

Central Bank of Lesotho



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP TITTLE:
**PROVISION OF EXTERNAL AUDIT
SERVICES FOR THE CENTRAL BANK OF LESOTHO**

RFP TITTLE:
CBL/FNC/TC /8/09/2025

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Central Bank of Lesotho (the Bank or CBL) was established by the Lesotho Monetary Act of 1978, as the Monetary Authority in Lesotho. An Amendment Act elevated the Bank to the status of a Central Bank in 1982. In the year 2000, the Central Bank of Lesotho Act No. 2 of 2000 was enacted conferring autonomous status to the Bank. The Bank is fully owned by the Government of Lesotho and managed by the Board of Directors.

The principal objective of the Bank is to achieve and maintain price stability. To attain this objective, the Bank performs several functions in line with modern central banking practices. The other important function of the Bank is to formulate and execute monetary policy for Lesotho.

Other key functions of the Bank include to issue, manage and redeem the currency of Lesotho. The Bank also serves as a Banker for the Lesotho Government and the commercial banks. The Central Bank of Lesotho acts as a custodian of the country's foreign reserves and supervises and regulates the financial institutions. CBL also acts as an advisor to the Government on financial issues.

In 2004, the Bank established Lehakoe Recreation and Cultural Centre (LRCC) as a strategy to develop a diverse environment, promoting healthy living and wellness through physical exercise and promotion of social interaction through highly developed hospitality services, including the sensitisation of Basotho and non-Basotho alike to the cultural heritage of Lesotho. The LRCC is not a separate legal entity from the Bank.

The Bank invites proposals from suitably qualified and independent service providers to provide external audit services in compliance with International

Standards on Auditing.

- i. Only service providers registered with the Lesotho Institute of Accountants (LIA) must partner with the 'big four' audit firms for their extensive global networks, expertise in financial and regulatory audits, ability to manage large-scale audits including auditing complex financial institutions and central banks.
- ii. The registered local audit firms may also partner with reputable second-tier firms to undertake the audit assignment.
- iii. The local firm must be a single legal entity and must disclose any partnerships or joint ventures entered into for purposes of this tender.
- iv. The local firm must be a single legal entity and must disclose any partnerships or joint ventures entered into for purposes of this tender.
- v. The Bank shall enter into a single contract under a joint venture/joint venture arrangement with the entities for the performance of the audit.
- vi. The contract will be for an initial period of three (3) years, with the possibility of renewal based on satisfactory performance.

The financial statements of the Bank are prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Central Bank of Lesotho Act, 2000. The Bank uses International Financial Reporting Standards as a guide on the most appropriate accounting policies to adopt and as a model for the presentation and disclosure framework followed in its financial statements.

2. TERMINOLOGY FOR THIS RFP

Throughout this RFP, the terminology is used as follows:

“Audit Firm” or **“Service Provider”** means the successful Proponent to this RFP who shall enter into a written Contract with the Bank;

“Contract” means the written agreement resulting from this RFP executed by the Bank and the Audit Firm;

“IT” means Information Technology

“Joint venture” means a business arrangement where two audit firms have pulled their resources and expertise for the audit of the CBL Annual Financial Statements;

“LIA” means Lesotho Institute of Accountants

“Must” or “Mandatory” means a requirement that failure to meet shall result in disqualification;

“The Bank” or “CBL” means the Central Bank of Lesotho.

3. SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES

1. SCOPE OF WORK

The appointed service provider shall be expected to undertake the following specific activities:

- a)** Perform a financial statements audit in conformity with International Auditing Standards;
- b)** Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error;
- c)** Design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for an audit opinion;
- d)** Provide a report on whether the financial statements of the Bank are fairly presented in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards;
- e)** Assess material financial misstatements due to fraud or error and provide a report on fraud or error findings;
- f)** Understand the Bank's internal controls and design & plan audit procedures to assess the operating effectiveness of internal controls relevant to the audit;
- g)** Report identified control deficiencies to the Audit Committee and Management with clear recommendations on how to resolve the identified matters.

- h) Highlight areas where controls were found to be inadequate and ineffective in the audit Report;
- i) Assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the Bank's IT General Controls in IT infrastructure including IT Application controls in the financial system;
- j) Evaluate the appropriateness of the Bank's accounting policies, the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by Management;
- k) Evaluate the presentation, disclosures, structure and content of the financial statements;
- l) Assess whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation;
- m) Assess the appropriateness of the use of the going concern basis of accounting disclosing any material uncertainty that may cast significant doubt on the Bank's ability to continue as a going concern;
- n) Assess and report on the Bank's adherence with key compliance and regulatory requirements.

2. DELIVERABLES

1. Key Deliverables

The key deliverables for the exercise include but are not limited to the following:

- a) Understanding the Legal and Regulatory Framework,
- b) Annual Audit Plan

- c) Appreciation of the Bank's operations
- d) Evaluation of the Bank's Internal Controls
- e) Assessment of the Bank's Compliance and Governance Status
- f) Evaluation of accounting policies and estimates
- g) Assessment of the going concern and financial sustainability
- h) Reporting and follow up

2. Key Deadlines

The financial year for the Bank ends on 31 December. The deadlines below must be taken into account during the planning and performance of the audit.

- 2.1. The Annual Audit Plan must be presented to the Audit Committee during the last quarter of the financial year being audited;
- 2.2. The annual financial statements must be signed for submission to the Minister responsible for Finance by 31 March;

4. PROPOSAL PREPARATION (Proposal Format)

1. TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

Evaluation of proposals is made easier when proponents respond in a similar manner. The following format and sequence should be followed in order to provide consistency in proponent responses and to ensure that each proposal

receives full consideration:

a) Key deliverables

Proponents are requested to indicate in detail that they will fully meet or comply with requirements. For each of the key deliverables proponents must outline and detail the general approach of achieving the deliverables, which will manifest central banking audit experience or knowledge. This description should include notes on: factors to be considered, methods, techniques and procedures.

b) Proponents Financial Capability

Proponents should demonstrate their financial capability to meet their financial obligations under the assignment such as payment of salaries, etc. Recent financial statements of the bidder duly signed by an Audit Firm or practicing Chartered Accountant for the past five (5) years should be provided. The bidder's financial statements should be unqualified and profitable along with positive net cash flows.

c) Assignment Plan and Detailed Assignment Approach

It is requested that proponents provide a draft implementation schedule for the proposed audit. The schedule must indicate the delivery of each key component including key milestones and identify the key delivery phases and describe the approach and the expected deliverables from each phase.

d) Company Experience

A Proponent should provide a brief summary of suitability which outlines

specifically the proponent's track record and nature of assignments relevant to this project;

Where activities were performed as a subcontract or a joint venture, this should be clearly indicated, the stating extent of the involvement as well as the subcontractor's track record and experience relevant to this audit;

A list of previously performed external / independent audits comparable to CBL audit requirements where a proponent has rendered a service (s) of similar magnitude. Contact details should also be availed so that contact may be made during the selection process;

Proposals should be accompanied by a minimum of three (3) relevant external / independent audit reference letters comparable to the CBL audit requirements in the last five (5) years.

The profile, relevant international experience and ranking of the international partner or the joint-venture arrangement must be comprehensively outlined;

e) Project Implementation Team Composition and Qualifications

The composition of proposed team for the assignment or for the implementation of the project should be clearly shown and the roles they will play.

The Curriculum Vitae (CVs) of each team member should be provided and show clearly the details as follows: CVs for professional staff and key sub-professional staff proposed. Each CV shall be limited to 3 pages and shall give the following information.

- Name, Age, Nationality and Position in Team;
- Educational Qualifications;
 - Professional Qualifications (professional registration, societies, honours, publications, etc;
- Relevant experience (actual duties performed and degrees of responsibility held must be indicated) including locations, dates and duration of assignments, starting with the latest.
- The team should include specialists and experts in:
 - i) Digitech
 - ii) Actuarial
 - iii) Quality Reviews

The Team Leader should possess experience as follows: at least 5 years' relevant experience in assignments of similar nature.

f) A Statement on Professional Indemnity Insurance

The proponents shall state in their proposals the current levels of professional indemnity insurance and provide evidence thereof.

3. FINANCIAL PROPOSAL

The financial proposals shall be invited at the later stage from only proponents that have satisfactorily met the technical requirements.

4. MANDATORY DOCUMENTS (REQUIRED AS PART OF THE PROPOSAL):

The proponents should have the following documents as attachments to their proposals:

Requirement	Supported by:
Trading Compliance	Valid copy of the trader's license or company registration certificate issued by each proponent's inland registrar of companies.
Tax Compliance	Valid copy of the tax clearance certificate or Tax Compliance Certificate issued by each proponent's Inland tax authority, e.g. SARS or RSL.
Letter of Introduction	One-page letter of introduction identifying the proponent (proponent's name and physical address together with contact details; contact person, telephone number and e-mail address) and signed by the person or persons authorized to sign on behalf of, and bind the proponent to statements made in the proposal
LIA Registration	Certified at source LIA practicing Certificate
Lead Director and/or Partner Identity	The following documents must be submitted: • Certified Copies of Identity Documents of Directors and/or Partners • Police Clearance of Directors and/or Partners
Professional Indemnity Cover	Copy of professional indemnity cover

Workmen's Compensation Insurance Cover	Proof of valid and existing workman's compensation
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Proponents should provide actual documents in PDF format of **Internal Hyperlinks (or Internal Links)** that is clickable links inside the document itself (such as in the Table of Contents) that jump to a specific page, heading, or anchor within the same PDF document.

Provision of a Link or Website referring the Bank to access the documents shall **not** be accepted.

5. REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL PROCESS

1. Contact Point

Enquiries arising from this RFP should be directed in writing @ E-mail: tenderclarifications@centralbank.org.ls

2. Clarifications

Any queries relating to this RFP must be addressed in writing to the contact point designated in 5.1 above on or before 23rd February 2026 Responses will be published on the Bank's website www.centralbank.org.ls on the 27th February 2026.

3. Eligibility

Proposals will not be evaluated if the Proponent's current or past corporate or other interests may, in the Bank's opinion, give rise to a conflict of interest in connection with this audit. Only proposals that comply with all the requirements of this RFP will be considered.

6. DELIVERY OF PROPOSALS

1. Technical Proposal

Technical Proposals must be submitted electronically by email @ tenders@centralbank.org.ls. Electronic PDF email bid submissions/ document/folder should be named "**Technical Proposal for Provision of External Audit Services**".

The technical proposal shall be attached to the email as PDF formats

with **Internal Hyperlinks (or Internal Links)** attachments or folder or zipped folder only. **External Links** are not allowed.

2. Financial proposal

Financial proposals shall be invited at a later stage, only from proponents that have satisfactorily met the technical requirements of the Bank and have scored an overall of 80%.

Proponents who will submit financial proposals with technical proposals shall be disqualified.

3. DEADLINE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF TECHNICAL PROPOSALS

Proposals should be received **on or before Friday, 13th March 2026**. The cut off time for receipt of the proposals is **14:30hrs**. Proposals submitted after the above-specified date and time shall not be considered.

4. OPENING OF PROPOSALS

Technical proposals shall be opened on the same day. Bidders will be sent the tender register.

5. EVALUATION OF TECHNICAL PROPOSALS

Proposals compliant with the requirements for submissions described above shall be evaluated. Technical evaluation shall involve both submission analysis and pitching evaluation.

7. EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. MANDATORY EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proponents will receive a Pass/Fail rating on the Mandatory Criteria, depending on the fulfillment of the requirements listed below. Proponents

missing any of the requirements below will not be considered for the next stage of evaluation. The next stage is the technical evaluation.

REQUIREMENT	YES	NO	REMARKS
Valid copy of the company's license or registration certificate / certificate of incorporation issued by each proponent's inland registrar of companies.			
Valid copy of the tax clearance certificate or Tax Compliance Certificate issued by each proponent's Inland tax authority. E.g. SARS or RSL.			
Signed letter of introduction			
Statement of shareholders accompanied by the following: • Certified Copies of Identity Documents of Directors • Police Clearance of Directors			
Certified (at source) copy of a valid LIA practicing Certificate			
• Copy of professional indemnity cover • Copy of a valid workmen's compensation insurance cover or			

2. TECHNICAL EVALUATION CRITERIA:

Technical evaluation shall comprise of technical proposal evaluation and the oral presentation (pitch).

2.1. Technical proposal evaluation criteria

Technical proposals will be opened and evaluated on the basis of the following criteria, scored as indicated:

2.2.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	
SCOPE	MARKS ALLOCATION
Financial soundness of the proponent demonstrated by unqualified financial reports and no financial losses in the last 5 years.	10
Key deliverables	35
Company Experience and The Profile, relevant international experience and ranking of the international partner or joint-venture arrangement	15
Qualifications, skills and experience of managerial and key staff (based on CVs)	15
Audit Plan	5

(To qualify for pitch evaluation the proponents should score a minimum score of 80% under technical proposal evaluation.)

2.3. Pitch evaluation criteria

The purpose of pitch session (oral presentation) is to validate the information provided by the proponent in their proposal and to test the proponent's understanding of the requirements as detailed in the RFP. The pitch is evaluated and it involves question and answer session. Only proponents that have scored a minimum score of 80% and above shall be invited for the pitch and shall be evaluated based on the criteria as follows:

Evaluation Area	Allocated score
Clarity of the presenter and ability to answer questions appropriately	10
Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of CBL requirements	10
Consistency of the RFP and the presentation (pitch)	10
Total	30

(To qualify for financial evaluation the proponents should score a total weighted (50:50) score of 80% under both submission evaluation and pitch.)

3. Financial evaluation

Financial proposals will be evaluated following completion of the technical evaluation and oral presentations. Proponents that have scored a combined weighted score of 80% under technical evaluation will be invited to submit their financial proposals.

Financial proposals will be evaluated based on the predetermined criteria as below. Proponents will receive a Pass / Fail rating depending on the fulfillment of the requirements listed below. Proponents missing any of the requirements below shall be disqualified.

EVALUATION AREA	YES	NO	REMARKS
Accuracy-100% accuracy			
Compliance - Full compliance to the requirements (taxes, all costs categories as per the RFP).			
Completeness - Complete financial proposal covering all the requirements.			

4. SELECTION FOR AWARD (*Quality and Cost based selection*)

To determine a proposal for award, a weighted score in the ratio of Technical 80% and Financial 20% shall be used. The top-ranked proposal

shall be selected.

8. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE RFP

1. Proposal Validity & Firm Pricing

Proposals should be valid for at least 90 days after the closing date and prices are to be fixed for the entire contract period.

2. Currency

All responses to this RFP should be expressed in LSL Loti or ZAR Rands. Proposals in other currencies shall not be permitted.

3. Taxes

3.1. VALUE ADDED TAX (VAT)

Prices quoted are to be:

- a) Inclusive of 15% Value Added Tax (where applicable); and
- b) In accordance with applicable Lesotho Tax laws.

3.2. WITHHOLDING TAXES

In effecting payment, the applicable withholding taxes shall apply:
10% for foreign companies.

Proponents that include an added amount to their proposed fee as the withholding tax shall be disqualified.

4. OWNERSHIP OF PROPOSALS

All proposals, including supporting documents, submitted to the Bank become the property of the Bank.

5. CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION

- a) All proposals submitted by proponents shall be held in strict confidence and will not be revealed to any other party.
- b) All Information pertaining to the Bank obtained by the proponents as a result of participation in this project is confidential and must not be disclosed without written authorisation from the Bank.
- c) The successful proponent shall be required to:
 - Sign a confidentiality clause.
 - Hand over all the documentation raised over to CBL

6. AMENDMENT OF RFP DOCUMENT

At any time prior to the deadline for submission of responses, CBL, for any reason, whether at its own initiative or in response to a clarification requested by a prospective respondent, may modify the RFP documents by amendment.

All prospective proponents that have received the RFP documents will be notified of the amendment in writing, and such amendment will be binding on them. To allow prospective respondents reasonable time to take any amendments into account in preparing their responses, CBL may at its sole discretion extend the deadline for the submission of responses based on the nature of the amendments.

7. COSTS OF RESPONDING

Proponents are solely responsible for their own expenses incurred during the preparation of the proposal and for subsequent negotiations with the Bank including the “pitch” sessions.

No payment will be made for any costs incurred in the preparation or

submission neither of proposals nor in the negotiations, preparation and signature of the contract or for any other work prior to the engagement date.

If the Bank rejects all or any proposal, it shall not be liable to any proponent for any claims, whether for costs or damages incurred by the proponent in preparing the proposal, loss of anticipated profit in connection with any final contract, or any other matter whatsoever.

8. BACKGROUND CHECK

The Bank reserves the right to check and verify the background of all or any persons (firms, directors, partners, technical staff, etc.) involved in the Bid and reserves the sole right to determine whether or not to accept or reject any such Bid on any grounds.

9. HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Bank adheres to Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) requirements under the Occupational Safety and Health Act No.4 of 2024 and as amended; International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 45001:2018 and other international best practices on OHS. As such, all its service providers shall also be required to comply with applicable Lesotho Legislation on Occupational Health and Safety including Public Health Order No.12 of 1970 as amended and adhere to the Bank's OHS policy.

All service providers must make a consideration to provide their staff with necessary Occupational Health and Safety requirements while undertaking this assignment including a valid workmen's compensation insurance.

10. LANGUAGE OF THE PROPOSAL

The proposal shall be written in the English Language. All correspondence and other documents pertaining to the proposal and its implementation shall also be in English.

11. JOINT VENTURE

If a bidding firm does not have all the expertise for the assignment, there is no objection to the firm associating with another firm to enable a full range of expertise to be presented. The joint venture shall be accompanied with full documented details of the proposed association.

In the case of a joint venture or association, all the firms constituting the joint venture or association will be jointly and severally liable and at least one firm, preferably the lead entity in the joint venture or association shall be financially capable of meeting the contract requirements and potential liabilities on its own and shall assume contracting responsibility and liability for satisfactory execution of the assignment.

The joint venture shall comply with the Practice Bylaws of Lesotho Institute of Accountants.

12. WITHDRAWAL, SUBSTITUTION AND MODIFICATION OF BIDS

Tenderers may modify or withdraw the tender prior to the submission deadline. The modification or notice of withdrawal in writing, shall be effective if it is received by the Bank prior to the Proposal Submission Deadline.

13. ACCEPTANCE AND/OR REJECTION OF PROPOSALS

- a) The Bank is not bound to give reasons for declining any or all of the proposals.
- b) The Bank is not bound to accept the lowest or any bid and may

cancel the bidding process at any stage prior to the award of contract and is not bound to provide reasons for cancellation.