

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Sl. No.	RFP Reference	Section clause/ content of RFP	Query	Mission's Response
1.	Chapter 1: Request for Proposal (RFP)	9. The Mission/Post handled approximately 2,56,973 no. of services/ transactions during the three-year period from Jan-2022 to Dec-2024 (Equivalent to 343 transactions/ services per working day, assuming 250 working days in a year.	Please be kind to share the transactions received in person and received by post / courier at each ICAC during the three years from Jan-2022 to Dec-2024.	Details attached in the Annexure-A of this document All applications are received in person.
2.	Chapter – I Request for Proposal (RFP) Point 3, Page 3	The proposal of the bidding company will constitute an offer to enter into a contract with the Mission, based on the terms and conditions stated in this RFP. The proposal may form part of the final contractual documentation if the bidding company is invited by the Mission to enter into an Agreement. The Agreement inter alia will include provisions for the SP to adhere to all local laws applicable to the operation of the ICAC, including on employment of staff and their remuneration, banking operations, environment, safety, insurance, privacy, payment of local taxes, etc.	Does this clause indicate that the SP should ensure that for staff employment and remuneration, banking operations, environment, safety, insurance, privacy, and local tax payments strict adherence to all local laws and requirements be a mandatory condition when quoting the Single Service Fee?	SP is required to adhere to all local laws applicable to the operations of ICAC.
3.	Page no. 04 CHAPTER I: REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) Point 05.	In the event of the rollout of chip-enabled e-passport services by the Ministry, the SP shall be responsible for the enrolment and capture of ten-finger and facial biometric data of the applicants, as prescribed by the Indian Mission/Posts. In that case the Mission & Posts in coordination with Gol's National Informatics Centre (NIC), will provide necessary biometric capturing software for the purpose while the hardware shall be the responsibility of the SP as per the standards prescribed by NIC. No request/ claim for any hardware and its installation would be entertained under any circumstances during the period of contract. Hence the rates should be quoted with these provisions	We kindly request you to provide us with complete technical specifications for the hardware and its installation. This information is necessary for us to include in our price bid. At this time, we do not have any clarification regarding the quantity, technical specifications, or any other hardware/ software requirements. The service fee depends on	Biometric capturing technical specifications required are detailed in the RFP. Quantity of hardware planning is for bidders to make, taking into account anticipated applicants to be served daily, number of counters, redundancies etc.

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

		in mind. The SP shall coordinate with the Mission/Posts and NIC or any other agency authorized by the Ministry to put in place seamless procedures for this purpose.	various factors, such as the index prices of the country. Since we are unsure of when chip-enabled e-passport services will be implemented by the Ministry, we kindly request that this requirement be removed from the current Request for Proposal (RFP).	
4.	Chapter III	Point No. xii, Page No. 10 EMD and other Bank Guarantees (BGs) can be furnished through SWIFT (including e-Bank guarantee)	Details of the Embassy Bank account duly mentioning Account No / Address of Bank / Details of swift / IBAN	Details of the bank account will be shared through email with companies who have shared their organizational profile with the Mission.
5.	Chapter III Clause (vi)	Instructions to Bidders (vi) Bidding companies having outstanding penalties levied by the Indian Mission/Post as per the provisions of the Agreement payable to Missions/Posts/MEA, shall not be considered.	a. Please clarify whether Bidding companies which have received a Show cause notice for levying of penalties/notice demanding penalties are eligible to bid in the present RFP if the Bidding company in question has responded to the Show cause notice for levying of penalties/notice demanding penalties and a final communication qua said penalties has not been received from the Mission/Post MEA. b. Please clarify whether Bidding companies who have challenged the levying of any particular penalties against them whether before Mission/Post MEA or before a	The proposal of Bidding companies that have outstanding penalties levied by any Indian Mission/Posts, irrespective of the current status, shall not be considered and summarily be rejected.

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

			court or before an arbitral tribunal are eligible to bid?	
6.	Chapter III clause (vi)	Instructions to Bidders (vi) Bidding companies having outstanding penalties levied by the Indian Mission/Post as per the provisions of the Agreement payable to Missions/Posts/MEA, shall not be considered.	Please be kind to clarify whether the penalties that are contested by the Bidding Company including but not limited to for lack of proof and a reply from the Mission is awaited, will be considered as outstanding penalties for the purpose of Chapter III, clause (vi)	The proposal of bidding companies that have outstanding penalties levied by any Indian Missions/Posts shall not be considered and summarily rejected. Provision of the RFP will be applied to all, appeal or otherwise of outstanding penalty cases in earlier contracts of respective bidders.
7.	Chapter V Point No 1(x) page No 17	The Bidding Company must provide certificate that its operations are compliant with local laws and relevant tax regime.	Kindly clarify from whom the said certificate is to be provided?	Yes, the OSPs will have to submit self-certification in this regard.
8.	Page no. 16 Chapter V: (iii)/Mandatory Eligibility Criteria	The average annual turnover of the Bidding Company during the last three years (Jan 2021-Dec 2023) must be at least USD 5,00,000 excluding any subsidy or financial help in any manner received from the local govt. or entity or organization or NGO. The Bidding Company shall provide audited information certified by an external auditing agency to substantiate the claim of its turnover. In the case of joint ventures, information must be provided for both the partners of the joint venture and a copy of their joint venture agreement.	The RFP requires the average turnover of the Bidding company based on calendar Year during the last three years (Jan 2021-Dec 2023). However, in India, balance sheets are typically prepared on a financial year basis, starting from April 1 st and ending on March 31 st . To present the financial data for each calendar year, as desired in the RFP, please confirm if a certificate from a Chartered Accountant verifying the accuracy of the audited data for calendar years is acceptable.	The Mission would accept balance sheets on the basis of the prevalent accounting year of the country where the company is registered. An external audit agency in the country where the company is registered.

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

9.	Page No. 16 Chapter V: Mandatory Eligibility Criteria 1. (iii)	Conversion rate from US\$ to INR	We kindly request you to confirm the applicable years for the conversion rate of US\$ to INR for calculating the equivalent value of Turnover and Net Worth during the respective calendar years for Jan 2021 - Dec 2023, as mentioned in the RFP.	Bidders may submit information based on US\$/INR conversion rate as per RBI/Central Bank of the country in respective years.
10.	Chapter V, clause 1 (x):” Page 17	“The Bidding Company must provide certification that its operations are compliant with local labour laws and the relevant tax regime and shall continue to be compliant with such regime.”	As the operations of the bidding company would only stand initiated post the award of the tender, would a bidder whose bid is unable meet viability standards based on local labour laws read with labour requirements as stipulated in the present RFP, stand to be declared as nonresponsive. Further, what would be the procedure for such determination?	The only criteria for selection of SP is minimum technical qualification as per provisions of RFP and L1 criteria.
11.	Please refer to chapter VI, 1(a) and chapter VI, 1(e)		We would like to seek clarification regarding the eligibility criteria outlined in Chapter VI, 1(a) and Chapter VI, 1(e) of the tender document. As we do not have a branch office in the Bahrain, we intend to submit the tender independently while partnering with a local entity. However, we note that the eligibility criteria require the local partner to meet 50% of the net worth and 50%	The requirements as mentioned in the RFP are to be met by the bidders

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

			<p>of the turnover, which may significantly limit participation to major companies in the Bahrain and potentially encourage non-Indian companies to qualify for the tender process. Also please note, the bidding company meets the eligibility requirements and the financial guarantees are given by the bidding company and not the local partner.</p> <p>We would like to confirm whether we, as an Indian company without a local partner, can participate in the tender individually. In the event that the tender is awarded to us, we would establish a separate entity in the Bahrain to deliver the services to the Mission. Request your clarification.</p>	
12.	<p>CHAPTER VII: SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES REQUIRED 1 A. Dealing with Applicants and Documents xi-(a)</p>	<p>Muscat Minimum no. of counters – 14 (13 Submission + 1 Reception) Minimum staff required: Counter Staff – 14 Receptionist - 0</p>	<p>There is a discrepancy in the details regarding the number of counters and minimum staff for the location MUSCAT. The second column specifies a minimum of 14 counters (13 Submission +1 Reception), while the staff details mention 14 Counter Staff, and No Receptionist. Similar inconsistencies are noted for SALALAH, SOHAR, NIZWA,</p>	<p>Counter staff includes the Receptionist</p>

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

			SUR, BURAIMI, DUQM, IBRI, IBRA, KHASAB and BARKA Kindly confirm the correct number of counters and staff for each location.	
13.	CHAPTER VII: SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES REQUIRED 1 A. Dealing with Applicants and Documents	SP shall provide space/ working station for officials of the Mission for attestation or other services as decided by the Mission.	Is the required workstation for officials intended for the public dealing area or the back-office area? Please clarify.	Exclusively for back-office area for handing/taking over of the documents on all working days.
14.	CHAPTER VII: SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES REQUIRED 1 B. Acceptance and forwarding of application to Mission/Post (x)-(b)	The SP shall also maintain a maximum turnaround time of 30 minutes for any applicant from token generation to acceptance of application and payment at the counter of ICAC.	Does the 30-minute TAT include Application Facilitating Services such as photographs, form filling, photocopying, etc.?	Turn Around Time shall not exceed 30 minutes from the time of token generation till the time of generation of submission receipt for the applicant. 30-minute TAT is the standard requirement for the processing of applications, which includes capturing photographs and providing photocopies as well. Separate time could be considered for Form filling if required.
15.	Chapter VII: Scope of Work and Deliverables Required Clause X (b)	The SP shall also maintain the turnaround time of 30 minutes for any applicant from token generation to acceptance of application and payment at the counter of ICAC.	The Tender specifies the turnaround time for 30 minutes and as per our understanding, the turnaround time will be only for submitting the application and a separate time would be allotted for form filing, photocopy, photograph services.	
16.	3- OPERATIONAL SYSTEMS AND INFRASTRUCTURE: Point 3- Application	The clause states that SP shall provide, at no additional cost/charge, the following four Application Facilitating Services, to applicants submitting consular applications at ICACs. Photocopy,	We should consider implementing a structured token system to streamline applicant flow and reduce wait	

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Facilitating Services at ICACs	Photographs (4 photographs), Form filling, Courier Services. Also that SP shall not be allowed to charge applicants, any additional cost other than the Service Fee quoted in its financial bid, for providing Application Facilitating Services at ICACs.	times at the center, as per the RFP, applicants unable to opt for value-added services like photography, photocopy, form-filling and courier will lead to inefficiencies and longer queues. With close to 340 applications processed daily (excluding visa and OCI), almost 90% of applicants end up in a queue at some stage, causing congestion, particularly at the Photograph and form-filling stations. Since nearly everyone requires form-filling assistance, the waiting time increases significantly, making it difficult to achieve the 30-minute turnaround goal and leading to applicant discomfort and unnecessary complaints. Wouldn't issuing four different tokens help in distributing the load more effectively? This way, applicants would not be forced into unnecessary queues, service efficiency would improve, will only opt for value added service only if required and overall satisfaction levels would increase. Should we explore this approach to enhance our operations? Also, with this approach the turnaround	
--------------------------------	---	---	--

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

17.	Chapter VII Point No 1(T), page No 44	Consular Camps	How many consular camps will be conducted during a calendar year. .	It is need based and can vary.
18.	Chapter VII: Scope of Work and Deliverables Required Clause G (c)	Dispatch the document(s)/passport/ PCC to applicants via courier in a secured manner on the same day (or the next working day in case of delayed receipt).	Please be kind to clarify if the courier service is mandatory or optional?	Courier service is a mandatory deliverable to be provided by the SP, with the option for applicant to collect passport/document from ICACs.
19.	Chapter VII, SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES REQUIRED	Are there any specific languages which the mission wants OSP to incorporate on the website/ mobile app	Request clarity on the languages to be used for website, mobile app, call centre etc.	Hindi and English
20.	Chapter VII, SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES REQUIRED	Requirement of ICAC Manager in all the centres.	We request the mission to re consider the count as ICAC manager in a bigger centre with significant footfall is fine however for smaller centres it may not be viable since for 2 staff or less as a senior staff / supervisor can be placed instead of ICAC manager. Request please check and consider. We also request to provide the centre wise allocation with the count of CPV applications with the count of roles assigned for better understanding	The minimum staff of each ICAC has been specified based on the current operations at ICACs across various locations and keeping in mind future requirements.
21.	CHAPTER VII: SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES REQUIRED (xi) (a)	Staff for Application Facilitating Services	The staff for application facilitation services are mentioned centre wise in addition to the submission counter staff and backend staff. We believe not all the counters will be occupied at all times and	The numbers specified are based on the current operations. Any re-arrangement will require prior permission of the Mission.

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

			the staff at the counter can be deployed to assist the applicants with the additional facilitation services and will also lead to under utilisation of the workforce in case of less applications at the centre at any given point of time. Request, please consider revising the count as submission officers or back end officers can be utilised for the role.	
22.	Chapter VII, point xi (b)	The clause states that, The SP shall also provide a minimum of 2 staff to facilitate the backend coordination and to ensure the smooth functioning of ICACs	Please confirm how many staff are required dedicated for Back office and specify the roles for Staff for 'Application Facilitating Services' since all the staff will not be utilised all the times. Also please update whether the 2 staff at back end will also handle contact centre owing to lesser count of applications or will that be considered separate	Back-office staff requirement is clearly mentioned on page 23. Application Facilitating Services includes photocopying, photographs, Form filling, and Courier services etc. Back-end staff will not handle contact center and there will dedicated staff for contact center.
23.	Chapter VII, point xi (c)	The SP shall operate, on a regular basis, an exclusive submission counter at the Embassy of India, Muscat with adequate number of staff, for processing the applications as decided by the Mission/Posts, failing which penalties shall be levied on the SP as prescribed under Chapter XI of this RFP.	Please confirm if the deputation of adequate staff at the Embassy of India, Muscat is required on all working days and does the count includes the total count of staff mentioned in Minimum staff required or separate since offsite. Also, what will be the adequate number of staff, please specify the count.	2 counters at the Embassy will be operational on all working days. Staff for the Embassy will be separate which will be 3, but can vary as per requirement.
24.	As per Chapter VII	point No xi page No 23 in Note under point © SP shall also operate on a regular basis, an exclusive submission	Please share an estimate or	

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

		counter at the Embassy of India, Muscat with adequate number of staff for processing of applications.	indication as to how many counters and staff will be required.	
25.	(xii) Enquiry and Grievance redressal mechanism	Point e states the telephone enquiries shall be attended to from 8 AM to 7 PM on all working days.	As per the local law, according to the Oman Labour Law, the standard working hours are 40 hours per week, typically eight hours per day over six days. T Request you to please provide timings as per the local labor law. Also please specify if there will be different timings during Ramadan?	Please refer to Para 1P(vii) of CHAPTER VII There will be different timings during Ramadan and timing will be shared as per local Administration's instructions/guidelines.
26.	Point P- (i) Facilities at the ICAC	The SP shall ensure that ICAC is easily accessible to members of the public and located in a reputable area (within the specified limits) as per the local regulations, in consultation with and with the approval of the Mission/Posts concerned.	Please specify- what is the term ' within specified limits ' mean?	Please refer to Annexure-J Part III: Technical Bid evaluation proforma Sno.1(a). The evaluation criteria on location of ICAC is self-explanatory. Evaluation will be done based on relative quality of offers of various bidders. The location of the center must be permissible under local laws.
27.	Point P- (vi) Facilities at the ICAC	The staff in the ICAC must be fluent in the language(s) as per local requirements of the country/zone of operation.	Please specify the languages	English and Hindi will be medium of communication in all cases.
28.	Page No. 21 Chapter VII: SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES	Indian Consular Application Center (ICAC): Minimum Area of ICAC in Sq. ft.	The minimum area of each ICAC to be established is on the very high side, especially keeping in view the fact that the	The size allocation and area has

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

	REQUIRED: 1-A. (xi) Indian Consular Application Center (ICAC)		<p>separate Optional Services and Premium Lounge Services have been removed from this present RFP, which might have necessitated large space requirements.</p> <p>We would request clarification for the big space requirement for the various ICACs and request rationalization of space requirements on the basis of the counters required.</p>	been made keeping in mind the current operations and future requirements.
29.	Indian Consular Application Centre (ICAC): Point a. Page 20	The SP is required to set up a new Indian Consular Application Center (ICAC) in prominent locations as specified in the following table under the jurisdiction of Mission/Post, in well-connected commercial complexes with ample parking facilities for applicants.	Please advise what constitutes a new ICAC in terms of the RFP?	<p>The OSP is required to set up an entirely new ICAC having new civil infra (including chairs, tables & furnishings) and IT infrastructure (including desktops, workstations, POS, Token machines, etc.,) and other necessary equipment/facilities/utilities.</p> <p>The marks for the proposed ICAC will be assigned as per the Technical Evaluation Proforma-Part-III of the Annexure-J</p>
30.	Chapter - VII Page 20	Website	Languages not defined for maintaining the website. What languages are mandatory?	The website will be required in English and Hindi
31.	Chapter VII, Clause 1 (A) (xi) (a) Page 20	"The SP is required to set up a new Indian Consular Application Center (ICAC) in prominent locations as specified in the following table under the jurisdiction of	Are the bidders required to advance	The selection criteria as defined in the RFP is as per L1 basis only.

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

		<p>Mission/Post, in well connected commercial complexes with ample parking facilities for applicants. The proposed locations for the ICACs should have an area of minimum office space as specified in the table below sufficient for Reception desk/counters/workstation/walk-in applicants, seating of waiting people, space for smooth movement of incoming and outgoing visitors, separate exit/entry to ensure smooth flow of people, etc.”</p>	<p>documents/calculations supporting the financial viability of any ‘service fee’ so submitted by the bidder, to show that the same is sufficient to finance not only the market rental values for the requisite ICACs and meet the specified requirements? If there are no such documents to be provided by the prospective bidders, how will the tendering authority determine this aspect?</p>	<p>The bidder is required to submit its financial bid, strictly as per the Annexure-K of the RFP.</p> <p>Quality of implementation and technical solution offered will be measured against service level metrics as defined in the RFP</p>
32.	<p>Page No. 44 CHAPTER VII: SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES REQUIRED T. Consular Camps</p>	<p>The SP may be required by the Mission/Post to organize Consular Camps at any location within the consular jurisdiction of the Mission/Post(s) at no additional cost to the Government of India/ Mission/ Post or applicants. SP will be required to provide services, including scrutiny of applications for consular/ Passport/ Visa/ OCI/ PCC/ Surrender Certificate / GEP Verification/ Miscellaneous Attestation etc., and acceptance of fees. The same Service Fee should be levied on applicants. No additional service charge will be paid to the SP. These camps are to be organized in cities other than the location of the Centres. The SP should quote financial bid keeping in mind this aspect and SP will not be allowed to charge any additional cost from anyone [either from the applicant or Mission/Post/Ministry]</p>	<p>Since the organization of consular camps is a requirement in addition to regular ICAC centers, the following information is kindly requested:</p> <p>1. Manpower & Resource Requirements: a) Number of personnel required for consular camp operations. b) Number of applications anticipated to be processed at each camp. c) Number of camps to be conducted per year.</p> <p>2. Camp Organization & Logistics: (a) Kindly provide logistics for</p>	<p>The number of consular camps to be conducted will vary as per requirement. About 3 staff members may be required which may process about 80 applications during the day. No additional infrastructure apart from existing resources might be involved. The numbers and modality is tentative and subject to variation as per requirement.</p>

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

			<p>proposed organization and conducting of consular camps.</p> <p>(b) Kindly specify the typical duration of each consular camp.</p> <p>3. Infrastructure & Space Requirements: Please indicate the modalities for space requirements or infrastructure that is needed for the successful operation of a consular camp.</p>	
33.	Chapter VII Page No. 29, Point No. xii (a)	The SP shall provide an efficient and courteous telephonic enquiry system through Toll-free numbers / Voice Over Internet Protocol	Please provide number of calls / emails received for planning of call center.	The numbers vary and cannot be quantified.
34.	Part III: Technical Bid Evaluation Performa Point 1(b)	Parking facilities with capacity and type of parking.	Please be kind to clarify, what is the maximum number of parking slots to be considered as adequate slots in ICAC.	<p>Exclusive Parking means Parking space exclusively reserved for applicants visiting ICAC.</p> <p>Bidders are to arrive at the number of parking slots as per the number of applicants anticipated to visit ICAC and based on existing local norms.</p> <p>Marks under Technical bid evaluation will be awarded based on the information/presentation provided by the bidder.</p>

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

35.	Part III: Technical Bid Evaluation Performa Point 4 (a)	Provision of Application Facilitating Services at ICACs Photocopying Photograph Form Filling Courier Services Refer to Chapter VII, para (3) of the RFP (7 marks)	Please be kind to clarify what explanation/solution for the provision of Application Facilitation Services is expected from the Service provider. This will enable us to incorporate the necessary details into our Technical Bid accordingly.	Requisite hardware and manpower facilities have to be provisioned for Application Facilitation services such as photograph, photocopy, form filling etc. Refer Chapter VII Para 3. As regards courier service, bidder has to provide information regarding the courier dispatch process, the courier company to be hired, etc in its technical bid. Technical bid evaluation marks will be awarded, based on the solution/explanation provided by the bidder, as per Annexure J(Part-III) of the RFP.
36.	Part III: Technical Bid Evaluation Performa Point 9	Reputation of the bidding company in the market and quality of non-GOI client list and references received from them.	Please be kind to clarify the Reference Letters provided to the bidding company by foreign client governments will be considered in assessing market reputation	Reputation will be assessed based on past association with corporate and non-GOI clients including foreign governments.
37.	Page No. 113 Part III: TECHNICAL BID EVALUATION PROFORMA D) Scoring Criteria/Remarks Sr. No. 1 (a)	Location of the ICAC: Marks will be given as per the Mission's judgment on the basis of information provided by the bidding company. The offer that provides the best locations for ICACs in terms of easy and convenient access through public transport, prime location and proximity to the Mission etc. will be given the highest mark 08, and the others will be given a lower mark on a relative basis to the best offer.	We kindly seek clarification on the terms 'Prime Location' and 'Proximity' as used in scoring criteria/ remarks in the TECHNICAL BID EVALUATION PROFORMA. Prime Location:	The RFP provision and the evaluation criteria on location of ICAC is self-explanatory. Evaluation will be done based on relative quality of offers of various bidders

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

			<p>Please elaborate what will be deemed as constituting a 'Prime Location' for the purposes of this tender:</p> <p>Proximity: Since the Proximity may be assessed based on the following criteria:</p> <p>High Proximity km Medium Proximity km Low Proximity km</p> <p>Please confirm, if there is any minimum benchmark in terms of kilometres for the purpose of evaluation of proximity.</p>	
38.	<p>Page No. 113 Part III: TECHNICAL BID EVALUATION PROFORMA D) Scoring Criteria/ Remarks Sr. No. 1 (b)</p>	<p>Parking facilities with capacity and type of parking</p> <p>5 Marks- Exclusive Parking with adequate slots in ICAC</p> <p>4-Marks- Adequate parking slots in or near ICAC</p> <p>Less than 4 Marks – for Inadequate slots/ slots not closer to ICAC</p>	<p>Kindly provide clarification on the definition and scope of "Exclusive Parking" as outlined in the tender.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of Exclusive Parking: • Number of Exclusive Parking Slots: <p>a) A confirmation of the number of parking slots to be categorized as "Exclusive Parking" is requested.</p> <p>b) The number of parking slots to be categorized as exclusive parking is also requested.</p> <p>c) This information is crucial for bidders to accurately assess</p>	<p>Exclusive Parking means Parking space exclusively reserved for applicants visiting ICAC.</p> <p>Bidders are to arrive at the number of parking slots as per the number of applicants anticipated to visit ICAC and based on existing local norms.</p> <p>Marks under Technical bid evaluation will be awarded based on the information/presentation provided by the bidder.</p>

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

			<p>project requirements and submit competitive bids.</p> <p>A prompt response to this clarification is requested to enable the bidders to incorporate this information into their bids.</p>	
39.	Annexure C		<p>In the section on the organization profile form and the notes referring to the declaration or certificate required as per Annexure C, could you kindly confirm whether any additional declarations or certificates are needed apart from the organization profile and references?</p>	<p>Organization Profile is to be submitted in Annexure-C</p>
40.	Annexure K		<p>Regarding the financial bid, we have noted that only the Service Fee is mentioned. Could you please clarify whether we are required to provide detailed calculations on how we arrive at the bidding cost based on the services required as per the RFP?</p>	<p>The service fee for all the CPV services will be the same.</p> <p>Bidding companies are required to submit their financial bid, strictly as per the Annexure-K of the RFP. No additional information/calculation sheet is required to be provided by bidders.</p>
41.			<p>As only four additional services are included in the service fee, could the mission allow us to offer the following value-added</p>	<p>There are no Optional /Value added services under the Scope of work. OSP shall not indulge in providing any service other than the</p>

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

			<p>services to customers for their convenience? Printouts (including WhatsApp printing, per page) Translation (English/Arabic, per page) Typing (English/Arabic, per page) Premium Lounge Service Indian CPV Services @ Your Doorstep Any other services for customer convenience</p>	<p>deliverables included in the RFP. Application Facilitating Services are mandatory to be provided by OSP, at no additional cost, to applicants submitting consular applications at ICAC, failing which penalty shall be imposed as per Chapter Xi of the RFP. OSP shall provide form-filling service to all applicants who need it.</p>
42.	Annexure: K, Financial Bid Page 121	Note: Proforma of Service Fee is to be filled correctly, without any omission. Any vague details /no response may lead to rejection of the bid.	<p>If there is just one consolidated Service Fee to be quoted by the bidder. please advise what specific details are considered under vague here. And what are mandatorily required to be shared.</p>	<p>Only a singular Service Fee has to be as per Annexure K.</p>
43.	Annexure-K	<p>Financial Bid Note: 1 – Service Fee quoted above is the ‘Service Fee per application’ payable to the Service Provider. Bidder shall quote the Service Fee as per deliverables of the RFP including digitization and indexation of documents, enrolment of fingerprint biometrics, facial Biometric capture, and provision of four Application Facilitating Services viz, photocopying, photographs, Form filling, and Courier Services.</p>	<p>a. Please be kind to clarify how the charges for the courier services to be computed given they vary based on distance and local circumstances. Please be kind to clarify whether an average of the courier rates is to be taken or a separate disclosure is to be made qua the differential courier rates and ultimately differential service fees.</p>	<p>Bidders need to factor in courier charges, variability of distances amongst other factors to offer a singular all-inclusive service fee</p>

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

44.	Annexure-K	<p>Financial Bid Note: 1 – Service Fee quoted above is the ‘Service Fee per application’ payable to the Service Provider. Bidder shall quote the Service Fee as per deliverables of the RFP including digitization and indexation of documents, enrolment of fingerprint biometrics, facial Biometric capture, and provision of four Application Facilitating Services viz, photocopying, photographs, Form filling, and Courier Services.</p>	<p>If the Service Fee has multiple components including digitization and indexation of documents, enrolment of fingerprint biometrics, facial Biometric capture, and provision of four Application Facilitating Services viz, photocopying, photographs, Form filling, and Courier Services, please clarify how is the service fee to be quoted if for instance an applicant does not avail any or all of the 4 Application Facilitation Services.</p>	<p>A singular all-inclusive service fee has to be quoted as per Annexure K, regardless of applicant availing any or all of the application facilitation services.</p>
45.	Annexure: K-FINANCIAL BID	Service Fee Quotation	<p>Please provide the increased % of diaspora count YOY for service fee determination. Also please quote the total count of transactions to be considered when deriving service fee. What should be the number of anticipated CPV applications for the three -year contract period, on the basis of which the bidder estimates revenue</p>	<p>Figures mentioned in the RFP may be used to work out tentative numbers.</p>
46.	Annexure H page No 103 Note 1	Bidder should ensure that the seal and Code No of the signatory is put by the bankers before submission of BG.	<p>Since the BG can be furnished through SWIFT (including e-Bank guarantee) hence affixing of bank seal is not possible. Pls clarify on the same.</p>	<p>e-BG and SWIFT transactions will be accepted as per banking norms.</p>
47.	Annexure H page No 103 Note 2	Stamp paper is required for BG issued by the Banks located in India.	<p>Since the BG can be furnished through SWIFT (including e-</p>	<p>e-BG and SWIFT transactions will be</p>

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

			Bank guarantee) hence Stamp paper requirement does not exist. Pls clarify on the same.	accepted as per banking norms.
48.	PREMIUM LOUNGE	Clarifications on Premium Lounge at ICAC's	We have reviewed the current RFP and noticed that the clause regarding the Premium Lounge is not there. The absence of this provision raises concerns regarding applicant convenience and crowd management at the center. Without a designated Premium Lounge, all applicants, regardless of their service preferences, will be gathered in the same space, leading to congestion, longer waiting times, and overall discomfort. Additionally, service providers (SPs) may later request the Mission to allow the use of a Premium Lounge, citing operational challenges. This could lead to unplanned revisions and inconsistent service offerings. Given that a Premium Lounge was previously included as an option for enhanced applicant comfort, could you please clarify the Mission's stance on this matter from an applicant experience perspective?	There are no Value-added services including Premium Lounge under the Scope of Work of the RFP. SP shall not indulge in providing any Service other than the deliverables included in the RFP. Bidders may quote their price bid taking this into consideration.
49.	General Query	Responsibility of Handling applications during the transition period.	We shall be grateful if the transition period and modalities	<i>There would be no transfer of applications between the</i>

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

			for handling applications during the transition period are clarified.	<i>existing and the new SP. The existing SP will complete the services for all the applications received by it.</i>
50.	General Query	Utilize the services of a subcontractor for a specific category.	We kindly request confirmation if it is possible to utilize the services of a subcontractor for a specific category of ancillary service.	There is no such provision in the RFP. Please note that agents and middlemen are not permitted under any circumstances. However, for courier and security services, SP can engage reputed companies.
51.	General Query	Contract Period	Require amendment. See Chapter XVII (P.S Validity of Agreement) Para 1 clearly stipulates that the Agreement shall be valid for 3 years from the date of signing of the Agreement. Instead, the following may be proposed: As is, this is a 3-year fixed term Agreement, unlikely the earlier RFPs that provided flexibility for extension in case the need arises or the circumstances demand. The present formulation does not allow the possibility of extension. It is, therefore, proposed that the Para 1 may be modified to incorporate flexibility and allow discretion to the Mission for the extension of the Agreement	Pls, refer to Chapter XVII. The agreement signed will be valid for three years from the date of signing the Agreement, without further extension.

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

			after the completion of 3-year term.	
52.	General Query	Backlog of Services from the incumbent service provider.	Kindly confirm that the cost associated with addressing this backlog is not included in the bid price and constitutes a separate and excluded expense to be reimbursed by the mission.	The selected OSP is not expected to deal with applications accepted by the previous OSP. The previous OSP would ensure that all applications are taken to their logical end which is either submission of all documents to the Mission/Post or return to the applicant.
53.	General Query	Average Number of Pages Per Application	Kindly confirm the average number of pages per application to be digitized by the digitization center to accurately estimate resource requirements and submit competitive bids.	The number of documents to be digitized for application varies from service to service. However, average number of pages per application may be taken between 8-10 pages.
54.	Generic Query	NA	The present RFP does not stipulate any criteria for determining viability of bids. What is the process which the MEA seeks to follow, post receipt of bids, to determine the viability of a bid to ensure quality of services offered and to ensure complete adherence of all the local laws?	The selection criteria as defined in the RFP is as per L1 basis only. Quality of implementation and technical solution offered will be measured against service level metrics as defined in the RFP
55.	CHAPTER X: BANK GUARANTEES (BGs_	The prospective SP should submit the requisite irrevocable Bank Guarantees to the concerned Mission as per the format in Annex-G.	Please specify the Bank Guarantees in figures.	The exact amount will depend on the Service Fee quoted by the L1 bidder. The details will be provided to the bidder who is awarded the

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

				contract, at the time of signing of Agreement.
56.	Chapter XI Service Level Metrics/Penalties Page 68, point 41	Personal Records (PII Data)	Please advise purging policy for Personal data for the applicant	The duration of records to be maintained by SP after the service is completed should not exceed one month unless specifically requested by the Mission.
57.	2- OPERATIONAL SYSTEMS AND INFRASTRUCTURE: Point 3- Application Facilitating Services at ICACs	The clause states Website and notice boards of the SP/Mission should indicate that photocopying, photographs, form filling, and courier services are not charged separately and the Service Fee charged by the SP is inclusive of the charges for Application Facilitating Services	Since photocopying, photographs, form filling, and courier services are optional charges and can only be provided on applicant's requirement, what about the applicants who don't want to avail these services, wants to collect the document in person, already have the correct photograph, doesn't need xerox and form is correctly filled, why will they be paying for these services in the form of service fee charged by SP as will be paying. Also, if the applicant stays in close vicinity of the office and doesn't need courier and the photograph pasted already is as per specification why the service fee inclusive of additional facilitation charges be charged to him? Also, when the applicant will visit the centre in case of deficiencies	A singular all-inclusive service fee per application, as quoted in Annexure K, shall be collected from applicants, regardless of applicants avails any or all of the application facilitation services. As detailed earlier form filing time can be excluded from 30-minute TAT.

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

			in application will stand in different queues in absence of premium lounge to get the photographs and form filling assistance if required, these exercise consumes sometime and it will be chaotic also the turnaround time of 30 minutes practically would not be possible rather will add on to applicant's discomfort.	
58.	Chapter X Page No 50 point No 1(i)	The SP shall provide a Bank Guarantee in OMR for the Govt funds held by SP.	Kindly advise amount for the same.	The details will be provided to the bidder who is awarded the contract, at the time of signing of Agreement.
59.	Chapter XIV, Page No. 74	Point No. 1(ii) Envelop 2: A separate closed envelope containing the Technical Bid comprising of Bid Cover Letter and Declaration (Annex-F), Mandatory Eligibility Criteria (Annex-D), Technical Bid (Annex-J) and a Declaration by the Bidder (Annex-E). All these annexures should be duly filled in Four Copies of technical bid. To be enclosed.	Kindly advise how many original and copies of technical bid are required.	One copy of the technical bid should be original and three copies could be in duplicate.
60.	Chapter XIV Page No 75 point No 1(iv)	The proposal must contain the information required by the RFP, in original, signed.	Can the BID docs be signed by DSC or physical signatures are reqd.	Physical signatures are required.
61.	CHAPTER XV: SELECTION OF BIDDERS/ AWARD OF CONTRACT (II) Financial Bid Evaluation: (e)	The Lowest Financial Bid (L1) will be determined based on the Service Fee quoted by the bidders, as per Annexure-K of this RFP. The bidder who has quoted the lowest 'Service Fee' will be ranked as L1 and the contract will be awarded to the L1.	Is there a process in place to evaluate the financial figures quoted by the bidder? Additionally, does the MEA have any guidelines or viability criteria to assess whether a financial bid is abnormally low or high?	Pls, refer to Chapter XV, Para B. Stage-2 point II (e). The Lowest Financial Bid (L1) will be determined based on the Service Fee quoted by the bidders, as per Annexure-K of this RFP. The bidder who has quoted the lowest 'Service Fee' will be ranked

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

				as L1 and the contract will be awarded to the L1
62.	Chapter XV, Para B (II)(b) Page 77	Before the opening of the Financial Bids, the marks obtained by the various bidders in the Technical Bid stage will be communicated by email.	For the sake of transparency, will the Mission also provide the scores provided to the bidder for each of the respective items in the technical bid?	The total cumulative marks obtained by the bidders at the technical bid stage will be communicated to the respective bidders only.
63.			Can a Government of India PSU participate through consortium?	Please refer to Chapter -VI
64.			Is there any preferences or condition pertaining to the employees working for these services?	Please refer to Chapter -VII: Pt 1.B (XII) (i)
65.			What are the condition on the financial transactions to be done with respect to services charges and MEA? Is transaction of foreign exchange involved?	Please refer to Chapter -VII: Pt 1.C All transactions will be in local currency (OMR).

Embassy of India, Muscat

TENDER No. CONS/MUSCAT/415/02/2025 dated 04 February, 2025

RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED/ SUBMITTED TO THE MISSION AND PERTAINING TO THE RFP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Annexure-A

Branch	Year wise services delivered by various centers								
	2022			2023			2024		
	Passport	Consular	Visa	Passport	Consular	Visa	Passport	Consular	Visa
MUSCAT	37,947	21,629	8,825	41,509	23,839	7,475	40,618	21,861	6,262
SALALAH	4,158	821	-	4,585	739	-	4,709	712	-
SOHAR	3,140	222	-	3,900	208	-	4,491	178	-
NIZWA	1,570	78	-	2,078	76	-	2,242	36	-
SUR	1,120	1	-	1,320	2	-	1,274	-	-
IBRI	839	4	-	944	-	-	1,183	-	-
SHINAS	780	-	-	636	-	-	317	-	-
DUQM	685	-	-	737	-	-	767	-	-
BURAIMI	498	-	-	466	-	-	472	-	-
KHASAB	239	-	-	269	-	-	310	-	-
DIBBA	54	-	-	82	-	-	66	-	-
Total	51,030	22,755	8,825	56,526	24,864	7,475	56,449	22,787	6,262