

REPLY TO PRE-BID QUERIES (RFP:CIAD:115/1 Dated 03-01-2023)

S No	Query	Reply
1.	Whether we can apply only for one region or more than one in each of the following Groups either I or II. Do we can apply for all the regions or any specific region?	One firm can apply for any one of the two Groups i.e Lucknow Zone Group I (Covering -6- Regions) or Lucknow Zone Group II (covering -8- Regions & ARMB Branch, Allahabad) subject to fulfilling eligibility criteria (pl. Refer Annexure 3- Eligibility Criteria). Please refer Annexure 13, Page no. 75 & 76 of RFP for details of Branches / Other units in Group.
2.	We would like to know that the exemption from deposit of EMD has been provided to MSME bidder is this Exemption also applicable to deposit application amount because its a huge amount fixed by the Bank and for any MSME its not possible to deposit such kind of non-refundable amount.	It is clarified that there is no exemption of Application Fees. (Refer Key information on the RFP Response Submission & Clause 2.1.1 - Application Money). Application Money of Rs 20,000/- which is required to be submitted with RFP response, which is non-refundable.
3.	<p>It is noted that BOB has once again issued RFP for the Concurrent Audit Assignment of BOB for Lucknow Zone. It is also noted that Technical Proposal Evaluation Criteria has been revised / modified. Our observations on the same is as under :-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presence of HO and Branches - Now with the split of Zone into two, in our view, none of the firm will secure full 10 marks. Instead thereof, requirement of HO / Branch Office should only be made mandatory. 2. Establishment of Firm - Firms above 15 years above, will be given 6 points, be it 20 years, 25 years , 30 years or more. In our view, older firms should be given more weightage. 3. Experience of Concurrent Audits in the respective zone / area :- Restricting experience into the area / zone will ingore firms having national presence. Existing Concurrent Audit Assignments and experiences in last five years should be seen in totality, irrespective of area / region. 4. Experience of Statutory Bank Branch Audit :- Most of the big firms have their offices in Mumbai / Delhi or bigger cities, where cooling period is compulsory. Local firms may not face the cooling period stipulation but may be assigned Rural / small Branches, not required for Concurrent Audit. Evaluation with this, may not be appropriate. 5. It is also observed that no criteria for evaluation is basd on the turnover / professional receipts of the firm in last 3 years. Higher Turnover reflects strength and capabilities of the firm to take the large assignments. In this particular case, minimum average turnover of 2.00 Crs in last 3 years should be stipulated for graded points may be assigned. 	Technical Evaluation Criteria under RFP is approved by committee of Executives after due deliberation. We express our inability for any modification under Technical evaluation criteria. However, CA firm to highlight experience and expertise of domain area of Key personnel & Team Leader in their presentation before Evaluation committee to exhibit strength of their Firm.

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4.	We understand, this assignment was awarded to M/s Ramesh C Agarwal & Co, Allahabad, we shall be obliged if the reasons for their discontinuation / refusal / termination is shared with us.	Under last RFP, M/s Ramesh C. Agrawal & Co. was selected for carrying out Concurrent Audit of Branches / other units in Zone. However, Firm had not commenced concurrent audit of identified branches and backed out from the engagement due to their internal issue.
5.	we observe that an Application Fee of Rs. 20,000/- is being asked even though we are applying for this tender for the Second Time within a period of Five Months. In my opinion, the Bank should not charge this kind of Application Fee from the same applicant who has already paid you for the same RFP recently. Only those who are applying for the First Time should pay the Application Fee.	It is clarified that there is no exemption of Application Fees. (Refer Key information on the RFP Response Submission & Clause 2.1.1 - Application Money). Application Money of Rs 20,000/- is required to be submitted with RFP response, which is non-refundable.
6.	Further, please also note that there is no Turnover Limit mentioned for the Applicants. If you are really concerned about quality of work, you should select CA Firms which have minimum average Turnover of 3 Crores in the last THREE YEARS for handling this kind of assignment. Moreover, kindly consider the strength of a Firm based on overall assignments in hand across India, number of paid CA employees on roll and total number employees of the Firm. Unless you prescribe certain minimum standards, it will always be difficult to shortlist right entity who can deliver quality services on the ground.	Technical Evaluation Criteria under RFP is approved by committee of Executives after due deliberation. We express our inability for any modification under Technical evaluation criteria.
7.	The Chartered Accountants Act, 1949 mandates communication with previous auditors. Kindly inform us name, address and mobile numbers of the previous auditor.	Required details of previous Auditor shall be informed to successful bidder under RFP.
8.	Is power of attorney required as per annexure 2 (Letter of authorization to bid) is to be submitted on stamp paper or it should be submitted only on the letter head?	When Bid document is submitted by any Authorized Signatory of Firm as per constitution and bye laws of Firm, The letter of Authorization to bid along with Power of Attorney is not required. Otherwise, letter of authorization of Bid and POA (Stamp Duty paid & Notarized / Registered) by authorized signatory is required to be submitted.
9.	It is most humbly submitted that Concurrent Audit is mandated by the RBI which requires independence of	Concurrent Audit framework of Bank provide full independence to Concurrent Auditor.

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	auditors which cannot be performed as per RBI, ICAI, SEBI and other regulatory Guidelines as per information reaching this prospective aspirant from a Category I CA Firm with Head Office is Varanasi.	Query is not clear.
10.	Our Firm have deposited tender Fees earlier in connection with earlier tender of Lucknow Zone, covering 56 Branches (RFP: CIAD: 114/3 dated 20th August 2022). Will the same will be eligible for set off in this retendering process. Also Tendering Fees has been kept intact by the bank, despite the fact, that same zone has been bifurcated into 2 Groups(Group-1 & 2)	It is clarified that there is no exemption of Application Fees. (Refer Key information on the RFP Response Submission & Clause 2.1.1 - Application Money). Application Money of Rs 20,000/- which is non-refundable is required to be submitted with RFP response.
11.	Can Single Firm can file tender for both groups of Lucknow Zone and can the both groups assignment can be awarded to Single Firm	One firm can apply for only one of the two Groups i.e Lucknow Zone Group I (Covering -6- Regions) or Lucknow Zone Group II (covering -8- Regions & ARMB Branch, Allahabad) subject to fulfilling eligibility criteria. (Pl. Refer Annexure 3 – Eligibility Criteria)
12.	Letter of Authorization to Bid as per Annexure 2 is required or not, if Bid Documents are signed by Partner of the Firm.	Letter of Authorization of Bid as per Annexure 2 is not required in case Bid Document is submitted by authorized signatory of firm as per constitution and bye laws of firm.
13.	Do, we have to Fill Nil/Keep the column Blank in the Annexure # 16 on page # 79 of RFP	Annexure 16 - with required details i.e firms name, registered office and other relevant details is required to be submitted with RFP Response. Please strike off whichever is not applicable.
14.	What is the cut-off date for last Five Years' Experience of Banks wrt Concurrent Audit within geographical area of Zone. And what is the exact meaning of Zone. We are applying for Lucknow Zone(Group-1), then audit under whole UP State will be considered or not	Engagement from 01-04-2017 shall be considered for Past experience of Concurrent Audit, & Forensic audit. Please refer to Page no. 24 for Geographical jurisdiction - Districts covered for each Group.
15.	What is the Cut-off date for last Five Years' Experience of Banks wrt Statutory Branch Audit? Will Central Statutory Audit be also counted in Statutory Branch Audit?	Statutory Audit for F.Y 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 & 2021-22 shall be considered for Technical Evaluation. Central statutory Auditor also carry out Branch Audit of top Branches and may be considered for marks for SBA Engagement on production of such allotment letter with name of Branches.
16.	Will Concurrent Audit of RBI, Regional Office will be considered for concurrent audit purpose. Relevant Extract of Reference page # 23 of Tender is reproduced below:	For the purpose of Technical evaluation, Schedule Commercial bank excluding RRB, Co-Operative Bank & Small Finance Bank shall be considered only for experience of Concurrent Audit. As such, experience of Concurrent Audit of RBI, Regional office will not be considered for Technical Evaluation under Sr. no. 2.1 of Technical Evaluation .

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17.	Can 2 Firms can form Joint Venture to undertake the assignment. What is the maximum no. of firms, that can form the Joint Venture.	Please refer annexure - 3, page No. 45 of RFP for Eligibility criteria. -2- or more firms under joint venture arrangement are not eligible to participate under RFP.
18.	Weightage will be given to which firm. Firm applying solo or firm applying in Joint Ventures. In Case, Marks Obtained can be assumed be same.	Please refer annexure - 3, page No. 45 of RFP for Eligibility criteria. -2- or more firms under joint venture arrangement are not eligible to participate under RFP.
19.	Is it possible, that we begin audit of 90% + of units from 1st March and remaining[2-3 Units] after 15-20 Days later, as these 2-3 Units are located at Rural Areas and we have to search for suitable staff there.	It is expected from Selected firm to commence the Audit of all Branches wef. 01-03-2023 , however, 5-10 days' time may be allowed for commencement of some Branches on case to case basis subject to coverage of transactions and other activities from 01-03-2023 as per scope to be completed by firm after commencement of audit.
20.	Will Bank Guest House be made available to Chartered Accountants Visiting Far Places from office/HO, in case of Night Stay.	Please note that no lodging and boarding facility shall be provided by bank.
21.	Can CA visit to Very Far Areas from Office like in our case: XXXX, XXXXX Branches can be conducted bi-weekly instead of weekly visit.	CA has to visit the Branches on weekly basis. (Please refer Annexure – 7)
22.	We have HO and 1 Branch Office in Kanpur and 1 Branch office in Lucknow and 1 Branch Office in Noida. How many marks for the same will be allotted?	Please refer to Para 4.3 - Technical proposal Evaluation criteria, point no. 1.1 of RFP.
23.	We have carried out concurrent audit of 1 branch of BOI for 3 Years, but we have appointment letter for 1 year only in our possession. We have Bills, Monthly Report in our possession for all the 3 Years. We will try to collect mail communication/Appointment Letter from Zonal Office of the bank for rest of 2 Yrs, but the same can take time. Will Bank allot us marks on that basis. Also, we have contacted Bank Officials and they are saying that due to Covid Disruptions, Higher Authorities have forwarded a Excel Sheet containing for all the branches Concurrent Auditors and no separate appointment letter or mail has been done to CA's Firms and the bank can not share that mail, as that have data of other firms also. Pls. advice.	Please refer to Para 4.3 - Technical proposal Evaluation criteria, point no. 2.1 of RFP for technical marks for experience of Concurrent Audit, subject to providing engagement letter / satisfactory proof.