

RFP 2022 001: Travel Management Services, Version 1.0

NEN-AI

November 2022

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Terms and Abbreviations

Term	Description
AI	Artificial intelligence
APEX	Advance Purchase Excursion Fare
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
RFP	Request for Proposal
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

1 Introduction

The National Entrepreneurship Network is an independent organization developing AI-based solutions for social good. We are supported by reputed global institutions such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Google, and USAID. We work closely with central and state governments in India to collaborate on solutions in the domains of healthcare and agriculture.

This request for proposal (RFP) is inviting a qualified, reputable, and experienced company ("Firm") to provide travel management services for the Artificial Intelligence Unit of NEN-AI ("NEN-AI"). This document provides the details of the assignment and expected deliverables. Proposals must be submitted to NEN-AI no later than **14th of December 2022**.

The terms outlined in this RFP shall form part of the contract should the NEN-AI accept a proposal. NEN-AI may, at its discretion, cancel the requirement in part or whole. It also reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal, annul the selection process, or reject all proposals at any time before selection without incurring any liability to Tenderers.

Tenderers may withdraw their proposal after submission, provided that NEN-AI receives written notice of withdrawal before the deadline for submission of proposals. No proposal may be modified after the deadline for proposal submission. No proposal may be withdrawn between the deadline for submission of proposals and the expiration of the proposal validity period. All proposals shall remain valid and open for acceptance for a period of 90 calendar days after the deadline for submission of proposals. A proposal valid for a shorter period may be rejected.

In exceptional circumstances, NEN-AI may solicit the Tenderer's consent to an extension of the validity period. The request and responses for this shall be made in writing.

All communications relating to this RFP must be directed via email to procurement@wadhwaniai.org. Tenderers must not communicate with any other person at NEN-AI regarding this RFP. The proposals prepared by the Tenderer and all correspondence and documents relating to the proposal exchanged by the Tenderer and NEN-AI shall be in English. Supporting documents and printed literature furnished by the Tenderer in another language shall be translated to English - this will prevail for interpretation of the proposal. The responsibility for translation is the Tenderer's responsibility.

A Tenderer requiring any clarification of the solicitation documents may notify NEN-AI in writing at procurement@wadhwaniai.org by the specified date and time mentioned. NEN-AI shall respond in writing to any request for clarification of the solicitation documents it receives by the due date published. Written copies of NEN-AI's response which contain information that may be of common interest to all Tenderers (including an explanation of the query but without identifying the source of inquiry), shall be posted on the NEN-AI website or communicated via email or both.

At any time prior to the deadline for submission of proposals, NEN-AI may, for any reason, whether at its own initiative or in response to a clarification requested by a prospective Tenderer, modify the RFP documents by amendment. The amendments will be posted on the NEN-AI website or communicated via email or both. In order to allow prospective Tenderers reasonable time in which to take the amendment into account in preparing their proposals, NEN-AI may, at its sole discretion, extend the deadline for the submission of the proposal.

2 Submission of Proposals

Tenderers are requested to send a bid via email to procurement@wadhwaniai.org. Two separate files (technical and financial bids) should be attached to the email as outlined below.

The technical file should contain the technical proposal and be titled **RFP 2022 001 TECHNICAL PROPOSAL: (name of Tenderer)**. This must not contain any financial information, as this may result in disqualification.

The financial file should contain the financial proposal and be titled **RFP 2022 001 FINANCIAL PROPOSAL: (name of Tenderer)**. The template for the same is attached as Annexure 1.

The email's subject line must contain the reference number and title of the RFP: **RFP 2022 001: Provision of Travel Management Services for NEN-AI (name of Tenderer)**.

The financial proposal must be password protected. The authorized procurement officer will contact the Tenderers that qualify for the password to open the financial proposal. Tenderers must not send the password to the financial proposal until they are requested to do so by the procurement officer. Financial proposals that are submitted without password protection may be

rejected for non-compliance.

Any proposals received by NEN-AI after the deadline for submission of proposals prescribed in the timeline of this document are liable to be rejected.

NEN-AI requires that all its staff members, tenderers/bidders, suppliers, service providers, and any other person or entity involved in NEN-AI activities observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of all contracts. NEN-AI may reject any proposal put forward by Tenderers or, where applicable, terminate their contract if it is determined that they have engaged in corrupt, fraudulent, coercive, collusive, or other prohibited practices.

In their proposal, Tenderers must confirm that, based on their current best knowledge, there are no real or potential conflicts of interest involved in rendering services for NEN-AI. They must also set out their policy on dealing with conflicts of interest, should these arise.

Information relating to the evaluation of proposals and recommendations concerning the selection of Firm will not be disclosed to Firms that submit proposals.

3 Scope of Services

The scope of services shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

3.1 Air Travel

NEN-AI requires the Firm, in all cases, to book the most direct and cost-effective route in accordance with NEN-AI's travel policy, and provide competitive fares on routes that minimize inconvenience to passengers in order to make informed decisions. While a copy of the travel policy shall be provided to the Firm, it is to be understood that it embodies the following basic principles:

- i. Where available, use of the lowest applicable fare (including APEX fares) shall be the preference.
- ii. First Class, Business Class, or an equivalent mode of travel may be applicable only in situations as per the travel policy or as the NEN-AI designated officer suggests.

- iii. The Firm must be able to administer corporate deals negotiated with operating airlines on behalf of NEN-AI.
- iv. The Firm must be able to provide tickets for domestic and international air travel destinations. Authorizations to purchase such tickets shall be in the form of approved travel requests. If a travel date changes, the Firm must receive corrected travel authorization prior to issuing a ticket with the changed itinerary. As a general policy, the Firm shall immediately make bookings of the most direct and convenient routing and the most economical fare and provide them to the travelers within one business day (9 business hours) upon receipt of the approved travel requests.
- v. The Firm shall provide the following information for each suggested itinerary:
 - Airfare and ticketing deadline
 - Accurate status of the airline on all segments of the journey
 - Fare restrictions including validity, penalties for changes, and cancellations
 - Required visa for transit and entry
 - Health-related information
- vi. Tickets shall be promptly issued along with the detailed itineraries and web check in (in printed and electronic format) showing the accurate status of the airline upon receipt of the traveler's confirmation from NEN-AI Travel desk.
- vii. In the event that the required travel arrangements cannot be confirmed, the Firm shall notify the Travel Desk of any such problem and present alternative routings/quotations for the traveler's consideration.
- viii. For wait-listed bookings, the Firm shall provide regular feedback on the status of the flight and continuously endeavor to secure confirmation.
- ix. The Firm shall also provide alternative quotations in order to secure further cost reductions based on the most direct and cost-effective routing on the appropriately designated travel class.

- x. The Firm shall obtain the lowest applicable fare available on the most direct routes in compliance with the relevant NEN-AI travel policy at the time of booking. In no event shall the Firm procure travel tickets in excess of the amount in accordance with the NEN-AI travel policy without the written approval of the Travel Desk.
- xi. The Firm shall keep abreast of carrier schedule changes, as well as all other alterations and new conditions affecting travel, and make appropriate adjustments for any changes in flight schedules prior to or during the traveler's official trip. When necessary, tickets and billings shall be modified or reissued to reflect these changes.
- xii. Air tickets shall be issued only on approved ticket stock of the International Air Transportation Association (IATA) or ticket stock of recognized, reputable airlines as approved by NEN-AI. However, exceptions should be considered in markets where only regional airlines are operating upon the Travel Desk's confirmation.
- xiii. The administrative hierarchy for decision-making shall be conveyed to the Firm in writing prior to the effective date of this contract.
- xiv. The Firm shall provide an information service to notify NEN-AI travel desk of such events as airport closures, canceled or delayed flights, strikes as well as local political or safety conditions which may affect travel to any particular destination as soon as available, including outside of the regular working hours. The Firm shall also check and advise about the risks of close connections of flights and trains, especially information about mandatory check-in and check-out procedures taking into account the time needed to claim baggage and any need for transit visas. This information shall be included in the planning process.
- xv. The Firm shall render expert advice on itineraries and reserve and issue ticket documents in a timely and accurate manner within the parameters of the travel policy of NEN-AI as requested. The Firm shall retain proper records of all tickets issued and related services provided under the contract for a period to be agreed upon at the signing of the contract. Such records shall be made available for inspection by NEN-AI upon request at all times and on short notice.
- xvi. The Firm shall inform the NEN-AI travel desk of all the conditions of tickets and airfare,

including check-in baggage allowance and any other relevant information prior to departure. For tickets/segments with no check-in baggage allowance, the Firm shall try to add the service and notify the travel desk of the arrangement or lack thereof to be further communicated with the traveler.

- xvii. In case of lost, delayed, or damaged baggage due to airlines, the Firm shall provide support to the traveler for recovery and claims for compensation.
- xviii. The Firm shall only charge NEN-AI for the official trip cost per the established travel entitlement as per the relevant travel policy. Any additional cost resulting from any deviation from the official cost of the trip for the purposes of private travel shall be collected directly from the traveler.
- xix. The Firm shall provide consultants dedicated to serving the NEN-AI during the term of service. The consultants should demonstrate good knowledge and experience in travel globally.
- xx. The Firm shall be given complete copies of NEN-AI travel policies and procedures and shall be fully familiar and in compliance with these for all official travel.
- xxi. The Firm shall immediately process airline refunds for all canceled travels.
- xxii. The importance of confidentiality of the data is to be recognized and the travel itineraries and reservations of its travelers. Accordingly, the firm must keep all information provided to them confidential at all times.

3.2 Visa Arrangements

The Firm shall proactively assist NEN-AI staff members in obtaining visas in line with the relevant consular requirements. This assistance shall consist of providing information regarding visa requirements when providing the official itinerary, providing the forms and applications when requested, conducting visa assistance follow-ups, keeping appropriate records thereon, and planning for delivery and pick-up of documents to/from NEN-AI and embassies/consulates.

3.3 Passport

The Firm shall provide the necessary information/documentation required for and assist with processing a passport renewal for international travelers, when there are six or less blank passport pages left, or the expiration date is less than six months away.

3.4 Insurance

The Firm shall arrange appropriate travel insurance based on the official travel dates of departure and return from/to the duty station when the flight tickets are issued. The Firm shall render assistance, as and when required, to any traveler in case of illness or injury, and in case of loss of or damage to the luggage.

3.5 Forex

The Firm shall make provision for foreign currency in the form of card for international travelers. This shall be an advance payment to the travelers with prior approval.

3.6 Accommodation

The Firm may be requested to make reservations for lodging when necessary. This service shall include initiating and confirming reservations and confirming the all-inclusive rates at which the reservation is made. This involves planning, booking, amending reservations, and paying for accommodation, when applicable, through channels/modes agreed upon, with any hotel group, private hotel, or other accommodation where such arrangement is necessary and approved by NEN-AI. It also involves negotiating discounts on standard tariffs or reduced tariffs with all available hotel groups, private hotels, or other concerns.

3.7 Train Travel

The Firm may be requested to make train reservations as and when required. The reservations are to be done up to 2nd AC Fare per traveler. The firm will communicate with the travel desk on the options available and book accordingly, upon receiving confirmation from the traveler.

3.8 Reporting

The Firm shall provide a bi weekly report to NEN-AI in the format requested, which shall include:

- i. List of travelers, travel dates, and routing from the origin to the destination (sector).
- ii. Ticket numbers, and the ticketing date.
- iii. Penalties and additional or refund amount for changed/canceled tickets.
- iv. Firm service charge for each transaction.

The Firm shall raise invoices bi weekly to NEN-AI and sent to the NEN-AI travel desk/ Admin team along with the above mentioned format including the summary of invoices dates, invoice numbers and cost allocation (Project charged).

The format will be shared with the selected firm at later stage.

The Firm shall develop a database and shall, on a monthly basis or upon request, make the same information available "online" to the NEN-AI.

3.9 Corporate Agreement

The Firm shall inform the NEN-AI Travel Desk of any special offers, discounts, benefits, or advantages from airlines and other travel suppliers with potential cost savings. The Firm may negotiate and arrange corporate agreements between travel suppliers and NEN-AI, where discounts, added benefits, and/or reward points could be provided to NEN-AI travelers without guaranteed sales volume from NEN-AI.

3.10 Private Travel

The Firm shall also attend to NEN-AI staff members' requests for private travel not sponsored by the NEN-AI. However, the official travel requirements shall be accorded the highest priority, and, therefore, the Firm shall ensure that servicing private travel does not delay, impede, or frustrate the Firm's timely and effective processing of NEN-AI official travel.

4 Competencies and Requirements

4.1 Mandatory Competencies

- i. The Firm must be accredited with IATA.
- ii. The Firm has in its current office all the necessary equipment and facilities and shall employ a sufficient number of experienced and professionally trained travel experts and staff members to handle the minimum requirements of NEN-AI.
- iii. The Firm must have at least 5 years of proven experience in providing corporate travel management services with references of client profiles, preferably major NGOs, international bodies, or government entities.
- iv. The Firm shall respond to every email within 15 minutes turnaround time (TAT) and dedicated staff is required who handles queries 24/7. Consultants dedicated to handling NEN-AI travels must have at least 5 years of work experience in ticketing and fare computations in a global setting and proven proficiency in English.
- v. Annexure 1: RFP 2022 001 FINANCIAL PROPOSAL –To be filled by the Firm RATES FOR PROVIDING AIR/TRAIN

Annexure 1: RFP 2022 001 FINANCIAL PROPOSAL –To be filled by the Firm

RATES FOR PROVIDING AIR/TRAIN TICKETS & OTHER RELATED SERVICES

Please include the commercials for the items listed in the formats below along with the services charge % age and final prices for the same:

Sl. No.	Item	Rate for service charges in %age / Management Charges (With dedicated Help Desk)	Rate for service charges in %age / Management Charges (Without dedicated Help Desk)
AIR TRAVEL			
1	For Booking of domestic air tickets in all classes		
2	For cancellation charges of domestic air tickets in all classes		
3	For booking of international air tickets in all classes		
4	For cancellation charges of international air tickets in all classes		
RAILWAY TICKETS			
1	Train tickets booking charges		
2	Train tickets cancellation charges		

3	Tatkal ticket booking charges		
4	Tatkal ticket cancellation charges		
OTHER SERVICES			
1	Visa service charges		
2	Passport service charges		
3	Insurance charges		
4	Forex charges		
5	Domestic/International Hotel Booking charges		
6	Any other related services		
7	GST/Service Tax/Charges (if any) 18% ON Service Charges		

I / We have gone through the contents of the application form carefully. The information supplied by me /us is/are true to the best of my/our knowledge and belief and nothing has been concealed there from. I/We shall abide by the terms and conditions of NEN-AI.