REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

PROVISION OF REGISTRY SERVICES FOR THE CO.ZA, WEB.ZA, NET.ZA AND ORG.ZA SECOND-LEVEL DOMAINS

Reference Number	**RFPZA2026/05**
Date of Issue	02 November 2026
Compulsory Briefing Session	20 November 2026
Clarification Closing Date	30 November 2026
Submission Deadline	14 December 2026, 12h00 SAST
Method of Submission	Responses shall be sent by email to: Email address: procurements@zadna.org.za • File Format: PDF • File names must be maximum 60 characters long and must not contain any letter or special character other than from Latin alphabet/keyboard. • All files must be free of viruses and not corrupted. • Max. File Size per transmission: 10MB • Mandatory subject of email: RFPZA2026/05 - Provision of Registry Services for the co.za, web.za, net.za and org.za Second-Level Domains • Multiple emails must be clearly identified by indicating in the subject line "email no. X of Y", and the final "email no. Y of Y.
Bid Validity Period	120 calendar days from the submission deadline
Physical Address	72 New Road, Glen Austin AH, Midrand, 1685
A mandatory Briefing session will be held on Friday, 20 November 2026 at 11h00AM for all service providers. The session will be held online and be recorded via Microsoft Teams which will be shared upon request. Confirmation to be sent to procurements@zadna.org.za on Thursday, 19 November 2026	
Inquiries/Questions	roquestions@zadna.org.za

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page
1. DEFINITIONS	3
2. INTRODUCTION	4
3. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE RFP	4
4. PROCUREMENT OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTCOME	5
5. HIGH-LEVEL REGISTRY SCOPE OF WORK	5
6. DETAILED REGISTRY SCOPE OF WORK	5
6.1 General requirements	5
6.2 Registrar accreditation	6
6.3 Collection of fees and commercial model	6
6.4 Detailed technical requirements	7
6.5 Infrastructure and facilities management	7
6.6 Registry software	8
6.7 Web registrar services	8
6.8 Security software and services	8
6.9 Risk identification and mitigation	8
6.10 Registry continuity	9
6.11 Name servers and registration data services	9
6.12 Standards compliance	9
7. LOCALISED .ZA REGISTRY SERVICE PRESENCE	10
8. COMPETENCY AND EXPERTISE REQUIREMENTS	10
9. TRANSITION AND IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS	11
10. SERVICE LEVELS AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT	11
11. COMMERCIAL AND PRICING PROPOSAL	12
12. CONTRACT PERIOD, GOVERNANCE AND KEY CONDITIONS	12
13. Bidder OBLIGATIONS, RESERVATIONS AND DISCLAIMER	13
14. CONFIDENTIALITY, PRIVACY AND DATA PROTECTION	13
15. PREFERENTIAL PROCUREMENT AND TRANSFORMATION	14
16. NEWS AND PRESS RELEASES	14
17. PRECEDENCE OF DOCUMENTS	14

Section	Page
18. LANGUAGE	14
19. INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS	14
20. BRIEFING, CLARIFICATIONS, PRESENTATIONS AND DUE DILIGENCE	15
21. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND CRITERIA	15
22. SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS	16
23. BID VALIDITY, AWARD AND CONTRACTING	17
ANNEXURE A: INVITATION TO BID AND Bidder INFORMATION	18
ANNEXURE B: DECLARATION OF INTEREST	18
ANNEXURE C: Bidder DETAILS AND CONDITIONS	19
ANNEXURE D: CONDITIONS OF BID	20
ANNEXURE E: MANDATORY COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST	22
ANNEXURE F: TECHNICAL RESPONSE AND COMPLIANCE SCHEDULE	23
ANNEXURE G: PRICING AND COMMERCIAL SCHEDULE	24
ANNEXURE H: SERVICE LEVEL ACCEPTANCE SCHEDULE	25
ANNEXURE I: TRANSITION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN	25
ANNEXURE J: REFERENCE PROJECTS AND KEY PERSONNEL	26

1. DEFINITIONS

Defined term	Meaning
Acceptable Bid	A Bid that materially complies with the specifications, mandatory requirements, submission instructions and conditions contained in this RFP.
Authority or. zadna	The .za Domain Name Authority, a not-for-profit company established in terms of Chapter X of the Electronic Communications and Transactions Act 25 of 2002.
Bid or Proposal	The complete, signed and binding response submitted by a Bidder in response to this RFP, including all annexures, schedules and supporting documents.
Bidder	A natural or juristic person, consortium or joint venture that submits a Bid and intends to be the main contracting party if appointed.
Commercial SLDs	The CO.ZA, WEB.ZA, NET.ZA and ORG.ZA second-level domains.
Consortium or Joint Venture	Two or more entities that combine their expertise, capital, resources, skills and experience to submit a single Bid and, if successful, perform the Contract jointly in accordance with a signed agreement.
Contract	The written agreement concluded between. zadna and the Successful Bidder, including the Registry Operating Agreement where applicable, the SLA, schedules and all documents incorporated by reference.
EPP	Extensible Provisioning Protocol used for the provisioning and management of domain names.
Preferred Bidder	A Bidder identified by. zadna for contract clarification or negotiation before final award, without creating a binding appointment until the Contract is signed.
Registry Data	All data received, generated, processed, stored or maintained in connection with the Commercial SLDs, including domain, registrar, registrant, billing, transaction, zone, audit and operational data.
Registry Operator	The entity appointed by. zadna to provide the Registry Services described in this RFP.
Registry Services	The technical, operational, administrative, financial, support, security, continuity, reporting and related services required to operate the Commercial SLDs.
RFP	This Request for Proposals and all addenda issued by. zadna under reference **RFPZA2026/05**.
Service Level Agreement or SLA	The performance, availability, support, security, reporting and remedy obligations forming part of the Contract.
Shared Registry System or SRS	The multi-registrar platform used to provision, maintain and manage domain names in the Commercial SLDs.
Successful Bidder	The Bidder formally awarded the Contract by. zadna following completion of the procurement process and execution of the Contract.
Registrar Agreement	The agreement, approved by. zadna, governing a registrar's access to and use of the Registry Services, SRS and Registry Data, including technical, operational, commercial, compliance and data-protection obligations.
Registrant Agreement	The model terms governing the registration and lifecycle of a domain name and the rights and obligations of the registrant, registrar and, where applicable, the Registry Operator, subject to. zadna approval and applicable SLD Charters.

Defined term	Meaning
Registry Operating Agreement or ROA	The principal written operating agreement under which the Successful Bidder is appointed to operate the Commercial SLDs, which may form part of or be used interchangeably with the Contract depending on. zadna's approved legal and regulatory structure.
Regulations	Any regulations made under the ECT Act that apply to registries, registrars, domain name administration or the Registry Services, as amended or replaced from time to time.

2. INTRODUCTION

The .za Domain Name Authority (. zadna) is a not-for-profit company established in terms of Chapter X of the Electronic Communications and Transactions Act 25 of 2002 (ECT Act). Section 65 of the ECT Act provides that. zadna shall:

- Administer and manage the .ZA domain namespace;
- Comply with the best international practices in the administration of the .za domain namespace;
- License and regulate registries and registrars for the respective registries;
- Publish guidelines on the general administration and management of the .za namespace, domain name registration requirements and procedures, and the maintenance of and public access to a repository, with due regard to policy directives issued by the Minister;
- Enhance public awareness of the economic and commercial benefits of domain name registration;
- Conduct investigations and research relating to the domain name system and remain abreast of developments in South Africa and internationally;
- Continually survey and evaluate whether the .za namespace meets the needs of citizens of the Republic;
- Issue information on domain name registrations in the Republic;
- Make recommendations to the Minister on policy matters relating to the .za namespace when requested; and
- Continually evaluate the effectiveness of the ECT Act and measures implemented under it in relation to the management of the .za namespace.

3. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE RFP

3.1. zadna invites suitably qualified and experienced Bidders from the broader ICT and domain name sectors to submit binding proposals for the provision of Registry Services for the Commercial SLDs within the .za namespace.

3.2 The Successful Bidder will be required to manage and administer the Commercial SLDs and their Registry Databases; provide authoritative DNS, registration data directory and related Registry Services; process domain name transactions through a secure Shared Registry System; collect and account for applicable fees; support and accredit registrars; and perform all associated continuity, security, compliance and reporting obligations.

3.3 The procurement is intended to result in the appointment of a Registry Operator under a written Registry Operator Agreement and SLA. Bids must therefore contain a complete technical, operational, commercial, legal, transition and governance proposal capable of evaluation and contracting.

3.4 The Registry Operator shall enable the generation and authoritative publication of DNS resource records, domain availability responses, WHOIS and/or Registration Data Access Protocol (RDAP) services, and other approved registration data services in compliance with the Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013 (POPIA), other applicable data law and. zadna frameworks.

3.5 The ECT Act assigns. zadna responsibility for licensing and regulating registries and registrars and for publishing requirements and procedures applicable to domain name registration. This RFP is intended to standardise the administration of the Commercial SLDs through a clear allocation of roles, responsibilities, controls and accountability between. zadna, the Registry Operator and accredited registrars.

3.6 The final legal instrument for the appointment shall comprise a Registry Operating Agreement, other written authorisation, including the SLA, as determined by. zadna in accordance with the ECT Act and approved governance arrangements.

3.7 Bidders must demonstrate that their solution and operating model can accommodate lawful changes to the regulatory framework during the Contract term without compromising continuity of the Registry Services.

3.8 The appointment of a Registry Operator does not limit. zadna's statutory, regulatory, policy-making, audit or oversight powers.

4. PROCUREMENT OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTCOME

4.1 Appoint a capable, sustainable and accountable Registry Operator for the Commercial SLDs;

4.2 Protect the security, stability, resilience and continuity of the .za namespace and the domain name system;

4.3 Maintain a competitive, fair, transparent and registrar-neutral registry environment;

4.4 Ensure a secure, scalable, standards-compliant and locally hosted registry platform and operating model;

4.5 Implement transparent collection, allocation and reporting of registry fees;

4.6 Enable effective oversight by. zadna through direct access to operational, financial and registry reporting;

4.7 Provide an orderly transition from the incumbent operator with no avoidable disruption to registrars, registrants or the public;

4.8 Support growth, innovation, awareness and adoption of .za domain names; and

4.9 Obtain value for money while meeting public interest, localisation, transformation and sustainability objectives.

4.10 Standardise registry and registrar roles and responsibilities through approved agreements, transparent operating rules and enforceable oversight arrangements.

5. HIGH-LEVEL REGISTRY SCOPE OF WORK

5.1 The Bidder must provide a detailed solution showing how it will deliver the following, at a minimum:

5.1.1 Management and administration of the Commercial SLDs and their registry databases;

5.1.2 Development, maintenance and implementation of internal administrative policies and procedures derived from approved SLD Charters and. zadna policies, in a manner that prevents unfair or anti-competitive practices;

5.1.3 Receipt, validation, processing, registration, update, transfer, renewal, suspension and deletion of domain names;

5.1.4 Provision and operation of suitable authoritative DNS, EPP/SRS, WHOIS/RDAP, registrar portal, billing, reporting, data recovery, back up and Disaster recovery procedures, monitoring and support infrastructure;

5.1.5 Maintenance of complete technical, operational, security, financial and audit records;

5.1.6 Implementation of an effective .za domain name abuse process for domain names registered in the Commercial SLDs;

5.1.7 Lawful acceptance, processing, storage, protection and dissemination of Registry Data;

5.1.8 Maintenance and enhancement of technical and administrative infrastructure to meet agreed service levels and preserve system integrity, stability and availability;

5.1.9 Registrar accreditation, onboarding, testing, support and relationship management;

5.1.10 Reporting to and advising. zadna on policy, operational, technical, security, financial and market matters relating to the Commercial SLDs;

5.1.11 Maintenance and communication of approved wholesale pricing and service packages to registrars; and;

5.1.12 A measurable plan to grow sustainable registrations and renewals within the .za namespace.

6. DETAILED REGISTRY SCOPE OF WORK

This section sets out the minimum requirements. Bidders must respond clause-by-clause in Annexure F, identify any qualification or dependency, and reference the supporting section of their proposal.

6.1 General requirements

6.1.1 Preserve the security and stability of the Commercial SLDs, the .za namespace and the Domain Name System generally.

6.1.2 Comply with and implement the regulatory and policy framework published or approved by. zadna, including applicable conditions, policies, procedures, Registrar Agreements, SLD Charters and administrative policies and procedures.

6.1.3 Operate the Registry Services using globally accepted standards, controls and practices for domain name registry management.

6.1.4 Validate that information submitted by a Registrar for each domain name complies with. zadna requirements, applicable law and the relevant SLD Charter.

6.1.5 Maintain, at a minimum, complete registrant identification and contact details, responsible registrar details, zone records and any other information prescribed by the Registrar Agreement or applicable SLD Charter, subject to privacy requirements.

6.1.6 Pay all fees due to. zadna from domain registrations and renewals within the prescribed period and in accordance with the approved wholesale fee and revenue allocation model.

6.1.7 Provide reasonable online access to permitted registration data free of charge, subject to. zadna policy, operational stability, POPIA and other applicable privacy requirements.

6.1.8 Keep personal information confidential and disclose it only where authorised by law, or a competent court or authority.

6.1.9 Develop and implement, subject to. zadna approval, policies and procedures for domain name registration, renewal, transfer, update, redemption, suspension and deletion.

6.1.10 Deposit Registry Data with a reputable escrow agent approved by. zadna at the agreed frequency and in the agreed format.

6.1.11 Provide all accredited registrars with fair and non-discriminatory access to the SRS as agreed to and documented in a Registry Operator Agreement and, subsequently, the Registrar Agreement.

6.1.12 Manage relationships with registrars, including accreditation, onboarding, certification, support, billing, compliance and communication, subject to. zadna oversight.

6.1.13 Meet technical and operational standards set by. zadna from time to time, including the implementation of approved new technologies and registry practices.

6.1.14 Maintain documented policies and system rules for initial and renewal registration periods, grace periods, redemption and expiry lifecycle management.

6.1.15 Provide. zadna with administrative and read-only operational access to agreed systems, dashboards, reports, audit logs and data extracts.

6.1.16 Maintain an auditable configuration, release, incident, problem, change and capacity management framework throughout the duration of the Agreement.

6.1.17 Submit with the Bid a draft proposed Registrar Agreement suitable for the Commercial SLDs.

6.1.18 Ensure that the proposed Registrar Agreement is consistent with the ECT Act, POPIA, zadna policies and procedures, the relevant SLD Charters, and the requirements of this RFP. The agreement will be subject to. zadna review and approval, and. zadna may withhold approval where any provision is inconsistent with the applicable framework or public-interest requirements.

6.1.19 The proposed Registrar Agreement must address, at a minimum, the terms of access to the SRS and Registry Data; the respective obligations of the Registry Operator and Registrar; supported protocols and software; technical certification; security and data-protection requirements; fees and billing; audit and reporting; service support; suspension and termination; dispute handling; and continuity obligations.

6.2 Registrar accreditation

6.2.1 As of 31 October 2026, approximately **542 registrars** were accredited in the .za namespace. The Bidder must validate the latest number during due diligence and be able to support the full accredited registrar base and reasonable growth over the Contract period.

6.2.2 Operate an authorisation and accreditation process that establishes the required legal agreements and verifies each registrar's technical ability to interact securely with the EPP registry and support function.

6.2.3 Provide registrar development toolkits, technical documentation, sample code where appropriate, test credentials and a fully functional Operational Testing and Evaluation environment.

6.2.4 Define objective certification tests for registrar EPP clients and provide repeatable onboarding, re-certification and suspension processes.

6.2.5 Provide .zadna with continuous access to registrar accreditation records, agreements, compliance status, contacts, transaction status and support information.

6.2.6 Apply registrar requirements consistently, fairly and transparently and maintain an auditable record of decisions and exceptions.

6.2.7 Support bulk communications, planned maintenance notices, incident notices, release notes and policy implementation notices to registrars.

6.3 Collection of fees and commercial model

6.3.1 The current publicly reviewed wholesale fee is R69.00 excluding VAT for each registration or renewal transaction. The fee comprises an allocation retained by the registry operator and. zadna, inclusive of a Non-Commercial Fund aimed at supporting the operational efficiency of non-commercial SLDs. .zadna or the registry operator can from time-to time conduct fee adjustments subject to a consultative process with the relevant stakeholders.

6.3.2 Propose a transparent fee structure showing the amount retained for registry operations, the amount payable to. zadna, and any amount proposed for the subsidisation of approved non-Commercial SLDs.

6.3.3 Provide the financial model, assumptions, transaction volumes, escalation basis, sensitivity analysis and sustainability rationale supporting the proposed fee structure.

6.3.4 Implement an auditable collection, reconciliation, allocation, remittance and exception-management process for all fees.

6.3.5 Provide. zadna with a secure electronic reporting platform and downloadable reports covering registrations, renewals including multi-year registrations, deletions, transfers, registrar balances, invoices, collections, adjustments, VAT,. zadna revenue and any subsidies.

6.3.6 Ensure that the financial and operational reporting platform can be expanded over time and integrated with. zadna-approved systems and data interfaces.

6.3.7 Maintain segregation of duties, approval controls, reconciliations, audit trails, refund controls, debtor management and fraud-monitoring controls.

6.3.8 Permit. zadna and its authorised auditors to inspect records, systems, reconciliations and supporting evidence relevant to revenue and Registry Services.

6.4 Detailed technical requirements

6.4.1 The technical requirements in this RFP are minimum requirements and .zadna may amend or supplement requirements through a formal addendum before the closing date or, after contract award, through the agreed change-control process to address legal, policy, security, standards or operational changes.

6.4.2 The Bidder must submit current-state and proposed-state architecture diagrams, component descriptions, data flows, security zones, integration points, capacity assumptions, dependencies, software ownership/licensing details, hosting locations and a bill of materials.

6.4.3 The solution must separate production, disaster recovery, testing, development and registrar certification environments and must prevent unauthorised data movement between environments.

6.5 Infrastructure and facilities management

6.5.1 Operate a primary live registry environment used for normal full-time service delivery.

6.5.2 Operate a geographically separate secondary or disaster recovery environment capable of assuming primary Registry Services if the primary environment is unavailable.

6.5.3 Maintain continuous or near-continuous replication between the primary and secondary environments, consistent with the proposed recovery point objective.

6.5.4 Locate Registry Data and the primary data-processing environments in South Africa. Any proposed exception or use of a foreign support service must be fully disclosed and is subject to .zadna approval and applicable law.

6.5.5 Use appropriate load balancing, redundancy, fault isolation, auto-scaling and capacity management controls to minimise service interruption.

6.5.6 Implement highly available and redundant WHOIS/RDAP, EPP, portal, DNS, database, billing and monitoring services.

6.5.7 Maintain secure physical and logical access controls, environmental controls, power resilience, connectivity diversity, monitoring and documented facility certifications.

6.5.8 Maintain secure and supported hardware, operating systems, databases, network devices, hypervisors, container platforms and cloud services throughout the Agreement duration.

Component	Minimum expected capability
Solution access	Secure online administrative, registrar and reporting portals; API access where approved.
Compute	Application, EPP/SRS, portal, integration, reporting and support servers or equivalent managed/cloud services.
Database	Highly available relational database management system supporting transactional consistency, concurrency control, replication, backup and recovery.

Component	Minimum expected capability
Storage and backup	Encrypted primary storage, immutable or protected backup, off-site copies, retention management and tested restoration.
Network and security	Load balancers, firewalls, DDoS protection, switches/routers, secure management access, rate limiting, network monitoring and segmented security zones.
Registry software	RFC-compliant EPP registry and SRS, registrar toolkit, administration tools, billing and reporting.
DNS and registration data	Real-time authoritative DNS, DNSSEC, WHOIS and/or RDAP services, zone generation and distribution.
Support	24x7x365 monitoring and technical incident support; customer and registrar support in accordance with the SLA.
Observability	Centralised logging, metrics, traces, alerting, dashboards, audit trails, security monitoring and capacity reporting.

6.6 Registry software

6.6.1 Describe and demonstrate the Registry software, architecture, product roadmap, support model, licensing model, source-code ownership and the rights available to modify, maintain or continue operating the solution for .zadna purposes.

6.6.2 Provide an EPP-compatible registry platform that protects the industry investment in EPP-based registrar integrations.

6.6.3 Provide a stable, scalable, secure, standards-compliant and IPv4/IPv6-enabled SRS capable of supporting multiple registrars and the full domain lifecycle.

6.6.4 Disclose all proprietary components, open-source components, third-party dependencies, licence restrictions, escrow arrangements and end-of-life risks.

6.6.5 Provide separate and suitably controlled production, disaster recovery, staging, test and registrar certification environments.

6.6.6 Support secure APIs and data exports required for .zadna oversight, reporting, audit, regulatory compliance and transition.

6.7 Web registrar services

6.7.1 Provide a secure web-based interface supporting all approved registrar administration functions and relevant registry administration functions.

6.7.2 Use standards-compliant, accessible and responsive web interfaces that operate on supported modern browsers.

6.7.3 Provide role-based access control, multi-factor authentication, audit logging, session security, password and credential controls, and segregation of registrar data.

6.7.4 Provide real-time or near-real-time visibility of transactions, balances, invoices, domain portfolios, reports, support requests and maintenance notifications.

6.8 Security software and services

6.8.1 Describe the security architecture, software and services used to protect Registry Data, including encryption in transit and at rest, key management, secrets management and privileged access management.

6.8.2 Log all security-relevant events and all transactions that query or change Registry Data, protect logs against tampering, and retain them for the period approved by .zadna.

6.8.3 Provide continuous security monitoring, vulnerability management, patch management, malware protection, configuration compliance, threat detection and incident response.

6.8.4 Provide DDoS protection for authoritative DNS and all public-facing Registry Services, including upstream/provider coordination and tested response procedures.

6.8.5 Maintain an information security management system aligned to recognised standards and provide current certifications or independent assurance reports where available.

6.8.6 Conduct regular independent penetration tests and vulnerability assessments, promptly remediate findings according to risk, and provide reports and remediation evidence to .zadna.

6.8.7 Notify .zadna of actual or suspected security incidents within the SLA and cooperate with .zadna, regulators and competent authorities.

6.8.8 Maintain a secure software development lifecycle, code review, dependency scanning, release controls and emergency change procedures.

6.9 Risk identification and mitigation

6.9.1 Identify technical, operational, financial, legal, security, supplier, capacity, staffing, transition and business-continuity risks associated with the proposed service.

6.9.2 Address disruption or unavailability of critical Registry infrastructure arising from internal or external causes.

6.9.3 Address domain registration and management risks, including transaction failure, data corruption, duplicate processing, unauthorised change, billing error and registrar abuse.

6.9.4 Explain the end-to-end implementation and transaction flows for the registrar interface, Registry interface and third-party interfaces including data escrow, WHOIS/RDAP, DNS, payment and reporting services.

6.9.5 Explain day-to-day Registry administration, including registrar onboarding/accreditation, transaction processing, statistical reporting, technical support, billing and interface management.

6.9.6 Provide a risk register showing risk owner, likelihood, impact, controls, mitigation actions, residual risk and monitoring frequency.

6.9.7 Describe dependency and concentration risks relating to cloud providers, data centres, anycast providers, software vendors, payment providers, escrow providers and key personnel.

6.10 Registry continuity

6.10.1 High availability

6.10.1.1 Use geographically and network-diverse redundant systems, including network-level and end-node redundancy and load balancing where appropriate.

6.10.1.2 Maintain a 24x7x365 emergency operations capability capable of responding to critical events.

6.10.1.3 Achieve monthly service availability of at least 99.98% for the core SRS and other critical Registry Services, measured in accordance with the SLA and subject to approved exclusions.

6.10.1.4 Accept service credits, penalties or other contractual remedies for failure to meet agreed service levels.

6.10.1.5 Demonstrate automated failover or documented rapid failover, regular testing and evidence that no single point of failure exists for critical services.

6.10.2 Extraordinary events

6.10.2.1 Use commercially reasonable efforts to restore critical Registry functions within 24 hours after the end or stabilisation of an extraordinary event and restore full system functionality within 48 hours, unless more stringent recovery objectives are proposed and accepted in the SLA.

6.10.2.2 Maintain documented crisis management, communications, escalation, regulatory notification and stakeholder coordination procedures.

6.10.3 Business continuity and disaster recovery

6.10.3.1 Maintain a business continuity and disaster recovery programme aligned to recognised standards such as ISO 22301 and ISO/IEC 27031, ISO 27001or equivalent current standards.

6.10.3.2 Provide for continuity of Registry Services in the event of infrastructure failure, cyber incident, loss of premises, loss of key suppliers, staff unavailability, financial distress or business failure.

6.10.3.3 Nominate a continuity provider or other viable continuation mechanism acceptable to .zadna and authorise .zadna to contact that provider where the Registry Operator cannot be contacted.

6.10.3.4 Conduct Registry continuity and disaster recovery exercises at least annually and after material changes, including failover and restoration testing.

6.10.3.5 Propose recovery time and recovery point objectives for each critical service and demonstrate how these objectives will be achieved and tested.

6.10.3.6 Provide. zadna with exercise reports, lessons learned, remediation plans and evidence of closure.

6.11 Name servers and registration data services

6.11.1.1 Provide a primary master or equivalent secure hidden-master architecture and multiple secondary authoritative name servers for the Commercial SLDs in accordance with best practice.

6.11.1.2 Place authoritative name servers at topologically and geographically dispersed Internet locations and provide appropriate network and provider diversity.

6.11.2.1 Provide software for authoritative DNS services, disclose source-code and modification rights, and support DNSSEC.

6.11.2.2 Provide secure production and test environments with high availability, redundancy and anycast support.

6.11.2.3 Receive delegation and glue information from the Registry System and securely generate, validate and disseminate current zone data.

6.11.2.4 Ensure that authoritative DNS services are continuously available, accessible and current and comply with applicable ICANN and IETF requirements.

6.11.2.5 Provide RFC-compliant DNS clusters and cooperate with approved carriers, ISPs or secondary DNS providers.

6.11.3.1 Ensure name server reachability and performance in accordance with international best practice and the SLA.

6.11.4.1 Deploy and operate anycast services in accordance with RFC 4291, RFC 4786 and successor standards where applicable.

6.11.5.1 Provide reliable public WHOIS and/or RDAP services for the Commercial SLDs in accordance with applicable RFCs, .zadna policy and POPIA.

6.11.6.1 Implement applicable security controls for .za-related zones, including DNSSEC, secure zone generation, key management, monitoring and change control.

6.12 Standards compliance

6.12.1 The Bidder must comply with all relevant existing and future IETF RFCs, BCPs and successor standards applicable to DNS, name server operations, EPP, WHOIS/RDAP, IPv6, DNSSEC, network security and data escrow. The following lists are minimum references and are not exhaustive.

Area	Minimum compliance expectation
DNS	RFCs 1034, 1035, 1123, 1982, 2181, 2182, 3226, 3596, 3597, 4343, 5966 and 6891, including successor standards.
Data escrow	Regular deposits with a reputable, preferably ICANN-approved, escrow provider approved by .zadna. .zadna must be an intended third-party beneficiary and must have access under agreed release conditions.
EPP	RFCs 5910, 5730, 5731, 5732 where host objects are used, 5733 and 5734, including extensions and successor standards approved by .zadna.
IPv6	Accept IPv6 glue records, publish them in DNS, and follow BCP 91 and RFC 4472 or successor guidance.
Network ingress filtering	Implement BCP 38 and BCP 84 or successor controls.
DNSSEC	Deploy DNSSEC in accordance with the .ZA DNSSEC Policy and Practice Statement and relevant standards including RFCs 4033, 4034, 4035, 4509, 5155, 5910, 6841 and 6781, as superseded.
Registration data	Support applicable WHOIS and RDAP standards and .zadna registration data access policies.
Time synchronisation and logging	Use reliable time sources and consistent timestamps for transactions, DNS operations, security events, billing and audit records.

7. LOCALISED .ZA REGISTRY SERVICE PRESENCE

7.1 The primary Registry infrastructure, Registry Data and core operational control for the Commercial SLDs must be geographically located in South Africa.

7.2 The Bidder must maintain a registered and operational presence in South Africa and identify the South African entity that will contract with .zadna.

7.3 The Bidder must identify the location of all production, disaster recovery, backup, monitoring, support and data-processing components and disclose any cross-border processing or support access.

7.4 The Bidder must provide a local operations and support capability with appropriately skilled personnel and effective escalation arrangements.

7.5 The Bidder must provide a localisation, skills-transfer, employment and supplier-development plan aligned to .zadna's public-interest and transformation objectives.

8. COMPETENCY AND EXPERTISE REQUIREMENTS

8.1 Each Bidder must submit the following information and evidence, using the supplied schedules where applicable:

8.1.1 A description of its primary business and the services relevant to this RFP;

8.1.2 Names and profiles of directors, shareholders, controlling interests and key personnel responsible for the proposed services;

8.1.3 Details of ownership structure, subsidiaries, holding companies, related entities and jurisdictions of incorporation;

8.1.4 Demonstrated experience and performance history in domain name registry, DNS, high-availability transaction platforms or comparable critical infrastructure;

8.1.5 Details of the proposed products, technologies, software, licences, support arrangements and services;

8.1.6 A realistic implementation and transition timeframe;

8.1.7 A project organisation structure and named key personnel, including roles, allocation, location, qualifications and relevant experience;

8.1.8 A single accountable contact officer with telephone and email details;

8.1.9 The principal place of business and local operational addresses;

8.1.10 At least three contactable customer references for relevant services;

8.1.11 A declaration of actual or potential conflicts of interest, including interests in registrars, registries, resellers or other domain name sector participants;

8.1.12 The Bidder's current organogram and the proposed contract organogram;

8.1.13 Narrated solution and security architecture designs;

8.1.14 Documented incident, problem, service request, change, release, configuration, capacity and service-management processes;

8.1.15 A transition plan from the incumbent operator, including all Bidder costs and assumptions;

8.1.16 The latest three years of audited annual financial statements, or other approved evidence where the entity has traded for a shorter period;

8.1.17 Evidence of professional indemnity, cyber, public liability and other relevant insurance, or a commitment to obtain cover before commencement;

8.1.18 Evidence of relevant certifications, independent assurance reports and staff certifications; and

8.1.19 A subcontractor schedule identifying each subcontractor, scope, location, value, dependency, data access and contractual accountability.

8.1.20 A draft proposed Registrar Agreement, in line with clause 6.1.17.

8.2 Required organisational and team capabilities

8.2.1 Strong analytical, diagnostic and problem-solving capability appropriate to a nationally significant domain registry environment;

8.2.2 Sound judgement, commercial awareness and the ability to balance operational sustainability with. zadna's statutory and public-interest objectives;

8.2.3 Independence, objectivity, integrity and the ability to manage actual or perceived conflicts of interest;

8.2.4 Ability to provide accurate, complete and timely operational, financial, security, compliance and performance reporting; and

8.2.5 Demonstrated ability to guide efficient and effective operations, assurance activities, continuous improvement and accountable decision-making.

9. TRANSITION AND IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

9.1 The Bidder must submit a fully costed transition and implementation plan covering mobilisation, discovery, design confirmation, environment build, data migration, registrar testing, parallel operation, cutover, stabilisation and handover.

9.2 The transition must avoid preventable interruption to domain registrations, renewals, transfers, DNS resolution, WHOIS/RDAP, registrar access, billing and reporting.

9.3 The Bidder must identify all information, access, cooperation and deliverables required from .zadna, the incumbent operator, registrars and third parties, together with the latest required dates.

9.4 The Bidder must provide a detailed migration approach for Registry Data, transaction history, registrar accounts, billing balances, DNS zone data, DNSSEC material, audit logs, documentation and open incidents, subject to secure-transfer controls.

9.5 The Bidder must define data validation, reconciliation, rollback, parallel-run, cutover approval and post-cutover verification procedures.

9.6 The Bidder must provide registrar communication, certification and support arrangements for any change to interfaces, credentials, endpoints or operating procedures.

9.7 The Bidder must maintain a transition risk register, integrated project schedule, governance structure, decision log, issue log, test plan and readiness checklist.

9.8 The Bidder must propose measurable acceptance criteria and obtain written .zadna approval before each transition stage and final go-live.

9.9 All transition costs must be separately disclosed. Unless otherwise agreed in the Contract, the Successful Bidder will bear its own transition and mobilisation costs.

9.10 The Bidder must provide an exit and reversibility plan enabling orderly transfer of Registry Services, Registry Data, documentation, credentials, configurations, licences and knowledge to .zadna or a successor operator at Contract expiry or termination.

10. SERVICE LEVELS AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

10.1 The Bidder must accept the principle of measurable service levels, continuous monitoring, monthly reporting, root-cause analysis, service improvement and contractual remedies. Final targets and measurement rules will be contained in the SLA.

Service measure	Minimum/expected target	Measurement	Remedy
Core SRS/EPP availability	≥ 99.98% monthly	Monthly	Service credits/penalties and corrective action
Authoritative DNS availability	Bidder to propose ≥ 99.999%	Monthly	Service credits/penalties and corrective action
WHOIS/RDAP availability	Bidder to propose ≥ 99.98%	Monthly	Service credits/penalties and corrective action
Priority 1 incident acknowledgement	≤ 15 minutes	Per incident	Escalation and service credit
Priority 1 restoration/workaround	Bidder to propose; target ≤ 2 hours	Per incident	Escalation, RCA and service credit
Security incident notification to .zadna	Within 30 minutes of confirmation or reasonable suspicion	Per incident	Escalation and contractual remedies
Critical vulnerability remediation	Bidder to propose risk-based target	Per finding	Remediation plan and escalation
Data escrow deposit success	100% of scheduled deposits	Per deposit	Immediate correction and escalation
Backup restoration test	100% successful tests at agreed frequency	Quarterly/annually	Corrective action
Monthly operational and financial report	By agreed business day	Monthly	Escalation

10.2 Bidders must complete Annexure H and may propose improved targets. Any exclusions, maintenance windows, measurement points and dependencies must be clearly stated.

10.3 Planned maintenance must be approved or notified in accordance with the SLA, scheduled to minimise impact, and supported by rollback and communication plans.

10.4 For material or recurring failures, .zadna may require a service improvement plan, independent assurance, additional reporting, management escalation, service credits, penalties or other contractual remedies.

11. COMMERCIAL AND PRICING PROPOSAL

11.1 Submit a complete commercial proposal using Annexure G, with all amounts stated in South African rand and clearly indicating VAT.

11.2 Separate recurring transaction-based charges, fixed monthly/annual charges, once-off transition charges, optional services, pass-through charges and third-party costs.

11.3 State the proposed wholesale fee allocation for registry operations, .zadna, approved non-commercial SLD support and any other proposed allocation.

11.4 State all volume assumptions, minimum commitments, tiers, discounts, indexation/escalation, exchange-rate exposure, licence assumptions and exclusions.

11.5 Provide a ten-year financial model or a model covering the proposed Agreement term, including registration, renewal and deletion assumptions and sensitivity scenarios.

11.6 Confirm that the price includes all personnel, facilities, infrastructure, software, licensing, security, support, monitoring, travel, reporting, audit assistance, transition and overhead required to meet the RFP unless expressly identified as an excluded optional item.

11.7 Identify any costs that may be incurred by .zadna, registrars or registrants outside the proposed wholesale fee.

11.8 Prices must remain firm for the initial period specified in the Bid and thereafter may be adjusted only in accordance with the agreed contract mechanism.

11.9. zadna may evaluate total cost of ownership, revenue impact, affordability, sustainability, risk and value for money, not merely the lowest nominal price.

12. CONTRACT PERIOD, GOVERNANCE AND KEY CONDITIONS

12.1 The anticipated appointment and Registry Operating Agreement term is ten (10) years, commencing after successful transition and written service commencement approval by .zadna. The appointment will be subject to the prospective service provider having a duly constituted Board, ongoing compliance, annual performance review, payment of all applicable fees, maintenance of required licences or authorisations, and .zadna's statutory and governance powers. Any extension beyond ten years will require satisfactory performance, lawful authority and the necessary approvals.

12.2 No automatic renewal or appointment arises from this RFP, preferred-Bidder status, negotiations or any previous relationship with .zadna.

12.3 The Successful Bidder must enter into a Contract, SLA, data-processing terms, confidentiality terms and any escrow, security or transition schedules required by .zadna.

12.4 The Registry Operator remains fully accountable for all subcontracted services. Subcontracting, replacement of key subcontractors and material changes to hosting or software providers require prior written approval from .zadna.

12.5 .zadna will retain regulatory and policy oversight. The Registry Operator may not amend SLD Charters, Registrar Agreements, registry rules, fee structures or material operating policies without .zadna approval.

12.6 The Registry Operator must provide governance forums, monthly operational reviews, quarterly strategic reviews, risk and security reporting, and executive escalation.

12.7 .zadna and its authorised auditors may audit service delivery, security, finances, data, compliance, subcontractors and controls on reasonable notice or immediately where serious risk is suspected.

12.8 The Contract will include intellectual-property, source-code access or escrow, data ownership, licence continuity, confidentiality, POPIA, insurance, indemnity, limitation of liability, breach, termination, step-in, transition assistance and dispute-resolution provisions.

12.9 All Registry Data, .ZA zone data, registrar and registrant records, operational records required for regulatory oversight, and data generated specifically for the Registry Services remain under .zadna's authority and must be returned or transferred in an accessible format on request or termination.

12.10 The Successful Bidder must maintain sufficient resources and financial capacity for the duration of the Contract and promptly notify .zadna of any event that could materially affect performance or continuity.

12.11 The Successful Bidder will be required to sign the Registry Operating Agreement and SLA, together with any licence, data-processing, escrow, security, transition and other schedules required by .zadna, before service commencement.

12.12 The Registry Operating Agreement or licence may contain conditions imposed by .zadna from time to time in accordance with applicable law. The Registry Operator must implement such conditions within the required timeframe, subject to an agreed change-control process where the condition materially affects cost, architecture or implementation.

12.13 The Registry Operator must continuously disclose and appropriately manage actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest, including any interest in a registrar, reseller, registry, hosting provider, escrow provider or other participant whose interests could affect impartial performance.

13. BIDDER OBLIGATIONS, RESERVATIONS AND DISCLAIMER

13.1 This RFP is issued to solicit competitive proposals for the Registry Services. It does not constitute an offer by .zadna and does not bind .zadna to accept any Bid.

13.2 .zadna may, subject to its governance and procurement requirements, amend, postpone, suspend, cancel or reissue the RFP; request clarification or additional information; conduct due diligence; verify information; negotiate with a Preferred Bidder; or elect not to award a Contract.

13.3 Each Bidder bears all costs and risks associated with preparing and submitting its Bid, attending meetings, demonstrations or due diligence, and negotiating any Contract.

13.4 Bidders must independently verify all information and assumptions relevant to their proposals. .zadna does not warrant that estimates, volumes, dates or background information will remain unchanged.

13.5 .zadna may correct errors, seek clarification, waive immaterial administrative defects where permitted, or disqualify a Bid that is late, incomplete, misleading, materially non-compliant or otherwise unacceptable.

13.6 Clarification may not be used to materially alter a Bid, introduce a new solution after closing, or provide an unfair competitive advantage.

13.7 No act or omission by .zadna creates an expectation of appointment. A binding relationship arises only when an authorised written Contract is signed by both parties.

13.8 .zadna may use information submitted for evaluation, governance, audit, regulatory and contracting purposes, subject to confidentiality and applicable law.

13.9 A Bidder must promptly disclose any material change to its Bid, ownership, financial position, conflicts, key personnel, subcontractors or ability to perform during the validity period.

14. CONFIDENTIALITY, PRIVACY AND DATA PROTECTION

14.1 Information provided by .zadna for the RFP may be used only for preparing the Bid and must be disclosed only to persons who need it for that purpose and are bound by appropriate confidentiality obligations.

14.2 Bidders must identify information in their Bid that they reasonably regard as confidential and provide the legal and commercial basis for the claim. A blanket marking of the entire Bid as confidential will not automatically be accepted.

14.3 .zadna may disclose Bid information to its Board, committees, employees, professional advisers, evaluators, auditors, regulators, law-enforcement authorities and other persons authorised by law or necessary for the procurement process.

14.4 Each Bidder must take reasonable steps to prevent unauthorised access to .zadna information and must notify .zadna promptly of any actual or suspected compromise.

14.5 All personal information must be processed in accordance with POPIA and other applicable law. Bidders must minimise personal information included in the Bid and obtain any necessary authority to provide personal information of directors, employees, references and subcontractors.

14.6 Documents and data supplied by .zadna remain .zadna property and must be returned or securely destroyed on request, except where retention is required by law.

14.7 The Successful Bidder will be required to enter into detailed confidentiality and data-processing arrangements and to implement appropriate technical and organisational security measures.

15. PREFERENTIAL PROCUREMENT AND TRANSFORMATION

15.1 .zadna supports broad-based black economic empowerment as an integral part of procurement and expects Bidders to demonstrate commitment and performance in ownership, management control, skills development, employment equity, enterprise and supplier development, local procurement and meaningful participation of SMMEs.

15.2 Bidders must submit a valid B-BBEE status level verification certificate or sworn affidavit, as applicable, and all information required to claim preference points or specific goals.

15.3 The applicable preference point system, specific goals and evidence requirements will be stated in the final invitation or addendum and applied in accordance with .zadna's approved procurement framework and applicable law.

15.4 Consortium and joint venture Bids must provide the required B-BBEE evidence for the bidding structure and each member as specified in the final invitation.

15.5 The Successful Bidder may be required to report periodically against transformation, localisation, skills-transfer and supplier-development commitments included in its Bid.

16. NEWS AND PRESS RELEASES

16.1 No Bidder, agent, consortium member or subcontractor may make a public announcement, media statement, marketing claim or news release concerning this RFP, the evaluation, the award or any resulting Contract without .zadna's prior written consent and coordination.

17. PRECEDENCE OF DOCUMENTS

17.1 Where there is a conflict, the following order of precedence applies unless an addendum expressly states otherwise: (a) formal RFP addendum issued by .zadna, in latest-date order; (b) this RFP and its annexures; (c) written clarifications formally issued by .zadna; and (d) the Bid.

17.2 After contract signature, the order of precedence will be the order stated in the Contract. A Bidder's standard terms do not apply unless expressly accepted in writing by .zadna.

18. LANGUAGE

18.1 Bids and all supporting documentation must be submitted in English. Where an original document is in another language, the Bidder must provide a certified or otherwise acceptable English translation together with the original.

19. INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

19.1 Bidders must submit a complete proposal in the manner, format and by the deadline stated on the cover page and any addendum.

19.2 The Bid must respond to the entire RFP, including the scope, technical requirements, transition, SLA, commercial proposal and all annexures. Partial Bids will not be considered unless expressly permitted by .zadna.

19.3 The electronic submission must contain two clearly separated folders or files: (1) Technical and Administrative Proposal; and (2) Financial Proposal. Pricing must not be included in the technical file except where expressly requested.

19.4 Documents must be in searchable PDF format. Completed schedules may additionally be submitted in editable Word or Excel format where requested. The signed PDF version prevails in the event of inconsistency.

19.5 The Bid must be signed by an authorised representative and include proof of authority, such as a board resolution or equivalent authorisation.

19.6 The Bid must be delivered to **procurements@.zadna.org.za** before the closing date and time. Post, hand delivery or submission to another address will not be accepted unless .zadna issues a written addendum permitting it.

19.7 Late submissions will be disqualified. The Bidder bears the risk of transmission delay, file corruption, password failure or access restrictions.

19.8 Where secure cloud storage is used with .zadna's approval, access must remain available to .zadna for at least 12 months after the closing date, and all passwords or access instructions must be provided before closing.

19.9 File names must include the RFP reference, Bidder name and file description. Bidders should use standard formats and avoid executable files.

19.10 Clarification questions must be submitted in writing to **procurements@.zadna.org.za** by the clarification closing date. Responses of general relevance may be shared with all prospective Bidders without identifying the questioner.

19.11 Bidders must continuously check the .zadna website and procurement communications for addenda, notices and clarifications. Failure to consider an addendum does not excuse non-compliance.

19.12 The Bid must remain valid for 120 calendar days from the submission deadline, unless .zadna requests and the Bidder agrees in writing to an extension.

20. BRIEFING, CLARIFICATIONS, PRESENTATIONS AND DUE DILIGENCE

20.1 The briefing session arrangements will be stated on the cover page or in an addendum. The briefing is compulsory; non-attendance will result in disqualification.

20.2. zadna may require one or more Bidders to make an oral presentation, demonstrate the proposed solution, provide access to a test environment, or respond to scenario-based questions.

20.3 Presentations and demonstrations form part of the evaluation only where stated or communicated by. zadna and may be scored, used to verify the written Bid, or used as due diligence.

20.4. zadna may contact references, inspect facilities, verify certifications, examine financial information, test technical claims and conduct security, legal, operational or commercial due diligence.

20.5 Bidders must provide requested clarification or evidence within the timeframe specified by .zadna. Failure to respond adequately may result in disqualification or an adverse evaluation.

20.6 Any material discrepancy between a Bid, presentation, demonstration, reference response or due-diligence finding may be taken into account in the evaluation.

21. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND CRITERIA

21.1 Bids will be evaluated through the stages below. .zadna may appoint separate evaluation, technical, due-diligence and adjudication structures in accordance with its governance framework.

21.2 Stage 1: Administrative and mandatory compliance

A Bid must satisfy the mandatory submission and eligibility requirements in Annexure E. A materially non-compliant Bid may be disqualified and not evaluated further.

Requirement	Status
Submitted before the closing date and time to the correct address	Mandatory
Signed Bid and proof of authority	Mandatory
CIPC registration and South African contracting entity details	Mandatory
Valid tax compliance status PIN / required tax evidence	Mandatory
Valid B-BBEE certificate or affidavit, where applicable	Mandatory for preference claim
Completed declarations and annexures	Mandatory
Audited financial statements or approved alternative evidence	Mandatory
Acceptance of core RFP conditions or clearly disclosed qualifications	Mandatory
Proposed primary Registry infrastructure and Registry Data located in South Africa	Mandatory
Ability to support EPP, IPv4/IPv6, DNSSEC, data escrow and 24x7 critical support	Mandatory

21.3 Stage 2: Functionality evaluation

21.3.1 Functionality will be scored out of 100. A Bidder must achieve at least 70 points overall and at least 50% of the available points in each criterion to proceed, unless the final RFP or an addendum states a different threshold.

No.	Criterion	Evaluation sub-criterion	Points
1	**Relevant organisational experience and references**	Demonstrated experience operating domain-name registries, registry platforms or equivalent mission-critical infrastructure	4
		Demonstrated DNS, authoritative name-server, EPP/SRS or comparable critical Internet infrastructure experience	2
		Experience operating highly available, geographically resilient and high-volume platforms	2
		Quality, relevance and scale of at least three contactable client references	2
	Subtotal – Criterion 1		**10**
2	**Key personnel and operating model**	Qualifications and technical competence of key personnel	3
		Relevant DNS, registry, cybersecurity, infrastructure and service-management experience of proposed team	3
		Adequacy of local staffing structure and availability of specialist resources	2
		24x7x365 operating model, governance, escalation arrangements and accountability	2
	Subtotal – Criterion 2		**10**
3	**Technical solution and architecture**	SRS/EPP registry platform architecture, functionality and RFC compliance	5
		DNS and authoritative name-server architecture, including IPv4/IPv6, DNSSEC and Anycast	4
		WHOIS/RDAP services and data-access capability	2
		Registrar portal, administrative portal and web-based interfaces	2
		Billing, collections, financial reporting and reconciliation capability	2
		Registry reporting, analytics and .zadna management-access	2

		capability	
		Scalability, performance, maintainability and interoperability	2
		Compliance with applicable IETF, ICANN and .ZA technical standards	1
	Subtotal – Criterion 3		**20**
4	**Security, privacy, resilience and continuity**	Overall security architecture, access control, encryption and security governance	4
		DDoS protection, perimeter security and threat-prevention capability	3
		Security monitoring, logging, detection and incident-response capability	3
		POPIA compliance, data protection and privacy-management controls	2
		High-availability and geographic redundancy architecture	3
		Disaster recovery, backup and restoration arrangements	2
		Registry data escrow arrangements and .zadna accessibility	2
		Business continuity and periodic DR/continuity testing	1
	Subtotal – Criterion 4		**20**
5	**Registry operations, registrar support and service management**	Registrar accreditation, onboarding and certification processes	2
		Registrar technical and customer-support arrangements	2
		Incident, problem, change and service-management processes	2
		Operational monitoring, reporting and performance-management capability	2
		SLA management, escalation, service reviews and operational controls	2
	Subtotal – Criterion 5		**10**
6	**Transition, migration and exit approach**	Overall transition methodology and implementation plan	2
		Detailed project schedule, milestones, dependencies and resource allocation	2
		Registry data migration approach, validation and integrity controls	3
		Testing, integration, registrar testing and operational-readiness approach	2
		Cutover strategy and measures to minimise service disruption	2
		Rollback, contingency and failure-recovery arrangements	1
		Post-implementation stabilisation and support	1
		Stakeholder and registrar communication during transition	1
		Exit, handover, portability and reversibility arrangements	1
	Subtotal – Criterion 6		**15**
7	**Financial capability, governance and risk**	Financial sustainability and ability to fund registry operations throughout the contract period	2
		Corporate governance, internal controls and auditability	1
		Insurance, business-risk management and continuity-of-business arrangements	1
		Subcontractor, third-party and supply-chain governance	1
	Subtotal – Criterion 7		**5**
8	**Growth, localisation, transformation and innovation**	Credible strategy for growing registrations and adoption of the .ZA namespace	3
		South African infrastructure, operational presence and localisation commitment	2
		Skills development and transfer of technical knowledge within South Africa and/or .zadna	2
		SMME participation, supplier development and transformation contribution	2
		Relevant innovation and continuous improvement of registry services	1
	Subtotal – Criterion 8		**10**
	TOTAL		**100**

21.3.2 The standard scoring guide below will be used unless a criterion includes a more specific rubric.

Score	Description
0	No response, non-compliant response or no evidence.
1	Poor response; major gaps; very high risk; little or no relevant evidence.
2	Partially meets the requirement; significant gaps or weaknesses.
3	Meets the requirement adequately with acceptable evidence and manageable risk.
4	Exceeds the requirement in several material respects; strong evidence and low risk.

Score	Description
5	Excellent, comprehensive and innovative response; compelling evidence and very low risk.

21.3.3 Weighted points will be calculated as: score awarded ÷ 5 × criterion weight. Evaluators may moderate scores based on presentations, demonstrations, references and due diligence.

21.4 Stage 3: Due diligence, presentations and risk assessment

21.4.1. zadna may verify technical, operational, financial, legal, security and reference information. A material adverse finding may result in score adjustment, qualification, negotiation conditions or disqualification.

21.5 Stage 4: Price and preference evaluation

21.5.1 The intended preference point system is 80/20, consistent with the approach used in the previous Registry Operator RFP, subject to confirmation in the final invitation or addendum and application in accordance with. zadna's approved procurement framework and applicable law. Qualifying Bids will be evaluated for price and the specific goals stated in the final procurement documents.

21.5.2 For price evaluation, zadna may use the evaluated total cost, proposed wholesale fee/revenue allocation, total cost of ownership, volume assumptions and financial impact over the contract term. Arithmetic errors and inconsistencies may be treated in accordance with the bid conditions.

21.5.3 The highest total score does not create an automatic right to award. .zadna will consider overall value for money, sustainability, material risk, due-diligence findings, affordability and governance approvals.

22. SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

22.1 A complete response pack in searchable PDF format, delivered correctly and on time.

22.2 CIPC registration documents and details of directors or members.

22.3 Valid SARS tax compliance status PIN and, where requested, Central Supplier Database registration details.

22.4 Valid B-BBEE status level verification certificate or sworn affidavit, as applicable.

22.5 Audited annual financial statements for the latest three financial years or approved alternative evidence for a newer entity.

22.6 Completed and signed **Annexures A to J** and all required declarations.

22.7 Proof of authority for the signatory.

22.8 For a consortium or joint venture, a signed agreement identifying the lead member, roles, work split, value split, liability, governance and authorised representative.

22.9 For each proposed subcontractor, legal details, scope, value, B-BBEE status, data access, location and dependency.

22.10 Any other document specified by. zadna through an addendum or clarification.

23. BID VALIDITY, AWARD AND CONTRACTING

23.1 Bids remain valid for 120 calendar days after closing. During this period, a Bidder may not withdraw or materially reduce its offer without. zadna's written consent.

23.2. zadna may request an extension of validity. A Bidder that does not agree may withdraw at the end of the original validity period without penalty but will no longer be considered.

23.3. zadna may appoint a Preferred Bidder for clarification or negotiation. Preferred-Bidder status is not an award and does not create a binding contract.

23.4 Any negotiation may address implementation detail, risk allocation, SLA, pricing clarification, governance, security, transition, data protection and contract wording, but may not undermine fairness or materially change the procurement need.

23.5 The award is subject to required governance approvals, successful due diligence, agreement on final terms and signature by authorised representatives.

23.6. zadna may award based on the whole requirements, may cancel without award, or may take any other lawful action permitted by its governance framework. No split award is contemplated unless stated by addendum.

23.7 Unsuccessful Bidders will be informed in accordance with. zadna policy. Any debriefing or objection process will be governed by the applicable procurement procedures.

ANNEXURE A: INVITATION TO BID AND BIDDER INFORMATION

Bidder information	Details
Name of Bidder	
Trading name	
Company registration number	
Date of registration	
VAT registration number	
Income tax reference number	
TCS PIN	
CSD number (if applicable)	
Postal address	
Street address	
Telephone number	
Cellphone number	
Email address	
Website	
Authorised representative	
Position/capacity	

B-BBEE information	Response
B-BBEE status level	
Certificate or affidavit submitted	☐ Yes ☐ No
Issued by / deponent	
Expiry / signature date	
Bidder resident in South Africa	☐ Yes ☐ No
South African branch	☐ Yes ☐ No
Permanent establishment in South Africa	☐ Yes ☐ No

I certify that the information provided in this annexure is complete and correct and that I am authorised to submit this Bid on behalf of the Bidder.

_____	_____	_____
Authorised signature	Name and capacity	Date

ANNEXURE B: DECLARATION OF INTEREST

This declaration must be completed by the Bidder and, where the Bid is submitted by a consortium or joint venture, by each member. "State" includes any national, provincial or local government institution, public entity or other organ of state.

Ref	Question / information required	Response
B1	Full name of Bidder or authorised representative	
B2	Identity or passport number	
B3	Position occupied in the Bidder	
B4	Company registration number	
B5	Tax reference number	
B6	VAT registration number	
B7	Are you or any person connected with the Bidder employed by the State?	☐ Yes ☐ No
B8	If yes, provide name, institution, position and authority for remunerative work	
B9	Did the Bidder, any director/member/trustee/shareholder or their spouse conduct business with .zadna during the previous 12 months?	☐ Yes ☐ No
B10	Does the Bidder or any connected person have a family, friendship, business or other relationship with a .zadna person who may participate in the evaluation or adjudication?	☐ Yes ☐ No
B11	Are you aware of any such relationship involving another Bidder?	☐ Yes ☐ No
B12	Do directors/members/trustees/shareholders have an interest in another entity bidding for this Contract or operating in the relevant domain name market?	☐ Yes ☐ No
B13	Provide full particulars for every "Yes" answer	

Full name	Identity/passport number	Personal tax reference	State employee/PERSAL number, if applicable

I certify that the information in this declaration is correct and complete. I acknowledge that. zadna may reject the Bid or take appropriate action if this declaration is false, incomplete or misleading.

_____ _____ _____

Signature Name and position Date

ANNEXURE C: BIDDER DETAILS AND CONDITIONS

C1. Bidding structure

Structure	Select
Individual Bidder	☐
Joint Venture	☐
Consortium	☐
Other (describe)	☐

For a consortium or joint venture, list all members and attach the signed agreement:

No.	Member legal name	Registration number	Role / work split	Percentage or value split
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				

C2. Bidder profile

Information	Response
Supplier size classification (Large / QSE / EME)	
Latest financial-year revenue (R)	
Financial year-end date	
First-time business with. zadna (Yes/No)	
Number and total value of current contracts	
Total employees	
Employees assigned to this Contract	
Years operating relevant services	

C3. Entity ownership

Ownership category	Percentage
Black ownership	
Black women ownership	
Black youth ownership	
Ownership by persons with disabilities	
Other ownership	
Total	100%

ANNEXURE D: CONDITIONS OF BID

The Bidder must accept or reject each condition and provide a clear qualification where it does not accept. Failure to complete this annexure may render the Bid incomplete.

D1 The Bidder has provided full and accurate responses to all mandatory questions and understands that an incomplete or materially non-compliant Bid may be rejected.	Accept	Do not accept
	☐	☐

D2. zadna is under no obligation to acquire any item or service merely because it appears in a Bid and is not required to accept the lowest-priced or highest-scoring Bid where lawful reasons support another outcome.	Accept	Do not accept
	☐	☐

D3. zadna may request written clarification, evidence or verification and the Bidder will respond within the stated timeframe.	Accept	Do not accept
	☐	☐

D4 A consortium or joint venture has attached a signed agreement stating roles, work split, value split, governance and liability.	Accept	Do not accept
	☐	☐

D5 .zadna may conduct benchmarks, demonstrations, reference checks, site visits, security checks and due diligence during evaluation and after award.	Accept	Do not accept
	☐	☐

D6 The Bid remains valid for the stated validity period and may not be withdrawn or materially reduced during that period without .zadna's written consent.	Accept	Do not accept
	☐	☐

D7 Every consortium or joint venture member has authorised the Bid and, where required, co-signed the submission.	Accept	Do not accept
	☐	☐

D8 Only written addenda issued by an authorised .zadna representative may amend the RFP.	Accept	Do not accept
	☐	☐

D9 All proposed Services will comply with South African law and applicable technical and industry requirements.	Accept	Do not accept
	☐	☐

D10 The Bidder has responded to the whole RFP and has clearly identified every qualification, assumption and dependency.	Accept	Do not accept
	☐	☐

D11 Changes made by the Bidder to wording in the RFP do not amend. zadna's requirements unless expressly accepted in the Contract.	Accept	Do not accept
	☐	☐

D12 The Bidder is responsible for checking. zadna's website and procurement communications for addenda and updates.	Accept	Do not accept
	☐	☐

D13 The Bidder accepts. zadna's confidentiality, privacy, audit, data ownership, transition and regulatory oversight principles, subject to final Contract terms.	Accept	Do not accept
	☐	☐

D14 The Bidder has disclosed all subcontractors, conflicts of interest, related-party interests and material legal or financial matters relevant to performance.	Accept	Do not accept
	☐	☐

D15 The Bidder will submit and, if appointed, implement. zadna-approved and registrant Registrar Agreements and will enter into the Registry Operating Agreement and SLA before service commencement.	Accept	Do not accept
	☐	☐

ANNEXURE E: MANDATORY COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

Ref	Mandatory requirement	Bidder response (Comply/Do not comply)	Proposal reference / evidence
E1	Bid submitted on time to the correct address		
E2	Signed Bid and proof of signatory authority		
E3	CIPC registration documents		
E4	Valid SARS TCS PIN / required tax evidence		
E5	Valid B-BBEE certificate or affidavit, where applicable		
E6	Three years audited financial statements or approved alternative		
E7	Completed Annexures A to J		
E8	Consortium/JV agreement, if applicable		
E9	Three relevant contactable references		
E10	South African contracting and operational presence		
E11	Primary Registry infrastructure and Registry Data located in South Africa		
E12	EPP-compatible SRS supporting IPv4 and IPv6		
E13	DNSSEC, data escrow, WHOIS/RDAP and authoritative DNS capability		
E14	24x7x365 monitoring and critical-incident response		
E15	Acceptance of 99.98% minimum core SRS availability		
E16	Complete technical, transition, SLA and pricing proposals		
E17	Draft proposed Registrar Agreement and Registrant Agreement submitted		
E18	Bidder accepts the ten-year anticipated term and Registry Operating Agreement/SLA requirement		

ANNEXURE F: TECHNICAL RESPONSE AND COMPLIANCE SCHEDULE

The Bidder must provide a clause-by-clause response. "Comply" means that the requirement is included in the offered price and will be contractually delivered without material qualification. Add rows where required.

RFP ref	Requirement area	Bidder response / qualification	Proposal section and evidence
5	High-level Registry scope of work		
6.1	General Registry requirements		
6.2	Registrar accreditation and support		
6.3	Fee collection and financial reporting		
6.4	Technical architecture and environments		
6.5	Infrastructure and facilities		
6.6	Registry software and source/licence rights		
6.7	Web registrar services		
6.8	Security software and services		
6.9	Risk identification and mitigation		
6.10	High availability, continuity and DR		
6.11	Authoritative DNS, WHOIS/RDAP and DNSSEC		
6.12	Standards compliance		
7	Localised South African presence		
8	Competency, experience and personnel		
9	Transition, migration and exit		
10	SLA and performance management		
11	Commercial model and pricing		
12	Contract governance and key conditions		
6.1.17-6.1.21	Proposed Registrar and Registrant Agreements		
8.2	Organisational and team capabilities		

ANNEXURE G: PRICING AND COMMERCIAL SCHEDULE

G1. Proposed wholesale fee allocation

Component	Amount per registration (excl. VAT)	Amount per renewal (excl. VAT)	Basis / notes
Total proposed wholesale fee			
Amount payable to .zadna			
Amount retained for Registry operations			
Amount allocated to approved non-commercial SLD support			
Other allocation (describe)			

G2. Other charges

Item	Once-off / recurring	Unit	Quantity assumption	Unit price excl. VAT	Total excl. VAT
Transition and mobilisation					
Annual fixed Registry service charge					
Data escrow					
Anycast / secondary DNS					
Security and DDoS protection					
Optional professional services					
Exit / transition assistance					
Other (specify)					

G3. Commercial assumptions

Assumption	Bidder response
Pricing validity period	
Contract term modelled	Ten (10) years
Registration volume assumptions	
Renewal volume assumptions	
Deletion / expiry assumptions	
Escalation/indexation method	
Foreign-currency exposure	
Minimum commitments	
Third-party/pass-through costs	
Payment terms	
VAT treatment	
Excluded costs	

The Bidder certifies that the pricing is complete, transparent and sufficient to deliver the full proposed solution, subject only to the assumptions and exclusions expressly stated above.

_____	_____	_____
Authorised signature	Name and position	Date

ANNEXURE H: SERVICE LEVEL ACCEPTANCE SCHEDULE

Ref	Measure	.zadna minimum/expected target	Bidder target	Qualification / measurement proposal
H1	Core SRS/EPP availability	99.98% monthly		
H2	Authoritative DNS availability	Bidder to propose ≥ 99.999%		
H3	WHOIS/RDAP availability	Bidder to propose ≥ 99.98%		
H4	Priority 1 acknowledgement	15 minutes		
H5	Priority 1 restoration/workaround	Bidder to propose; target ≤ 2 hours		
H6	Security incident notification	30 minutes after confirmation/reasonable suspicion		
H7	RCA for Priority 1 incident	Bidder to propose; target ≤ 5 business days		
H8	Scheduled data escrow deposits	100% successful		
H9	Annual DR/failover exercise	At least once per year		
H10	Monthly reporting	By agreed business day		

The Bidder accepts that the final SLA will include detailed definitions, measurement rules, exclusions, maintenance windows, escalation, service credits, penalties and chronic-failure remedies.

_____	_____	_____
Authorised signature	Name and position	Date

ANNEXURE I: TRANSITION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN SUMMARY

Phase	Key activities	Deliverables / acceptance criteria	Start	Finish	Responsible party	Dependencies / risks
1. Mobilisation						
2. Discovery and due diligence						
3. Detailed design and build						
4. Data migration preparation						
5. Registrar certification and communication						
6. Testing and rehearsal						
7. Parallel operation / cutover readiness						
8. Cutover						
9. Stabilisation and acceptance						
10. Exit readiness / reversibility						

I2. Transition governance and controls

Required item	Bidder response / proposal reference
Integrated project plan and critical path	
Governance structure and meeting cadence	
Data migration and reconciliation method	
Testing strategy and acceptance criteria	
Rollback and contingency plan	
Registrar communication and support plan	
Transition risk register	
Cutover decision process	
Stabilisation and hypercare	
Exit and reversibility plan	

ANNEXURE J: REFERENCE PROJECTS AND KEY PERSONNEL

J1. Relevant reference projects

Client	Service / project	Scale and relevance	Contract period	Contact person	Contact details
Reference 1					
Reference 2					
Reference 3					
Reference 4 (optional)					

J2. Key personnel

Name	Proposed role	Location	Qualifications/certifications	Relevant years	Allocation %	Employment status

J3. Subcontractors and critical suppliers

Entity	Service / dependency	Location	Contract value or %	Data/system access	B-BBEE level	Replacement/continuity plan

End of RFP: All schedules must be completed and submitted with the Bid. Bidders should add supporting pages where necessary but must retain the reference numbering used in this document.