

Request for Proposals to Host the Secretariat of Science Collections International (SciColl)

This document describes the requirements and procedures to be followed for submitting a bid to host the Secretariat of Science Collections International (SciColl). Further details about SciColl and its organizational structure are found in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), and the Terms of Reference and Business Plan, both of which should be consulted when preparing a bid. In the event of any ambiguity in interpreting this document, the language of the MoU will take precedence.

ROLE AND PURPOSE

The SciColl Secretariat Host is to provide the location, facilities and services agreed to in an arrangement between it and the SciColl Executive Board. Expected services include, but are not limited to, staff management, financial management, accountancy, legal services, Internet access, IT capabilities, and logistical & technical assistance. The SciColl Secretariat Host is to house the SciColl Secretariat and manage it in accordance with domestic laws. The SciColl Secretariat Host is to also obtain or provide legal status for SciColl. Subject to the laws of the country in which it is located, the Secretariat Host will be accountable to the Executive Board and General Assembly for all matters pertaining to SciColl, except as otherwise provided in the Terms of Reference.

ELIGIBILITY

A bid may be submitted on behalf of a government or an institution that intends to be a Member of SciColl.

REQUIRED CONTENTS OF A BID

Proposals must include the following information:

- 1. Background:** A description of the proposed host organization, including its location and physical and managerial capabilities and its research collection significance / related resources.
- 2. Plan:** An analysis of how the proposed Secretariat host is to meet the requirements of this solicitation and the requirements stated within the SciColl Terms of Reference and Business Plan, including:
 - **Legal Status of SciColl.** The bid should describe the proposed legal status of SciColl, which should allow it to carry out the activities and work programme under the orders and authority of the Executive Board and General assembly. SciColl should be able to receive and disburse funds, enter into contracts for goods and services, hold title to property, and hire personnel as needed. This status should preferably be similar to that of a non-profit organization with tax-free status consistent with the laws of the country. The bid should describe the benefit, if any, that SciColl could derive from special rules or exemptions (for instance, on taxes or import duties), and the degree of legal/administrative independence for SciColl. It should also include a description of any local regulations that could impose restrictions on SciColl, its funding, or operation. A detailed description of the organizational relationship between SciColl, the Secretariat, and the host organization, including how and when SciColl and the Secretariat is to obtain separate legal status if any, should be included.

- **The Secretariat Host.** The bid should identify a legal entity in the host country that will be closely associated with SciColl and, as specified in a legal agreement with SciColl, may provide certain facilities, infrastructure and services needed to carry out its activities. It should provide an explanation of how the host organization can accommodate the needs of the SciColl Secretariat and which of the required capabilities, if any, is to be outsourced. The date/time frame for the availability of the infrastructures/resources and legal status should be provided. The initial contract for the Secretariat Host will be for a period of five years. Following that period, if agreed by the SciColl Governing Board and the Secretariat Host, the contract may be extended for additional periods. Either party may, without cause, terminate this arrangement by providing six months written notice to the other party.
- **SciColl (Secretariat) Staff.** The bid should specify the employment status of the staff, including rights, benefits and pension rights (if any). Provision should be made for hiring staff of any nationality. The personnel management provisions (hiring, review, termination, etc.) should be described. The potential employment status of staff companions should be specified. The bid should describe the status of SciColl officers and professional staff, technical and support staff and staff companions. The bid should also describe any special provisions for staff co-located with SciColl but seconded from and paid by another institution or country. It should include a description of personnel management provisions (hiring, review, termination, etc.)
- **Receiving funds.** The bid should describe the process for receiving, holding, managing and accounting for funds from contributing countries, public or private institutions, private company sponsors, and other entities. The process for receiving in-kind contributions should also be specified. Plans for management and accounting of SciColl's finances, including a plan of how to manage currency fluctuations and possibly cash flow delays between expenditures and income should be included.
- **Disbursing funds.** The bid should specify how goods and services will be purchased at the request of SciColl under the authority of the Executive Board. It should describe efficient procedures that will allow SciColl to use its funds to pay for certain expenses, including the following:
 - Secretary General: Salary and benefits
 - Staff: Salaries and benefits for staff personnel,
 - Consultants for services including, but not limited to legal and intellectual property rights
 - Travel
 - Expenses incurred by members of the SciColl Executive board, members of the SciColl Science Advisory Board, members of SciColl task groups...
 - Workshops, meetings, training, and technology transfer
 - Purchase and maintenance of specialized equipment or software,
 - Other costs related to SciColl operations, as approved by the SciColl Executive Board
- **Office space and meeting facilities.** The bid should describe a detailed description of the space being offered and its availability, as well as additional services provided by the host for SciColl Secretariat, taking into account a requirement for 5-10 staff number.

3. Budget: Provide an analysis of any funds that the submitting country/institution is offering to commit to the Secretariat, and assurance that these funds are in fact available.

Voluntary Contributions of the Bidding Country/Institution

Each bidding country or institution is encouraged to contribute optional goods and services to SciColl, both at SciColl start-up, and on an ongoing operational basis. Such contributions may include those listed below. This list is meant to provide examples, but not be exhaustive. Each bid should include any relevant items that may not be listed but are deemed valuable by the bidding Host. Each bid should also specify the availability and cost, if any, of the contributions listed below, as well as any other relevant contributions:

- Space and furnishings — including offices and general work areas to support an appropriate and potentially flexible number of Secretariat staff, classroom/conference space, space for visiting scientists and students, off-site temporary housing for visiting scientists and students, desks, chairs. As a frame of reference, number of permanent staff specified in the Business Plan is about 6-8.
- Financial contributions to SciColl above and beyond the Institution or Government Contributions outlined in the Terms of Reference and Business Plan.
- Seconded staff position (technical or administrative), full or part-time, to SciColl Secretariat, to work under the supervision of the Secretary General.
- Utilities, including lighting, electrical (conditioned power), cooling, and heat.
- Communications infrastructure
- Computing infrastructure
- Office equipment
- General facilities infrastructure, including housekeeping services, signage, parking for staff and visitors, postal services, storage, and security.
- Financial services, including general accounting, payroll, inventory, purchasing, audit, tax compliance, and legal compliance. (Electronic/online infrastructure required.)
- Donations and grants management and business development.
- Clerical staff.
- Computing and communications infrastructure services — including ISP and LAN maintenance.
- Contracting services, including the ability to make, accept, and manage contracts with third parties.
- Human Resource Management
- Legal services, including but not limited to services for confidentiality, liability, and protection of intellectual property
- Recruitment and hiring, including the ability to hire non-nationals on a non-discriminatory basis.
- Benefits, including health insurance, a convertible retirement program, sick leave, vacation leave, education and childcare, etc.
- Equal-opportunity recruitment policy.
- Non-discrimination employment policy.

Desirable Attributes

Additional desirable attributes of a bid could include items listed below. Again, this list is not meant to be exhaustive, and the bidding Host should include all items deemed valuable, even if they are not listed.

- Placement of the Secretariat within, or with easy access to, a relevant research collection organisation.
- Proximity and ready availability of information technology, including a robust library and open access to on-line journals.
- Proximity or easy access to other international organizations with whom SciColl might need to coordinate.
- Proximity to an international airport and convenient local ground transportation.
- Meeting facilities
- Access to language/cultural orientation classes for Secretariat staff and families, work permit for staff companions.
- Access to convention planning/hosting capabilities.
- Non-smoking workplace

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF SECRETARIAT HOST

The Secretariat Host is to be chosen by the Executive Board, as defined in the Terms of Reference, or the Acting Executive Board at the time (defined below). The bidders for the SciColl Secretariat Host are required to demonstrate their capacity to provide for institutional arrangements which conform to the closest extent possible, under their respective domestic law, with the criteria for the SciColl Secretariat Host, SciColl Secretariat and Secretary General, as outlined in the SciColl Terms of Reference, Business Plan and in the Request For Proposals To Host The SciColl Secretariat, and which satisfy any other criteria required by the Executive Board.

Acting Executive Board: Prior to the establishment of SciColl as a legal entity, the Acting Executive Board will consist of one delegate from each country and institution having provided evidence of the intent to become Member as defined in the Terms of Reference; Governments from such countries and Institutions are invited to send a letter of intent to the Global Science Forum Secretariat by September 1st 2010.

Criteria for the selection of the Secretariat Host include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The Proposal itself as an example of the Bidder's work (such as the details or completeness in responding to all aspects of the RFP).
- The Bidder's organizational and institutional ability to provide the services listed in this RFP.
- The extent to which to Bidder can host SciColl as an independent legal / administrative entity with purchasing and contracting autonomy.
- The additional amenities offered by the Bidder.
- The financial support and incentives, including but not limited to tax-exempt status and cost of host-provided services, offered by the Bidder.
- Proximity and ready availability of information technology and....
- The Bidder's technical approach and project organization, as presented in response to this RFP.
- The experience of the Bidder in hosting other international programs.

PROCEDURE FOR SUBMITTING A BID

Questions about bids, procedures, selection criteria, or any other related item are welcome in advance of submitting a bid. Please direct all questions to the GSF. The questions, and their responses, will be posted to the SCiColl website in a timely fashion. (Therefore it is strongly encouraged to check the website frequently for updates before submitting a bid.)

Bids should be provided, both in digital form and on paper, in a sealed envelope to the Executive Secretary of the GSF, postmarked by September 1st 2010. The Executive Secretary of the GSF is to notify the bidder when the materials have been received.

PROCEDURE FOR THE REVIEW OF PROPOSALS

The Executive Secretary of the GSF will convene and chair an international committee of three to four members comprised of experts in the areas of research collection management, use or research collection and professional organizations and science administration. These individuals will be capable of providing neutral evaluations, and will not have been previously involved in SciColl.

The proposals are to be sent to the committee at least two weeks prior to their meeting to review the applications. At the review meeting each application is to be discussed by the reviewers and evaluated using the criteria outlined in this document. A brief critique written jointly is to be provided for each proposal delineating the strengths and weaknesses. Criteria which can be directly compared among all bids will be evaluated on a comparative (ranked) basis. Additional criteria, which may not be provided in all bids, will be considered separately on a case-by-case basis. The committee will rank the proposals. Within one month following the postmark deadline, the committee will send to the (Acting) Executive Board copies of the proposals, a document that justifies the rankings, and the brief critiques of all of the proposals.

PROCEDURE FOR SELECTING THE SECRETARIAT HOST

The (Acting) Executive Board is to receive copies of the ranked proposals as well as the reviews from the review committee. The (Acting) Executive Board will meet within three weeks of receipt of the materials from the review committee, and will select the host based on this material. The (Acting) Executive Board should make its final decision by 15 November 2010.