



CALL FOR APPLICATIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NACALA – LIWONDE FIBER OPTIC CABLE (FOC) ALONG THE NACALA-LIWONDE RAILWAY LINE

DATE ISSUED: 29TH SEPTEMBER 2023

REFERENCE NO: MACRA/NACALA-LIWONDE-FOC/2023/10/01

1. Introduction

Malawi is among the countries with high internet bandwidth costs primarily due to the acquisition of internet bandwidth and its geographical positioning. The landlocked Ness and distance from the seacoasts where international internet sea cables land result in high in-transit costs incurred by internet service providers. This in turn contributes to elevated prices for internet services within the country. Presently the internet bandwidth and capacity enter the country through the borders with Tanzania, Mozambique, and Zambia. The varying routes and distances from the ocean coasts to the borders of Malawi directly influence the cost of internet services in Malawi.

Considering these challenges, the Government of Malawi through the Ministry of Information and Digitalization in collaboration with the Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA) is building upon the Diplomatic Data Corridor (DDC) initiative whose aim is to establish bilateral state-to-state agreements for transiting internet capacity in Malawi. To achieve this, the Government's goal is to establish the Nacala-Liwonde Fiber Optic Cable (FOC) along the Nacala-Liwonde Railway Line. The FOC will facilitate the connection to submarine cables and will encompass both dark fibre and transit IP capacity, ultimately fostering a competitive digital environment and eco-system.

It is against this background, that the Ministry of Information and Digitalization through the Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA) and building on the DDC initiative, would like to facilitate the establishment of the FOC through the Nacala corridor to connect Malawi to the submarine sea cables and access affordable internet services.

2. Objective of the Assignment

The following are the main objectives of the project;

- a) Establishment of FOC through the Nacala corridor to connect Malawi to the submarine sea cables and access affordable internet services.
- b) Strengthen the Malawi-Mozambique access route by providing redundancy routes.
- c) Establish a special purpose vehicle to manage the FOC on behalf of the Government of Malawi and a key stakeholder.

3. Scope of Work Overview:

The scope of work shall consist of, but not limited to, the designing, laying, testing and commissioning as well as operations and maintenance of a fully managed FOC network from Nacala to Liwonde along the Railway Line through a well-defined Service Level Agreement (SLA). The services and infrastructure will be fully managed and monitored continuously year-round (on 24/7/365 basis) by the successful applicants and are expected to work in partnership with Electricity Supply Corporation of Malawi (ESCOM) Limited's Fibre Optic Communications (Malawi Government's implementing agency) in the deployment of the Nacala – Liwonde FOC project.

4. Minimum Application Requirements

The potential and interested applicants must submit written applications demonstrating relevant knowledge and experience in similar project by providing information as highlighted in Table 1 of this request for applications below to be considered for further assessment:

Table 1: Format and Detailed information required for the application.

No	REQUIREMENT DESCRIPTION	APPLICANTS RESPONSE
1	Legal Entity Name (if different from Company Name):	
2	Company Type (Please check one):	Local Foreign Joint Venture (JV)
3	Mailing Address:	
4	Country:	

5	Designated Contact (<i>name and title</i>):	
6	Email Address:	
7	Telephone Numbers:	
8	Date the Company was founded:	
9	Website URL:	
10	List of applicant's top five (5) clients:	
11	Applicant's full company profile and all incorporation documentation from the country of registration	
12	Proof of applicant experience providing enterprise grade fiber optic connectivity	
13	Proof of applicant experience in providing Gigabit enterprise grade internet service?	
14	Proof of applicant completed submarine fiber optic projects	
15	Applicant's experience in obtaining permits, licenses, crossing agreements, environmental requirements and/or decommissioning commitments required for projects of similar nature	
16	Proof of Applicant's experience in the routine maintenance and repair of damaged equipment or cable including upgrades and technology refreshes of any FOC related equipment.	
17	Proof that the Applicant has previously carried out any feasibility studies for any or related FOC Project. If yes, please provide details	
18	Proof of Applicants experience in providing direct circuits (i.e., point-to-point or leased/private lines)	

19	Does Contractor have capability and experience with continuous (24/7/365) monitoring and management of fiber optic communication services?	
20	<p>Applicants list of major projects demonstrating proven experience in installing projects of similar size and/or scope. Please provide the following details for completed projects/past experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Name • Year the project was executed. • Client Name and contact details • Delivery Scope • Project value <p>If this project scope was executed in association with one or more other entities, please indicate the association type, primary entity involved as well as percent (%) work split.</p>	
20	Applicants' willingness and commitment to partner with ESCOM Limited FOC (Malawi Government implementing agency) in the deployment of the Nacala – Liwonde FOC	
21	Declaration that the applicant (including any affiliated entities or any predecessor organization) have not been disqualified to participate in any Public Procurement processes - Please provide complete details:	
22	<p>Attach files.</p> <p>Please attach any relevant documentation/information to back up your application</p>	

5. Submission of Applications

The address for submission of applications is:
Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA)
Area 13
Green Heritage House
P.O. Box 30214
Capital City
LILONGWE 3

Email: procurement@macra.mw

6. Closing Date for Receipt of Applications

The closing date for receipt of applications is **27th October 2023 at 10:00 hours** and opening of applications shall commence at the same time in MACRA's corporate boardroom, where interested applicants their representatives and the general public are welcome to attend and witness.

7. Please note that this call for applications does not in any way constitute to a formal request for a bid or proposal, nor is it intended to create any expectations regarding future business dealings with MACRA and may not result in an issuance of a detailed Request for Proposal (RFP) or Invitation to Tender (ITT).