

**Question and Response Document**  
**Solomon Islands Threshold Program Industry Day**  
**Notice ID: SI-Industry-Day**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Topic/ Procurement</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>MCC Response</b>
1	General	How widely has information about this project been disseminated to SI-based firms, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), other organizations, and local people?	MCC and the Solomon Islands (SI) team have been in regular calls with partners in country throughout the program development process and made every effort to inform organizations in SI about these opportunities. MCC is encouraging teaming as a way to secure local qualifications and experience. If you are aware of smaller firms or organizations in Solomon Islands who would be well suited for this work, please feel free to share the procurement information with them.
2	General	Have members of the Advisory Council been engaged or appointed yet?	Members of the Advisory Council have been identified, and MCC and the Solomon Islands Government are discussing the membership list. This is a point of verification and agreement in program negotiations between MCC and the Solomon Islands Government.
3	General	Are the line ministries, for example Ministry of Lands, Ministry of Tourism, Forestry, etc. part of the Advisory Council?	The line ministries involved in both projects are core participants of the Advisory Council. There are a number of ministries that will be critical to meeting ALTIF and FOVEP objectives, and they will be represented on the Advisory Council. For FOVEP, this includes the Ministries of Forestry, Environment, and Women. For ALTIF, this includes the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Ministry of Lands, and the Ministry of Commerce. The Ministry of National Planning and Development Coordination will play an overarching leadership role in performing oversight of both projects.
4	General	Can a member of the private sector join the Advisory Council?	There are two separate councils that will be formed. The Advisory Council will be made up of government officials. However, the Solomon Futures Circle is private and non-governmental in nature. MCC is still in the process of determining the best way to

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			secure innovative, broad-thinking participation in the Futures Circle beyond government. If an individual is interested in participating in the Futures Circle, please send an email to Jacqueline Naranjo at <a href="mailto:naranjoj@mcc.gov">naranjoj@mcc.gov</a> .
5	General	Will the advisory groups be established prior to the close of the procurement?	The Advisory Council will be formally established prior to the close of the procurement. However, the Solomon Futures Circle membership will likely be determined after contract award.
6	General	What is a Public International Organization?	A public international organization (PIO) is defined as an organization composed principally of governments, such as the World Bank Group or the United Nations.
7	General	Who can be investors? Are PIOs the only investors considered for the ALTIF program?	The program is open to any and all investors. From a practical standpoint, we are mainly looking for private investors who demonstrate experience in the Pacific region and/or have worked with social license issues in indigenous communities.
8	General	MCC has indicated that a PIO will implement the investor-facing activity. Has that PIO been identified and if so, can that selection be shared?	MCC has identified the PIO for Activities 1 and 2 under the ALTIF project and has been working with them to finalize the details of the partnership. At this time, MCC can say that the PIO is an entity under the World Bank Group umbrella.
9	General	Has MCC identified the international NGO that will be supporting the FoVEP program and can this information be provided?	MCC expects to make a non-competitive award to an international NGO in support of the FoVEP program. We have identified the international NGO and are currently working with them to finalize the design of the payment for ecosystem services activity. As the agreement has not yet been formally signed, MCC cannot disclose their identity at this time. However, we can say that the approach involves the Nakau Programme methodology.
10	General	There are a lot of players across both of these programs (ALTIF and FoVEP). Is there a framework or a map that outlines all of the components, groups, partners, etc.?	Slide 10 in the presentation contains the framework of the implementation partners for the Threshold Program (THP). For now, MCC recommends focusing on the first two columns, as ALTIF and FoVEP are the two core projects. Activities under these two projects are bolded, and under each

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			<p>activity, the partner(s) carrying out the tasks are listed. A brief summary follows, but MCC recommends viewing the slide for a visual representation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ALTIF Activity 1: PIO and the Community Engagement partner (subject of the Industry Day)</li> <li>• ALTIF Activity 2: PIO only</li> <li>• ALTIF Activity 3: Cross-Cutting Program Support (CCPS) partner (subject of the Industry Day)</li> <li>• FoVEP Activity 1: International NGO</li> <li>• FoVEP Activity 2: CCPS partner (subject of the Industry Day)</li> </ul>
11	General	Will there be an eventual Compact for Solomon Islands and if so, will an award for one of these procurements preclude a firm from bidding on a contract under the Compact?	<p>MCC's Board makes determinations related to compact selection. These country selections are based upon several factors including MCC scorecard performance and, for threshold program countries, THP performance. The Threshold Program is an opportunity for Solomon Islands to demonstrate its willingness to make policy reforms and its capacity to enact them.</p> <p>If Solomon Islands is selected for a compact in the future, it is unclear what the projects would be under that program. Bidders would not be <i>automatically</i> excluded from participating in compact procurements if they were to win a THP implementation contract; however, there's no way to eliminate that possibility altogether. Conflict of interest issues are handled on a case-by-case basis and would be assessed if/when a compact and associated procurements materialize.</p>
12	General	MCC stated that procurements for evaluation will not occur before 2022. At this point, does MCC know if there will be two separate procurements for evaluating the projects?	MCC has not yet finalized the evaluation procurements but does expect that it will be two separate contracts, awarded competitively. More details will be communicated closer to the expected solicitation release date. Vendors may also monitor MCC's <a href="#">Business Forecast</a> , which is updated on a semi-annual basis.
13	Both	The duration of the two contracts is not specified. Can MCC clarify and if	The Solomon Islands Threshold Program (THP) is expected to be about 4 years long,

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		possible specify the expected level of effort for the experts in these assignments?	and the contract periods of performance will be framed around that. The contracts are expected to last for the duration of the THP. At this time, MCC cannot specify the level of effort expected. Additional information regarding overall budget/level of effort <i>may</i> be released in the solicitation/Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) posting, if determined to be necessary.
14	Both	When does MCC intend to launch the solicitations?	<p>For CCPS, the solicitation is expected to be released on beta.SAM.gov in early to mid-May 2021.</p> <p>For Community Engagement, the Annual Program Statement (APS) NOFO is currently available at:  <a href="https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=314279">https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=314279</a>. The NOFO <i>amendment</i> for the opportunity statement specific to the Community Engagement effort is expected to be issued in spring 2021.</p> <p>Please monitor beta.SAM.gov and grants.gov, respectively, for the release of each requirement.</p>
15	Both	When are the projects expected to start?	Both CCPS and Community Engagement services are expected to begin in October 2021.
16	Both	Can one company be awarded both projects? Do you encourage a company to submit offers for both procurements?	Yes, <i>theoretically</i> one organization can submit quotations/concept papers and be awarded both the CCPS and Community Engagement procurements. However, the qualification requirements, submission process, and terms and conditions for each procurement will be quite different. MCC encourages organizations to ensure they are able to fully meet all required expertise for each project before submitting offers for both.
17	Both	Does MCC have an indicative budget for each project?	The estimated budget for CCPS is currently \$3.5M-\$5M; we expect to provide further clarity on the CCPS budget in the final solicitation. The Community Engagement budget will be disclosed in the co-creation phase (Stage II of the APS process).

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18	Both	Can MCC confirm that “solicitation” means a call to submit a full technical and financial quotation?	MCC is using the words “solicitation” and “procurement” as catchall terms, but please note that the process will be different for CCPS and Community Engagement. For CCPS, the solicitation is expected to be released on beta.SAM.gov and require a full technical and financial quotation at time of submission. For Community Engagement, the “solicitation” would be published as an amendment to the <a href="#">Notice of Funding Opportunity on grants.gov</a> and would require only a concept paper, with budget details to be submitted later in the process if a firm/organization is invited to Stage II and beyond.
19	Both	Can MCC share a copy of the timeline?	The anticipated timelines for CCPS and Community Engagement can be found on slides 14 and 29 of the PowerPoint, respectively.
20	Both	All in all, the best model would be time-based invoicing. In such case the consultant guarantees a certain number of working days and invoicing is based on that. If however, milestone payment is mandatory, then it is suggested that payment milestones are always defined for the following 6 months of the contract. This is to ensure that milestones are realistic. We would be interested to know what MCC thinks about this.	<p>MCC is exploring options for contract/agreement type and will include this in the final solicitations that are released. For CCPS, MCC is considering a Time-and-Materials (T&amp;M) contract in which hourly labor and other direct costs would be invoiced on a regular, typically monthly, basis, with payment upon acceptance of the invoice.</p> <p>For Community Engagement, payment/invoicing information can be found in Section A.5 of the document titled “APS NOFO No. 95332419N0001 – Annex A – MCC Assistance Award Standard Provisions,” located under the “Related Documents” tab at the grants.gov link provided in Question 14. For assistance awards such as the proposed Community Engagement project, payment can be in advance (subject to MCC’s due diligence assessment of the proposed recipient) or in arrears; however, assistance awards are purely for the reimbursement of actual costs (including direct <i>and</i> indirect costs) – profit/fee is <b>not</b> permitted under this arrangement.</p>

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21	Both	Will the contract/agreement be made directly with MCC?	Yes, the contract/agreement will be directly with MCC. Please note that there will <i>not</i> be a Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) or accountable entity for Solomon Islands, which differs from most other threshold programs. Instead, MCC headquarters contracting staff will be conducting all procurements in support of the program's implementation, and contracts/agreements will be directly between MCC and the implementing entity.
22	CCPS	Can MCC provide an idea about the experts and their level of effort required for Cross-Cutting Program Support Services?	We anticipate approximately three key personnel for this requirement; however, please note this is subject to change and the final list of key personnel will be included in the solicitation for this requirement. Currently we anticipate: 1) Team Leader, Facilitated Governance Reform (FGR); 2) Monitoring Officer/Jr. Expert; and 3) Communications Expert. See Question 13 for information on the expected level of effort.
23	CCPS	The ToR states " <i>The objective of this activity is not to provide solutions, but rather to facilitate teams of local actors to work together, identify solutions, and make progress towards addressing the complex problems that inhibit meeting the overall program objectives. MCC expects the contractor to be able to provide or procure technical expertise on an as needed basis and when local teams clearly articulate needs and demand.</i> " It is recommended that this approach be maintained in the bidding documents. If, for example, reaching a certain number of agreements with investors would be set as a payment milestone, it would be difficult to submit a bid, because it is very uncertain how much work each agreement would require and whether it would even be possible to reach an agreement in certain cases. Connecting payments to investment agreements would also motivate putting time only	MCC will include more information regarding the contract type and expected deliverables in the final solicitation. Please see the answer to Question 20 regarding payment/invoicing.

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		on easy cases. What are MCC's thoughts on this?	
24	CCPS	When does MCC plan to start the tendering process?	See above answers to Questions 14 and 19.
25	CCPS	Will a final version of the Terms of Reference (ToR) be published in early/mid-May?	The final version of the ToR/statement of work will be released with the solicitation and is expected to be published in early/mid-May. See above answer to Question 14.
26	CCPS	At this stage it is also uncertain what would be the content of the "government reform" as this will be defined during the process. Therefore, it is suggested that facilitating / preparing for government reform would be either a separate work/procurement (defined after it is clear what it would include), or that it would be time based (consultant is expected to invest certain amount of time for the reform work). We are keen to know MCC thoughts on this.	The Facilitated Governance Reform (FGR) Activity will identify reforms needed to meet ALTIF and FoVEP objectives. The CCPS contractor will play a lead organizational and facilitation role in the FGR activity. More information will be provided about this role in the CCPS solicitation.
27	Community Engagement	We understood from the Terms of Reference for Community Engagement Services for the Solomon Islands Threshold Program that MCC expects to engage Implementing Partners to implement the <i>ALTIF Project Activities</i> . Our question is if one organization/consortium can be the implementing partner for all activities?	MCC is currently working with a PIO to implement the land identification and investment promotion activities. As stated in the response to Question 16 above, theoretically one organization could be selected to implement both CCPS and Community Engagement.
28	Community Engagement	Is it possible for MCC to mention when the bidding for selecting implementing partners may open?	Please see above answers to Questions 14 and 19.
29	Community Engagement	The ToR is referring to "social licenses." It is also stating that there are frequent court cases. Does the legislation and/or the recent court decisions support the "social license" concept? I.e. would such social agreement hold in the court?	Court cases related to land tenure are common. Social license is an informal agreement between a community(ies) and an investor around the use of land and sharing of benefits. These agreements may be documented, but whether they would hold up in court in the Solomon Islands is to be determined.
30	Community Engagement	When will organizations hear about RFI responses that were submitted in December?	Organizations should have received a confirmation that their responses to the RFI were received. If you did not get a confirmation, please reach out to the contacts listed in the RFI. MCC does not

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			plan to communicate further with RFI respondents unless there is a specific question on the submission.
31	Community Engagement	Is there any role for community engagement in FoVEP, or is it solely for ALTIF? It seems that FoVEP could also benefit from this role.	<p>For this procurement, the role of the Community Engagement organization is intended only for the ALTIF project.</p> <p>The FoVEP project has a community engagement component but the project uses an alternative mechanism to accomplish this work. Under FoVEP Activity 1, MCC will be partnering with an international NGO which will utilize community engagement methods for the PES activity.</p>
32	Community Engagement	Will the recipient's initial community engagement work and the feedback received from that community play a part in selecting the preferred investment site(s)?	Yes, MCC expects that there will be a lot of cooperation between the Community Engagement partner and the other implementing partners. We expect the recipient of this cooperative agreement to be an active participant in the various stages of land identification activities, so it is expected that they will assist in site selection.
33	Community Engagement	There was mention that "already registered land" will be considered for the project. Does this mean that there will not be any work with land that is not registered?	The focus of the ALTIF project is on previously registered land parcels under the Land and Titles Act. However, there is one task related to formalization of community rights in customary land, which would involve land that is not already registered. This task could potentially be very sensitive, so MCC would make assessments on a case-by-case basis when determining whether it is appropriate to assist the community to formalize customary rights on land. However, the majority of work will be with registered land parcels, not customary land parcels.
34	Community Engagement	Has MCC decided whether this activity is likely to be implemented via just one cooperative agreement or potentially more than one?	At the moment, MCC anticipates that one cooperative agreement will be awarded for the Community Engagement activity, but MCC reserves the right to make multiple awards if deemed to be in the Government's best interest.



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35	Community Engagement	Is MCC providing any funding for Stages II and III of the submission process (i.e., co-creation and full application)?	No, MCC generally does not reimburse proposal costs, and will not provide funding to participate in and/or prepare submissions for any of the stages in the cooperative agreement award process.
36	Community Engagement	Will MCC require cost sharing for the Community Engagement APS opportunity?	No, MCC will not require cost sharing. The NOFO requirement of cost sharing will be waived for the Community Engagement opportunity.