever possible.
- Use and contribute to open source projects wherever possible.
- Make sure content is easy to find so users are able to easily navigate through the interface

- Optimise the efficiency of content and code.

What we expect from service providers

The preferred service provider will be responsible for:

- Development of the technology with a flexible and agile approach, with regular check-ins with the CLEAN Helpdesk team and, if necessary, respond to changes in the project requirements.
- Setting up of a domain name.
- Deliver documentation and training.
- Support in the handling of the platform in the first year of operation.
- Maintenance of the platform (i.e. bug fixing where necessary).

We require the service provider to assign a dedicated product team comprising at least one designer, one technical lead, and one software engineer exclusively for the duration of the development process. This dedicated team ensures focused attention on our platform's development, avoiding conflicts or delays caused by competing project priorities within the service provider's organisation.

During the project, we envision at least 3 workshops:

- Project Kickoff workshop.
- Workshops with CLEAN helpdesk consortium and stakeholders:
 - Content and technology overview
 - Project conclusion workshop

How to submit your proposal

Service providers should submit their proposal with attention to the below scoring criteria, details of which follow below:

- Track record
- Proposed approach to development
- Proposed budget, value for money is an important consideration
- Social ethos

Track record (35% of total evaluation score)

Service providers will only be considered who meet the 'essential' technical requirements listed below. These are minimum requirements which applicants must meet to be shortlisted. Please take care to demonstrate (linking to relevant work) each of these points in your proposal.

Essential experience:

- Knowledge of technical systems for knowledge management and public web applications, and underlying content management systems.
- Proven experience of optimising a web application's UX for users in low-bandwidth international contexts including developing countries.

- Proven experience with developing complex search functionality on web applications.
- Proven experience enabling interaction and collaboration on a web application, including commenting and document sharing features.
- Ability and capacity to maintain the platform for a minimum of one year following its development.

Proposed approach to development of web application (35% of evaluation score)

The applicant's proposed approach to developing the web application will be carefully evaluated. Applicants must respond systematically to all the points described as 'essential' below, to be shortlisted.

Essential narrative:

- Describe some of the considerations you would take into account in order to best serve the CLEAN helpdesk's different user needs. This includes stating how you will make the web application to enable knowledge communication and ease of use to submit requests for technical assistance.

Proposed budget (20% of evaluation score)

The budget to accompany the proposal narrative should clearly indicate costs associated with:

- A. Development of the web application build.
- B. The annual hosting and maintenance charge.

Proposals can be submitted in GBP or ZAR currency.

The CLEAN Helpdesk requires the budget to include:

- CVs of the development team who would work on the web application.
- Daily rate for the team of developers.
- Daily rate for the designer.
- Budget for six months of development.
- Specific information on who would substitute for the proposed work if the named lead personnel became unavailable during the delivery period. Explicitly state if the personnel are subcontracted freelancers.
- The amount of value added tax (VAT) and all other taxes applicable should be clearly shown on the budget.
- Hosting and maintenance costs (include any potential costs for hosting services and other SAAS) should be calculated on the basis of one year, to be charged and paid from the time that the web application is deployed to production and assuming that they cover a 'perfectly functioning' web application once all bugs associated with production have been resolved.

BBBEE score certificate (10% of evaluation score)

We encourage proposals from companies with a valid Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) score certificate. Your BBBEE score will be evaluated based on its certification level (Levels 1-4).

Please include in your proposal a valid BBBEE Score Certificate (if applicable).

Project timeline 28 March 2024	Publication of RFQ
19 April 2024	Deadline for submission of proposals.
22 April 2024	Selection process begins.
30 April 2024	Awarded service provider contacted, contract process begins.
To be discussed based on proposal	Delivery of the first set of product designs as agreed in project plan and kick-off workshop.
To be discussed based on proposal	Continuous development of additional features as agreed upon project plan and check-in meetings.

Privacy & Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013

- Protecting personal information is important to SSN. To do so, SSN follows general principles in accordance with applicable privacy laws and the Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013 (POPIA).
- SSN's role as the responsible party, is amongst others to process personal information for the intended purpose for which it was obtained and in line with legal agreements with its respective/prospective services providers and third parties.
- SSN will process personal information only with the knowledge and authorisation of the bidder/respondent and will treat personal information which comes to its knowledge as confidential and will not disclose it, unless so required by law or subject to the exception contained in the POPIA.
- SSN reserves all the rights afforded to it by the POPIA in the processing of any of its information as contained in this bid and the bidder/respondent is required to comply with all prescripts as detailed in the POPIA relating to all information concerning SSN.
- In responding to this bid, SSN acknowledges that it will obtain and have access to the personal information of the bidder/respondent. SSN agrees that it shall only process the information disclosed by the bidder/respondent in their response to this bid for the purpose of evaluation and subsequent award of the tender and in accordance with any applicable law.