Tender "The Development of AI-Driven Job Matching Platform - RFP#: PSE21002-10064"

Questions and answers

Date: 13 June 2025

1.1 Important errata and updates

Note that an erratum has been made to the following:

- **"4.15.2 Acceptance Costs"** on page 25 of the RFP. The attached document reflects the revised acceptance cost details.
- **"4.15.3 Invoicing and Payment of Services (Arts. 66 to 72 – 160)"** on page 25 of the RFP, related to the payment modalities. The attached document includes the revised RFP with the updated payment schedule.

1.2 Administrative and Technical Questions

1. **Indicative budget:** We understand that the Terms of Reference outline an ambitious scope, and that the future platform is expected to serve as a key component of the national LMIS. From an implementation point of view, such a system can naturally be designed and delivered with varying levels of functional depth, either as a comprehensive fully featured system or, in this first phase, as a solid **Minimum Viable Product (MVP)** that can realistically be built within the available timeline and budget and further enhanced in subsequent phases. Could you kindly indicate whether there is an indicative target budget range that we should consider in order to calibrate our proposal accordingly (both in scope depth and delivery model)?

   Answer: The budget details are confidential and cannot be disclosed. We recommend submitting your proposal in accordance with the scope and requirements outlined in the TOR, including your cost breakdown accordingly.

2. **Expected number of users:** We would also appreciate clarification regarding the expected number of users (job seekers, employers, administrators) that the system should be designed to serve in its initial deployment, to help us properly size the platform architecture and ensure good performance and scalability.
   Answer:
   1. Job seekers & employers unlimited.
   2. MOL team 100 users.
   3. Job sites 10 users.
   As for concurrent users SRS NFR06 is 1000 users at the same time, normal situation and peak times NFR 07. In addition to SRS 5.1.1 ,5.1.2, 5.1.3 and 5.1.4. Starting from page 27.

3. **Data hosting location expectations:** We understand that the platform must comply with Palestinian data protection laws and GDPR principles, as stated in

the tender documents. In order to design the most appropriate and cost-effective architecture, could you kindly clarify whether there are any specific requirements or preferences regarding data hosting location, for example:

A. Whether hosting must be fully within Palestine.

   Answer: By preference hosting is fully within Palestine

B. Whether hybrid models (local + cloud) are acceptable.

   Answer: Depending on the functional completeness of the solution hybrid cloud is acceptable

C. Or whether GDPR-compliant cloud hosting would also be considered acceptable.

   Answer: See answer on previous question B.
   Please refer to section 5.5.2 in the SRS.

4. The specifications document mentions one tender per public contract. But is it possible to apply, e.g. independently for Lot 2 and together with another partner for Lots 1 and 2 combined?

   Answer: Referring to the announced tender and the statement in section 2.7 on page 10, options are not permitted. A single tenderer is only allowed to submit one offer per lot or one combined offer for two lots. Submitting multiple offers or options for the same lot will result in exclusion from the process. This ensures fairness and transparency, as options are explicitly prohibited. Tenderers can form joint ventures with other parties for subcontracting purposes, but each entity can only submit one offer for each lot.

5. As a company based in Belgium, are we considered an international contractor in this case (and are therefore allowed to submit the tender via email)?

   Answer: Yes, please review point (3.4.5 "How to submit tenders?", section C). It clearly outlines the submission process specifically for international tenderers, including Belgium.

6. Is there a template for the financial breakdown?

   Answer: No, tenderers are requested to attach a financial comprehensive breakdown for each lot, detailing the costs for each deliverable, the price must include personnel, software/licenses (if any not covered by open source), development, testing, training, support, and any other applicable costs.

7. Is there a template for the company profile?

   Answer: No.

8. Which of the requirements in the SRS apply to Lot 1 and which ones apply to Lot 2?

Answer: The bidder should review all requirements and relate them to the ToR lots. As for the SRS it is clearly marked what the requirements are including those specific for the AI driven matching component.

9. Are the requirements in the tender indicative, or must they all be met? Does not meeting some of the minimum requirements constitute grounds for exclusion?

    Answer: As stated in the SRS file, the "Shall" requirements are mandatory to be covered in this phase while "should" requirements should be considered for future scalability. Noting that the items categorized with "Shall" are the only items you are asked to cover in the platform.

10. Would our Estonian legal entity be eligible to participate under your procurement policies?

    Answer: Please refer to Section 3.4.7.1 "Exclusion grounds" and 3.4.7.2 "Selection criteria" of the Tender Specifications. If your Estonian legal entity meets the exclusion criteria and fulfils the selection criteria with the documents requested in the 'Selection file', it is eligible to participate.

11. Does your tender process allow for Time & Materials (T&M) contracts, or is it strictly limited to fixed-price engagements?

    Answer: Bidders must complete the Tender Form (5.3 – Tender Form – Prices) by providing a **lumpsum** price for all deliverables outlined in the tender documents for **each lot** they are bidding on. In addition, tenderers are required to attach a **comprehensive financial breakdown for each lot**. This breakdown must detail the costs for each deliverable, including personnel, software/licenses (if not open source), development, testing, training, support, and all other applicable costs.
    Therefore, Time & Materials (T&M) contracts are not permitted. Bidders must provide fixed unit prices for the deliverables outlined in the tender documents.

12. Database Architecture: The TOR specifies the use of a robust relational database (e.g., PostgreSQL, MySQL) for core platform data, with NoSQL permitted only if justified. Could the contracting authority confirm whether a NoSQL-based architecture (e.g., Couchbase) would be acceptable for core platform data, provided that performance, scalability, and data integrity requirements are fully met?

    Answer: We do understand that a NoSQL database might be the better solution when dealing with unstructured data and structured data. Therefore, bidder can propose solutions based on a NOSQL database. If it is fully justified. Refer to section 3.3.2.7 in the ToR.

13. AI Model Requirements: The TOR and SRS refer to "developed and trained AI models." Could the contracting authority clarify whether this requirement applies strictly to custom-developed AI models, or if equivalent functionality—delivered through deterministic or heuristic engines embedded in off-the-shelf platforms—would be considered compliant?

Answer: We prefer a solution that uses the latest AI techniques including embedding, learning from examples, reacting based on interactions, NLP, ... Also, searching and matching engines can be utilised and justified in the matching AI engine in addition NLP features needed.

14. Arabic NLP and Search: The TOR outlines requirements for Arabic NLP, including dialect handling and morphological complexity. Could the contracting authority clarify whether this requirement applies solely to AI-driven parsing and matching, or also to general search functionality? Additionally, would partial support for Arabic—e.g., keyword-based search—be acceptable if it meets usability and performance expectations?

    Answer: We do not consider search specifically as we consider search as a specific way of matching. In addition, Arabic support is required in most of the components (AI Matching Engine, CV Parsing, and Profile Presentation).

15. Bias Detection and Mitigation: The TOR requests bias detection and mitigation throughout the AI lifecycle. Could the contracting authority confirm whether this requirement applies only to systems using machine learning models? If the proposed solution achieves fair and inclusive matching through deterministic logic, would that be considered sufficient?

    Answer: BIAS detection and Mitigation not only applies to AI. BIAS can also appear in deterministic logic. So Bias Detection applies to all ways of matching.

16. CV Parsing Accuracy: The SRS outlines high-accuracy CV parsing, particularly in Arabic. Given the known limitations of current parsing technologies in Arabic, would the contracting authority accept an alternative approach that emphasizes structured profile creation by users, supported by guided workflows, as a more reliable method for ensuring high-quality matching?

    Answer: We have to make it as easy as possible for a jobseeker to provide (minimal) data so that matching job opportunities can be suggested. Even with minimal data e.g. click behaviour or a few words in a CV should already allow for proposing valid job suggestions. Of course: the more is known about an individual the better the matching. However, we want to avoid that a jobseeker first has to go through a series of screens in order to create a profile in order to be able to match. Therefore, should allow for both CV parsing and profile building. The CV parsing component is a core component in the system. Refer to section 3.3.3.5.4 in the ToR and section 3.3.1 in the SRS.

17. Project Timeline Feasibility: The TOR suggests iterative releases within 10–12 weeks. Could the contracting authority confirm whether this timeline applies to custom-developed solutions only, or if it also applies to off-the-shelf platforms that require configuration and localization?

    Answer: The timeline applies for both.

18. Matching Technology: The TOR references vector-based AI matching. Could the contracting authority clarify whether alternative matching approaches—such as rule-based or hybrid models—are acceptable if they achieve the same functional outcomes (e.g., skill-based, education-based matching)?

Answer: Vector-based AI matching does not exclude skill-based or education-based matching. Vector-based AI matching is also the basis for cross-language matching as it does not necessarily need translation from one language to another. We want to avoid rule-based matching is possible. In addition, note that behaviour features have to be added. Refer to section 3.3.1 in the SRS.

19. Collaborative Filtering: FR-87 mentions collaborative filtering for job recommendations. Could the contracting authority confirm whether this is a mandatory requirement, or if it can be proposed as a future enhancement or optional module?

    Answer: As stated in the SRS file, the "Shall" requirements are mandatory to be covered in this phase while "should" requirements should be considered for future scalability. Noting that the items categorized with "Shall" are the only items you are asked to cover in the platform.

20. Schema.org vs. ESCO: FR-56 requires compliance with Schema.org Job Posting standards. Would the contracting authority consider ESCO classification—widely used in European public employment services—as an acceptable alternative or complement?

    Answer: Schema.org offers minimal number of attributes, and if justified ESCO for job classification can be a possibility. However, schema.org should be used for exchange of job offerings with external parties including employers. Please refer to section 3.2.1 in the SRS.

21. Employer Verification: FR-15 outlines automatic employer verification using government databases. Could the contracting authority confirm whether this integration is expected at launch, or if exposing APIs for future integration would be acceptable?

    Answer: Employer verification will be done by using existing MOL API's or if necessary, manually by MOL employees. Bidder should foresee calling the API's and if an employer is not found allow for manual verification. Refer to section 3.4.3 in the SRS.

22. Identity & Credential Verification: FR-106 and FR-107 reference integration with educational and ID systems. Could the contracting authority clarify whether these integrations are expected to be live at go-live, or if they can be phased in post-deployment?

    Answer: As stated in the SRS file, the "Shall" requirements are mandatory to be covered in this phase while "should" requirements should be considered for future scalability. Noting that the items categorized with "Shall" are the only items you are asked to cover in the platform.

23. CMS Functionality: The SRS includes content management features (e.g., news, help content). Could the contracting authority confirm whether a full CMS is required, or if simpler content publishing tools would suffice initially?

Answer: As in FR-161- if simpler content publishing tools would suffice initially, can be considered if justified.

24. Email & SMS Notifications: The SRS requires both immediate and digest email notifications, as well as SMS. Could the contracting authority clarify whether digest and SMS notifications are mandatory at launch, or if they can be proposed as future enhancements?

    Answer: This is a Shall requirement, and it is expected to integrate with already existing SMS portal/engine at MoL. Stated in both SRS (3.6.3) and TOR (3.3.2.3).

25. Job Site Integration: The SRS requires integration with at least five external job sites. Could the contracting authority confirm whether exposing APIs for third-party job boards to integrate with the platform would fulfil this requirement?

    Answer: Yes, it is indicated in the SRS. FR22-36, SRS 3.4.3 Clearly highlighting API Integration have been marked as should.

26. Integration Strategy: Several requirements mention integration with external systems. Could the contracting authority confirm whether providing secure, standards-based APIs is sufficient, or if specific integrations must be demonstrated at the proposal stage?

    Answer: if justified.

27. Containerization: The SRS specifies the use of containerization technologies. Could the contracting authority confirm whether alternative deployment methods—such as scripted and automated deployments—would be acceptable if they ensure consistency across environments?

    Answer: if justified.

28. Database Portability: The SRS requires database portability through abstraction layers. Could the contracting authority clarify whether this is a mandatory requirement, or if database-specific implementations are acceptable provided they meet performance and scalability expectations?

    Answer: if justified, however using standard portable technologies.

29. Browser Compatibility: The SRS states compatibility with all major browsers. Could the contracting authority confirm whether support for Chrome and Firefox alone would be sufficient, or if full compatibility with Safari and Edge is mandatory?

    Answer: Compatibility with all major browsers is mandatory. Check NFR-112.

30. Usage & Matching Metrics: Several requirements mention tracking algorithm performance and system usage patterns. Could the contracting authority clarify whether these are mandatory or optional, and whether basic usage dashboards would be sufficient at launch?

Answer: As stated in the SRS file, the "Shall" requirements are mandatory to be covered in this phase while "should" requirements should be considered for future scalability. Noting that the items categorized with "Shall" are the only items you are asked to cover in the platform.

31. Data Visualization Tools: The SRS mentions integration with data visualization tools. Would the availability of open APIs for integration with third-party analytics platforms meet this requirement?

    Answer: If justified.

32. Could the contracting authority kindly clarify whether an indicative or budget has been allocated for this tender? Understanding the financial framework, particularly in relation to the scope of both lots and the expected five-year pricing for off-the-shelf solution components, would help ensure that our proposal is both compliant and aligned with your expectations. The TOR refers to a 36-month project starting in January 2022 **with a total cost of EUR 5 million**. This project should have been finished by December 2024, and the budget may have been consumed. Can you share the procurement of the software and services (lot 1 + 2) including the one-year warranty.

    Answer: The information provided pertains to the entire YEP project.
    For this specific assignment: The budget details are confidential and cannot be disclosed. We recommend submitting your proposal in accordance with the scope and requirements outlined in the TOR, including your cost breakdown accordingly. Please also refer to section 3.3.4.1 of the TOR and section 2.5 of the RFP regarding the contract duration.

33. Would the contracting authority consider extending the submission deadline for 4 weeks to 17 July 2025, to allow bidders to deliver more tailored and comprehensive proposals? This would also allow for clearer articulation of value-added features, risk mitigation strategies, and implementation planning—ensuring the authority receives proposals that are not only compliant but also strategically robust.

    Answer: To maintain the project schedule, submission deadline extension is not feasible.

34. Can Enable please specify the locations of the contract delivery where on-site presence is required, both during the project as well during subsequent warranty and maintenance and support period.

    Answer: Ramallah, West Bank, Palestine.

35. The tender further refers to a 5-year period. Does this 5 year include project + one year warranty? And where to put the additional years of the 5-year period in the pricing table?

    Answer: The overall project duration is five years. This specific assignment is detailed in section 3.3.4.1 of the TOR and referenced in section 2.5 of the RFP concerning the contract duration.

36. For international tenders, can the hard copies be delivered by hand to the address indicated? If so, will there be someone at reception to provide the supplier with proof of delivery of the tenderer submission?

    Answer: Yes, please review point (3.4.5 "How to submit tenders?", section C). It clearly outlines the submission process specifically for international tenderers.

37. Please confirm our understanding of that:
    - Is Conditional Acceptance achieved at go live?
      Answer: Yes.
    - Final Acceptance is achieved at end of one year warranty term upon go live?
      Answer: Yes.
    - After which milestones commence the said 'thirty days' verification of the contracting party?
      Answer: The thirty-day verification period begins after the provisional acceptance of each service delivery.

38. Tender Specifications "Page 25, section 4.15.2" - This section mentions that the travel and accommodation costs of the managing official during acceptance are to be borne by the service provider. Please clarify why Enable believes it's fair for the service provider to accommodate such costs. If such costs remain, please provide details as to where acceptance tests must take place, how long the managing official intends to stay and other details allowing the service provider to provide a correct estimate of such costs.

    Answer: This cost is not applicable to this RFP.

39. Tender Specifications "Page 25, section 4.15.2" - We believe there is text fragment missing after the sentence "When drawing up his tender, the tenderer shall take into account the following acceptance costs: "...(there is nothing following this sentence)

    Answer: This cost is not applicable to this RFP.

40. The First payment milestone includes completion of DL1, where DL1 includes items like 'regular progress reports', 'meeting minutes...' and 'Final Project Report'. This would imply that the first payment milestone will happen only at the end of the project. We feel this is unintentional. Can you please clarify?

    Answer: Note that an erratum has been made to the payment modalities of this RFP. Attached is the modified RFP with the **updated payment schedule under "4.15.3 Invoicing and payment of services (Art. 66 to 72 – 160)" on page 25.**

41. Pricing table starting from page 29: Please confirm our understanding that lump sum prices have to be provided for each DL in the table, i.e. the table should show 8 prices before being summed up.

    Answer: That is incorrect. The pricing table should only show one lump sum price, representing the total cost for all deliverables within a lot. In addition, tenderers are requested to attach a financial comprehensive breakdown for each

lot, detailing the costs for each deliverable, the price must include personnel, software/licenses (if any not covered by open source), development, testing, training, support, and any other applicable costs.

42. Pricing table starting from page 29: Our delivery will be based on COTS, off-the-shelf software, provided under a perpetual or term/subscription-based license model. Does Enabel expect the vendor offering off the shelf software to provide license pricing on the same table, or separately? The table seems to be designed for services-based pricing, not for delivering off-the-shelf software.

    Answer: Same table.

43. Pricing table starting from page 29: The pricing table allows for a project implementation price breakdown (DL1-DL7) and subsequent one year warranty (DL8). Can you clarify the pricing structure for off shell solution for the intended 5 years?

    Answer: Refer to 3.3.8.2 and 3.4.4.2. The contract will cover only **one year** of support not five years.

44. In reference to the evaluation criteria under "Total Cost of Ownership" and the requirement "the system SHALL be designed to accommodate a 100% annual growth in user base and transaction volume for at least the first three years of operation" Could you please confirm whether the pricing for the off-the-shelf solution should reflect this projected growth (e.g., in terms of licensing and associated maintenance costs), or should the pricing be based on the current user base and transaction volume only?

    Answer: Yes. It should reflect the expected growth. Refer to 5.1.4 in the SRS.

45. The Terms of Reference indicate a project duration of 20–22 weeks plus one year of maintenance services. However, the pricing for Of The Shelf Solution components is requested for a five-year period. Could you please clarify the expected contract duration and whether the five-year pricing refers to optional extensions or a framework agreement?

    Answer: The contract will cover only **one year** of support not five years.

46. It is stated that the core project phases are expected to be completed by 31/12/2025. Given the three-phased award process and the likelihood of extended negotiations, it seems unlikely that the contract will be signed early enough to meet this deadline. Could you kindly confirm whether this deadline is accurate or if it may be a clerical oversight? When do you expect the project to start and the system to go-live?

    Answer: Yes, Refer to section 3.3.4.1 in the ToR.

47. The RFP limits the technical proposal to 15 pages per lot, excluding annexes. Given the scope and detail requirements, would the tender board allow a more extensive proposal to ensure all requirements are addressed comprehensively?

    Answer: The technical proposal is limited to 15 pages per lot.

48. The RFP requests the provision of local support in Palestine, including Arabic language support, specifically for the On the Shelf Systems. Could the contracting authority please clarify whether a physical presence in Palestine is a mandatory requirement, or if remote support and maintenance—delivered by both English and Arabic-speaking personnel and backed by appropriate service-level guarantees—would be considered acceptable?

    Answer: If justified.

49. Annex A document control section mentions that the status of the document is "draft". The vendor wants to make sure that the version of Annex A is most up to date.

    Answer: We confirm that Annex A is the final version.

50. Requirement indicates that External Job Sites should have a profile within the employment platform similar to how employees can register their company profiles to post vacancies. Is that the case? Or do external vacancies need to be gathered in the employment platform via the API integration – how do you then see external job site registration and onboarding?

    Answer: refer to FR-22 for the registration is Shall, however the gathering is marked as SHOULD.

51. Annex A: Page 16 - FR-47 and FR-48 requirements are blank. Was that intended?

    Answer: Yes, FR-47 and FR-48 requirements are blank

52. Annex A: Page 21, FR-119 Does not highlight SHALL or SHOULD requirement. Can a vendor assume it is a SHOULD?

    Answer: It is SHOULD, however not in bold.

53. Annex A: Page 22, Section 3.6.2. Does the in-app notifications section talk about notifications received via the mobile application, which is out of the scope of this phase, or via the platform (web-based)?

    Answer: Via the platform (web-based) application, and yes, mobile application is out of scope in this phase. However, the platform should be mobile-responsive.

54. Annex A: Page 26 All software interfaces shall be documented with detailed specifications, including data formats, protocols, and security requirements. The vendor assumes this should be provided during the project phase, is that correct?

    Answer: Yes.

55. Annex A: Since the proposals should be separated in Lot 1 and Lot 2, how is the Annex A requirements separated for each of the Lots? Currently, there is no clear

separation. How should the vendor respond to Annex A requirements? Should the vendor assume for themselves which requirements are for Lot 1 and which are for Lot 2?

Answer: The bidder should review all requirements and relate them to the ToR lots. As for the SRS it is clearly highlighting functional and none-functional requirements related to both lots.

56. Based on the TOR: "The core project phases are expected to be completed by 31/12/2025 from the contract signing date." Can Enabel let the vendor know which are the core project phases that need to be delivered by 31/12/2025? In addition, which core functionalities of the solution need to be delivered in an initial phase while others can be delivered in subsequent phases not necessarily during the proposed project duration of 20-22 weeks? In other words, are all Annex A functionalities that need to be delivered during the proposed 20–22-week project or only the requirements which are defined as SHALL?

Answer: Everything with Shall is mandatory.

57. Annex A: Page 7 - Annex A states: "The following items are explicitly excluded from this phase of the project". Will these out of the scope items be requested at the following phases of the project and when would that take place?

Answer: To be advertised.

End of Questions