



# **Invitation for Proposals: Policy and Technology Secretariat services for the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI)**

## ***A. Introduction***

IATI is a voluntary, multi-stakeholder, network and community initiative that includes donors, partner countries and CSOs (civil society organisations). IATI maintains an open data standard that aims to make information about qualitative and quantitative development and humanitarian activities easier to access, use, share and understand.

The IATI Governing Board (GB) supported by a representative Working Group of members is undertaking a modified search and selection process among potential host entities for the provision of Policy and Technology Secretariat (PTS) Services to IATI over a period of five years from 2023-2027. All non-profit entities, interested to provide such services, are cordially invited to submit their proposals, following the instructions in this document. Single entities, partnerships, consortia or other legal set ups shall be considered through this process, provided services will be delivered as one, through a clearly defined line of accountability. Proposals should clearly define how this critical objective will be achieved.

Provision of legal and operational support for IATI is solicited through a separate process, with its own invitation for proposals. However, the same entity, partnership or consortia can submit proposals against both invitations.

## ***B. Objective***

The IATI Members' Assembly decided at its December 2021 Members' Assembly that IATI will continue to be a hosted multi-stakeholder initiative through 2027. The PTS services host (further, the host) will carry out policy and technical functions as specified in this document. The arrangements will be set out in a Letter of Agreement to be agreed between the IATI GB and the host.

## ***C. Timeframe***

The mandate of current consortium IATI Secretariat hosts comes to an end in December 2022 and the GB and IATI members wish to identify successor hosting arrangements to enable effective and timely transition to new arrangements in early 2023.

## ***D. Scope of work***

Priorities of IATI may shift based on the outcome of mid-term review of the current 2020-2025 IATI Strategic Plan (slated for 2023) and the formulation and implementation of the next strategic plan after 2025. The GB will undertake the responsibility for ensuring that the functions requested of the host will be commensurate with available resources.

The host should demonstrate its capacity to carry out the following functions, which are not in priority order.

Note that while English is the main working language of the IATI Secretarial and Governing Board, IATI strives to ensure its communications and assets meet the needs of publishers and data users through multilingual content.

## **1. Accountability Structure**

The host will provide support and be accountable to the GB for:

- Acting and delivering as one (particularly if the host is a consortium or other structure involving more than one entity);
- Providing a clear line of reporting to the GB and Members' Assembly as appropriate; and
- Delivering against the strategic plan and work plans, including the results matrix (outcome and outputs) and implementation of IATI activities.

To this end, the host is required to:

- a. Provide an Executive Director (ED) function responsible and accountable for resource mobilisation, delivery against approved work plans, and effective running of PTS. The ED will report formally to the GB on a quarterly basis and annually to IATI members. The GB must be consulted and approve the Terms of Reference and selection of the ED, and be given the opportunity to input into performance reviews of the ED by the host.
- b. Draft annual or multi-year rolling work plans within the agreed scope of work and containing SMART deliverables with details of costs, milestones and planned results, presented in a format that can be regularly monitored by the GB.
- c. Maintain, monitor and manage risks for the initiative.
- d. Keep open lines of communication with the GB and relevant Board focal points on a frequent basis.
- e. Ensure all deliverables meet the requirements outlined in the work plans, and are delivered in a timely manner.
- f. Communicate clear and timely business requirements to the provider of operational and legal support services, in line with GB decisions.
- g. Monitor and report on the implementation of the work plans and track progress against the strategic plan results framework.
- h. Facilitate strategic planning and development of the next five year strategic plan.

The principal recipients of the services above will be the IATI GB, which serves in a governing capacity to the host on behalf of the Members of IATI and the IATI community.

Other organisations or governments who are not members of IATI but who use the IATI standard as publishers or use IATI data to gain insight of development and humanitarian support provided, also benefit from the services of the IATI host through tools as well as support and guidance as outlined in the Strategic Plan, work plans and budget.

## **2. Stewardship of the IATI Standard**

The IATI standard is a core asset of the initiative, canonically detailing how data should be formatted, structured and published. It is essential that the IATI standard is maintained, supported and, where necessary, developed or altered. This area of work focuses directly on the standard. The host would be expected to:

- a. Maintain the integrity and availability of key assets of the standard to all stakeholders: schema; codelists; rulesets.
- b. Provide a public and open platform that documents the IATI standard, including core guidance materials.
- c. Ensure that feedback mechanisms on the standard are in place.
- d. Facilitate channels for stakeholders to discuss, evaluate and collaborate on matters relating to the standard.
- e. Schedule and host the relevant consultative mechanisms to consider, deliberate and propose changes to the standard.
- f. Make use of established governance and working mechanisms to further develop such input, including Working Groups and Communities of Practice.
- g. Where requested, organise advance schedules for any planned programme to undertake changes to the standard (aka “upgrades”).
- h. Communicate notices of changes to core assets of the standard (schema; codelists; rulesets) promptly and transparently to all stakeholders.
- i. Provide analytical support in terms of the adoption and take up of the standard.
- j. Undertake research to risk assess the impact of any proposed changes to the standard.
- k. Where and when requested, undertake research into how the standard could be further developed to satisfy user needs, for example around south-south cooperation or debt management; formulate and present to the GB and IATI members recommendations for updating the standard, following the results of research conducted.
- l. Gather insights and information from and with peer open data initiatives, to both disseminate and utilise models of best practice, as well as to ensure and support interoperability with other standards.

### **3. Technical infrastructure**

The provision and maintenance of a range of tools, services and resources supporting the technical operations of IATI is essential to provide a robust, reliable and secure infrastructure, designed according to user needs.

This area of work focuses on IATI’s technical infrastructure, with the host expected to:

- a. Maintain all core components of IATI, including but not limited to the IATI Registry; the IATI Datastore; the IATI Validator; d-portal, the Country Development Finance Data tool, and the IATI technical foundation including all IATI API services.
- b. Provide and maintain code repositories for the core components, and any future developments. Wherever possible, ensure that all code is openly licensed for reuse.
- c. Ensure technical infrastructure is maintained according to transparent and publicly available metrics including uptime and timeliness of dealing with bugs or issues.
- d. Provide and publish timelines, roadmaps and commitments in terms of how long core components, and any associated services, will be maintained.
- e. Where relevant, undertake research and reviews to explore and propose any significant update or addition to the existing technical infrastructure.
- f. Foster the wider technical community of IATI and promote innovation, including through decisions on procurement of technology services.
- g. Liaise and consult with the IATI community on such proposals in the appropriate channel/fora.
- h. Ensure all tools are developed and maintained according to user needs, and solicit and process feedback from users.

- i. When updating or building new technical infrastructure, ensure that all development is conducted in an open manner, with input and consultation from the IATI community.
- j. Ensure all documentation on core components and services is maintained, available and openly licensed.

#### **4. Publisher and User Support**

The IATI Standard and its technical infrastructure requires a range of support mechanisms to ensure organisations and individuals can effectively publish open data in the IATI format, and/or use the data for their needs.

This area of work focuses on the provision of support channels, materials and other expectations from the host. It includes the following:

- a. Maintain authoritative onboarding guidance materials to organisations seeking to publish to or use the IATI data standard.
- b. Handle registration requests in a timely and efficient manner.
- c. Maintain a Helpdesk to provide a support channel for queries from users where feasible.
- d. Provide targeted, proactive support to potential users of IATI data (e.g. partner country governments and CSOs), according to strategic priorities.
- e. Provide targeted, proactive support to publishers in improving IATI data quality, according to strategic priorities.
- f. Where relevant, generate new public guidance materials, especially when evidenced from repeated user or publisher requests.
- g. Where requested or relevant, support users to seek, or be signposted to, external support or vendors.
- h. Develop training materials and arrange periodic training events for publishers and users of IATI data.

#### **5. Community and Communications**

- a. Maintain and improve the core communication assets of the initiative including the IATI website; social media channels; IATI connect; branding materials.
- b. Actively maintain and monitor social media and communication engagement.
- c. Engage the IATI community actively and regularly through the IATI Connect platform, virtual and in-person events; managing and supporting existing Communities of Practice and Working Groups and, where appropriate, formulate and resource the establishment of new ones.
- d. Channel relevant and timely information to new or prospective members of IATI including publishers wishing to disclose information by using the IATI standard as publishers (official and non-official, multilateral or bilateral, civil society organisations, networks, private sector actors, foundations); data users such as support-receiving governments; journalists, parliamentarians; and the public at large.
- e. Prepare and distribute the IATI Annual Report.
- f. Promote IATI's community space IATI Connect and lead or contribute to relevant discussions of Communities of Practice and Working Groups.

#### **6. Policy and Planning Services**

Guided by the GB and the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), the key policy and coordinating responsibilities of the host include the following:

- a. Provide Secretariat programme and project management for all areas of IATI work

- b. Make arrangements and manage annual Members' Assemblies, working with the Operational and Legal Provider for administrative support.
- c. Draft policy papers and proposals in a timely manner for decision by the GB or the Members' Assembly.
- d. Implement decisions taken by the GB and the Members' Assembly as they may occur.
- e. Approve in-house make or buy decisions which are identified as part of the strategic plan, work plans and budgets.
- f. Maintain and update IATI standard operating procedures in compliance with decisions taken by the GB and the Members' Assembly.
- g. Conduct polls, elections, votes, consultations, written procedures as needed on behalf of the GB.
- h. Actively support the GB- or member-led fundraising activities.
- i. Develop and implement a plan to increase awareness leading to new memberships in IATI, with respect to both strategic alliances and the need for breadth and scope of organisations represented.
- j. Ensure IATI and transparency are included in UN and global processes and political forums through outreach and sustained engagement.
- k. Provide induction training for new members.
- l. Undertake partner country outreach (involving governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in partner countries in country pilots, support participation in meetings, develop guidance).
- m. Where feasible, promote and support regional meetings for Peer review among Publishers and Data users.
- n. Where feasible, promote and support regional meetings with partner countries to encourage new membership.
- o. Effectively collaborate with the provider of legal and operational support services to ensure smooth provision of financial, procurement and other support services.

## ***E. Skills and experience required from candidate organisations***

Candidate organisations are invited to submit proposals for provision of PTS services for IATI, demonstrating how combination of their past experience and existing systems, structures and processes positions them to successfully deliver functions specified above.

The proposals should demonstrate the Candidate Organisations':

- I. Commitment to the values of accountability and transparency;
- II. Commitment to improving the accessibility, use and understanding of information about qualitative and quantitative aspects of development and humanitarian support;
- III. Ability, expertise and skills to improve the validation, accessibility, use and understanding of such information;
- IV. Technical expertise and skills to further develop and implement the IATI data standard, based on member, stakeholder, and community needs, to publish comprehensive, forward looking data;
- V. Technical experience and skills to manage, maintain and improve data standards and understand and avoid incompatibility with other technical publishing standards, engaging with the technical leads on other standards as appropriate; Expertise and skills to maintain and further develop the core technical infrastructure of IATI;
- VI. Expertise and skills to provide technical support services to publishers making use of the data standards and develop the tools necessary to encourage publishers to improve the quality of IATI data from the perspective of the users of IATI data, especially in partner countries or similar;
- VII. Experience in collaborating with a wide variety of stakeholders and their networks (e.g. donor countries, partner countries, CSOs, foundations, multilateral organisations, IT tool providers);

- VIII. Experience, skills and network to advocate for IATI on a global level and to consolidate and further strengthen its perceived value for relevant international initiatives;
- IX. Capacity to support the provision of information, support and outreach services in languages other than English (French being the priority initially)
- X. Project management capability including capacity to manage and deliver work plans; to deliver and buy in and manage services based on value for money; and to regularly report against previously agreed work plans, milestones and results, using SMART indicators;
- XI. Experience in and facilities for outreach and providing information to a variety of stakeholders;
- XII. Experience of providing Secretariat functions to diverse groups of international stakeholders;
- XIII. Absence of any conflict of interest that would prejudice the achievement of the aims of IATI.

## **F. Process**

As agreed by members at their 2021 Members' Assembly meeting, a modified search and selection process is to be undertaken among potential hosting entities seen as acceptable to IATI on the basis of the improved and updated TOR, with a view to selecting and negotiating with a preferred host. On this basis it should be clearly understood that this is not a competitive business tendering process, but a process seeking to identify hosts based on the best strategic fit to meet IATI's strategic objectives.

Proposals should therefore address each of the sections above, clearly and succinctly setting out the proposed structure and clear lines of accountability. Proposals from coalitions should explain how the entities will deliver by working-as one (including a single line of accountability to the GB). It should include profiles of proposed team, indicative costs and overheads; previous relevant experience of entity/ies; and description showing clear alignment with the goals, objectives and core values of IATI.

Entities that are also proposing for the provision of legal and operational support services should indicate this in their proposal, including identifying any efficiencies or other benefits that would arise from the awarding of both Terms of Reference.

The proposals will be evaluated based on combination of the following criteria:

Values	Demonstrated commitment to the same values as promoted by IATI such as transparency, accountability and easy access to data for development and humanitarian activities
Human Resource	Availability of staff resources and technical expertise to implement the PTS services
Experience	Demonstrated experience providing services similar to PTS services described in this document
Cost effectiveness	Total cost associated with the structure proposed by the candidate organisation to deliver the PTS services
Partnerships	Existence of established partnerships with IATI stakeholders and their networks (donors, partner countries, UN and

	multilateral organisations, CSOs, other publishers of transparency data, etc.)
Lack of conflict of interest	Absence of conflict of interest including those that may potentially arise during the delivery of PTS services and other activities carried out by candidate organisation/s as part of their non-IATI-related operations
Complementarity with existing services	Complementarity between PTS services and other activities currently carried out by candidate organisation/s (e.g. that can advance interoperability between IATI and other information transparency standards and initiatives)

If you are interested to submit a proposal, or if you have any questions regarding the information provided in this document, please contact the Governing Board using the following email address: [governingboard@iatistandard.org](mailto:governingboard@iatistandard.org).

Proposals should be clearly marked “**Proposal for provision of Policy and Technology Secretariat services to IATI**” and submitted via e-mail.

## **G. Timeframe**

October	Circulation of this call for proposals among potential hosting entities
6 January 2023	Deadline for submission of proposals by hosting entities
January 2023	Period for review of submissions by selection committee and clarifications
January – February 2023	Selection process undertaken by the IWG through a combination of shortlisting and interviews with organisations that have proposed to deliver the functions within each of the two sets of TORs.
March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on options received from the IWG, the Board makes recommendations to members on most qualified preferred bids for host(s) for the two areas of work;</li> <li>• The Board makes written recommendations of most qualified preferred host(s) to IATI members and previews request for approval to engage the successful bidder(s);</li> <li>• Members meet in person to discuss and approve recommendations from the Board on selection and engagement.</li> </ul>
April-June 2023	New hosts begin to transition towards full hosting