

Request for Proposals (RFP) for

The Provision of an off an off the shelf e-Learning Platform and courseware to the CSIR

RFP No. 3439/31/03/2021

Date of Issue	Thursday, 18 March 2021	
Compulsory Briefing Session and Site Inspection	None	
Enquiries and submission of proposals	Strategic Procurement Unit	E-mail: tender@csir.co.za
Closing Date and Time	Thursday, 01 April 2021 2021 at 16h30 (Late bids will not be accepted)	
CSIR business hours	08h00 – 16h30	

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION A – TECHNICAL INFORMATION	4
1 INTRODUCTION	4
2 BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT	6
3 INVITATION FOR PROPOSAL	6
4 PROPOSAL SPECIFICATION	6
5 SCOPE OF WORK AND TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS	8
6 FUNCTIONAL EVALUATION CRITERIA	9
7 ELIMINATION CRITERIA	10
8 NATIONAL TREASURY CENTRAL SUPPLIER DATABASE REGISTRATION	11
9 PROCEDURE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS	12
10 TENDER PROGRAMME	12
11 SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS	12
12 DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION	13
13 AWARDING OF TENDERS	13
14 EVALUATION PROCESS	13
15 PRICING PROPOSAL	14
16 VALIDITY PERIOD OF PROPOSAL	15
17 APPOINTMENT OF SERVICE PROVIDER	15
18 ENQUIRIES AND CONTACT WITH THE CSIR	15
19 MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION	16
20 COST OF PROPOSAL	16
21 CORRECTNESS OF RESPONSES	16
22 VERIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS	16
23 SUB-CONTRACTING	17
24 ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS	17
25 CSIR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO	18
26 DISCLAIMER	18
DECLARATION BY TENDERER	19

27	ANNEXURE A	20
28	ANNEXURE B RETURNABLE CHECKLIST	21
29	ANNEXURE C REFERENCE FORM	23

SECTION A – TECHNICAL INFORMATION

1 INTRODUCTION

The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is one of the leading scientific research and technology development organisations in Africa. Through collaboration with national and international institutions, CSIR undertakes directed and multidisciplinary research and technological innovation that contributes to the socio-economic development of the country which has a direct impact on the improvement of the quality of life of South Africans.

The CSIR has a staff complement of about 2000 employees, over 60% of which are scientists, engineers and technologists. The organisation's main operations are located in Pretoria while it is represented in other provinces of South Africa, namely Kwa-Zulu Natal, the Western Cape and the Eastern Cape through regional offices.

The CSIR is going through a strategic shift, with the recent unveiling of its new industrial development strategy as it embraces the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). Our vision is to be accelerators of socio-economic prosperity in South Africa through leading innovation. Our mission is to collaboratively innovate and localise technologies while providing knowledge solutions for the inclusive and sustainable advancement of industry and society. The rapid technological changes to the digital economy demands a different set of skills for the CSIR workforce. There is an increased need to be innovative and flexible in order to adapt and lead technology development and transformation in South Africa. The CSIR would therefore like to embrace this technological shift by utilising a digital learning environment to upskill and reskill its workforce.

Given this background, the CSIR has gone through a process to redefine our competencies based on our revised strategic objectives and values. These are grouped into broad categories as summarised below. The organisation requires a workforce that is agile and well-equipped to

respond to the dynamic environment under which we operate. Some of the challenges affecting this environment include:

- Increasing demand to address socio-economic challenges and make impact;
- Globalisation – remaining relevant in the transforming nature of innovation and business;
- Scarcity of high level skills in science, engineering and technology and the management thereof; and
- Financial sustainability in a challenging economic climate.

A concerted, coordinated effort to develop capable workforce within the CSIR is therefore critical for long term sustainability.

CSIR Culture

The CSIR is a mandate-centered, people-oriented organisation, forming an integral part of the National System of Innovation (NSI) – made up of relationships between government departments, state-owned entities, private companies, research institutes, tertiary institutions and NGOs. We regard ourselves as inter-dependent with all other elements of the NSI and we build and value our strong partnerships with other role players in this system in the public and private sector domains. The CSIR has a culture that values people and society, and promotes both innovation and business excellence as well as strong ethical behaviour.

CSIR values (EPIC)

Excellence - We excel at R&D and industrial innovation solutions that address South Africa's challenges.

People-centred – We care about people – our impact through innovation aims to improve lives.

Integrity – We value integrity – in ourselves and in others.

Collaboration – We are keen to learn from one another and collaborate across the organisation and with external partners.

2 BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

The CSIR currently has a need for a comprehensive eLearning platform with courseware that addresses the entire range of skills spanning across different occupational categories and occupational levels within the organisation. The CSIR needs to provide a learning environment where employees have the opportunity to develop new skills as needed, in order to leverage and lead the rapid changes in the technological, scientific and business domains in the country.

A suitable service provider is therefore sought to deliver a relevant, competence-based e-Learning platform for the CSIR. The service provider will be required to understand the organisational context at both micro and macro levels and provide an e-Learning Platform with relevant learning content and courseware. This includes clearly articulated outcomes for each course, from on-boarding of staff members to industry recognised courses.

The successful service provider is expected to understand the current and emerging skills requirements of the organisation, and deliver an eLearning platform with courseware that is cost effective, agile and adaptable to the dynamic business environment in which the CSIR operates.

3 INVITATION FOR PROPOSAL

Proposals are hereby invited from suitable service providers for the provision of an eLearning platform with appropriate courseware to the CSIR.

4 PROPOSAL SPECIFICATION

All proposals are to be submitted in the format specified in this enquiry.

Bidders are to submit responses in the following format prescribed below. Failure to adhere to this may result in disqualification, and the tender may be deemed as non-responsive.

Based on the above background, the CSIR is looking for an eLearning platform with the requisite capability to implement competency-based online learning for the CSIR. The provider should demonstrate a proven track record of providing eLearning platforms as well as company's profile demonstrating capacity to perform the services required.

4.1 Technical Proposal (Part A)

The following must be submitted as part of the technical proposal:

- 4.1.1 Covering letter;
- 4.1.2 Company profile
- 4.1.3 Technical proposal clearly specifying: The technical competencies and expertise to undertake the assignment, demonstrable relevant experience in similar assignments, project plan and deliverables
- 4.1.4 A minimum of five (5) contactable references from institutions of similar size to the CSIR where similar training solutions were provided successfully.
- 4.1.5 A detailed work plan clearly showing the information gathering, planning, design, development, testing, delivery, and handover phases for the platform.
- 4.1.6 The provider will be expected to provide a demonstration, a user manual as well as user and administration training about the platform.

4.2 Financial Proposal (Part B)

The following must be submitted as part of the financial proposal:

- 4.2.1 Covering letter;
- 4.2.2 Proposed cost as per attached Annexure C- BOQ;
- 4.2.3 Pricing should be on official company letterhead;

4.2.4 The pricing must be firm for 120 days and inclusive of all costs to render the required once-off services;

4.2.5 Provide a valid copy of BBBEE certificate or valid sworn affidavit confirming BBBEE status.

5 SCOPE OF WORK AND TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

The CSIR requires reputable institutions with vast knowledge and relevant experience in providing eLearning platforms containing locally and/ or internationally recognised courseware and learning content, to provide a platform that comprises the following:

- Technical (including 4IR courses), business and soft skills to support the upskilling and reskilling of the CSIR workforce.
- The ability for users to sign up and search for courses that are related to their fields and interests and to start learning immediately.
- Provision for multiple digital devices, such as PCs, laptops, smart phones, tablets, etc. to allow learners to learn anytime and anywhere. It will be advantageous if the training material is downloadable and accessible offline.
- Ability to track learners' engagement and progression through the courseware and provision of appropriate recognition mechanisms for course completion. It will be an added advantage if recognition and credentialing are provided via industry standards such as digital badges (micro credentials).
- Provide the functionality for the CSIR to upload custom courseware and custom learning pathways (e.g. the addition of on-boarding materials for new employees). Ensure that courseware is always up-to-date. It will be an added advantage if the platform has a functionality that allows CSIR the ability to create course content on the platform.
- Provide APIs that enable integration into CSIR tools/systems.

- The reporting functionality to enable Workplace Skills Plan (WSP), Annual Training Reports (ATR), B-BBEE and Employment Equity submissions, as well as tracking number of participants with demographic breakdown and costs.

The following learner levels should be included in all courses to create a learning pathway:

- **Introductory level:** courses at this level will accommodate the beginners in different fields of learning.
- **Intermediate level:** courses at this level will accommodate learners who have already attended introduction courses or have already acquired skills and knowledge at beginner's level.
- **Advance level:** courses at this level will accommodate learners who have already attended courses or have already acquired skills and knowledge at intermediate level.

Service providers are required to clearly state the approach they will use towards the provision of the solution in closing the skills gap of the CSIR workforce on a continuous basis, outlining the deliverables, outcomes and impact.

6 FUNCTIONAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

- 6.1** The evaluation of the functional / technical detail of the proposal will be based on the following criteria:

No.	Evaluation Criteria	Weighting (%)
1	Company Experience: Number of years the company has been providing e-Learning platform should not be less than 3 years.	20

2	<p>References (Only relevant references)</p> <p>The service provider must provide evidence that they have successfully developed and implemented e-Learning. The service provider must provide not less than 5 references where similar programmes were designed and successfully deployed.</p> <p>Reference letters with contact details must be provided to substantiate such claims. Reference letters must be completed on the attached form (Appendix C). <u>Annexure C MUST</u> be completed for each reference provided.</p>	20
3	<p>Methodology and Approach</p> <p>The service provider must demonstrate their understanding of the key requirements and expectations of CSIR as outlined in this document and a briefing session that will be arranged. A detailed approach, methodology and tools on how they will assist CSIR in achieving the objectives of this request and how their solution meets the technical specifications outlined, must be provided. This includes an outline of the project deliverables, indicating key milestones and turnaround times.</p>	60
	TOTAL	100

6.2 Proposals with functionality / technical points of less than the pre-determined minimum overall percentage of 70% and less than 60% on any of the individual criteria will be eliminated from further evaluation.

6.3 Refer to Annexure A for the scoring sheet that will be used to evaluate functionality.

7 ELIMINATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be eliminated under the following conditions:

- Submission after the deadline;
- Proposals submitted at incorrect location.

8 PRICING SCHEDULE

No.	Deliverable / Item Description	Unit of Measure	Quantity	Unit Price / Rate (Excl. VAT)	Price (Excl. VAT)
The Provision of an e-Learning Platform and courseware to the CSIR					
1	Full service as outlined in technical specifications for the provision of An e-Learning Platform and Courseware to the CSIR				
	<i>NB: Pricing must be inclusive of all costs required to deliver the required goods and/or services to the CSIR</i>				
				Sub-total	
				VAT	
				Total	

9 NATIONAL TREASURY CENTRAL SUPPLIER DATABASE REGISTRATION

Before any negotiations will start with the winning bidder it will be required from the winning bidder to:

- be registered on National Treasury's Central Supplier Database (CSD). Registrations can be completed online at: www.csd.gov.za;
- provide the CSIR of their CSD registration number; and
- provide the CSIR with a certified copy of their B-BBEE certificate. If no certificate can be provided, no points will be scored during the evaluation process. (RSA suppliers only).

SECTION B – TERMS AND CONDITIONS

10 PROCEDURE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

10.1 All proposals must be submitted electronically to tender@csir.co.za.

10.2 Respondents must use the RFP number as the subject reference number when submitting their bids.

10.3 The e-mail and file sizes should not exceed a total of 30 MB per e-mail.

10.4 The naming/labeling syntax of files or documents must be short and simple (e.g., Product Catalogues).

10.5 All documents submitted electronically via e-mail must be clear and visible.

10.6 All proposals, documents, and late submissions after the due date and time will not be evaluated.

NB: NO HARD COPIES OR PHYSICAL SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED

11 TENDER PROGRAMME

The tender program, as currently envisaged, incorporates the following key dates:

- Issue of tender documents: 18 March 2021
- Last date for submission of queries: 30 March 2021
- Closing / submission Date: 01 April 2021

12 SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

12.1 All proposals are to be submitted electronically to tender@csir.co.za. No late proposals will be accepted.

12.2 Responses submitted by companies must be signed by a person or persons duly authorised.

12.3 All e-mailed proposal submissions are to be clearly subject-referenced with the RFP number. Proposals must consist of two parts, each of which must be sent in two separate e-mails with the following subject:

PART 1: Technical Proposal RFP No.: 3439/01/04/2021

PART 2: Pricing Proposal RFP No.: 3439/01/04/2021

12.4 The CSIR will award the contract to qualified tenderer(s)' whose proposal is determined to be the most advantageous to the CSIR, taking into consideration the technical (functional) solution, price, and B-BBEE.

12.5 Proposals submitted must be in the following file formats:

- PDF

13 DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

Proposals shall be submitted at the e-mail address mentioned above no later than the closing date of **Thursday, 01 April 2021**, during CSIR's business hours. The CSIR business hours are between 08h00 and 16h30.

Where a proposal is not received by the CSIR by the due date and stipulated e-mail address, it will be regarded as a late submission. Late submissions will not be considered.

14 AWARDING OF TENDERS

14.1 Awarding of tenders will be published on the National Treasury e-tender portal or the CSIR's tender website. No regret letters will be sent out.

15 EVALUATION PROCESS

15.1 Evaluation of proposals

An evaluation team will evaluate all proposals for functionality, price, and B-BBEE. Based on the results of the evaluation process and upon successful negotiations, the CSIR will approve the awarding of the contract to successful tenderer/s.

A two-phase evaluation process will be followed:

15.1.1 The first phase includes the evaluation of elimination, and functionality criteria.

15.1.2 The second phase includes the evaluation of price and B-BBEE status.

Pricing Proposals will only be considered after the functionality phase has been adjudicated and accepted. Only proposals that achieved the specified minimum qualification scores for functionality will be evaluated further using the preference points system.

15.2 Preference points system

The 80/20 preference point system will be used where 80 points will be dedicated to pricing and 20 points to B-BBEE status. If all tenders received are more than R50m, the proposal will be cancelled and re-issued.

16 PRICING PROPOSAL

- 16.1** Pricing proposal must be cross-referenced to the sections in the Technical Proposal. Any options offered must be clearly labelled. Separate pricing must be provided for each option offered to ensure that pricing comparisons are clear and unambiguous.
- 16.2** Price needs to be provided in South African Rand (excl. VAT), with details on price elements that are subject to escalation and exchange rate fluctuations indicated.
- 16.3** Price should include additional cost elements such as freight, insurance until acceptance, duty where applicable.
- 16.4** Only firm prices* will be accepted during the tender validity period. Non-firm prices** (including prices subject to rates of exchange variations) will not be considered.
- 16.5** Bidders must quote as per the Bill of Quantities (Annexure C).

**Firm price is the price that is only subject to adjustments in accordance with the actual increase or decrease resulting from the change, imposition, or abolition of customs or excise duty and any other duty, levy, or tax which, in terms of a law or regulation is binding on the*

contractor and demonstrably has an influence on the price of any supplies, or the rendering costs of any service, for the execution of the contract;

***Non-firm price is all prices other than “firm” prices.*

16.6 Payment will be according to the CSIR Payment Terms and Conditions.

17 VALIDITY PERIOD OF PROPOSAL

Each **proposal** shall be valid for a minimum period of three (3) months calculated from the closing date.

18 APPOINTMENT OF SERVICE PROVIDER

18.1 The contract will be awarded to the tenderer who scores the highest total number of points during the evaluation process, except where the law permits otherwise.

18.2 Appointment as a successful service provider shall be subject to the parties agreeing to mutually acceptable contractual terms and conditions. In the event of the parties failing to reach such agreement, CSIR reserves the right to appoint an alternative supplier.

18.3 Awarding of contracts will be announced on the National Treasury website, and no regret letters will be sent to unsuccessful bidders.

19 ENQUIRIES AND CONTACT WITH THE CSIR

Any enquiry regarding this RFP shall be submitted in writing to CSIR at tender@csir.co.za with **RFP No: 3439/01/04/2021 – “The Provision of an off the shelf e-Learning Platform and courseware to the CSIR”** subject.

Any other contact with CSIR personnel involved in this tender is not permitted during the RFP process other than as required through existing service arrangements or as requested by the CSIR as part of the RFP process.

20 MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION

All documentation submitted in response to this RFP must be in English.

21 COST OF PROPOSAL

Tenderers are expected to fully acquaint themselves with the conditions, requirements, and specifications of this RFP before submitting proposals. Each bidder assumes all risks for resource commitment and expenses, direct or indirect, of proposal preparation and participation throughout the RFP process. The CSIR is not responsible directly or indirectly for any costs incurred by tenderers.

22 CORRECTNESS OF RESPONSES

- 22.1** The tenderer must confirm satisfaction regarding the correctness and validity of their proposal and that all prices and rates quoted cover all the work/items specified in the RFP. The prices and rates quoted must cover all obligations under any resulting contract.
- 22.2** The tenderer accepts that any mistakes regarding prices and calculations will be at their own risk.

23 VERIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS

- 23.1** Tenderers should check the numbers of the pages to satisfy themselves that none are missing or duplicated. The CSIR will accept no liability concerning anything arising from the fact that pages are missing or duplicated.
- 23.2** Only one electronic copy of the proposal (Technical and Financial) must be submitted via e-mail to tender@csir.co.za. If the bidder sends more than one proposal, the first submission shall take precedence should it not have been recalled/withdrawn in writing by the bidder.

Pricing schedule and B-BBEE credentials should be submitted with the proposal, but as a separate e-mail and no such information should be available in the technical proposal.

24 SUB-CONTRACTING

- 24.1** A tenderer will not be awarded points for B-BBEE status level if it is indicated in the tender documents that such a tenderer intends sub-contracting more than **25%** of the value of the contract to any other enterprise that does not qualify for at least the points that such a tenderer qualifies for, unless the intended sub-contractor is an exempted micro enterprise that has the capability and ability to execute the sub-contract.
- 24.2** A tenderer awarded a contract may not sub-contract more than **25%** of the value of the contract to any other enterprise that does not have an equal or higher B-BBEE status level than the person concerned, unless the contract is sub-contracted to an exempted micro enterprise that has the capability and ability to execute the sub-contract.

25 ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- 25.1** A tenderer shall not assume that information and/or documents supplied to CSIR, at any time prior to this request, are still available to CSIR, and shall consequently not make any reference to such information document in its response to this request.
- 25.2** Copies of any affiliations, memberships and/or accreditations that support your submission must be included in the tender.
- 25.3** In case of proposal from a joint venture, the following must be submitted together with the proposal:
- Joint venture Agreement including split of work signed by both parties;
 - The original or certified copy of the B-BBEE certificate of the joint venture;

25.4 An omission to disclose material information, a factual inaccuracy, and/or a misrepresentation of fact may result in the disqualification of a tender, or cancellation of any subsequent contract.

25.5 Failure to comply with any of the terms and conditions as set out in this document will invalidate the proposal.

26 CSIR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO

26.1 Extend the closing date;

26.2 Verify any information contained in a proposal;

26.3 Request documentary proof regarding any tendering issue;

26.4 Give preference to locally manufactured goods;

26.5 Appoint one or more service providers, separately or jointly (whether or not they submitted a joint proposal);

26.6 Award this RFP as a whole or in part;

26.7 Cancel or withdraw this RFP as a whole or in part.

27 DISCLAIMER

This RFP is a request for proposals only and not an offer document. Answers to this RFP must not be construed as acceptance of an offer or imply the existence of a contract between the parties. By submission of its proposal, bidders shall be deemed to have satisfied themselves with and to have accepted all Terms & Conditions of this RFP. The CSIR makes no representation, warranty, assurance, guarantee or endorsements to bidder concerning the RFP, whether with regard to its accuracy, completeness or otherwise and the CSIR shall have no liability towards the bidder or any other party in connection therewith.

DECLARATION BY TENDERER

Only tenderers who completed the declaration below will be considered for evaluation.

RFP No: 3439/01/04/2021

I hereby undertake to render services described in the attached tendering documents to CSIR in accordance with the requirements and task directives / proposal specifications stipulated in **RFP No. 3439/01/04/2021** at the price/s quoted. My offer/s remains binding upon me and open for acceptance by the CSIR during the validity period indicated and calculated from the closing date of the proposal.

I confirm that I am satisfied with regards to the correctness and validity of my proposal; that the price(s) and rate(s) quoted cover all the services specified in the proposal documents; that the price(s) and rate(s) cover all my obligations and I accept that any mistakes regarding price(s) and rate(s) and calculations will be at my own risk.

I accept full responsibility for the proper execution and fulfilment of all obligations and conditions devolving on me under this proposal as the principal liable for the due fulfilment of this proposal.

I declare that I have no participation in any collusive practices with any tenderer or any other person regarding this or any other proposal.

I accept that the CSIR may take appropriate actions, deemed necessary, should there be a conflict of interest or if this declaration proves to be false.

I confirm that I am duly authorised to sign this proposal.

NAME (PRINT)

CAPACITY

SIGNATURE

NAME OF FIRM

DATE

WITNESSES

1

2

DATE:

28 ANNEXURE A

No.	Criteria	Proof required	Points allocation	Weight
1	Company Experience: Number of years the company has been providing training in e-learning-should not be less than 3 years.	Company Profile explicitly indicating the number of years the company has been providing e-learning platforms	< 3 years – 0 points 3 – 5 years – 6 points >5 years – 10 points	20%
2	References (Only relevant references) The service provider must provide evidence that they have successfully provided e-learning.	Reference Letters and Completed Reference Form	< 5 references – 0 points 5 - 6 references – 6 points >6 references – 10 points	20%
4	Methodology and Approach The service provider must demonstrate their understanding of the key requirements and expectations of CSIR as outlined in this document. A detailed approach, methodology and tools on how they will assist CSIR in achieving the objectives of this request, must be provided, including an outline of the project deliverables, indicating key milestones and turnaround times.	Detailed Methodology, Approach and Gantt Chart/time line	Non-submission or poor methodology and approach – 0 points Approach is specifically tailored to suit the requirements and will meet the needs. The project plan does meet requirements. The project plan is specifically tailored to meet CSIR requirements – 6 points The approach is innovative and well-articulated, the timeframes and project plan are suited to the project needs. The work plan is in sync with the project scope and deliverables – 10 points	60%
Total				100

29 ANNEXURE B RETURNABLE CHECKLIST

NOTE: The bidder is required to complete each and every schedule listed below to the best of his ability as the evaluation of tenders and the eventual contract will be based on the information provided by the bidder. Failure of a bidder to complete the schedules and forms to the satisfaction of the CSIR will inevitably prejudice the tender and may lead to rejection on the grounds that the tender is not responsive.

The bidder must complete the following returnable documents:

RETURNABLE DOCUMENTS –		
PART A: TECHNICAL RETURNABLES		
ONE ELECTRONIC COPY		
Description	Included	
	Yes	No
Proof of trainer's relevant qualifications, in providing e-Learning Platform – (Provide certificate)		
Company Experience – (Company Profile) Number of years the company has been providing e-learning platform. The company must not have less than 3 years in providing e-learning platform in medium to large organisations.		
Company Experience – (Client reference letters) The service provider must provide evidence that they have successfully provided e-learning platform . The bidder must provide not less than five references where similar platform was conducted. Reference letters must be provided to substantiate such claims. Reference letters must be completed on the attached form (Appendix C). Annexure C MUST be completed for each reference provided.		
Team member/s Experience – (Comprehensive trainer CV) The team members that will be involved in this project) must not have less than 3 years' experience in providing e-learning platform. A comprehensive CV must be provided indicating when the e-learning platform was offered, as well as the organisation(s) where such platform was offered.		
Methodology and Approach including Work plan/timelines – (Detailed Methodology, Approach and Gantt Chart) The service provider must explain their understanding of the objectives of the assignment, approach to the assignment and the methodology for carrying out the assignment. The main activities of the assignment, their		

content and duration, phasing and interrelations, milestones, and delivery dates of the reports. The proposed work plan should be consistent with the approach and methodology.		
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PART B: PRICING PROPOSAL		
ONE ELECTRONIC COPY		
32	Pricing Proposal	
33	B-BBEE Certificate	
34	Completed SBD1 Form	

Any other relevant document may be submitted, to substantiate the bidder's proposal.

30 ANNEXURE C REFERENCE FORM

TO BE COMPLETED FOR EACH REFERENCE SUBMITTED (FORM TO BE COMPLETED BY REFERENCE AND NOT BIDDER)

It is critical for the referee to complete the form fully. CSIR will not give scores for incomplete forms

Referee Company legal Name:

Bid Description (reference provided for):

Describe the service/work done:

.....

.....

Project Start Date: **Project End Date:**

Contract Amount:

Rate Service Provider (Put a mark to the relevant score)

Indicator	Excellent	Very good	Good	Poor	Unacceptable
Score	5	4	3	2	1

Would you use the service provider again: Yes / No

Referee Contact Person:

Referee Designation:

Referee Contact number:

Referee Email:

I hereby declare that to the best of my knowledge, information completed above is true and correct.

Bidder's referee signature:

Date: