



**CARIBBEAN CENTRE FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY
AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY (CCREEE)**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FOR AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE
CARIBBEAN CENTRE FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY
AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY (CCREEE)**

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to procure independent external audit services for the Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CCREEE).

BACKGROUND

History of the CCREEE

In March 2014, the Small Island Developing States Sustainable Energy and Climate Resilience Initiative (SIDS DOCK), UNIDO and the Government of Austria (GoA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to assist SIDS in Africa, the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean and the Pacific in the creation of a network of regional sustainable energy centres.

To determine the technical and institutional design of activities in the Caribbean, which was ultimately to lead to the establishment of the CCREEE, a consultative preparatory process was executed by SIDS DOCK and UNIDO in cooperation with the CARICOM Energy Unit and with financial support of the Austrian Development Agency (ADA). The process included stakeholder consultations, the development of a needs assessment and a Global Environment Facility (GEF) Project Document (PRODOC) on the first operational phase of the CCREEE.

The technical and institutional design of the CCREEE was validated during a regional workshop, organized by SIDS DOCK and UNIDO, in July 2014 in Roseau, Commonwealth of Dominica. Based on the recommendations of the validation workshop, the creation of the CCREEE was considered during the Fifty-Fourth Special Meeting of the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) (Energy), as well as the Fifty-Fifth Special Meeting of the COTED (Energy and Environment), held in Guyana in February 2015. The Thirty-Sixth Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the CARICOM, held at Bridgetown, Barbados in July 2015, endorsed the establishment of the CCREEE as the implementation hub for sustainable energy activities and projects within the region and the offer of the Government of Barbados to host the centre in Bridgetown was accepted. In October 2015, the interim phase of the Centre was officially launched during a high-level ceremony in Bridgetown, Barbados.

The main goal of the interim phase was to fully operationalise the Centre as a legal entity under the CARICOM laws and regulations. This was achieved in May 2018 through the signing and ratification of the CCREEE legal agreement by a sufficient number of CARICOM Member States and the signing of the host country agreement between the CCREEE and the Government of Barbados (the agreement was opened for signature at the Thirty-Eighth Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM in Grenada in July 2017).

Between 2016 and 2018, the CCREEE was headed by the Interim Executive Director, Dr. Al Binger. The CCREEE has transitioned from the interim phase to the 1st operational phase. The Interim-Director was followed by a permanent Executive Director, Dr Gary Jackson, who was appointed in October 2018.

During the interim phase, the Centre operated based on the results framework of the initial CCREEE GEF PRODOC. The strategic planning retreat of the Executive Board (EB) developed in November 2018 helped to identify the vision and the mission statements—the priority areas for the CCREEE—and how it will work towards achieving them as part of an overall Strategic Framework.

Vision, Mission and Mandate

Three guiding principles work together to shape how the CCREEE operates in the region.

Vision – Transforming the energy landscape into a climate resilient, sustainable and affordable sector, focussed on improving the lives of our people.

Mission – To create, educate and facilitate the increased awareness and development of the RE and EE Agenda.

Mandate – Specialised Agency with an official CARICOM and SIDS DOCK mandate to promote RE and EE investments, markets and industries in the Caribbean.

1.1 Organisational Capacity

The organisational capacity of the CCREEE is key to ensure the successful implementation of its Strategic Plan (SP) and the achievement of the objectives. This includes the resources—people, technology and finance—as well as processes and procedures. This capacity is the base on which the CCREEE’s framework strategy rests and includes:

- people with the right skills and experience to work together with national and international partners (NFIs, THs, RUN, CCS EU and CARICOM Institutions)
- procedures (financial or human resources) in alignment with CARICOM
- technology, including tools and information technology
- internal and external communication strategies
- a funding mobilisation strategy; and
- a transparent monitoring and reporting process

A communication and public relations strategy ensures that the CCREEE mission, vision and mandate and its SP are widely communicated and understood at national, regional and international level, as this will have an impact on all activities, programmes and projects that the Centre aims to develop and implement, the number of institutions with which the Centre can partner and the financing that it will be able to raise.

The financial sustainability strategy of the Centre includes raising of funds from financial institutions, donors and development partners, getting access to global funds as well as seeking ways to implement activities that generate income.

1.2 The CCREEE regional intervention logic

CCREEE is a member of the Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centres (GN-SEC) whose aim is to accelerate the energy and climate transformation by creating economies of scales, equal progress and spill-over effects between countries. In partnership with Member States and other sub-regional players (e.g. power pools, utility organisations, regulatory authorities, regional banks), the centres work towards the creation of integrated regional markets for SECT products and services by setting targets, policies, standards and incentives, as well as de-risking of investments through the provision of reliable data, analytics, bundling of projects and convening power. Each of the centres have their own priorities depending on the demand in Member States.

The CCREEE builds on the regional intervention logic of other centres of the Global Network of Sustainable Energy Centres (GN-SEC). In this logic, the CCREEE contributes to the creation of integrated and inclusive regional CARICOM markets for sustainable energy products and services by mitigating existing barriers through regional tools and methodologies. The CCREEE works towards an equilibrium between domestic market demand for and supply of sustainable energy products and services. Therefore, the consideration of local value creating aspects (jobs, local manufacturing and servicing) in demand-side activities (e.g. policies, standards, financing and incentives), as well as the promotion of domestic energy entrepreneurship and innovation become an important emphasis.

The assumption is that some of the barriers for the development of sustainable energy markets can be addressed more effectively and at lower cost at a regional level. Through its activities, the CCREEE complements and accelerates national efforts in the areas of policy and regulation, capacity development, knowledge and data management, awareness raising, as well as the promotion of investment, innovation and entrepreneurship. The CCREEE serves as a hub for all kinds of domestic and international partnerships. Together with the CARICOM Energy Programme, the CCREEE plays an

important role in the setting of domestic priorities, contributing to donor harmonisation and coordination, as well as ensuring the sustainability and availability of results and deliverables after project closure.

1.3 CCREEE's Governance Structure

The Governance structure of the CCREEE includes:

- the CARICOM Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED on Energy)
- Executive Board
- Technical Committee
- The CCREEE Secretariat
- National Focal Institutions
- Thematic Hubs
- Regional Universities Network (RUN)

Under its governance structure, the CCREEE works closely with the Energy Unit of the CARICOM Secretariat but reports to the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED). The CCREEE matters are discussed in conjunction with meetings of the CARICOM COTED on Energy. On the basis of recommendations of the Executive Board (EB), the Council provides overall strategic policy guidance, evaluates the CCREEE's performance and appoints its Executive Director. From 2019 onwards, the Centre broadened its staff base in accordance with its technical and operational need.

The CCREEE's internal rules and procedures include the following:

- (1) Finance and Administration Manual: outlines the financial rules and procedures for the Centre's operations and projects/programmes to ensure proper accountability is conducted as well as effective and efficient use of funds from generated income, MS or external funding partners.
- (2) Procurement Manual: outlines the procurement principles and processes that the Centre should follow when going through procurement processes for goods, works and services, including:
 - (i) ensuring the work programme carried out by the Centre is in line with CARICOM priorities and is relevant to the Caribbean Sustainable Energy Roadmap and Strategy (C-SERMS) objectives and targets;
 - (ii) ensuring total transparency, as well as efficiency, in terms of the resources used by the Centre (personnel and funds);
 - (iii) ensuring that the use of the resources provides the maximum value and benefits for the CARICOM MS;
 - (iv) providing a cost-effective system for the CCREEE Secretariat to identify and implement its Work Programme;
 - (v) ensuring the quality, performance standards of the procured goods, works and services; and
 - (vi) providing procedures in other areas of the Centre's operations (such as consultants, documentation, sustainable and gender responsive procurement, etc).
- (3) Rules of Procedure for the Executive Board: establishes the procedures for the CCREEE EB operations.
- (4) Staff Regulations and Rules: establishes the rules and regulations to which the CCREEE staff needs to adhere.

The Finance and Administration Rules as well as the Procurement Rules have been developed and approved by the CCREEE Executive Board [EB]. The rules of Procedure of the EB as well as the Staff Regulations and Rules are all approved by the CCREEE EB. The Centre is also working to develop and implement internal rules and procedures to work with NFIs and the THs.

1.4 CCREEE's Functions

1.4.1 Policy implementation

In the area of policy development, the CCREEE aims to be the facilitator and implementation body of the CARICOM Energy Unit.

1.4.2 Project Facilitation, Investment & Business Promotion

As the CARICOM sustainable energy implementation body, a primary goal of the CCREEE is to increase the development and deployment of high-quality sustainable energy infrastructure projects in the region, by supporting them throughout the project development phases up until bankability. For that, the Centre will—along with NFIs, THs, CARICOM Institutions, utilities, development partners, and financial institutions—provide assistance to identified sustainable energy programmes/projects executed by both the public and private sectors or civil society in the CARICOM region depending on their specific programme/project needs.

1.4.3 Knowledge Management & Awareness Raising

One major constraint for investors and projects developers in the CARICOM region sustainable energy sector is the lack of reliable and updated energy information, such as key energy country data on existing policies, laws, stakeholders, prices, generation costs, resources, investment and potential project sites. In fact, the lack of information is one of the major risks perceived by investors and project developers that has a direct impact on the development and implementation of projects. In addition, there is a lack of information on good practices, successful or unsuccessful projects as well as insufficient awareness about key market enablers and on the opportunities offered by the sustainable energy technologies and services.

1.4.4 Capacity Development

Capacity development on sustainable energy issues is key to achieving the Centre's vision. Strengthening the capacities of local key institutions and stakeholder groups through the up-scaling and replication of certified training and applied research programmes and mechanisms are key elements of the CCREEE's strategy and efforts.

1.5 Cross-cutting issues

Three cross-cutting issues are critical to the success of the Centre and they will be considered in all the CCREEE's interventions and activities:

- (i) Coordination of Activities, Networking & Partnerships
- (ii) Data & Knowledge Management
- (iii) Gender & Social and Environmental Safeguards

1.6 Data & Knowledge Management

One of the strategic priorities of the CCREEE is to create a platform to share information and knowledge on sustainable energy across the region because data and knowledge management are crucial to ensure that policy and decision making in the sustainable energy area are based on up-to-date evidence and information on the sector's development and potential and are key to mitigate investment barriers associated with lack of transparency, information and knowledge.

1.7 Gender and Youth

The CCREEE considers gender and youth mainstreaming critical to carrying out all its activities, projects and programmes and thus it will mainstream gender and youth through its operations and activities by means of its institutional governance structure and staff policy and at programme/project/activity implementation level. Energy-gender and youth related

stakeholders will be engaged, consulted and involved by the CCREEE to ensure that gender and youth are being well mainstreamed.

1.8 Indicative budget and funding model

1.8.1 Financial sustainability requirements

CCREEE's financial sustainability strategy adheres to the following principles:

- CCREEE's activities should add value to the region and contribute to the vision for the centre.
- CCREEE should not compete with private sector companies.
- CCREEE is a CARICOM institution and therefore activities should benefit the Caribbean people.
- CCREEE needs to ensure the achievement of its vision and aims in the long term.

As a result, CCREEE will not aim to undertake activities purely to generate revenues. Nonetheless, certain income generating activities that simultaneously adhere to the above values are important for the long-term sustainability of the Centre. CCREEE's income sources are therefore as follows:

- Income generated by activities which adhere to the financial sustainability values listed above.
- Revenues from administrative charges while acting as an implementing partner for international development organisations and donors.
- Core contributions from international development partners where the Centre's vision is in line with the ambitions of donors in the region.
- Core funding from CARICOM and MS (initially in-kind and utilising CARICOM resources)

In the shorter term, CARICOM Member States and the CARICOM Secretariat do not pay a financial contribution towards the Centre. Support from the CARICOM Secretariat comes from participation on the Executive Board and Technical Committee, as well as in-kind contributions (e.g. by the communications team). CARICOM Member States support the CCREEE through in-kind contributions in the form of working hours and commitments undertaken by the NFIs to contribute to the CCREEE's activities at local level.

Barbados, as host country, provides both in-kind and financial contributions, as well as the CCREEE office space.

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

CCREEE prepares a complete set of financial statements in accordance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS).

CCREEE's annual financial statements will include:

- Statement of financial position
- Statement of financial performance
- Statement of changes in net assets/equity
- Cash flow statement
- Comparison of the approved budget and the actual amounts
- Notes to the financial statements

To facilitate the timely completion of the annual audit, CCREEE prepares an audit readiness plan including a timetable detailing the completion dates of schedules required by the auditors.

ACCESSIBILITY

The Auditor will have complete access to all financial records, reports, statements and any other documentation deemed necessary to carry out the engagement, including:

- (i) Pursuant to its establishment, its Instruments of Ratification
- (ii) Financial and Administration Manual
- (iii) CCREEE's Procurement Manual
- (iv) CCREEE's Staff Regulations and Rules
- (v) Agreements with IDPs

All accounting documents relating to the CCREEE's operations are kept at its Offices at the Trinity Business Centre, Country Road, St. Michael. This is the Organisation's first audit.

1.9 Staff directly involved in the Annual Audit Exercise

Senior staff involved in the preparation of the annual financial statements and the audit exercise are –

Executive Director – Dr. Gary Jackson

Finance Manager – Mr. Elson Jordan

1.10 External Audit

The CCREEE expects to have its annual audit for the year ended 31 December 2019 completed by the end of June 2020. Going forward, CCREEE expects to have the audit completed by the end of the first quarter of the following year.

Article 10.2 of the CCREEE's Financial and Administration Manual requires the review of the selection of the auditor. This is to ensure competitive pricing and to maintain a high quality of service. It is not a requirement to change auditors every three years, simply to re-evaluate the selection.

In any case, audit services provided to the CCREEE will be rotated every five years.

AUDIT OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the Auditor's engagement is to –

1. obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements of the Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CCREEE) as a whole are free from material misstatements, whether due to error or fraud, thereby enabling the Auditor to express an opinion on whether the financial statements are prepared in all material respects in accordance with IPSAS;
2. report on the financial statements and communicate as required by the International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) in accordance with the auditor's findings.

AUDIT SCOPE

The audit will be conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) as issued by the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC). The audit will include

- (1) An evaluation of CCREEE's internal control system, which includes the design and function of the system, including
 - (i) the control environment,
 - (ii) control activities,
 - (iii) the accounting and information systems

- (iv) a risk assessment and management.
- (2) A review of the financial transactions and accounting records for the purpose of expressing an opinion as to whether the financial information (basic financial statements and supplementary financial information) are free from material misstatement and are reasonably presented and are prepared in accordance with the CCREEE's Financial and Administration Manual and IDP funded project requirements where applicable.
- (3) An examination of the financial statements – Receipts and Expenditure of IDPs to ensure no material misstatement and compliance with their reporting requirements.

In addition to the provision of an opinion on the financial statements, the Auditor will be required to bring to the attention of the CCREEE any observations made in the course of the audit with regard to inefficiencies in accounting systems and procedures, weaknesses in internal control, the occurrence of illegal acts, and irregularities or fraud.

DELIVERABLES

- (a) Opinion on whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement based on an examination of the evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- (b) An assessment of the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.
- (c) Opinion on whether each IDP funded project included in the audit, reasonably presents the financial situation of the project and if it was prepared in accordance with the specific audit requirements of the donor agency according to their guidelines for the project's finance and management.
- (d) Whether the supplementary financial information is reasonable and fairly presented in all material respects.

QUALIFICATIONS OF THE AUDITOR

The successful auditor will

- (i) hold a professional qualification from and membership in a national or international accountancy body;
- (ii) possess a practicing certificate to provide auditing services in Barbados and a minimum of ten years post qualification experience in the practice of auditing.

Notwithstanding the professional qualification and experience which the successful proposal will have, it is required that the successful firm must be impartial and independent of all aspects of the management and financial interests of the CCREEE.

The Auditor must **NOT**, during the period covered by the audit or during the undertaking of the audit, be employed by, serve as a Director for, or have any financial or close business relationship with any senior officer in the CCREEE's management.

1.11 Invitation to Respondents

This Request for Proposals (herein referred to as "RFP") is a solicitation by the Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (herein referred to as the "CCREEE") from qualified suppliers to submit proposals for the provision of audit services

Only complete submissions which include all required information will be considered; incomplete submissions will be rejected.

1.12 Objective of the RFP

The purpose of this RFP process is to select a firm that will:

- Be capable of providing the nature of the auditing services described at xxx
- Demonstrate value for money;
- Provide the CCREEE with professional and responsive support;
- Work in a cooperative and professional manner with the CCREEE in the provision of the auditing services.

2 SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDELINES

2.1 RFP Contact

For all purposes of this RFP process, queries and other submissions including final proposals should be made to procurement@ccreee.org. Attempts at unofficial queries through officials and other staff members of the CCREEE for the purpose of influencing the outcome of this RFP may be cause for disqualification from further consideration.

2.2 Proposal Submission Delivery Requirements

All proposal submissions **MUST** be completed in electronic form and made via e-mail. Hard copy submissions are **not** required but may also be made in addition to e-mail submissions.

E-mailed submissions (Required)

Proposals sent by e-mail must be received in **Adobe PDF format only**, no later than 17:00 h (GMT/UTC - 4h) on 17 May 2020 in one e-mail. The e-mail subject line to be used is, “*Proposal for the audit of the financial statements of the CCREEE commencing with the statements for the period ended 31 December 2019*”. The submission must be duly signed and dated. The official address for e-mail submission will be the RFP contact email address, as indicated above in section 2.1.

2.3 RFP Timetable

Activity	Deadline
Issue Date of RFP	7 April 2020
Deadline for Questions	28 April 2020
Deadline for Issuing Clarification Document	6 May 2020
Deadline for Submission	17 May 2020
Evaluation of Proposals	31 May 2020
Contract Negotiation Period	6-10 June 2020
Anticipated Contract Start Date	14 June 2020

2.4 Inquiries from Respondents

Respondents are required to submit requests for additional information or clarification in respect of this RFP no later **28 April 2020** via RFP contact, e-mail: procurement@ccreee.org. All questions should be as clear and concise as possible. Respondents are also expected to immediately notify the RFP contact via email of any discrepancies, ambiguities, errors, omissions, or other faults in any part of the RFP document, providing full details.

Responses to inquiries or amendments will be issued in written addenda prior to the final proposal submission deadline. Should there appear to be conflict between the RFP and any addenda issued, the last addendum issued shall prevail.

2.5 Confidentiality

Through the submission of their bid, the respondent shall agree to following measures:

Confidential Information of the CCREEE

The respondent acknowledges that any information concerning the analysis, findings and recommendations of which the respondent, its agents or employees become aware of in the course of bidding or providing any services under a resulting contract, shall be treated as confidential. In particular, such information:

- (a) is the sole property of the CCREEE and must be treated as confidential;
- (b) is not to be used for any purpose other than replying to this RFP and the performance of any subsequent contract for the deliverables; and
- (c) must not be disclosed without prior written authorization from the CCREEE

Confidential Information of Respondents

Respondents should identify any information in their proposal, or any accompanying documentation supplied in confidence for which confidentiality is to be maintained by the CCREEE. Respondents are advised that their proposals will, as necessary, be disclosed, on a confidential basis, to any related parties engaged by the CCREEE to advise or assist with the RFP process, including the evaluation of proposals as well as to CCREEE's third parties who have a financial or legal/regulatory interest.

2.6 Language guidelines

Proposals prepared and submitted by respondents in addition to all correspondence and documents relating to the RFP exchanged between the respondent and the CCREEE shall be written in the English language.

2.7 Currency

All monetary cost amounts must be quoted in United States Dollars.

2.8 Costs associated with the proposal

All respondents shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of proposals. This includes administrative costs, travel costs and costs associated with demonstrations, if and whenever applicable.

2.9 Validity period of proposals

Bids shall remain valid for a total of 60 days after the closing date prescribed by the CCREEE for the receipt of bids. A bid valid for a shorter period will be rejected by the CCREEE and deemed nonresponsive. In exceptional cases, the CCREEE may solicit the respondent's consent to an extension of the bid validity period. The request and response thereto shall be made in writing through letters and/or emails.

2.10 Delivery of Services

The respondent shall bear all risks and costs related to the submission of their proposals.

The respondent is fully responsible for organising and guaranteeing timely delivery. Close coordination with the contracting authority, the CCREEE, is recommended.

3 OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS

3.1 Taxes, levies and duties

The final cost shall be quoted and itemized to include a break-down of all relevant costs. The contract cost, however, shall be exclusive of direct and indirect taxes since the CCREEE is exempt from taxes. This is in accordance with Article VIII of the 'Headquarters Agreement between the Government of Barbados and the CCREEE' entered into effect in May 2018.

3.2 Force majeure

Respondents shall not be considered in default if delays in delivery occur due to causes beyond the respondent's control, such as, *inter alia*, acts of God, natural calamities, civil wars, strikes, fires and floods. Only those causes which have a duration of more than seven days shall be considered cause of force or calendar majeure. In the event of delay due to such causes, the delivery schedule will be extended for a length of time equal to the period of force majeure

At its sole discretion, CCREEE retains the right to cancel this RFP at any time. Such cancellation would be without any liability on the part of the CCREEE.

4 PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

The submitted proposal should contain the following components:

4.1 Transmittal Letter

The transmittal letter should state the willingness and ability to provide services in accordance with all terms and conditions of this RFP. The letter shall clearly indicate that the respondent has carefully read all the provisions in the RFP and should summarize the important information contained in submitted proposals. An authorized representative of the bidding agency, preferably the Managing Partner, must include his/her name and sign the cover letter. The cover letter must contain a brief summary of the experience and background of the respondent. Transmittal letters should also acknowledge receipt and understanding of any addenda associated with the RFP.

4.2 Company profile

Respondents should describe their business' background and company history drawing relevance to this RFP.

4.3 Qualifications & Experience

Respondents should provide evidence of certification of the staff responsible for managing the engagement as well as any senior staff assigned to the audit and proof of capability including previous relevant experience. Any legal and ongoing litigation should be declared.

4.4 Subcontractors

Respondents should declare if subcontractors will be engaged to meet the scope of works described in this RFP. The information provided should include the subcontractor's responsibilities, business information, qualifications and any experience relevant to their responsibilities related to the RFP.

4.5 Other Submissions

Interested firms must also submit the following documents/information to demonstrate their suitability:

- Curriculum vitae for key personnel within the firm who will undertake the engagement;

- A financial proposal quoted in United States dollars (US\$) according to deliverables as outlined in Attachment 1 below

4.6 Timeline

Respondents should provide a proposed timeline for competition of the engagement outlined in this RFP, particularly where they differ from the timelines articulated by the CCREEE in ‘Bid Schedule of Prices/Payments’ Attachment 1. Lead times should be clearly illustrated.

4.7 Audit Pricing Information

Respondents should provide a price breakdown which includes pricing associated with all aspects of the procurement – professional fees, details of any reimbursables, etc.

Price proposals shall be valid for a minimum of 60 days.

4.8 Criteria for Proposal Assessment

The firm scoring the highest cumulative score in technical and financial evaluations will be awarded with the contract. Technical and financial evaluation will carry 70% and 30% weightages, respectively.

Technical proposals will be evaluated per the criteria below:

- Work samples provided by firm relevant to the scope of services highlighted above (30 points)
- Qualification/expertise of key personnel proposed for the assignment (20 points)

In case of a discrepancy between unit and total prices, the unit price shall prevail.

ATTACHMENT 1

BID SCHEDULE OF PRICES/PAYMENTS

Name of Bidder: _____

Signature of Bidder: _____

31 March 2020