**Request for Proposals** 

RFP Number: 003

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| To: | Prospective bidders |
| Date of issue: | Friday, April 1, 2022 |
| Information Session: | Wednesday, April 6, 2022, at 10:00am |
| Pre-submission Questions: | Monday, April 11, 2022 |
| Due date and time of submission: | Friday, April 29, 2022, at 17:00 local time  |
| Subject | Support to the development of a National ICT Strategy for Kosovo |

**Executive Summary**

USAID Compete Activity (hereinafter referred to as “USAID Compete”, “Compete” “Activity” or “Project”) is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It is implemented by Cardno Emerging Markets USA, Ltd. (Cardno). The Project is designed to facilitate sector-wide improvement in private sector export competitiveness in its key focus sectors of wood processing, food processing, and information and communications technology (ICT) sectors.

Cardno hereby requests proposals from qualified entities for **“Support to the development of a National ICT Strategy for Kosovo”** as detailed below.

**Information Session:**

The purpose of the Information Session is to provide important information on the opportunity. Information is critical and useful for the bidders to be able to prepare their offers. Upon completion of the presentation and Q&A session will take place.

All respective bidders are invited to participate in the information session that will be held **on Wednesday, April 6, 2022, at 10:00hrs** in USAID Kosovo Compete Office at Complex Ramiz Sadiku, Str. Ukshin Hoti #120, C3/3/b, Prishtine, Kosovo.

The Information Session will be available **online** as well, through **Microsoft Teams.** Please express your interest to participate in the noted session by sending an email at info@kosovocompete.org to be logged into the session.

**Pre-submission Questions:**

Questions relating to this Request for Proposals (RFP) should be sent in writing by email only to Cardno at info@kosovocompete.org no later than **Monday, April 11, 2022 at 17:00 CET** with the following subject line: “*Questions – RFP 003 – Support to the development of a National ICT Strategy for Kosovo”*. Questions and requests for clarification and the responses thereto that USAID Compete believes may be of interest to other offerors may be circulated to all RFP recipients. Cardno will respond to any questions it receives prior to the due date for the submission of proposals.

**Due Date and Time for Submission of Quotes:**

Applicants should submit applications through email at info@kosovocompete.org by **Friday,** **April 29, 2022, at 17:00hrs.**

Any quote received by USAID Kosovo Compete Activity **after the due date** and time for submission of quotes **will be rejected.**

This RFP consists of the following sections:

Section 1 – Background

Section 2 – Information for Bidders

Section 3 – Clauses Incorporated by Reference

Section 4 – Annexes

# Section 1 - Background

The USAID Kosovo Compete Activity (hereinafter “USAID Compete”, “Compete”, or “Activity”) is a five-year project implemented by Cardno, in consortia with Kosovo-based consulting company Recura Financials and US-based Canopy Lab. The project aims to promote resilient, self-sustaining market systems, and facilitate the private sector’s improved competitiveness in local, regional, and global markets. USAID Compete works to empower firms, organizations, and institutions to improve market systems in three key export-oriented sectors (Information and Communications Technologies (ICT), wood processing, and food processing) and sustainably increase their competitiveness. By working to address constraints across the system, USAID Compete will enable scalable and systemic change to occur, stimulating job creation and the private sector’s increased ability to engage in local, regional, and international markets. The expected results of the Activity across all three sectors are 1) market systems are strengthened to increase sector competitiveness and 2) market actors within those market systems are more productive and competitive.

USAID Compete Activity’s work in all of its focus sectors is organized along five functional areas:

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| **Functional areas** | **Description**  |
| Market Access | Facilitate market links between local companies and regional/international markets. |
| Diversified Finance | Support diversification of available financial products for local exporters. |
| Business Sophistication | Facilitate improvement of in-company management systems, structures, and tools. |
| Skills Development | Support the improvement of provision of industry-relevant skills. |
| Supporting Business Environment  | Facilitate the improvement of capacities of relevant institutional actors, associations, and service providers to deliver improved services.  |

As mentioned, the ICT sector is a key focus sector of the USAID Compete Activity. Kosovo’s ICT sector is key for Kosovo’s economic growth, as well as a desired transition toward a knowledge/service-based economy. In 2015, a very detailed *national ICT strategy* was developed involving various stakeholders. Many suggested initiatives were implemented, while other actions have remained either in the process of implementation or currently unimplemented. However, since the design of that particular strategy, capabilities and opportunities have changed e.g., considering that the number and capacities of Kosovar ICT companies have changed remarkably during this period; focus has shifted to various relevant themes and other significant (mega) trends have occurred, including changes to the regulatory environment in Europe and the world (to mention a few).

Building on the lessons learnt, as well as successes that the Kosovar ICT sector has achieved in the past six years, *an update to the national ICT strategy is considered critical*. The resulting refreshed national ICT strategy would not only reflect the current situation and capacities of the Kosovo ICT industry but also define the strategic objectives for the ICT sectors and subsectors for the coming 3-5 years. It should also reflect recent and upcoming trends in the sector and target markets. The strategy should also become user-centric and allow for easy/modular implementation by different players involved.

The ICT sector in Kosovo has significant additional potential to grow in the future and to become an important driver of national growth, a growing source of employment and with significant potential to induce innovation within other sectors through new IT solutions. Across the globe, information technology (IT) is permeating and transforming the economy, the public sector as well as society at large. This trend towards digital transformation has put IT sector promotion as a top priority on the agendas of many national governments. The Kosovo government has recognized the strategic importance of the IT industry for economic development and structural transformation towards a knowledge-based economy. Consequently, the Government of Kosovo has officially declared the IT industry a high priority sector for its economy. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the indispensable role that ICT products, services, and components play in supporting the economy and keeping citizens connected, including facilitating enabling employees to work remotely, keeping students engaged through remote learning, and enabling critical infrastructure through secure networks, data centers and cloud services.

*So far, USAID Compete, in keeping with its role as a facilitator in improving sector-wide competitiveness in the ICT sector, has consulted widely with relevant government counterparts, with private sector actors, and sector representative organizations including STIKK and the Innovation Center Kosovo. In light of these consultations, a joint decision has been reached between key stakeholders about the importance of launching the development of a new national ICT strategy that reflects shifting dynamics and ongoing trends, and potentially positions all important actors to take advantage of opportunities for the Kosovo ICT industry. As a result of this consensus, USAID Compete has agreed to provide technical support to the development of the national ICT strategy, which is the primary purpose of this RFP. In short, through this RFP, USAID Compete is seeking capable companies or entities that can support the sector association, government and other key stakeholders in drafting a new national ICT strategy.*

# Section 2: Information for Bidders

**2.1 Number of Proposals per Bidder:**

Only one proposal per bidder will be accepted. Consortia applications are allowed.

**2.2 Technical Specifications:**

Services offered must comply with the technical specifications provided in the Scope of Work contained in **Annex A**, as well as Application Form for Technical Proposal in **Annex B**, of this RFP.

**2.3 Cost:**

The subcontract type for this procurement will be a Firm Fixed-Priced Purchase Order.

The cost offer must include a detailed description and unit cost breakdown by labor type, materials, services, overhead, and fees, as per the **Budget Form** in **Annex C**, of this RFP. The total Firm Fixed Price must be quoted on a lumpsum, all‐inclusive basis. Nevertheless, the Total Firm Fixed Price shall be quoted net of any government duties or taxes.

It is anticipated that Cardno will subcontract for the full quantities of services described in this RFP. However, Cardno reserves the right to subcontract for less or more quantities and/or services at its discretion.

**2.4 Currencies:**

Prices shall be stated in EURO.

**2.5 VAT:**

USAID Compete is exempt from cooperating country taxes, duties, and VAT. Any award issued by Cardno on behalf of USAID Compete, an official program of the Government of the United States in Kosovo, is free and exempt from any taxes, tariffs, duties, or other levies imposed by the laws in effect in Kosovo.

An official letter that confirms this tax-exempt status will be provided to the winning bidder.

**2.6 Language:**

The proposal/quote, as well as all correspondence and documents relating to the offer, shall be in English.

**2.7 Validity:**

Proposals/quotes shall remain valid for 60 calendar days from the due date for receipt of proposals. In exceptional circumstances, prior to expiry of the original offer validity period, Cardno may request that the Bidder extend the period of validity for a specified additional period. A Bidder agreeing to the request will not be required to modify their proposal.

**2.8 Preparation and Submission of Proposal:**

Applicants should submit applications in writing to the Operations and Finance Director, via email at info@kosovocompete.org, by clearly marking RFP003 in the email subject. No hard copy submission is required.

**2.9 Due Date and Time for Submission of Proposals:**

Proposals must be received by Cardno no later than the due date and time as shown above. Cardno may, at its discretion, extend the due date and time for the submission of proposal by amending this RFP. Any proposal received by Cardno after the due date and time for submission of proposal will be rejected.

**2.10 Eligibility of Offerors:**

By submitting an offer in response to this RFP, the offeror certifies that it and its principal officers are not debarred, suspended, or otherwise considered ineligible for an award by the U.S. Government. Cardno will not award a contract to any firm that is debarred, suspended, or considered to be ineligible by the U.S. Government.

Eligible organizations include legally-registered for-profit, non-for-profit and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) registered in Kosovo and/or outside of Kosovo. Consortia-based applications are allowed.

Ineligible organizations include:

* Public international organizations;
* Entities that have misused USAID funds in the past, organizations that advocate, promote or espouse anti-democratic policies or illegal activities;
* Political parties or institutions;
* Organizations that are on the list of parties excluded from federal procurement and non-procurement programs or the United Nations Security Sanctions Committee.

**2.11 Submission Requirements:**

In order to determine the capability and experience of bidders seeking to be selected for this assignment, the information submitted must include the following minimum requirements:

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| **Requirements** | **Documentary evidence** |
| **Administrative compliance** |
| Eligible nationality of the legal person | Registration certificate  |
| **Economic and financial capacity**  |
| Provide turnover of the bidder over the past 3 years (2019, 2020 and 2021)  | Copy of financial statements, preferably audited by a certified auditor  |
| **Professional and technical capacity**  |
| The bidder shall have carried out at least 1 major project in the previous 5 years, and in a field which is directly relevant to Annex A: Scope of Work.  | A list of projects accompanied with *reference letters* that demonstrate implementation of relevant projects in the previous five years, including information on contract value, contracting entity/client, project location/country, duration (mm/yy to mm/yy), expert months provided, assignment budget, percentage carried out by bidder in case of association of firms or subcontracting, main activities, objectives. |
| Bidder ought to propose at least 4 professional staff members in the application in a field which is relevant to the one specified under Annex A: Scope of Work.The entities team of experts shall include a Team Leader and experts with professional experience related to the deliverables detailed in the Scope of Work. All experts shall be fluent in English.  | CVs of professional staff members who would carry out the assignment detailing qualifications, experience in similar assignments, particularly assignments undertaken in the previous five years, including information on contracting entity/client, project location/country, duration (mm/yy to mm/yy), expert months provided, assignment budget, main activities, objectives. |

**2.12 Delivery Requirements:**

As part of its response to this RFP, each offeror is expected to provide an estimate (in calendar days) of the delivery timeframe (after receipt of order). The delivery estimate presented in an offer in response to this RFP must be upheld in the performance of any resulting contract.

Implementation is anticipated to begin in May 2022 and is expected to last until January 2023 from the date of commencement. Subject to the needs of the project and performance of the bidder, Cardno reserves the right to adjust and/or extend the duration for an additional period. The delivery estimate presented in any offers in response to this RFP must be realistic, accurate, and upheld in the performance of any resulting subcontract or order.

**2.13 Negotiations:**

Best and final price quotations are requested from all offerors. It is anticipated that awards will be made solely on the basis of these original quotations. However, Cardno reserves the right to conduct negotiations and/or request clarifications prior to awarding a subcontract.

**2.14 Best Value**

Cardno will issue Awards using a *best value* analysis. Best value is the expected outcome of an acquisition that provides the greatest overall benefit to Cardno in response to the requirement.

**2.15 Evaluation of Proposal:**

Proposal will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

* **30%**: Past performance and experience of the company in delivering similar projects, preferably in Kosovo and/or the region, including relevant staff bios to be fully engaged in contract implementation
* **50%**: Technical Proposal ‐ Responsiveness to the SOW contained in Annex A of this RFP, including the deliverables and deliverables schedule.
* **20%:** Total Fixed Price

**2.16 Clarification of Proposal:**

During evaluation of the proposals, Cardno may, at its discretion, ask the bidder for a clarification of their proposals. Clarifications are limited exchanges with a bidder to resolve minor or clerical errors; they do not offer an opportunity for a bidder to modify or change an offer.

**2.17 Award Criteria:**

Cardno is not obligated to make an award by virtue of having issued this solicitation. Any award is predicated on Cardno receiving funding for this express purpose from USAID. Cardno can only make an award if the product fully complies with the technical specifications mentioned in the contract terms. Any award(s) will be made to the responsible bidder whose offer(s) has/have been determined to be most advantageous to Cardno.

Cardno has the right to withdraw or change this RFP at any time. *Bidders’ proposals are done so at the sole cost and expense of the bidder with no obligation on the part of Cardno*.

**2.18 Confidentiality:**

Information submitted in response to this RFP will be held confidentially.

# Section 3 - Clauses incorporated by Reference

**3.1 General Terms and Conditions**

This Purchase Order will be issued under a U.S. Government Prime Contract to Cardno. Applicable clauses set forth below will be incorporated by reference into this Purchase Order with the same force and effect as if they were set forth in full. A full copy of each clause may be obtained from the Cardno. The term "FAR" means Federal Acquisition Regulation as revised on the date of this Purchase Order. In no event shall any provision of this Purchase Order be construed as allowing the Subcontractor to appeal directly to or otherwise communicate directly with the Government of US without written consent of Cardno’s Contract Administrator.

**3.2 Technical proposal**

The technical proposal must be no longer than 12 pages in length. Pages submitted in excess of 12 pages will not be reviewed. Supporting documents and CVs of the proposed key staff members, which the bidders are required to submit will not be counted toward the 12-page limit. The technical proposal should be submitted using **Annex B – Application Form – Technical Proposal.**

**3.3 Cost proposal**

The cost proposal shall be submitted as a separate file from the technical proposal. Applicants are advised to fill in the budget form as detailed as possible. Lump sums will not be accepted. Applicants are allowed (and encouraged) to add new lines and modify the budget lines (not Budget Headings) according to the needs of the proposal’s activities. Applicants should also provide a detailed budget description. The required format for the budget is included as **Annex C - Budget Form**.

According to the Mandatory Standard Provisions for Non-U.S., Nongovernmental Recipients, uniform administrative requirements on cost principles for federal awards 2 CFR 200, Subpart E, Cost Principles, and Cost Principles for Commercial/For-Profit Organizations (48 CFR 31.2 Federal Acquisition Regulations), taxes, including value added taxes, are not allowable costs where an exemption or refund of such taxes mechanism exists. Please do not budget VAT cost in the project budget breakdown.

# Section 4 - Annexes

Annex A: Scope of Work

Annex B: Application Form – Technical Proposal

Annex C: Budget Form

# SECTION I ‐ FEDERAL ACQUISITION REGULATION (FAR) CLAUSES

52.202‐1 DEFINITIONS JUL 2004

52.203‐3 GRATUITIES APR 1984

52.203‐5 COVENANT AGAINST CONTINGENT FEES APR 1984

52.203‐6 RESTRICTIONS ON SUBCONTRACTOR SALES TO THE GOVERNMENT SEP 2006

52.203‐7 ANTI‐KICKBACK PROCEDURES OCT 2010

52.203‐8 CANCELLATION, RESCISSION, AND RECOVERY OF FUNDS FOR ILLEGAL OR IMPROPER ACTIVITY JAN 1997

52.203‐10 PRICE OR FEE ADJUSTMENT FOR ILLEGAL OR JAN 1997IMPROPER ACTIVITY

52.203‐12 LIMITATION ON PAYMENTS TO INFLUENCE CERTAIN FEDERAL TRANSACTIONS OCT 2010

52.204‐1 APPROVAL OF CONTRACT DEC 1989

52.204‐3 TAX PAYER IDENTIFICATION OCT 1998

52.204‐4 PRINTED OR COPIED DOUBLE‐SIDED ON RECYCLED PAPER AUG 2000

52.204‐7 CENTRAL CONTRACTOR REGISTRATION APR 2008

52.204‐8 ANNUAL REPRESENTATIONS AND CERTIFICATIONS SEP 2010

52.204‐9 PERSONAL IDENTITY VERIFICATION OF CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL SEP 2007

52.204‐10 REPORTING EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION AND FIRST‐TIER SUBCONTRACT AWARDS JUL 2010

52.209‐6 PROTECTING THE GOVERNMENT'S INTEREST WHEN SUBCONTRACTING WITH CONTRACTORS DEBARRED, SUSPENDED, OR PROPOSED FOR DEBARMENT SEP 2006

52.215‐2 AUDIT AND RECORDS—NEGOTIATION, OCT 2010 ALTERNATE II APR 1998

52.215‐8 ORDER OF PRECEDENCE‐‐UNIFORM CONTRACT FORMAT OCT 1997

52.215‐10 PRICE REDUCTION FOR DEFECTIVE COST OR PRICING DATA OCT 2010

52.215‐11 PRICE REDUCTION FOR DEFECTIVE COST OR PRICING DATAMODIFICATIONS OCT 2010

52.215‐12 SUBCONTRACTOR COST OR PRICING DATA OCT 2010

52.215‐13 SUBCONTRACTOR COST OR PRICING DATA – MODIFICATIONS OCT 2010

52.215‐14 INTEGRITY OF UNIT PRICES OCT 2010

52.215‐15 PENSION ADJUSTMENTS AND ASSET REVERSIONS OCT 2004

52.215‐18 REVERSION OR ADJUSTMENT OF PLANS FOR POSTRETIREMENT BENEFITS OTHER THAN PENSIONS (PRB) JUL 2005

52.215‐19 NOTIFICATION OF OWNERSHIP CHANGES OCT 1997

52.215‐23 LIMITATIONS ON PASS‐THROUGH CHARGES, ALTERNATE I OCT 2009

52.216‐7 ALLOWABLE COST AND PAYMENT DEC 2002

52.216‐8 FIXED‐FEE MAR 1997

52.217‐2 CANCELLATION UNDER MULTIYEAR CONTRACTS OCT 1997

52.217‐8 OPTIONS TO EXTEND SERVICES NOV 1999

52.219‐4 NOTICE OF PRICE EVALUATION PREFERENCE FOR HUBZone SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS JUL 2005

52.219‐8 UTILIZATION OF SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS MAY 2004

52.219‐9 SMALL BUSINESS SUBCONTRACTING PLAN OCT 2010 ALTERNATE II OCT 2001

52.219‐16 LIQUIDATED DAMAGES‐SMALL BUSINESS JAN 1999 SUBCONTRACTING PLAN

52.222‐1 NOTICE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF LABOR DISPUTES FEB 1997

52.222‐26 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY MAR 2007

52.222‐35 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR VETERANS SEP 2010

52.222‐38 COMPLIANCE WITH VETERANS’ EMPLOYMENT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS SEP 2010

52.222‐50 COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS FEB 2009

52.225‐1 BUY AMERICAN ACT‐‐SUPPLIES FEB 2009

52.227‐2 NOTICE AND ASSISTANCE REGARDING PATENT DEC 2007 AND COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT

52.227‐14 RIGHTS IN DATA‐‐GENERAL DEC 2007

52.228‐3 WORKERS COMPENSATION INSURANCE APR 1984

52.228‐7 INSURANCE‐‐LIABILITY TO THIRD PERSONS MAR 1996

52.229‐8 TAXES‐FOREIGN COST‐REIMBURSEMENT CONTRACTS MAR 1990

52.230‐2 COST ACCOUNTING STANDARDS OCT 2008

52.230‐6 ADMINISTRATION OF COST ACCOUNTING STANDARDS MAR 2008

52.232‐9 LIMITATION ON WITHHOLDING OF PAYMENTS APL 1984

52.232‐17 INTEREST OCT 2010

52.232‐20 LIMITATION OF COSTS APR 1984

52.232‐22 LIMITATION OF FUNDS APR 1984

52.232‐23 ASSIGNMENT OF CLAIMS JAN 1986

52.232‐25 PROMPT PAYMENT OCT 2008 ALTERNATE I FEB 2003

52.233‐1 DISPUTES OCT 2003

52.233‐3 PROTEST AFTER AWARD, AUG 1996 ALTERNATE1 JUN 1985

52.233‐4 APPLICABLE LAW FOR BREACH OF CONTRACT CLAIM OCT 2004

52.233‐6 DRUG‐FREE WORKPLACE MAY 2001

52.237‐3 CONTINUITY OF SERVICES JAN 1991

52.242‐1 NOTICE OF INTENT TO DISALLOW COSTS APR 1984

52.242‐3 PENALTIES FOR UNALLOWABLE COSTS MAY 2001

52.242‐13 BANKRUPTCY JUL 1995

52.243‐2 CHANGES‐‐COST REIMBURSEMENT AUG 1987 ALTERNATE II APR 1984

52.243‐7 NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES APR 1984

52.244‐2 SUBCONTRACTS ALTERNATE I (JUN 2007) OCT 2010

52.244‐5 COMPETITION IN SUBCONTRACTING DEC 1996

52.244‐6 SUBCONTRACTS FOR COMMERCIAL ITEMS OCT 2010

52.245‐1 GOVERNMENT PROPERTY JUN 2007

52.245‐9 USE AND CHARGES JUN 2007

52.246‐25 LIMITATION OF LIABILITY‐‐SERVICES FEB 1997

52.247‐63 PREFERENCE FOR U.S.‐FLAG AIR CARRIERS JUNE 2003

52.247‐64 PREFERENCE FOR PRIVATELY OWNED U.S.‐FLAG COMMERCIAL VESSELS FEB 2006

52.249‐6 TERMINATION (COST‐REIMBURSEMENT) MAY 2004

52.249‐14 EXCUSABLE DELAYS APR 1984

52.253‐1 COMPUTER GENERATED FORMS JAN 1991

# AIDAR 48 CFR Chapter 7

752.202‐1 DEFINITIONS JAN 1990

752.209‐71 ORGANIZATION CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DISCOVERED AFTER AWARD JUN 1993

752.211‐70 LANGUAGE AND MEASUREMENT JUN 1992

752.219‐8 UTILIZATION OF SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS AND SMALL DISADVANTAGED

BUSINESS CONCERNS

752.225‐70 SOURCE, ORIGION AND NATIONALITY REQUIREMENTS FEB 1997

752.225‐71 LOCAL PROCUREMENT FEB 1997

752.228‐3 WORKER’S COMPENSATION INSURANCE

752.228‐70 MEDICAL EVALUATION (MEDEVAC) SERVICES JUL 2007

752.227‐14 RIGHTS IN DATA – GENERAL OCT 2007

752.228‐7 INSURANCE‐LIABILITY TO THIRD PERSONS

752.232‐70 LETTER OF CREDIT ADVANCE PAYMENT OCT 1989

752.242‐70 PERIODIC PROGRESS REPORTS OCT 2007

752.245‐70 GOVERNMENT PROPERTY‐USAID REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

752.245‐71 TITLE TO AND CARE OF PROPERTY APR 1984

752.7001 BIOGRAPHICAL DATA JUL 1997

752.7002 TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION JAN 1990

752.7003 DOCUMENTATION FOR PAYMENT NOV 1998

752.7006 NOTICES APR 1984

752.7008 USE OF GOVERNMENT FACILITIES OR PERSONNEL APR 1984\_123