

## MINUTES OF PRE - EOI MEETING

*Installation of 3 MWp Solar PV Rooftop Powerplants at various Government Buildings*

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 EOI Reference - SEU/NREAP/TBFIT/SPV/PI/REOI/2019/01

Minutes of Meeting pertaining to Expression of Interest (EOI) for the Installation of cumulative 3 MWp (1.25 MWp/ 1 MWp/ 0.75 MWp) Solar PV Rooftop Power Plants through Build Own Operate Manage (BOOM) model at various Government Buildings across The Kingdom of Bahrain for a 20 Year period

Venue : The Domain Hotel & Spa, Diplomatic Area, Manama

Date : 13.02.2019

Time : 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM

1. Alexander Al Samahiji, Acting Executive Director from Sustainable Energy Unit (SEU) chaired the meeting. He welcomed all the representatives and nominee of companies/consortia or partners who have participated in the Meeting. There were 60 participants representing more than 35 companies/consortia or partners.
2. The chairperson presented briefly about the background of EOI, the evaluation criteria and working mechanisms. He highlighted the important dates for the EOI and thereafter the representatives and nominee were asked to raise any queries related to EOI.

Queries and SEU comments/clarifications are summarized as follows:

Sl.	Query raised by Participants	SEU's Clarification/Comments
<b>Procedural questions and clarification on EOI and RFP</b>		
1.	Any possibilities on extension of EOI submission date (6 <sup>th</sup> of March 2019)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SEU/ UNDP revises (Section 1.1 of Annexure 3) and further extends the last date for submitting the EOI by the Bidders from 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019 to <b>20<sup>th</sup> March 2019.</b></li> <li>"Last date to receive - EOI 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019, Wednesday (12:00 midnight Bahrain Time (GMT+3))"</li> <li>Addendums are published with these minutes.</li> </ul>

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2.	Will there be any restriction on deploying remote monitoring & data collection?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These details are already taken into consideration and it will be particularised in the RFP document.</li> </ul>
3.	Is there any site visit plan during the EOI stage? Any information on it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During the EOI stage there will be NO site visits.</li> <li>During the RFP stage, at least a few sample site visits will be organised for site assessment.</li> <li>The process and procedure to participate in site visits will be elaborated in the RFP document.</li> </ul>
4.	Will SEU apply the same or a different model/ approach for the future tenders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Under this tender, a company / consortium can bid either one or all the three lots. But, <u>a company or consortium can win only one lot among the three lots.</u></li> <li>This is to mitigate the risk for the building owner and to increase the technical capacity of market actors in Bahrain.</li> <li>The model/ approach for future tenders will be determined later.</li> </ul>
5.	Any possibility of combining this tender with the future tenders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is NO possible combination of this tender with any of the future tenders.</li> <li>Every tender stand on their own. However, bidding companies/consortia can bid for the next tenders thereafter.</li> </ul>
6.	The tentative project timeline in the tender document plans to commission the Solar PV plants by 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter (Q3) of 2019, does it seem too ambitious?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The commissioning timeline provided in the EOI is for indicative purposes only.</li> <li>However, final project timeline will be made available in the RFP document.</li> </ul>
7.	Whether the installation of the cumulative capacity of 3 MWp (0.75/ 1.00/ 1.25 MWp), is planned on rooftop + ground mount (or) rooftop only?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The installation of the cumulative capacity of 3 MWp under this tender is proposed on the government buildings rooftops only.</li> <li>In the future tenders, installations on car parks, shadings and land may be considered.</li> </ul>

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8.	Under the technical eligibility criteria of this tender, Whether the total 3 MWp needs to be met only from rooftops or combination of rooftops + ground mount?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SEU/ UNDP revises the technical eligibility criteria (Section 1.2 of Annexure 2) as follows:            "A minimum of 20 Solar PV Projects (cumulative over ground &amp; rooftop mounted) installed &amp; commissioned within the last 3 Year (2016, 2017 &amp; 2018) in Bahrain (or) any other countries (cumulative over all partners).            (And)            A minimum of 3 MWp of Solar PV Projects (cumulative over ground &amp; rooftop mounted) of which at least 1.25 MWp are Solar PV Rooftop Projects (cumulative rooftop mounted only) installed &amp; commissioned within the last 3 Years (2016, 2017 &amp; 2018) in Bahrain (or) any other countries (cumulative over all partners)."</li> <li>Addendums are published with these minutes.</li> </ul>
9.	Whether the consortium formed in the EOI stage can be changed later during RFP stage or remain unchanged throughout?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Consortia or partnership formed during the EOI stage are the ones who, upon passing the EOI stage successfully, will be invited to bid in the RFP stage. Hence, they need to remain unchanged by definition.</li> <li>Ideally, consortia or partnership are built for a purpose and should last for the smooth operation of the solar plants for the 20-year period.</li> </ul>
10.	Whether only the lowest tariff is being considered for winning the bid or technical aspects will also be given due consideration?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The RFP tender process will evaluate the bids on both technical and financial aspects.</li> <li>The weightage of each of these aspects will be elaborated in the RFP document.</li> </ul>
11.	Any protection to the developers from the external factors which the developers have no control over the 20 years period that impacts the performance of rooftop plants?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Necessary protections will be made available in the Lease Agreement (LA) &amp; Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) to protect the owners/ developers/ investors on unforeseen circumstances that may arise in the 20 years project tenure.</li> </ul>

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12.	To Whom the EOI must be submitted to? Tender board or SEU?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The EOI should be submitted only to the UNDP as prescribed in the tender document</li> <li>refer tender document - Section 1.2 of Annexure3.</li> </ul>
13.	Whether the minimum and maximum annual energy generation data, made available for every rooftop?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the tender document, Section 1.4 of Annexure I explains that, the "plant sizes typically range of 10 kWp to 200 kWp."</li> <li>The cumulative capacity of 3 MWp is grouped into 3 lots (0.75/ 1.00/ 1.25 MWp).</li> <li>The estimated minimum annual energy generation data will be made available only for the respective lots and not for every rooftop.</li> <li>The details of the estimated minimum annual energy generation for the respective lots will be made available in the RFP document.</li> </ul>
14.	Clarification on the financial bid bond required for submission during the RFP stage. Can a bidder submit a single bid bond covering all the 3 lots (or) a distinct bid bond for each of the respective 3 lots?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The RFP will be issued through the National Tender Board.</li> <li>Bidder must submit a distinct bid bond for each lot.</li> <li>The value of bid bond will be made available in the RFP document and it shall define instructions about the submission of bid bonds as per the rules and regulations of the tender board.</li> </ul>
15.	Whether a letter for sub-contract (or) consortium agreement is required between Independent Power Producer (IPP) and Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is a business decision by a bidder on how to bring the consortia or partners on board and build partnerships.</li> <li>The EOI should define and prove the consortia partners who are responding to the EOI for consideration in the later stage of RFP as per Annexure 9, Row 4.</li> </ul>
16.	Any arrangement for lifting of materials to the rooftop will be provided by the building owners?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The companies or consortia shall have to organise their own arrangements for lifting their construction materials &amp; equipment to the respective building rooftops.</li> </ul>

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17.	Clarification on the asset management after completion of the active life of 20 years period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These details are already taken into consideration and it will be particularised in the RFP document.</li> </ul>
18.	Whether to strictly follow the EOI, in terms of the profile page and the capacity of the file?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SEU/ UNDP revises and further increase the e-mail file size of the EOI submitted by the Bidders from 5 MB to 30MB.</li> <li>"EOI submitted by E-mail must contain a single combined file in pdf format. The file shall be limited to a maximum of 30MB, shall be virus-free and shall be sent in no more than one E-mail transmissions"</li> <li>Addendums are published with these minutes.</li> </ul>
19.	Whether, the one-year validity of CR is strictly considered as a criterion for evaluation as from the time of issuance and renewal, the duration of validity of CR will be always less than one year?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SEU/ UNDP revises the Bidder (s) Certificate of Incorporation / Registration (Annex 9) as follows:            "Bidder shall submit a Company Registration (CR) certificate issued by MOICT which will be current/active/valid at the time of submission of the EOI stage and maintain the CR validity for the entire tenure of tender - (or)-            In case of Joint Venture or other forms of association, at least one (1) of the members shall have a Company Registration (CR) certificate issued by MOICT which will be current/active/valid at the time of submission of the EOI stage and maintain the CR validity for the entire tenure of tender"</li> <li>Addendums are published with these minutes.</li> </ul>
20.	Whether the PPA will be signed with a single or multiple owner of the buildings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The buildings covered under any respective lots (0.75/ 1.00/ 1.25 MWp) is for a single owner.</li> <li>The final winning bidders in the RFP shall sign the Power Purchase Agreement &amp; Lease Agreement with the signatories as defined in the RFP.</li> </ul>
21.	/What will be scope of asset security, protection and accessibility to the rooftops?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) and the Lease Agreement (LA) will elaborate the scope respectively.</li> </ul>

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22.	Whether the bidder will be responsible for developing the Power Purchase Agreements (PPA)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The bidders will not be responsible for developing either of the two agreements: Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) and the Lease Agreement (LA).</li> <li>The RFP shall provide these two agreements, acceptable by the Government.</li> </ul>
23.	Can Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) be negotiated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) and the Lease Agreement (LA) are binding and non-negotiable, the final winning bidders in the RFP shall sign it.</li> </ul>
24.	Whether the IPPs will be protected from any design variations requested by building's owner during implementation? As this may incur an additional cost.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Since the buildings' owner are involved right from the design stage of the project, the possibility of unforeseen variations in designs are minimised.</li> </ul>
25.	Details on redressal mechanism for any disputes or obstacles occurred during implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These details are already taken into consideration and it will be particularised in the RFP document.</li> </ul>
26.	Whether any penalty to be imposed for any delay in the completion of the project? Will there be any grace period provided to enable project completion and commissioning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These details are already taken into consideration and it will be particularised in the RFP document.</li> </ul>
27.	Is it mandatory to have two rooftop grid connected projects as testimonials or any other solar applications will be considered?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer tender document - Section 1.2 of Annexure2</li> <li>"Satisfactory Performance testimonials from at least two (2) Grid connected Solar PV Rooftop project Clients"</li> </ul>
<b>Questions and clarification on Prices, Tariffs and Incentives</b>		
28.	Whether there will be import duties and VAT exemption for the import of solar equipment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently, no exemption from import duties and VAT for any Solar equipment's.</li> </ul>



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29.	Whether the billing cycle will be monthly or bi-monthly or quarterly or annually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Since the project under this tender is integrated with Net-Metering the billing cycle shall be in accordance with Net-metering and is envisaged to be monthly. This will be stipulated in the RFP.</li> </ul>
30.	Whether the electricity tariff for the Government buildings is at a flat rate of 29 fils/kWh?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For any Government buildings, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ The electricity tariff for a consumption up to 5000kWh are on a concessional price of 16 fils/kWh.</li> <li>❖ The electricity tariff for a consumption beyond 5000kWh will be billed at flat rate 29 fils/kWh.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Please visit the following link for more information on non-domestic / commercial tariff. <a href="http://www.ewa.bh/en/Customer/BillsTariffs/electricity-water-tariffs">http://www.ewa.bh/en/Customer/BillsTariffs/electricity-water-tariffs</a></li> </ul>
31.	Whether the non-binding tariff, be a part of criteria for evaluation of the EOI submitted by the bidders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The nonbinding tariff is the part of the Expression of Interest (EOI) and <b>not a part of an Evaluation Criteria</b>.</li> <li>It will be an indication of price determined by the bidders through available professional software tools, costs estimations, expert judgement and experiences in solar rooftop business.</li> </ul>
32.	Whether there will be a dynamic (two-block) tariff within the 20 years project tenure?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This tender stipulates a fixed tariff for the entire project tenure of 20-years.</li> <li>Dynamic tariff shall NOT be taken into consideration at any point of time in this tender.</li> </ul>
33.	Can a bidder quote three different tariffs for three different lots or only one tariff for all the three lots?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During the RFP stage, the bidders can quote same or different tariffs for each of the three lots, as they see fit.</li> </ul>
34.	Will any future policy on feed-in-tariff affect this 3MWp project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) and the Lease Agreement (LA) will legally protect the owners/ developers/ investors of this project for 20 years tenure. Policy changes are not retroactive.</li> </ul>

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35.	Whether leasing of the building rooftops is provided free of charge or will it constitute any rental amount?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A nominal amount will be charged as a rental amount in the Lease Agreement (LA).</li> <li>The technical details and the cost associated will be provided in the RFP document.</li> </ul>
36.	What if all the bidders in the RFP bid a tariff above 29 fils/ kWh?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The purpose of the EOI and RFP is for bidders to competitively bid against each other and can offer the best technical/ tariff combination. The best combination will win.</li> <li>The indicated cost of 29 fils/kWh is used for illustrative purposes and defines the top electricity tariff slab to the rooftop owner (see item 27 above for more details).</li> <li>Hence this gives an indication to the bidders that the rooftop owner is likely accept an IPP's tariff less than this.</li> <li>If in case the quoted tariff is above 29 fils/ kWh, the building's owner may find the IPP's tariff economically unfeasible and the tender will not be awarded.</li> </ul>
37.	Does the government provide any incentives packages for the Solar PV projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently, no incentive schemes are in place by the government.</li> </ul>
38.	In which currency will the payments be made during the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The currency of payments will be in Bahrain Dinars (BHD).</li> </ul>
<b>Queries and clarification on Consortium</b>		
39.	Can Solar PV manufacturers be a part of a consortium as a supplier, taking note that the panel manufacturer has only supply of PV modules as project reference and not EPC reference?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is a business decision on how a company or companies may choose any eligible partners while forming the consortium.</li> <li>The minimum eligibility criteria provided in the tender document must be fulfilled in order to qualify for the next stage of tender.</li> </ul>



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40.	Whether the local partner/ company should be enrolled with the EWA approved list of companies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is not mandatory that any local partner/ company should be enlisted under EWA's approved list of companies.</li> <li>Any local company who have a current/ active/ valid CR with the prescribed CR activity can become bidder solely or partner with companies to form a consortium.</li> <li>Refer tender document - serial number 10 of Annexure 5 - "If in any case, our company (or) consortia partners are NOT enrolled under Electricity &amp; Water Authority's (EWA) approved contractors, then I/we commit to sign a service contract (or) service agreement with any one (1) of the EWA's approved contractors."</li> </ul>
41.	Clarification on the flexibility to choose the partners or consortia in terms of duration i.e. allowed for short duration or required for entire 20 years period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Consortia or partnership formed during the EOI stage are the ones who, upon passing the EOI stage successfully, will be invited to bid in the RFP stage. Hence they need to remain unchanged by definition.</li> <li>Ideally, consortia or partnership are built for a purpose and should last for the smooth operation of the solar plants for the 20-year period.</li> </ul>
42.	Is it acceptable to form two or more consortium and bid for this tender?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A single company can build a partnership to form a single consortium and bid in this tender.</li> <li>A single company cannot build a partnership to form two or more consortium and bid in this tender.</li> </ul> <p><b>Example:</b> Assume three companies 'A', 'B' &amp; 'C'. In case 'A' wants to form consortium, it can build a partnership either with 'B' or 'C' resulting in one consortium, but cannot build a distinct partnership with 'B' and 'C' at the same time resulting in 2 consortia.</p>

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43.	As a foreign company, is it mandatory to form a consortium for the EOI response?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer tender document - Section I.1 of Annexure2</li> <li>"Companies or consortia, either national or international, should consist of at least one company or partners registered in Bahrain. (and) Companies or consortia, either national or international, should consist of at least one company engaged in the business of solar PV"</li> </ul>
<i>Queries and clarification on Technical and Institutional</i>		
44.	Can the drawings of the building roofs be shared with the bidders for their assessment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An information pack containing useful facts from the survey findings will be made available during the RFP stage.</li> <li>During the RFP stage, a few sample site visits will be organised for site assessment.</li> <li>The process and procedure to participate in site visits will be elaborated in the RFP document</li> </ul>
45.	What are the institutions involved in the statutory clearance of the grid connection process, permitting, licensing? Will there be any ways to expediate the connection process for this tender?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The statutory institution for grid connection and regulation is EWA. The necessary clearance permits and grid connections shall be made available through the local authorised and approved contractors.</li> <li>They will support the bidding companies/ consortia to work through all the processes such as pre-approval, design approval, grid connection testing, grid connection approval and any other process from EWA.</li> <li>It is the responsibility of the final winning bidders in the RFP to process grid connection as per the net-metering resolution &amp; connection agreement.</li> <li><a href="http://www.ewa.bh/en/RenewableEnergy/Pages/Net-Metering-Resolution-and-Connection-Agreement.aspx">http://www.ewa.bh/en/RenewableEnergy/Pages/Net-Metering-Resolution-and-Connection-Agreement.aspx</a></li> </ul>

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46.	Any list of approved local companies or equipment in public domain?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The list of approved contractors/ consultants are publicly available and can be found at EWA website: <a href="http://www.ewa.bh/en/RenewableEnergy/Pages/Approved-Contractor-Consultant.aspx">http://www.ewa.bh/en/RenewableEnergy/Pages/Approved-Contractor-Consultant.aspx</a></li> <li>The list of approved equipment are publicly available and can be found at EWA website: <a href="http://www.ewa.bh/en/RenewableEnergy/Pages/Approved-PV-equipment.aspx">http://www.ewa.bh/en/RenewableEnergy/Pages/Approved-PV-equipment.aspx</a></li> <li>For any other additional requirements, technical documents refer the link:</li> <li><a href="http://www.ewa.bh/EN/RENEWABLEENERGY/Pages/default.aspx">http://www.ewa.bh/EN/RENEWABLEENERGY/Pages/default.aspx</a></li> </ul>
47.	How to deal with the multiple buildings spread across different governorates?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8 Properties covering all the 4 governorates is considered in this tender.</li> <li>All the buildings selected for this tender are located within the respective property boundaries. Hence, the winning bidders shall carryout their mobility within not more than 3 property boundaries.</li> </ul>
48.	Are any government buildings rented to other agencies will be included in the list of government owned buildings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The government buildings rented to other than the government agencies are excluded.</li> <li>Only the government owned buildings are considered in this tender.</li> <li>No private properties are included in the list.</li> </ul>
49.	Whether there exists any process to enrol new solar equipment, or investors have to consider only equipment from the approved list?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EWA is the authorising body to approve renewable energy equipment (see item 43 above for more details)</li> <li>Equipment not currently on the list can be put on the list by contacting the EWA with appropriate IEC certification &amp; Test reports from internationally accredited laboratories.</li> <li>These details are already taken into consideration and it will be particularised in the RFP document</li> </ul>

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50.	What type of meter used for commercial billing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Typically, a bi-directional meter shall be used for commercial billing under net-metering.</li> <li>More details of the meter &amp; billing will be particularised in the PPA/ RFP document and is part of the Net Metering Grid Code.</li> </ul>
51.	Whether necessary compensation is provided to the IPP's for the isolation of the Solar PV Powerplant during the time of a major shutdown, renovation or blackout in daytime?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These details are already taken into consideration and it will be particularised in the PPA/ RFP document.</li> </ul>
52.	Are any standard sun hours being used in the Kingdom of Bahrain for all the companies to use the same figure for tariff calculation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The companies or consortia shall have to do their necessary tariff calculations based on the meteorological data source they deem appropriate.</li> </ul>
<b>Others</b>		
53.	<i>Comment:</i> The tender will set a benchmark on the rooftop solar projects in the Kingdom of Bahrain and therefore everyone needs to be cautious and should project a realistic price instead of quoting below the market price for the sake of getting the project. Undervaluation of the tariff prices could affect the Bahrain's PV market & business in future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SEU noted that each project must make financial sense for everyone involved, for the off-taker and for the developer.</li> <li>Therefore, the bids offered should be realistic and reflect the costs of the developer, given that they will be tied to a PPA for 20 years.</li> </ul>