

Request for Proposal (RFP)

For: English Connects – UK Online ELT Awards

Date: 5 October 2020

1 Overview of the British Council

1.1 The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries. We do this by making a positive contribution to the UK and the countries we work with – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust.

1.2 We work with over 100 countries across the world in the fields of arts and culture, English language, education and civil society. Last year we reached over 80 million people directly and 791 million people overall including online, broadcasts and publications. Founded in 1934, we are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter and a UK public body. Further information can be viewed at www.britishcouncil.org.

2 Introduction and Background to the Project / Programme

2.1 Jointly funded by the FCO and British Council and managed by the British Council, English Connects is a programme to connect African youth and the future generation of leaders with the UK through English. It aims to improve the quality of English language teaching and learning, particularly in French and Portuguese speaking countries in Sub-Saharan Africa where the British Council is unrepresented, thus creating opportunities to enable young people to increase their potential to study and improve their employability and networks.

Working with governments, the private sector, future leaders, educators and learners in formal and non-formal education, the programme aims to reach and impact a wide audience through face to face interaction, media and digital channels.

The programme connects UK ELT providers, institutions, media and educational technology agencies with targeted countries, showcasing UK expertise, creativity and innovation in education, aiming to build trust and new partnerships.

Programme activities focus on three main strands:

- Access to broadcast, digital and on and off-line English resources for young people (aged 18-35)
- Professional development for teachers along with strengthening of their communities of practice

- Engagement with ministries of education and others on English language provision

English Connects is currently active in ten countries, eight of which are unrepresented (meaning that the British Council does not have a physical presence in these countries): Angola, Cameroon, Congo DRC, Djibouti, Gabon, Guinea (Conakry), Ivory Coast (Cote d'Ivoire), Mali, Niger and Senegal. It will expand into a further two countries this year, Benin and Mozambique.

2.2 The purpose and scope of this RFP and supporting documents is to explain in further detail the requirements of the British Council and the process for submitting a proposal in response to this RFP (“**Proposal**”).

3 Proposal Conditions and Contractual Requirements

This section of the RFP sets out the British Council’s contracting requirements, general policy requirements, and the general conditions relating to this procurement process (“**Procurement Process**”).

3.1 Contracting requirements

3.1.1 Contracting authority: the British Council which includes any other companies and organisations that control or are controlled by the British Council from time to time (see: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/structure/status>).

3.1.2 Delivery location for goods and/or services: via the British Council office in Senegal.

3.1.3 Duration: 6.5 months (with the possibility of an extension for up to an additional 12 months).

3.1.4 Contractual terms: As set out at Annex 1 *Terms and Conditions of Contract* (“**Contract**”). By submitting a Proposal, you are agreeing to be bound by the terms of this RFP and the Contract without further negotiation or amendment. Once the Contract is awarded, there will be no changes allowed to the Contract (except in accordance with the provisions of the Contract). Any clarification questions in relation to any aspect of this Procurement Process and the associated documentation should be submitted in accordance with the process set out in paragraph 12 (*Clarification Requests*). Only changes which relate to the correction of ambiguity or manifest error in relation to the terms of the Contract will be considered and, if necessary, the British Council may, when issuing its response to clarification questions, reissue Annex 1 to reflect such changes. Any proposed amendments received from a potential supplier as part of its Proposal shall entitle the British Council to reject that Proposal and to disqualify that potential supplier from this Procurement Process.

3.2 General Policy Requirements

3.2.1 By submitting a Proposal, you confirm that you will, and that you will ensure that any consortium members and/or subcontractors will, comply with all applicable laws, codes of practice, statutory guidance and applicable British Council policies relevant to the goods and/or services being supplied. All relevant

British Council policies that suppliers are expected to comply with can be found on the British Council website (<https://www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/transparency/policies>).

3.3 General Proposal conditions (“Proposal Conditions”)

3.3.1 Application of these Proposal Conditions – In participating in this Procurement Process and/or by submitting a Proposal it will be implied that you accept and will be bound by all the provisions of this RFP and its Annexes. Accordingly, Proposals should be made on the basis of and strictly in accordance with the requirements of this RFP.

3.3.2 Third party verifications – Your Proposal is submitted on the basis that you consent to the British Council carrying out all necessary actions to verify the information that you have provided, and the analysis of your Proposal being undertaken by one or more third parties commissioned by the British Council for such purposes.

3.3.3 Information provided to potential suppliers – Information that is supplied as part of this Procurement Process is supplied in good faith. The information contained in the RFP and the supporting documents and in any related written or oral communication is believed to be correct at the time of issue. No liability (save for fraudulent misrepresentation) is accepted for its accuracy, adequacy or completeness and no warranty is given as such.

3.3.4 Potential suppliers to make their own enquires – You are responsible for analysing and reviewing all information provided to you as part of this Procurement Process and for forming your own opinions and seeking advice as you consider appropriate. The clarification process set out in paragraph 12 should be used for any queries in relation to this Procurement Process.

3.3.5 Amendments to the RFP – At any time prior to the Response Deadline, the British Council may amend the RFP and if appropriate, the Response Deadline shall, at the discretion of the British Council, be extended.

3.3.6 Compliance of Proposal – Any goods and/or services offered should be on the basis of and strictly in accordance with the RFP (including, without limitation, any specification of the British Council's requirements, these Proposal Conditions and the Contract) and all other documents and any clarifications or updates issued by the British Council as part of this Procurement Process.

3.3.7 Compliance with the terms of the Contract – The successful supplier must comply with the Contract as set out in Annex 1 without any amendment (save as described in paragraph 3.1.4).

3.3.8 Format of Proposal – Proposals must comprise the relevant documents as detailed by the British Council in Annex 2 (Supplier Proposal) completed in accordance with relevant all instructions. Any documents requested by the British Council must be completed in full. It is important that you read the RFP carefully before completing and submitting your Proposal.

3.3.9 Modifications to Proposals once submitted – You may modify your Proposal prior to the Response Deadline by giving written notice to the British Council. Any modification should be clear and submitted as a completely new Proposal in accordance with Annex 2 (Supplier Proposal) and these Proposal Conditions.

3.3.10 Disqualification – If you breach these Proposal Conditions, if there are any errors, omissions or material adverse changes relating to any information supplied by you at any stage in this Procurement Process, if any other circumstances set out in this RFP, and/or in any supporting documents, entitling the British Council to reject a Proposal apply and/or if you or your appointed advisers attempt:

- to inappropriately influence this Procurement Process or fix or set the price for goods or services;
- to enter into an arrangement with any other party that such party shall refrain from submitting a Proposal;
- to enter into any arrangement with any other party (other than another party that forms part of your consortium bid or is your proposed sub-contractor) as to the prices submitted;
- to collude in any other way;
- to engage in direct or indirect bribery or canvassing by you or your appointed advisers in relation to this Procurement Process; or
- to obtain information from any of the employees, agents or advisors of the British Council concerning this Procurement Process (other than as set out in these Proposal Conditions) or from another potential supplier or another Proposal,

the British Council shall be entitled to reject your Proposal in full and to disqualify you from this Procurement Process. Subject to paragraph 3.3.1 below, by participating in this Procurement Process you accept that the British Council shall have no liability to a disqualified potential supplier in these circumstances.

3.3.11 Proposal costs – You are responsible for obtaining all information necessary for preparation of your Proposal and for all costs and expenses incurred in preparation of the Proposal. Subject paragraph 3.3.15, you accept by your participation in this Procurement Process, including without limitation the submission of a Proposal, that you will not be entitled to claim from the British Council any costs, expenses or liabilities that you may incur in submitting a Proposal irrespective of whether or not your Proposal is successful.

3.3.12 Rights to cancel or vary this Procurement Process – Nothing in this Procurement Process will bind the British Council to enter into any contractual or other arrangement with you or any other potential supplier. It is intended that the remainder of this Procurement Process will take place in accordance with the provisions of this RFP, but the British Council reserves the right to terminate, amend or vary (to include, without limitation, in relation to any timescales or deadlines) this Procurement Process by notice in writing. Subject to paragraph 3.3.15, the British will have no liability for any losses, costs or expenses you incur as a result of such actions.

3.3.13 Consortium Members and sub-contractors – It is your responsibility to ensure that any staff, consortium members, sub-contractors and advisers abide by these Proposal Conditions and the requirements of this RFP.

3.3.14 Liability – Nothing in these Proposal Conditions is intended to exclude or limit the liability of the British Council in relation to fraud or in other circumstances where the British Council’s liability may not be limited under any applicable law.

4 Confidentiality and Information Governance

4.1 All information supplied to you by the British Council, including this RFP and all other documents relating to this Procurement Process, either in writing or orally, must be treated in confidence and not disclosed to any third party (save to your professional advisers, consortium members and/or sub-contractors strictly for the purposes only of helping you to participate in this Procurement Process and/or prepare your Proposal) unless the information is already in the public domain or is required to be disclosed under any applicable laws.

4.2 You shall not disclose, copy or reproduce any of the information supplied to you as part of this Procurement Process other than for the purposes of preparing and submitting a Proposal. There must be no publicity by you regarding the Procurement Process or the future award of any contract unless the British Council has given express written consent to the relevant communication.

4.3 The British Council reserves the right to disclose all documents relating to this Procurement Process, including without limitation your Proposal, to any employee, third party agent, adviser or other third party involved in the Procurement Process in support of, and/or in collaboration with, the British Council. The British Council further reserves the right to publish the Contract once awarded and/or disclose information in connection with supplier performance under the Contract in accordance with any public sector transparency policies (as referred to below). By participating in this Procurement Process, you agree to such disclosure and/or publication by the British Council in accordance with such rights reserved by it under this paragraph.

4.4 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“FOIA”), EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2015, the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (“EIR”), and public sector transparency policies apply to the British Council (together the “**Disclosure Obligations**”).

4.5 You should be aware of the British Council’s obligations and responsibilities under the Disclosure Obligations to disclose information held by the British Council. Information provided by you in connection with this Procurement Process, or with any contract that may be awarded as a result of this exercise, may therefore have to be disclosed by the British Council under the Disclosure Obligations, unless the British Council decides that one of the statutory exemptions under the FOIA or the EIR applies.

5 Proposal Validity

5.1 Your Proposal must remain open for acceptance by the British Council for a period of sixty days from the Response Deadline. A Proposal not valid for this period may be rejected by the British Council.

6 Payment and Invoicing

6.1 The British Council will pay correctly addressed and undisputed invoices within 30 days in accordance with the requirements of the Contract. Suppliers to the British Council must ensure comparable payment provisions apply to the payment of their sub-contractors and the sub-contractors of their sub-contractors. General requirements for an invoice for the British Council include:

- A description of the good/services supplied is included.
- The British Council Purchase Order number is included.
- It is sent electronically via email in PDF format to alison.devine@britishcouncil.org

7 Specification

7.1 Background and Justification

In all target countries, secondary school English language teachers face large class sizes; Djibouti has an average class size of 50, while teachers in Cameroon, Gabon and Guinea teach classes of up to 100 or more. Managing these classes and providing ongoing assessment of learners' progress is challenging. Current assessment practices tend to focus on assessing reading and writing skills, and where spoken assessment does exist, it is not standardised. Teachers have few resources to develop speaking and listening skills. There is a strong focus on teaching grammar, often without any purposeful meaning and context.

All countries have a curriculum which teachers need to follow. While the curricula tend to adopt a competency-based approach, teachers receive little training in how to put this into practice in the classroom. In countries where there is a common textbook, most students cannot afford to buy one. Teachers often have limited access to the internet and technology and very few opportunities for INSET, new techniques and activities.

In Phase 2 of English Connects (October 2019 to March 2020), 240 Ministry of Education ELT Master Trainers from the participating countries received initial or follow-up face-to-face training, with the ongoing development of teaching, teacher training and mentoring skills. 4,445 secondary school teachers of English received continuing professional development (CPD) via face-to-face cascade training and communities of practice (online). 40 of the most active teacher educators and teachers were selected to undertake 5 days Action Research training at a regional training event. This award/reward proved to be a motivating factor for many of the English Connects participants and there have been requests for more such activities.

In Phase 3 (October 2020 to March 2021), English Connects will continue to provide virtual support for teacher educators in training and mentoring skills, including remote observation of training events. The

highest performing teacher educators and teachers in each country will be awarded a 'scholarship' for an online UK ELT training course award.

7.2 Objective

To provide a recognised online UK ELT training course - one for teacher educators and one for secondary level teachers of English - which English Connects can award as 'scholarships' to 24 high performing teacher educators and 24 English language teachers participating in the English Connects programme.

The courses need to be relevant for the large class size / low resource contexts that the English Connects teacher educators and teachers work in and may need to be adapted accordingly.

The aim is to select participants by the end of January 2021, ready to start a course from early February 2021, to finish no later than 31 March 2021.

7.3 Recipients

Selected inspectors, pedagogical advisors, teacher trainers and secondary level English language teachers in the participating countries of English Connects: Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, DRC, Gabon, Guinea (Conakry), Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Senegal.

7.4 Scope/Deliverables

7.4.1 To provide options for a UK ELT course for either teacher educators and/or secondary level teachers of English leading to some form of award / certificate for successful completion of the course.

Option 1: A fully online course with moderation leading to some form of award / certification from a UK institution for successful completion of the course.

Option 2: A blended course option with virtual support and possibly a face-to-face training element should travel restrictions be lifted (face-to-face training may be delivered in the UK if visas can be obtained or within Sub-Saharan Africa should visas be problematic).

7.4.2 Proposals may be for either 24 teacher educators or 24 teachers or both and may be for either Option 1 or for Option 2 or both.

7.4.3 To have monthly meetings with the British Council and the monitoring and evaluation agency on the progress of the project.

7.4.4 To provide an award or certificate by 31 March 2021 to those participants who complete the course, or a report for any participants who do not complete the course.

7.5 Methodology

It is expected that the training provider will take a collaborative approach to the assignment, working closely with the British Council and Ministry of Education inspectors, pedagogical advisors, teacher trainers and teachers of English in the target countries to understand the low resource contexts and large class environments that the teachers work in to provide suitable training relevant to the context of the

participants. The provider will be given access to pilot project findings, recommendations from Phase 2 of the English Connects programme and information about the local context.

7.6 Reporting

As outlined in section 7.4.4, an award or certificate to those participants who complete the course, or a report for any participants who do not complete the course by 31 March 2021.

7.7 Timeframe

January 2021 to 31 March 2021

7.8 Budget

Up to a maximum of £3,000 (three thousand GBP pounds) per head / course participant.

To include full registration and course fees, online tutor support, exam fees, certification fees plus accommodation/board within the UK should a UK face-to-face element be provided (the British Council will cover the cost of flights to the UK).

In the case that face-to-face training is delivered within Sub-Saharan Africa (because of visa or travel restrictions to the UK), please assume that the British Council will cover the cost of all UK trainer and English Connects participants' flights, accommodation and the training venue(s).

7.9 Coordination

Name and title of designated British Council contact:

Julia Stanton, Regional Self Access and Blended Learning Manager, Sub-Saharan Africa

julia.stanton@britishcouncil.org

8 Mandatory Requirements / Constraints

8.1 As part of your Proposal, you must confirm that you meet the mandatory requirements / constraints, if any, as set out in the British Council's specification forming part of this RFP. Failure to comply with any mandatory requirements or constraints shall entitle the British Council to reject a Proposal.

9 Key background documents

9.1 Further relevant background documents / information may be provided to potential suppliers as an Annex to this RFP and/or by way of the issue of additional documents / links to additional information / documents. Please view list of Annexes at the end of this document.

10 Timescales

10.1 Subject to any changes notified to potential suppliers by the British Council in accordance with the Proposal Conditions, the intended timescales applicable to this Procurement Process are:

Activity	Date / time
RFP Issued to bidding suppliers	Monday 5 October 2020
Deadline for clarification questions (Clarification Deadline)	Wednesday 14 October 23:59
British Council to respond to clarification questions	Monday 19 October 23:59
Deadline for submission of Proposals by potential suppliers (Response Deadline)	Sunday 1 November 23:59
Final Decision	Friday 6 November 23:59
Contract concluded with winning supplier	Monday 9 November 2020
Contract start date	Monday 16 November 2020

11 Instructions for Responding

11.1 The documents that must be submitted to form your Proposal are listed at Part 2 (Submission Checklist) of Annex 2 (Supplier Proposal) to this RFP. All documents required as part of your Proposal should be submitted to the British Council's e-Tendering portal hosted at <https://intendhost.co.uk/britishcouncil> by the Response Deadline, as set out in the Timescales section of this RFP.

11.2 The following requirements should be complied with when submitting your Proposal in response to this RFP:

- Please ensure that you send your submission in good time to prevent issues with technology – late Proposals may be rejected by the British Council.
- Do not submit any additional supporting documentation with your Proposal except where specifically requested to do so. PDF, JPG, PPT, Word and Excel formats can be used for any additional supporting documentation (other formats should not be used without the prior written approval of the British Council).
- All attachments/supporting documentation should be provided separately to your main Proposal document, clearly labelled and cross-referenced to the Proposal as relevant.
- If you submit a generic policy / document you must indicate the page and paragraph reference that is relevant to a particular part of your Proposal.
- Unless otherwise stated as part of this RFP or its Annexes, all Proposals should be in the format of the relevant British Council requirement with your response to that requirement inserted underneath.
- Where supporting evidence is requested as 'or equivalent' you must demonstrate such equivalence as part of your Proposal.
- Any deliberate alteration of a British Council requirement as part of your Proposal will invalidate your Proposal to that requirement and for evaluation purposes you shall be deemed not to have responded to that particular requirement.
- Responses should be concise, unambiguous, and should directly address the requirement stated.
- Your Proposal to the RFP requirements and pricing will be incorporated into the Contract, as appropriate.

12 Clarification Requests

12.1 All clarification requests should be submitted to the British Council's e-Tendering portal hosted at <https://in-tendhost.co.uk/britishcouncil> by the Clarification Deadline, as set out in the Timescales section of this RFP. The British Council is under no obligation to respond to clarification requests and will respond if the question is appropriate and received before the Clarification Deadline.

12.2 Any clarification requests should clearly reference the appropriate paragraph in the RFP documentation and, to the extent possible, should be aggregated rather than sent individually.

12.3 The British Council reserves the right to issue any clarification request made by you, and the response, to all potential suppliers unless you expressly require it to be kept confidential at the time the request is made. If the British Council considers the contents of the request not to be confidential, it will inform you and you will have the opportunity to withdraw the clarification query prior to the British Council responding to all potential suppliers.

12.4 The British Council may at any time request further information from potential suppliers to verify or clarify any aspects of their Proposal or other information they may have provided. Should you not provide supplementary information or clarifications to the British Council by any deadline notified to you, your Proposal may be rejected in full and you may be disqualified from this Procurement Process.

13 Evaluation Criteria

13.1 You will have your Proposal evaluated as set out below:

Stage 1: Proposals will be checked to ensure that they have been completed correctly and all necessary information has been provided, responses correctly completed with all relevant information being provided and all mandatory requirements as outlined in Section 8 met will proceed to Stage 2. Any Proposal not correctly completed in accordance with the requirements of this RFP and/or containing omissions may be rejected at this point. Where a Proposal is rejected at this point it will automatically be disqualified and will not be further evaluated.



Stage 2: If a bidder succeeds in passing Stages 1 of the evaluation, then it will have its Proposal evaluated in accordance with the evaluation methodology set out below.

13.2 Award Criteria – Responses from potential suppliers will be assessed to determine the most economically advantages proposal using the following criteria and weightings and will be assessed entirely on your response submitted:

Criteria	Weighting
<p>Proposal</p> <p>Your proposal should fully address the requirements of the RFP and demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - effective delivery capable of implementation in the local operating context - realistic achievement of learning outcomes within the timeframes and budget stipulated - an awareness of the challenges to successful implementation and suggested ways in which those challenges might be mitigated - a strategy for the monitoring and evaluation of - and real-time, formative learning from - the activity. 	50%
<p>Experience, track record and capability</p> <p>Please supply a brief capabilities statement (of no more than two pages) of your organisation's experience of work in Sub-Saharan Africa and of similar work in other regions, plus names and pen portraits (of no more than one page in total) for staff who will work on this activity.</p>	30%
<p>Commercial</p> <p>A maximum offer score of 10 will be awarded to the tender response offering the lowest "Overall Price". Other tender responses will be awarded a mark by application of the following formula: (Lowest Overall Price/Overall Price being evaluated) x 10 (rounded to two decimal places) = commercial score.</p> <p>The British Council may reject any tender response where the Overall Price for the goods and/or services is considered by the British Council to be abnormally low following the relevant processes set out under the EU procurement rules.</p>	20%

13.3 Scoring Model – Proposals will be subject to an initial review at the start of Stage 2 of the evaluation process. Any Proposals not meeting mandatory requirements or constraints (if any) will be rejected in full at this point and will not be assessed or scored further. Proposals not so rejected will be scored by an evaluation panel appointed by the British Council for all criteria other than Commercial using the following scoring model:

Points	Interpretation
10	Excellent – Overall the response demonstrates that the bidder meets all areas of the requirement and provides all of the areas evidence requested in the level of detail requested. This, therefore, is a detailed excellent response that meets all aspects of the requirement leaving no ambiguity as to whether the bidder can meet the requirement.

7	Good – Overall the response demonstrates that the bidder meets all areas of the requirement and provides all of the areas of evidence requested, but contains some trivial omissions in relation to the level of detail requested in terms of either the response or the evidence. This, therefore, is a good response that meets all aspects of the requirement with only a trivial level ambiguity due the bidder’s failure to provide all information at the level of detail requested.
5	Adequate – Overall the response demonstrates that the bidder meets all areas of the requirement, but not all of the areas of evidence requested have been provided. This, therefore, is an adequate response, but with some limited ambiguity as to whether the bidder can meet the requirement due to the bidder’s failure to provide all of the evidence requested.
3	Poor – The response does not demonstrate that the bidder meets the requirement in one or more areas. This, therefore, is a poor response with significant ambiguity as to whether the bidder can meet the requirement due to the failure by the bidder to show that it meets one or more areas of the requirement.
0	Unacceptable – The response is non-compliant with the requirements of the RFP and/or no response has been provided.

13.4 Commercial Evaluation – Your “Overall Price” (as calculated in accordance with requirements of Annex 3 (Pricing Approach) for the goods and/or services will be evaluated by the evaluation panel for the purposes of the commercial evaluation, further information on this approach may be available in Annex 3. In the event that any prices are expressed as being subject to any pricing assumptions, qualifications or indexation not provided for by the British Council as part of the pricing approach, the British Council may reject the full Proposal at this point. The British Council may also reject any Proposal where the Overall Price for the goods and/or services is considered by the British Council to be abnormally low following the relevant processes set out under the EU procurement rules. A maximum offer score of 10 will be awarded to the Proposal offering the lowest “Overall Price”. Other Proposals will be awarded a mark by application of the following formula: (Lowest Overall Price/Overall Price being evaluated) x 10 (rounded to two decimal places) = commercial score.

13.5 Moderation and application of weightings – The evaluation panel appointed for this Procurement Process will meet to agree and moderate scores for each award criteria. Final scores in terms of a percentage of the overall Proposal score will be obtained by applying the relevant weighting factors set out as part of the award criteria table above. The percentage scores for each award criteria will be amalgamated to give a percentage score out of 100.

13.6 The Winning Proposal(s) - The winning Proposal shall be the Proposal scoring the highest percentage score out of 100 when applying the above evaluation methodology, which is also supported by any required verification evidence (to include, without limitation, any updated information) obtained by the

Authority relating to any self-certification or other requirements referred to at any time in this Procurement Process.

List of Annexes forming part of this RFP (issued as separate documents):

Annex 1 – Terms and Conditions of Contract

Annex 2 – Supplier Response

Annex 3 – Pricing Approach