REQUEST FOR QUOTATION

Research on standards, gender equality and women’s empowerment
ISO Gender Action Plan

We are ISO, the International Organization for Standardization, the world’s largest developer of voluntary International Standards.

We are looking for a Consultant to assess and suggest criteria/methodology on how standards support gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Therefore, we would like to invite you to respond to this Request for Quotation (RFQ).

The purpose of this RFQ is to allow several qualified suppliers to submit their best quote for this service.

Unless otherwise public, any information obtained through sanctioned discussions with ISO personnel pursuant to the preparation of your response must be treated as confidential and proprietary information of ISO. No contact should be made by your company to any of our suppliers.

Please provide comprehensive information to the attached questions by 7 August 2020, after which time further proposals may not be accepted without prior written agreement.

Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me on the e-mail address provided in this document.

Yours sincerely,

Noelia Garcia Nebra
Program Manager

Address: Chemin de Blandonnet 8, 1214 Vernier (GE, Switzerland)
Email: garcianebra@iso.org
PART A – INSTRUCTIONS AND TERMS FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

1. Format of your proposal

All proposals shall be submitted in English and be set out in three main parts:

- Part 1: Response to the terms of reference (see Annex 1)
- Part 2: Completed consultant(s) profile form – (Annex 2)
- Part 3: CV of the consultant
- Part 4: Financial Proposal (Annex 3)

For a joint venture or consortium submitting a proposal, a signed “Statement of Intent” shall be included (see Part B - 3.3) in addition to the above documentation.

Part 1: Response to the terms of reference

The response submission shall contain the following in responding to the terms of reference:

1. Summary description of your qualification, experience and technical skills with special focus on the knowledge and motivation on the subject matter;
2. Organization profile and activities in areas related to the project, if relevant
3. Your proposal to the assignment covering:
   a. Experience carrying out research related to gender related issues
   b. Feedback on the ISO mapping tool against SDG 5 (https://www.iso.org/sdg/SDG05.html)
   c. Suggestions on research methods to assess the impact of standards on gender equality
   d. Examples of existing research on the impact of standards on SDG 5 or other research that may be relevant to the current assignment;
   e. Suggested time required for the completion of the different deliverables (see Part B- 2.1)
4. Any comments on the terms of reference;
5. Signed statement of intent for joint-venture submission, if applicable;
6. Conflict of Interest disclosure statement; and
7. Attachments of max. three most relevant references (summaries, letters or attestation)

Please complete Annex 1 - Consultant’s response to the terms of reference.

ISO reserves the right to contact any persons listed in your past performance document in order to gain a better understanding of the supplier’s past performance in delivering similar services to former clients.

Part 2: Completed consultant profile

This part of the proposal submission should include a completed individual consultant form given in Annex 2 – Consultant’s profile form. The consultant must confirm and indicate their availability to work on this project until the assignment is completed.

Part 3: Consultant CV

In addition to the consultant profile form, each consultant should also include his/her CV (2 pages max).
Part 4: Financial Proposal

The Consultant must submit a financial proposal for the assignment. All prices should be expressed in Swiss Francs (CHF). Payments will be processed in three installments, one after the completion of each Phase. The invoices shall be sent to ISO only after confirmation given in writing of acceptance of the deliverables and payment can be expected within 30 days of the receipt of the correctly detailed invoice. We are requesting the Consultant to submit a financial proposal based on the estimated working days needed to complete each assignment (see Annex 3 – Financial Proposal). ISO will assume that all provided costs are exhaustive and thus will not allow further costs to be introduced during contract negotiations, should the Consultant be selected.
2. Timeline for Proposals
Below is the timeline for the Request for Quotations process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone/Steps</th>
<th>End date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RFQ released to potential Consultants</td>
<td>19 June 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarification calls with Consultants/Suppliers (as requested)</td>
<td>7 July 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Consultants/Suppliers return proposal</strong></td>
<td>7 August 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected evaluation of proposals (including references)</td>
<td>24 August 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected selection of proposal</td>
<td>31 August 2020</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

These dates are a guide to the time frame expected for this project. Significant changes will be communicated accordingly.

3. Submission of Proposals
All proposals must be submitted electronically by email to Noelia Garcia Nebra, ISO Central Secretariat, garcianebra@iso.org, with CC to miller@iso.org and tenders@iso.org, as one file attachment in Portable Document Format (PDF). The PDF file shall be named appropriately and must not exceed 10MB in size.

To facilitate handling process, the “subject line” of the email must contain the following: the number indicated in the invitation notice and the submitter’s name:
e.g. “ISO/GAP/2020-01 (Consultant’s or Organization’s name)”

4. CB clarifications, amendments and point of contact
Any query necessary for the preparation of the proposal must be addressed in writing by e-mail to Noelia Garcia Nebra, ISO Central Secretariat, garcianebra@iso.org or Rachel Miller Prada, miller@iso.org before **7 July 2020**. ISO at its discretion reserves the right to extend the CB closing deadline or to issue an amendment to the CB.
PART B – TERMS OF REFERENCE

1 Background

1.1 ISO International Organization for Standardization
ISO is an independent, non-governmental international organization which holds membership from 165 countries from all regions of the world. Each ISO member is the recognized and representative national standards body (NSB) in its country. Through its members, it brings together experts to share knowledge and develop voluntary, consensus-based, market-relevant International Standards that support innovation and provide solutions to global challenges. The ISO Central Secretariat (ISO/CS) is based in Geneva, Switzerland.

ISO recognizes that increased and effective participation of developing countries in international standardization is of fundamental importance and that its developing country members need specific assistance to fully exploit the value of standards in support of their countries’ development.

1.2 Gender and Standards
Gender equality and women’s empowerment is one of the key areas for achieving sustainable development for all. This is recognized by SDG 5 “Achieve Gender Equality and Empower all Women and Girls” and by more than 50 gender-related indicators, including indicators related to other goals such as SDG 1: “End poverty” or SDG 8: “Decent work and economic growth”, and SDG 17 which seeks to promote a multilateral trade system.

Standards can play a prevalent and influential role in supporting gender equality in benefit of sustainable development. They can also be used, both at the national and international level, to assess and monitor gender-responsible policies and practices. Enhancing the gender balance in standardization work will lead to improved performance and better results. Applying a gender lens to the standards development process by addressing specific needs of women and girls is key to ensure that standards respond to current and future challenges and are relevant to all.

1.2 ISO Gender Action Plan
The ISO Gender Action Plan provides an operational framework to deepen the understanding of the gender representation in ISO work, assess the gender implications of standards, and ensure that ISO work and activities include a gender perspective.

The ISO Gender Action Plan 2019-2021 sets out four (5) priority areas:
1. Collect data on gender representation: Gathering adequate gender-disaggregated data will help ISO understand the current gender representation in ISO work and the effective monitoring of ISO’s progress towards long term objectives.
2. Collect case studies and best practices on standards in support of gender equality: ISO will carry out and collect case studies on national and international standards to define best practices on standards in support of gender equality. This includes gathering and sharing with ISO members on the benefits of use of standards in support of gender equality.
3. Assess the gender-responsiveness of ISO standards: ISO will capitalize on work being carried out by NSBs and other partner organizations to assess the gender implications of ISO standards and create instruments and tools to mainstream gender issues in ISO’s technical work.
4. **Raise awareness on standards in support of gender equality and women’s empowerment**: ISO recognizes that equipping its members, the community of experts and stakeholders with the knowledge and tools on the link between gender equality and standards is central to the success of the ISO Gender Action Plan 2019-2021.

ISO is a signatory of the UNECE Declaration on Gender responsive standards.

2. **Request**

This assignment will come as an activity under **Priority Area #2: Collect case studies and best practices on standards in support of gender equality**, and will review the current mapping of ISO standards in support of SDG 5, and assess how selected ISO standards support gender equality and women’s empowerment.

2.1. **Scope of Work and expected deliverables**

The Consultant’s work will be broken into three phases:

**Phase I**: The Consultant will carry out a literature review on existing studies on the use of standards to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment and evaluate the impact they have. The review will focus primarily, but not exclusively, on the use and impact of ISO standards, and will include a theoretical discussion on the mechanisms through which standards support SDG5. The Consultant may also refer to other relevant research on how policies and programmes support, among others, women entrepreneurs, women-owned SMEs, discrimination against women and girls, infrastructure and social protection policies, women’s opportunities at all decision-making levels, access to and use of health care, and equal economic resources.

*Deliverable*: Paper (20-25 pages) summarizing the main findings and suggesting the most appropriate criteria/methodology to be applied in assessing how standards support gender equality and women’s empowerment.

**Phase II**: Based on the suggested criteria/methodology, the Consultant will conduct a detailed analysis of pre-selected ISO standards (approximately 2 to 3 standards, to be selected by the ISO/CS team in collaboration with the Consultant) and evaluate their impact on gender equality and women’s empowerment.

*Deliverable*: Report on main findings and conclusions on the impact of the selected standards on gender equality and women’s empowerment. The report will also include an assessment of the applicability of the methodology, including recommendations for its revision if needed.

**Phase III**: Based on the agreed criteria/methodology, the Consultant will undertake a desk review of the current mapping conducted by ISO of standards in support of SDG 5 to define its accuracy.

*Deliverable*: Report with main conclusions of the desk review on the current ISO mapping.

The Consultant is expected to work in close collaboration with the ISO/CS team throughout the three phases.
2.2. **Qualifications and Experience**
The Consultant should have the minimum qualifications and experience:
- Postgraduate degree in economics, social sciences, development studies, gender studies or similar
- Excellent knowledge in socio-economic research, particular on issues related to gender. Experience in evaluating the impact of projects/programmes on gender equality and women’s empowerment is desirable.
- Previous work experience or first-hand knowledge of standards and developing standards is desirable
- Excellent oral and written English skills. Working knowledge of French or Spanish would also be an advantage.

2.3. **Expected Deliverables**
The Consultant will be required to share the outline and draft versions of the different deliverables for ISO/CS feedback and approval.

The table below shows the suggested timeline for this assignment. The specific deadlines will be defined on the final contract.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>TIME FRAME</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase I – Literature review and suggested criteria/methodology</td>
<td>Within 2 months from the signature of the contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase II - Findings and conclusions on the impact of the selected standards</td>
<td>Within 6 weeks of the approval of the criteria/methodology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase III - Conclusions of the desk review on the current ISO mapping</td>
<td>Within 2 months from the beginning of Phase III</td>
</tr>
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3. **Requirements**

3.1. **Project financials**
See Annex 3 for Financial Proposal requirements.

3.2. **Conflict of interest and disclosures**
Bidders must disclose in their Proposals details of any circumstances (known), including personal, financial and business activities that will, or might, give rise to a conflict of interest, if they were awarded this contract. Where bidders identify any potential conflicts they should state how they intend to avoid such conflicts. ISO reserves the right to reject any Proposal which, in ISO’s opinion, gives rise, or could potentially give rise to, a conflict of interest.

All bidders must disclose:
   a. If they are subject of any proceedings or other arrangements relating to bankruptcy, insolvency or financial standing.
   b. If they are subject of any proceedings, relating to: corruption including the offence of bribery fraud including theft, and not fulfilling any obligations relating to payment of taxes; and/or money laundering.

3.3. **Joint venture of consortium (or other form of association)**
For the performance of this project, subcontracting is prohibited.
Where the Proposal is submitted as a joint bid in conjunction with one or more consultants coming together (i.e. joint venture or other form of association) then, in the absence of a joint venture agreement the “associated consultant(s)” shall be deemed to be a sub-contractor to the bidder and shall not be a party to the contract.

Proposals submitted by a potential joint venture must include in the proposal submission documents a signed “Statement of Intent” to form a joint venture with a description of the composition or constitution of the joint venture in the event of being successful.

3.4. Consultant residing in Switzerland

For individual consultants residing in Switzerland who seek to be engaged directly, you must provide a copy of your AVS (social insurance) certificate demonstrating your independent contractor status in your bid documentation.

4. General Conditions

By responding to this RFQ, applicants agree that the decision of ISO is final and binding, including any decision to withdraw this RFQ or disqualify any proposal. ISO shall not in any way be responsible for any costs incurred in the preparation and presentation of the Consultant/Supplier’s information.

ISO reserves the right to negotiate all terms and conditions to enter a formal contract with the Consultants/Suppliers, including regarding ultimate pricing. This RFQ document, the Consultant/Supplier’s response and, written addenda may form part of the contract.

ISO is not bound to give any reason for rejecting any responses or part thereof.

All work and materials shall comply with all applicable provincial and federal laws, municipal ordinances, regulations, applicable building leases, and directions of inspectors appointed by proper authorities having jurisdiction. Where proof of certifications are required by ISO, the Consultants/Suppliers shall make all such certificates available for inspection.

4.1. Modifications

Information submitted shall be final and may not be altered by subsequent offers, discussions or commitments unless the respondent is requested to do so by the ISO Manager in written form.

4.2. Validity

The content and pricing of the submission must remain valid for 6 months from the date of submission.

4.3. Disclaimer

The acceptance of a submission to this RFQ is not to be construed as representing or creating any binding obligation on ISO to enter into any legal commitment whatsoever. Furthermore, in responding to this RFQ, the Consultant/Supplier is deemed to specifically acknowledge the following:

Notwithstanding any representation by or on behalf of ISO or any estimate of quantities by ISO shown in this RFQ or otherwise given to the Consultant/Supplier (now or in the future) ISO shall be under no...
obligation to purchase any particular quantity of products or services, except as otherwise formally agreed in with written and signed contractual agreement.

The Consultant/Supplier places no reliance on any such representation or estimates and will place no reliance upon any future representation or estimate that may be provided unless that representation or estimate is noted in the written and signed contractual agreement.

ISO shall have no liability to the Consultant/Supplier whether in contract, tort or otherwise with respect to the giving of any such representation or estimate.

4.4. Confidentiality

Unless otherwise public, all information disclosed in connection with this RFQ is confidential and the property of ISO. This information must only be released to the personnel of the Consultant/Supplier to whom release is required to prepare a response to this RFQ.

4.5. ISO Logo

Please note that applicants are not permitted to use or display the trademarked ISO logo, during or after the RFQ process without express permission from ISO.
PART C - EVALUATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

The evaluation of the proposals received will be performed by an evaluation committee composed of ISO/CS employees. The following three-stage process will be used based on methodology and criteria summarized below:

1. **Preliminary examination**

The initial stage will examine whether the proposal submitters have provided all the required information and/or associated documents. The preliminary examination shall be on a pass/fail basis.

2. **Evaluation criteria**

In evaluating the complete proposals received, ISO will seek the most appropriate offer based on the following criteria. The evaluation will be based on a scoring system.

2.1 **Qualifications and experience (50%)**

- Knowledge and experience carrying out socio-economic research
- Knowledge and experience incorporating a gender perspective in socio-economic research
- Knowledge and experience with models and methods to evaluate economic and social outcomes
- Knowledge and working experience evaluating the impact of projects/programmes on gender equality and women’s empowerment.
- Previous relevant publications or professional attainments

2.2 **Communication and relationship management (25%)**

- Experience working in research teams
- Excellent English written communication skills
- References and/or past performance evaluations

2.3 **Relevance of the proposal (20%)**

- Consistency of the proposal with the needs outlined in the RFQ
- Ability to meet timeframes
- Cost
- Absence of possible conflict of interest (related to personal, financial and business issues)

2.4 **Additional skills (5%)**

- Ability to present and moderate trainings/workshops in English and/or French
- Computer capability: MS-Office (Word, PowerPoint, Outlook, Excel).