

Request for Proposal (RFP)

For: Local consultant for Higher Education research in Morocco

Date: 12.01.2023

1 Overview of the British Council

1.1 The British Council builds connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK and other countries through arts and culture, education and the English language. We work in two ways – directly with individuals to transform their lives, and with governments and partners to make a bigger difference for the longer term, creating benefit for millions of people all over the world. We help young people to gain the skills, confidence and connections they are looking for to realise their potential and to participate in strong and inclusive communities. We support them to learn English, to get a high-quality education and to gain internationally recognised qualifications. Our work in arts and culture stimulates creative expression and exchange and nurtures creative enterprise.

1.2 We connect the best of the UK with the world and the best of the world with the UK. These connections lead to an understanding of each other's strengths and of the challenges and values that we share. This builds trust between people in the UK and other nations which endures even when official relations may be strained.

1.3 We work on the ground in more than 100 countries. In 2019-20 we connected with 80 million people directly and with 791 million overall, including online and through our 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 We British Council Morocco are seeking a local consultant (the “supplier”) to work with us, from February 2023 to May 2023 for technical assistance to two international organisations or individual international consultants that will be conducting the two following pieces of research:

1. Research to identify pathways for doctoral links between Moroccan and UK Higher Education Institutions (HEI)
2. English as Medium of Education in Moroccan Higher Education

The research is part of the British Council's Going Global Partnerships programme of activities in Morocco. The programme aims to build strategic, mutually beneficial partnerships in tertiary education between the UK and other countries. These contribute to stronger, more inclusive and globally connected tertiary education systems. The programme supports partnerships between universities, colleges, education policy

makers, civil society organisations and industry partners in the UK and around the world to enable four core outcome areas: research and knowledge, internationalisation, strengthening systems, enhanced student outcomes and increased inclusion. By building stronger international connections focused on developing equitable partnerships, Going Global Partnerships strengthens higher education and TVET systems, enables research collaboration, internationalises institutions, enhances student outcomes and supports inclusion. Together, the programme expects to support economic and social growth, with the UK seen as a trusted partner and provider.

To support partnership between Morocco and the UK in Higher Education, a Morocco-UK Commission for Higher Education and Scientific Research was created to strengthen higher education and scientific research links between Morocco and the UK by end of 2023. It responds to significant ambition on the part of both the Moroccan and British governments to support a step-change in the level of our cooperation in the field of higher education and scientific research by:

- extending the flows of Higher Education knowledge and understanding between the two countries;
- increasing collaboration in Higher Education quality assurance, enabling the two countries to benefit together from quality development and improvement;
- increasing the number of students travelling to each other's countries to study;
- increasing access to UK teaching and qualifications in Morocco, for example through course accreditation, joint teaching and the establishment of UK faculties in Morocco;
- increasing academic exchange visits between the two countries;
- increasing research collaboration between British and Moroccan higher education institutions to address key national and global challenges.

The research findings will provide clear recommendations for future collaborations in HE between Morocco and the UK in alignment with Morocco's 'National Plan to Accelerate the Transformation of the Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation Ecosystem (ESRI 2030 PACT)'. The plan aims at establishing a new university model as a locomotive of global and sustainable development to strengthen the competitiveness and attractiveness of the national economy. The aim is to develop human capital that meets the needs of the productive sectors and the requirements of the labour market as well as the integration of Morocco into the knowledge society. The plan places student empowerment at the heart of its operational mechanism through mobility and enhancing language skills.

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: the British Council Morocco.

3.1.3 Duration: 4 months period “From February 2023 to May 2023”

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. In the event that the chosen service provider is operating as a Sole Trader or through a Personal Service Company, the British Council retain the right to issue specific contractual terms and conditions, in order to take account of this status. If you plan to submit a bid as a Sole Trader or Personal Service Company please for a copy of the specific terms. 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 **60 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.

7 Specification

7.1 Objective and Outputs

The local consultant will provide support to gather information and data regarding the Moroccan context and insight into its HE system. The information will feed the recommendations of the international organisations/consultants regarding:

1. Comparison international consultants will draw of the current situation of scientific research in the UK and Morocco and how the research field is structured in both countries, suggesting interventions that will facilitate the establishments of joint PhD programs within the countries' regulatory frameworks.
2. Pathways to introduce and implement English as Medium of Education effectively. The research will investigate the current state of EME policy and resources in the Moroccan HE system as well as provide insights as to how Morocco can capitalize on existing learnings from other countries that have successfully introduced and/or expanded EME in their higher education system.

The key outputs expected from this consultancy are:

For Scientific Research:

- Analysis of the scientific research system in Morocco with special attention to regulatory frameworks for research in academic settings
- Key scientific research areas in Morocco and their alignment with public strategies and policies focusing on institutions and organisations that are working on these areas
- Statistics on number of students enrolled in joint supervisions PhD's in Morocco with analysis of trends in the last ten years
- Presentation of cases and existing programs of joint PhD in Morocco
- Any additional information from the local HE context that could inform the international research that is to be performed by an international organisation/consultant (Please check the intend reference number BC/02759) in parallel of this consultancy.

For EME:

- Ministry's policies and objectives for EME in Morocco
- Approaches and forms of EME currently being implemented in HEIs in Morocco (mapping of existing EME programs in Morocco with focus on type of institutions (public, private) and subject areas)
- EME model articulated by different universities in Morocco
- Perceived and actual challenges facing Moroccan practitioners and institutions in relation to EME
- Rapid evaluation of the existing EME programs in Morocco
- Any additional information from the local HE context that could inform the international research that is to be performed by an international organisation/consultant (Please check the intend reference number BC/02760) in parallel of this consultancy.

7.2 Criteria for the role

The consultant must:

- Be based in Morocco

- Have excellent English writing and speaking skills
- Demonstrate a very good understanding of country context and the issues relevant to higher education in Morocco
- Demonstrate extensive work experience related to the HE system in Morocco
- Provide evidence of related work or engagement conducted previously (analysis of HE system in Morocco, scientific research, English language teaching)
- Demonstrate experience in conducting research or projects with international partners or organisations

7.3 Deliverables:

The consultant will deliver several outputs for the British Council. These include:

1. A data collection plan designed in collaboration with the international research organisations/consultants. The plan will identify data information needed for the outputs of the two research pieces, and sources of information
2. A mapping of the Moroccan stakeholders for Higher Education, Scientific Research and English teaching in Morocco
3. Literature review of Moroccan publications related to the scope of the research in agreement with the international research organisations/consultants
4. Organize interactions and meetings between the international research organisations and Moroccan stakeholders based on the data collection plan
5. Reports on all meetings with Moroccan stakeholders. The format of reporting will be agreed with the international research organisations
6. Participate to meetings with International organisation/consultant for the presentation of findings and recommendations.

7.4 Research management and stakeholders' engagement

The work of this assignment will be guided by the British Council Morocco team who is responsible for managing the research, which includes but is not limited to:

- serve as direct contact point for local consultant and the international research organisations/consultants
- Contribute to interfacing with Moroccan stakeholders
- provide support to Morocco-based expert in identifying Moroccan partnering universities and coordinating interactions and meetings with Moroccan stakeholders
- approve final work plan and deliverables.
- assess the completion of services and deliverables against the approved work plan, supported by targets and indicators prior to paying invoices submitted by the consultant/research provider
- disseminate deliverables to relevant stakeholders.

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	12.01.2023
Deadline for clarification questions (Clarification Deadline)	19.01.2023
British Council to respond to clarification questions	23.01.2023
Deadline for submission of Proposals by potential suppliers (Response Deadline)	01.02.2023
Final Decision	03.02.2023
Contract concluded with winning supplier	07.02.2023
Contract start date	07.02.2023

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 *British Council's e-Tendering portal hosted at <https://in-tendhost.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 *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
Social Value	10%
Skills, knowledge and experience	50%
Methodology and approach	20%
Commercial	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 bidders 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 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