

TERMS OF REFERENCE:

**Request for Proposal for Appointment of a
Service Provider to Provide Travel
Management Services to South African Cities
Network (SACN) For a period of 12 months.**

ISSUED DATE: 13 December 2023

CLOSING DATE AND TIME: 26 January 2024 at 11:00 PM.

BID VALIDITY PERIOD: 16 DAYS

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1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

The South African Cities Network (SACN) was established in 2002 by the Minister for Provincial and Local Government, in collaboration with the mayors of South Africa's largest cities and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), as an independent Section 21 company with the mandate to:

- Promote good governance and management in South African cities;
- Analyse strategic challenges facing South African cities, particularly in the context of global economic integration and national development challenges;
- Collect, collate, analyses, assess, disseminate and apply the experience of large city government in a South African context; and
- Promote shared-learning partnerships between different spheres of Government to support the management of South African cities.

2. PURPOSE OF THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

- 2.1. The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit proposals from potential bidder(s) for the provision of travel management services to the South African Cities Network (SACN).
- 2.2. This RFP document details and incorporates, as far as possible, the tasks and responsibilities of the potential bidder required by the South African Cities Network (SACN) for the provision of travel management services.
- 2.3. This RFP does not constitute an offer to do business with the South African Cities Network (SACN) but merely serves as an invitation to the bidder(s) to facilitate a requirements-based decision process.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1. **Accommodation-** means the rental of lodging facilities while away from one's place of abode, but on authorised official duty.
- 3.2. **After--hours service-** refers to an enquiry or travel request that is actioned after normal working hours.
- 3.3. **Air Travel-** means travel by airline on authorized official business.
Authorising Official- means the employee who has been delegated to authorize travel in respect of travel requests and expenses.
- 3.4. **Car Rental** means the rental of a vehicle for a short period of time by a Traveller for official purposes.
- 3.5. **Domestic travel** means travel within the borders of the Republic of South Africa.
- 3.6. **Emergency service** means the booking of travel when unforeseen circumstances necessitate an unplanned trip or a diversion from original planned trip.
- 3.7. **International travel** refers to travel outside the borders of the Republic of South Africa.

- 3.8. **Management Fee** is the fixed negotiated fee payable to the Travel Management Company (TMC) in monthly installments for the delivery of travel management services, excluding any indirect service fee not included in the management fee structure (visa, refund, frequent flyer tickets etc).
- 3.9. **Service Level Agreement (SLA)** is a contract between the TMC and SACN that defines the level of service expected from the TMC.
- 3.10. **Shuttle Service** means the service offered to transfer a Traveller from one point to another, for example from place of work to the airport.
- 3.11. **Transaction Fee** means the fixed negotiated fee charged for each specific service type e.g. international air ticket, charged per type per transaction per traveller.
- 3.12. **Traveller** refers to an SACN official, consultant or contractor travelling on official business on behalf of SACN.
- 3.13. **Travel Management Company or TMC** refers to the Company contracted to provide travel management services (Travel Agents).
- 3.14. **Travel Voucher** means a document issued by the Travel Management Company to confirm the reservation and/or payment of specific travel arrangements.

4. LATE BID

- 4.1. Bids received after the closing date and time, at the email indicated in the bid documents, will not be accepted for consideration and where practicable.

5. SUPPLIER DUE DILIGENCE

- 5.1. The SACN reserves the right to conduct supplier due diligence prior to the final award or at any time during the contract period. This may include site visits.

6. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

- 6.1. Proposals must be submitted via email on or before the closing date and time.
- 6.2. Proposals will only be considered if received by the SACN before the closing date and time.
- 6.3. The bidder(s) are required to submit Proposals and the electronic version of the bid document. The electronic file must be named properly for ease of reference during the evaluation process.

7. SCOPE OF WORK

- 7.1. Background

The SACN currently uses an external travel management company to manage the travel requisition and travel expense processes within the travel management lifecycle. The travel requisition process is currently an outsourced automated process. After approval by management, the travel requisition is submitted by the SACN travel coordinator via email and telephone to the external company for bookings and confirmation. The SACN primary objective in issuing this RFP is to enter into agreement with a successful bidder(s) who will achieve the following:

- a) Provide the SACN with travel management services that are consistent and reliable and will maintain a high level of traveller satisfaction in line with the service levels;
- b) Achieve significant cost savings for the SACN without any degradation in the services;
- c) Appropriately contain the SACN risk and traveller risk.

7.2. Travel Services

The current SACN travel services include air travel, accommodation, car hire, shuttles, transfers, conference or venue hire etc. The table below details the travel services as follows:

Service Category

- Air travel – Domestic
- Accommodation – Domestic
- Car Rental – Domestic
- Shuttle Services – Domestic
- Conferencing
- After Hours and Emergency Services
- Value Added Services
- Air Travel - Regional & International
- Accommodation - Regional & International
- Car Rental - Regional & International
- Transfers - Regional & International
- Insurance

7.3. Service Requirements

7.3.1. General

7.3.1.1. The successful bidder will be required to provide travel management services. Deliverables under this section include without limitation, the following:

- a) The travel services will be provided to all Travellers travelling on behalf of the SACN. This will include employees and contractors, consultants, and clients where the agreement is that the SACN is responsible for the arrangement and cost of travel.
- b) Familiarisation with current SACN travel business processes.
- c) Familiarisation with current travel suppliers and negotiated agreements that are in place between the SACN and third parties.
- d) Familiarisation with current SACN Travel Policy and implementations of controls to ensure compliance.
- e) Penalties incurred as a result of the inefficiency or fault of a travel consultant will be for the TMC's account, subject to the outcome of a formal dispute process.
- f) Provide a facility for the SACN to update their travellers' profiles.
- g) Assist in managing the third-party service providers by addressing service failures and complaints against these service providers.
- h) Consolidate all invoices from travel suppliers.
- i) Provide a detailed transition plan for implementing the service without service interruptions and engage with the incumbent service provider to ensure a smooth transition.
- j) Provide the testimonials/reference letters from at least three (3) contactable existing/recent clients.

7.4. Reservations

7.4.1. The Travel Management Company will:

- a) Always endeavour to make the most cost-effective travel arrangements.
- b) Apprise themselves of all travel requirements for destinations to which travellers will be travelling and advise the Traveller of alternative plans that are more cost-effective and more convenient where necessary.
- c) Obtain a minimum of three (3) price comparisons from all airlines, for all travel requests where the routing or destination permits.
- d) Book the negotiated discounted fares and rates where possible.
- e) Must keep abreast of carrier schedule changes as well as all other alterations and new conditions affecting travel and make appropriate adjustments for any changes in flight schedules prior to or

during the traveller's official trip. When necessary, e-tickets and billing shall be modified and reissued to reflect these changes.

- f) Book parking facilities at the airports where required for the duration of the travel.
- g) Respond timely and process all queries, requests, changes and cancellations timeously and accurately.
- h) Must be able to facilitate group bookings (e.g. for meetings, conferences, events, etc.)
- i) Must issue all necessary travel documents, itineraries and vouchers timeously to traveller(s) prior to departure dates.
- j) Advise the Traveller of all visa and inoculation requirements well in advance.
- k) Assist with the arrangement of foreign currency and the issuing of travel insurance for international trips where required.
- l) Facilitate any reservations that are not bookable on the Global Distribution System (GDS).
- m) Facilitate the bookings that are generated through their own or third party Online Booking Tool (OBT) where it can be implemented.
- n) Note that, unless otherwise stated, all cases include domestic, regional and international travel bookings.
- o) Visa applications will not be the responsibility of the TMC; however the relevant information must be supplied to the traveller(s) where visas will be required.
- p) Negotiated airline fares, accommodation establishment rates, car rental rates, etc, that are negotiated directly or by the SACN are non-commissionable, where commissions are earned for the SACN, bookings on all these commissions should be returned to the SACN on a monthly basis.

7.5. Air Travel

- a) The TMC must be able to book full-service carriers as well as low-cost carriers.
- b) The TMC will book the lowest airfares possible for domestic travel.
- c) For international flights, the airline which provides the most cost-effective and practical routings may be used.
- d) The TMC should obtain three or more price comparisons where applicable to present the most cost-effective and practical routing to the Traveller.
- e) The airline ticket should include the applicable airline agreement number as well as the individual loyalty program number of the Traveller (if applicable).
- f) Airline tickets must be delivered electronically to the traveller(s) promptly after booking before the departure times.
- g) The TMC will also assist with the booking of charters for VIPs utilizing the existing transversal term contract where applicable as well as the sourcing of alternative service providers for other charter requirements.
- h) The TMC will be responsible for the tracking and management of unused e-tickets as per agreement with the SACN.
- i) Submission of proof or evidence of discounts on published fares

7.6. Accommodation and Conferencing

- a) The TMC will obtain price comparisons within the maximum allowable rate matrix as per the cost containment instruction of the SACN.
- b) The TMC will obtain three price comparisons from accommodation establishments that provide the best available rate within the maximum allowable rate and that are located as close as possible to the venue or office location or destination of the traveller
- c) This includes planning, booking, confirming, and amending accommodation with any establishment (hotel group, private hotel, guest house or Bed & Breakfast) in accordance with the SACN travel policy.
- d) The SACN travellers may only stay at accommodation establishments with which the SACN has negotiated corporate rates. Should there be no rate agreement in place in the destination, or should the contracted establishment be unable to accommodate the traveller, the TMC will source suitable

accommodation bearing in mind the requirement of convenience for the traveller and conformation with acceptable costs.

- e) Accommodation vouchers must be issued to all the SACN travellers for accommodation bookings and must be invoiced to the SACN monthly. Such invoices must be supported by a copy of the original hotel accommodation charges.

7.7. Car Rental and Shuttle Services

- a) The TMC will book the approved category vehicle in accordance with the SACN Travel Policy with the appointed car rental service provider from the closest rental location (airport, hotel and venue).
- b) The travel consultant should advise the Traveller on the best time and location for collection and return considering the Traveller's specific requirements.
- c) For international travel the TMC may offer alternative ground transportation to the Traveller that may include rail, buses and transfers.
- d) The TMC will book transfers in line with the SACN Travel Policy with the appointed and/or alternative service providers. Transfers can also include bus and coach services.
- e) Travel / shuttle vouchers must be issued to all the SACN travellers for shuttle bookings and must be invoiced to the SACN monthly. Such invoices must be supported by a copy of the original shuttle charges.

7.8. After Hours and Emergency Services

- a) The TMC must provide a consultant or team of consultants to assist Travellers with after hours and emergency reservations and changes to travel plans.
- b) A dedicated consultant/s must be available to assist VIP/Executive Travellers with after hour or emergency assistance.
- c) After hours' services must be provided from Monday to Friday outside the official hours and twenty-four (24) hours on weekends and Public Holidays.
- d) A call centre facility or after hours contact number should be available to all travel Coordinators so that when required, unexpected changes to travel plans can be made and emergency bookings attended to.
- e) The Travel Management Company must have a standard operating procedure for managing after-hours and emergency services.

7.9. Communication

- a) The TMC may be requested to conduct workshops and training sessions for Travel Bookers of the SACN.
- b) All enquiries must be investigated and prompt feedback be provided in accordance with the Service Level Agreement.
- c) The TMC must ensure sound communication with all stakeholders. Link the business traveller, travel coordinator, Travel Management Company in one smooth continuous workflow.

7.10. Financial Management

- a) The TMC must implement the rates negotiated by the SACN with travel service providers or the discounted air fares, or the maximum allowable rates established by the SACN where applicable.
- b) The TMC will be responsible to manage the service provider accounts. This will include the timely receipt of invoices to be presented to the SACN for payment within the agreed time period.
- c) Enable savings on total annual travel expenditure and this must be reported and proof provided during monthly and quarterly reviews.

- d) The TMC will be required to offer a 30-day bill-back account facility to the SACN should a lodge card not be offered. 'Bill back', refers to the supplier sending the bill back to the TMC, who, in turn, invoices the SACN for the services rendered.
- e) Where pre-payments are required for smaller Bed & Breakfast /Guest House facilities, these will be processed by the TMC. These are occasionally required at short notice and even for same day bookings.
- f) Consolidate Travel Supplier bill-back invoices.
- g) The TMC is responsible for the consolidation of invoices and supporting documentation to be provided to the SACN Financial Department on the agreed time period (e.g. monthly or weekly).
- h) Ensure Travel Supplier accounts are settled timeously.

7.11. Account Management

- a) An Account Management structure should be put in place to respond to the needs and requirements of the SACN and act as a liaison for handling all matters with regard to delivery of services in terms of the contract.
- b) The TMC must appoint a dedicated Account or Business Manager that is ultimately responsible for the management of the SACN account.
- c) The necessary processes should be implemented to ensure good quality management and ensuring Traveller satisfaction at all times.
- d) A complaint handling procedure must be implemented to manage and record the compliments and complaints of the TMC and other travel service providers.
- e) Ensure that the SACN Travel Policy is enforced.
- f) The Service Level Agreement (SLA) must be managed and customer satisfaction surveys conducted to measure the performance of the TMC.
- g) Ensure that workshops/training is provided to Travellers and/or Travel Bookers.
- h) During reviews, comprehensive reports on the travel spend and the performance in terms of the SLA must be presented.

7.12. Value Added Services

The TMC must provide the following value added services:

Destination information for regional and international destinations:

- i. Health warnings;
- ii. Weather forecasts;
- iii. Places of interest;
- iv. Visa information;
- v. Travel alerts;
- vi. Location of hotels and restaurants;
- vii. Information including the cost of public transport;
- viii. Rules and procedures of the airports;
- ix. Business etiquette specific to the country;
- x. Airline baggage policy; and
- xi. Supplier Updates.

7.13. Cost Management

- a) The SACN cost containment initiative and the Travel Policy are establishing a basis for a cost-savings culture.
- b) It is the obligation of the TMC Consultant to advise on the most cost-effective option at all times.
- c) The TMC plays a pivotal role in providing high quality travel related services that are designed to strike a balance between effective cost management, flexibility and traveller satisfaction.
- d) The TMC should have in-depth knowledge of the relevant supplier(s)' products, to be able to provide the best option and alternatives that are in accordance with the SACN Travel

Policy to ensure that the Traveller reaches his/her destination safely, in reasonable comfort, with minimum disruption, cost-effectively and in time to carry out his/her business.

7.14. Quarterly and Annual Travel Reviews

- a) Quarterly reviews are required to be presented by the Travel Management Company on all the SACN travel activity in the previous three-month period. These reviews are comprehensive and presented to the SACN Procurement and Finance teams as part of the performance management reviews based on the service level agreement.
- b) Annual Reviews are also required to be presented to the SACN Senior Executives.
- c) These Travel Reviews will include without limitation the following information.
 - I. Areas in need of immediate improvements (i.e. business process improvement);
 - II. Cost savings and potential cost savings;
 - III. Travellers' feedback /response review.

7.15. Office Management

7.15.1. The TMC to ensure high quality service to be delivered at all times to the SACN travellers. The TMC is required to provide the SACN with highly skilled and qualified human resources for the following roles but not limited to:

- a) Senior Consultants
- b) Intermediate Consultants
- c) Junior Consultants
- d) Travel Manager (Operational)
- e) Finance Manager / Branch Accountant
- f) Admin Back Office (Creditors / Debtors/Finance Processors)
- g) Strategic Account Manager (per hour)
- h) System Administrator (General Admin)

8. EVALUATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Technical Evaluation

8.1.1. Only bids that meet a minimum threshold of 75% in the functionality evaluation will proceed

8.1.2. Bidders are required to accurately reference their response, the SACN will not allocate the scores for the sections of the response which are not correctly referenced.

Evaluation Criteria	Weight	Score
<p>Availability of appropriate skills and resources to manage the contract. CV's of the assigned personnel to demonstrate appropriate skills and capabilities by showing current and previous work done as well as number of years in similar role</p> <p>Points will be allocated for number of years' relevant experience of the Accounts Project Manager</p> <p><u>Evidence</u> Bidders must provide CV of relevant key personnel.</p>	20%	<p>5=Five and above years' relevant experience 4=Four years' relevant experience 3= Three years' relevant experience 2= Two years' relevant experience. 1= One year relevant experience. 0= No information provided.</p>
The experience of company in travel management services managing domestic and international travel	20%	<p>5=Five and above years' relevant experience 4=Four years' relevant experience 3= Three years' relevant</p>

<u>Evidence:</u> Provide company profile and Company registration documents		Experience 2. Two years' relevant experience. 1= One year relevant experience. 0=No information provided.
Work performance on previous assignments successfully completed in the last 5 years. <u>Evidence</u> Provide the testimonials/reference letters from contactable existing/recent clients (within past 5 years) whom we may contact for references. The letter must include: company name, contact name, address, phone number, and duration of contract, value of the travel expenditure, a brief description of the services that you provided and the level of satisfaction. Letter must be for domestic, regional and international travel	30%	5=Four and above successfully completed Projects with turnaround times 4=Three successfully completed projects with notable turnaround times 3=Two successfully completed projects 2=One successfully completed projects 1=No information
Methodology In order for the SACN to assess the bidder's level of competence relating to travel management services the bidder is required to provide proposal detailing value propositions for the SACN based on the scope outlined which include but not limited to the following: I. Technology and booking system II. Cost savings III. booking process and reservations for International and Domestic travel IV. Value-added services V. Communication and account management VI. After hours and emergency services VII. Data protection and security <u>Evidence:</u> Executive summary including how the travel management services will be implemented, cost saving measures, booking system. Describe in detail how all travel reservations/ bookings are handled e.g. hotel (accommodation); car rental; flights, etc. • This must include, without limitation, an example of a detailed complex itinerary confirmation that includes air, car, hotel, passport requirement, confirmation numbers and additional proof of competency	30%	5= Response demonstrates all the requirements 4= Response demonstrates 6-7 of the requirements 3= Response demonstrates 4-5 of the requirements 2= Response demonstrates 1- 3 of the requirements 1= No information
Maximum percentage	100%	

Minimum percentage required to proceed to next evaluation stage	75%	
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9. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

- 9.1. Upon award the SACN and the successful bidder will conclude a supplementary agreement regulating the specific terms and conditions applicable to the services being procured by which the SACN, more or less in the format of the draft Service Level Agreement included in this RFP.
- 9.2. The SACN reserves the right to vary the proposed terms and conditions of the draft Service Level Agreement during the course of negotiations with a bidder by amending or adding thereto.
- 9.3. The SACN reserves the right to accept or reject any or all amendments or additions proposed by a bidder if such amendments or additions are unacceptable to SACN or pose a risk to the organization.

10. SPECIAL CONDITIONS OF THIS RFP

SACN reserves the right:

- 10.1. Not to award or cancel this RFP at any time and shall not be bound to accept the lowest or any Bid.
- 10.2. To negotiate with one or more preferred bidder(s) identified in the evaluation process, regarding any terms and conditions, including price without offering the same opportunity to any other bidder(s) who has not been awarded the status of the preferred bidder(s).
- 10.3. To accept part of the RFP rather than the whole RFP.
- 10.4. To carry out site inspections, product evaluations or explanatory meetings in order to verify the nature and quality of the services offered by the bidder(s), whether before or after adjudication of the Bid
- 10.5. To correct any mistakes at any stage of the RFP that may have been in the Bid documents or occurred at any stage of the RFP process.
- 10.6. To cancel and/or terminate the RFP process at any stage, including after the Closing Date and/or after presentations have been made, and/or after RFP have been evaluated and/or after the preferred bidder(s) have been notified of their status as such.
- 10.7. Conduct Financial Statement Analysis only on the recommended bidders after completion of the evaluation stage.
- 10.8. To award the RFP based on which bidder is offering the best value for money, even if such proposal is not the lowest priced proposal.
- 10.9. Not to award the RFP to bidder whose financial statements are not in order.
- 10.10. Award to multiple bidders to spread the risk.

11. PREPARATION COSTS

- 11.1. The Bidder will bear all its costs in preparing, submitting and presenting any response or RFP to this bid and all other costs incurred by it throughout the bid process. Furthermore, no statement in this bid will be construed as placing the SACN, its employees or agents under any obligation whatsoever, including in respect of costs, expenses or losses incurred by the bidder(s) in the preparation of their response to this bid.

12. TAX COMPLIANCE

- 12.1. No RFP shall be awarded to a bidder who is not tax compliant. The SACN reserves the right to withdraw an award made, or cancel a contract concluded with a successful bidder in the event that it is established that such bidder was in fact not tax compliant at the time of the award, or has submitted a fraudulent Tax Clearance Certificate to the SACN, or whose verification proves noncompliant. The SACN further reserves the right to cancel a contract with a successful bidder in the event that such bidder does not remain tax compliant for the full term of the contract.

13. SERVICE FEE

PLEASE LIST SERVICE FEES IN SOUTH AFRICAN RAND. INCLUDING VAT.

The SACN requires bidders to propose two pricing models the transactional fee model and the management fee model. The SACN will at their discretion select the best possible cost-effective solution.

Transactional Fees

- 13.1.1. The transaction fee must be a fixed amount per service. The fee must be linked to the cost involved in delivering the service and not a percentage of the value or cost of the service provided by third party service providers.
- 13.1.2. The Bidder must further indicate the estimated percentage split between Traditional bookings and On-line bookings.

And

Management Fee

- 13.1.3. The management fee is the total fee per annum that will be charged to the SACN in twelve payments. The SACN will pay the fee monthly in arrears.

Volume driven incentives

- 13.1.4. It is important for bidders to note the following when determining the pricing:
- Negotiated non-commissionable fares and rates with various airlines carriers and other service providers;
 - No override commissions earned through the SACN reservations will be paid to the TMC;
 - An open book policy will apply and any commissions earned through the SACN volumes will be reimbursed to the SACN.
 - TMCs are to book these negotiated rates or the best fare available, whichever is the most cost effective for the organisation.

The table below for service fee to be completed by all interested bidders.

SERVICE PROVIDED	FEE / COST PER TRANSACTION / INVOICE (YEAR 1)	FEE / COST PER TRANSACTION / INVOICE (YEAR 2)	FEE/ COST PER TRANSACTION / INVOICE (YEAR 3)	COMMENTS
RESERVATIONS				
Reservation of domestic air ticket				
Reservation of regional ticket				
Reservation of international ticket				

Reservation of other carrier tickets (bidder tospecify)				
Reservation of graded Hotels, guest houses, bed&breakfast				
Reservations of other accommodation (bidder tospecify)				
Reservation of rental car				
Reservation of shuttle/chauffeur service				
Reservation of bus service				
Reservation of train service				
Conference bookings				
Voyager tickets				
AFTER HOURS				
Travel during officehours				
Travel after hours				
CANCELLATIONS				
Cancellation of air tickets				
Cancellation of car rental bookings				
Cancellation of hotel bookings				
Cancellation of shuttle service				
Cancellation of train service				
Cancellation of bus service				
Cancellation of conference bookings				
Changes to booking before departure				
Changes to booking after departure				
Total cost per year	R	R	R	
Total cost for a duration of three years	R			
NB: Above pricing will be used for evaluationpurpose for stage three.				
Are the aforementioned service fees fixed for theduration of the contract?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			

NB: Prices must be fixed for duration of the contract, not be based on the percentage of the value ofthe transaction.

14. GENERAL

14.1. Regular Progress Assessments

- a) Assessments of the performance of the service provider will be conducted on a regular basis. If there is dissatisfaction with the performance, the SLA stipulations will be exercised.
- b) The Key Account Manager will meet with the Finance Manager and/ or Supply Chain Management of the SACN to discuss issues of mutual concern, review performance and discuss any improvements to efficiency and effectiveness for the service rendered.

15. SUBMISSIONS AND ENQUIRIES

Enquiries regarding the call and project will be accepted no later than **22 January 2024**.

Final proposals should be sent by email to Jabulani Sandleni at jabulani@sacities.net by close of business on **26 January 2024** at 11:00 PM.



Yolisa Dambuza

Executive Manager: Finance and Corporate Support Services