

NZC CESF Procurement

## **CESF Procurement Document to be published externally for the purposes of procuring expert support for cities in Belgium**

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# Abbreviations and acronyms

Acronym	Description
NZC	NetZeroCities
CESF	City Expert Support Facility
RFP	Request for Proposal
NZC-SGA2 / SGA2-NZC	NetZeroCities Specific Grant Agreement No.2 to Scale the Cities Mission Platform

# Summary

This document outlines the scope, process, and evaluation criteria for the deployment of Emergent and Additional Support via the City Expert Support Facility (CESF) to the community of practice among cities within the same national context. The document is organised as follows:

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# 1. Overview

## Executive Summary

This is a Request for Proposal (RFP) that details Climate-KIC's requirements for services to support cities in the NetZeroCities programme, through the NZC City Expert Support Facility (CESF). Please treat this document in accordance with the confidentiality obligations detailed further in this document.

Services and/or goods requested	Expert Support to the <b>community of practice of cities*</b> in Belgium
The legal entity requesting these goods and/or services	Climate-KIC Holding B.V.
Services and/or goods will be delivered to the following locations	Services and/or goods will be delivered to the following locations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Belgium</b></li> </ul> Services will be delivered on-site at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Various cities in Belgium</li> </ul> Additionally, services will be provided remotely to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cities in <b>Belgium</b></li> </ul>
Climate-KIC Contract Manager for submitting proposals and inquiries	Jourdan Wetzlar <a href="mailto:tenders@climate-kic.org">tenders@climate-kic.org</a>
Proposed contract term for successful candidates	12 months, deliverables and activities based

\* Details on what is referred to as a community of practice of cities can be found in Section 1.7.3 below.

**Table 1: Procurement executive summary**

## What is the CESF within the framework of NZC-SGA2 T1.6?

The City Expert Support Facility (CESF) within the framework of NZC-SGA2 1.6 is a grant-funded expert deployment service aimed at enhancing collaboration among cities within their national contexts. It focuses on strengthening the participation of cities interested in climate neutrality, in collaborative spaces and communities of practice among cities offered by national platforms and ecosystems.

Through Work Package 1 in SGA2, specifically from Task1.6, a dedicated support programme is being organised to strengthen communities of practice among cities (including Mission cities and other cities), support collaborative work between them in their national environment, and advocate for greater participation of cities that are not part of the 112 Mission Cities.

## Timelines

Climate-KIC has set the following indicative timelines for this RFP:

Planned Date*	Milestones
14/02/2025	RFP issued to bidders
21/02/2025	Deadline for Bidders to submit clarifications/questions
07/03/2025	Bidders submit proposals / Submission Deadline
14/03/2025	Evaluation Completed, bidders informed of outcome
21/03/2025	Alcatel Period Closes
23/03/2025	Proposed contract start date

\* Climate-KIC reserves the right to amend this timetable during the RFP.

Table 2: Timeline table

If you have questions on the RFP, email the Contract Manager at least 3 business days before the submission deadline. We aim to respond in a timely manner wherever possible. To proceed, please submit a proposal following the requirements by the Submission Deadline stated at Section 1.3. Climate-KIC will assess bids and notify bidders following the timeline at Section 1.3.

## About Climate-KIC

Climate-KIC is Europe's leading climate innovation agency and community, supporting cities, regions, countries and industries to meet their climate ambitions through systems innovation and place-based transformations.

Together with our partners, we generate, implement and integrate climate solutions by mobilising finance, testing business models, and opening pathways for institutional change and behavioural change. We orchestrate large-scale demonstrations that show what is possible when cycles of innovation and learning are deliberately designed to trigger exponential decarbonisation and build resilient communities. Climate-KIC is the project lead for NetZeroCities (NZC).

## About NetZeroCities

**NetZeroCities** (NZC) is a project designed to help cities overcome the current structural, institutional, and cultural barriers they face to achieve climate neutrality by 2030. NZC recognises the need for cities to develop specific strategies that are tailored to suit local and regional contexts, and supports them by developing, promoting, and integrating new and existing tools, resources, and expertise into an online platform accessible to all cities (**Mission Platform**). The project – designed to **support cities that are part of the EU's Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe supported Mission "100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities by 2030"** and other cities aiming at reaching climate neutrality – tailors advanced capabilities related to systemic change, citizen engagement and democratic, participatory governance, capital and financial structuring, and social innovation, to ensure cities have access to expertise needed to address their challenges in becoming climate neutral.

## About CapaCITIES

**CapaCITIES** is a project is a Horizon Europe project (2022-2024) that offers support for national and regional authorities to advance their governance structures and strengthen dedicated support for cities to implement the EU Cities Mission. The project is currently working with national stakeholders in 15 countries, including **Austria, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, and Turkey**.

CapaCITIES work is designed specifically to support the development of national platforms through strengthening the engagement of national entities in designing support services to regional and local authorities to reach climate neutrality. The project will end in March 2024. A new project will be funded to continue the started activities via a Horizon Europe call closed in September 2024, and which is expected to begin in spring 2025, with a planned duration of two years.

## About National Platforms

### 1.7.1 What are National Platforms

National platforms are multi-stakeholder national ecosystems that complement the efforts of the EU Cities Mission platform in their country-specific context. They aim to foster joint learning and progress among all cities that face similar challenges, given their shared national context. They support cities that are part of a community of practice in developing and implementing Climate City Contract (CCC) in the local language and seek to scale up actions and good practices between them. They also provide

assistance to cities for emerging inquiries, ensuring that such support is coordinated jointly with NZC, among many other functions.

National platforms can create a conducive environment for joint learning and collective progress among cities facing similar challenges within the same national context. This is why these communities of practice among cities are also considered ideal workspaces for the participation of cities that are not part of the 112 Mission Cities, to accelerate their transition to climate neutrality. They enable other cities to participate in peer-learning opportunities and collaborative spaces alongside Mission Cities. This interaction provides them with valuable insights and methodologies, fostering a sense of inclusion and engagement in the broader climate neutrality objectives. By facilitating access to tools, resources, and support services developed under the Mission Platform, national platforms ensure that cities can effectively contribute to and benefit from the collective efforts done at national level by Mission Cities towards climate neutrality.

### 1.7.2 Alignment between NZC and CapaCITIES to support National Platforms

NetZeroCities and CapaCITIES work towards better alignment and coordination to deliver complementary support to all European countries and mobilise Member States and Associated Countries to establish their own national platforms for climate neutral cities. This coordination and close collaboration are crucial to build one comprehensive support programme. While CapaCITIES support is designed with the national level in mind, the NetZeroCities services are mostly city-facing.

This means that the two projects offer support at these two levels:

#### **Work with the national level**

CapaCITIES focuses on bringing together national representatives involved in national platforms and includes networking events between countries, transnational exchange of knowledge and good practices, thematic capacity-building sessions, mentoring programs, and resourcing. By doing so, it aims at supporting national authorities in improving national support frameworks for local authorities, including regulatory frameworks. CapaCITIES, given the constraints on resources, emphasises collective learning at the national level rather than providing support to the different national authorities in an individualised way.

#### **Work with the local level**

NZC is designed to support cities and, within the framework of national platform support, to strengthen the community of practice among cities within the same national context. This collective support includes technical assistance, finance and investment advisory, peer-to-peer learning, development of collaborative actions, and collective learning sessions. This approach works in harmony with CapaCITIES' initiatives, creating a synergistic effect that significantly enhances the capacity to reinforce national ecosystems within the Member States.

By providing complementary support, both programs collectively contribute to a more robust framework within the various national contexts for achieving climate neutrality.

### 1.7.3 Community of Practice within the same national context

Throughout this document, the term “community of practice among cities” refers to collaborative spaces where cities of the same country regularly engage with one another on regular basis. These communities are designed to enable local governments to combine efforts in the development and implementation of climate actions aimed at achieving decarbonization, thereby establishing a cohesive community of practice.

The key objectives of the community of practice are:

- A) to empower individuals who work on climate in local administrations and communities;
- B) to foster collaboration between cities, information sharing and the exchange of ideas, experiences, lessons learnt and best practices;

- C) to help municipalities address and tackle concrete barriers.

In this context, cities exchange experiences, collectively address shared challenges, and engage in knowledge-sharing sessions that respond to their evolving needs. Central to these communities of practice is the continuity of interactions, which fosters sustained collaboration among cities that not only face similar regulatory constraints and challenges but also share commonalities in language and cultural nuances. This sustained engagement enables cities to consolidate their efforts, drawing on shared knowledge and best practices within the same cultural and regulatory context.

## 2. Confidentiality

All information provided in this Request for Proposal (hereinafter “RFP”) document and any information that may be subsequently disclosed during discussions, correspondence, and negotiations, is confidential and must not be disclosed to any other party or used for any other purpose whatsoever without the prior written permission of Climate-KIC Holding B.V. or relevant subsidiary (hereinafter “Climate-KIC”).

The Supplier must not disclose any such information, materials, specifications, or other documents to any third parties or to any other part of the Supplier’s group or use them for any purpose other than for the preparation and submission of a response to this RFP. The Supplier must not make any press announcements or publicise in any way Climate-KIC’s name, this document, the quotation process or any subsequent agreement without the prior written consent of Climate-KIC.

Climate-KIC may require the execution of Non-Disclosure Agreement as part of this RFP or for future commercial engagements. As part of preparation for the submission of the response and in any subsequent negotiations, the Supplier is allowed to disclose confidential information to others within the Supplier organisation, external advisors, or subcontractors, provided that the confidentiality conditions are adhered to.

Employees of either party who have access to confidential information must be notified of their obligations with regard to confidentiality and of the disciplinary proceedings which will result if confidentiality conditions are breached.

## 3. Specifications

### Scope

In the context of the efforts of Belgian cities within the **EU Mission for 100 Climate Neutral Cities by 2030**, and specifically the opportunity identified to provide additional support to the community of cities working toward the mission's objectives within the Belgium's national ecosystem, NZC / Climate-KIC is requesting a quotation for services from an organization or individual able to operate within this national context. The role involves supporting teams from NetZeroCities, as relevant, to take charge of and facilitate the process described below.

The following is a **general description of the services** and actions to be provided by the awarded supplier, followed in subsequent sections with detailed information.

- (1) Expert support, namely *collective technical assistance*, aimed at fostering radical collaboration between cities, increasing their capacities and improving the cooperation of the community of practice of cities with national authorities, and different stakeholders within Belgium.

The support will be directed towards cities that are already part of the Mission in Belgium — Mission Cities, Pilot Cities, Twin Cities, cities participating in online discussion groups — and other interested cities wanting to achieve climate neutrality.

- (2) Organisation of one in-person *annual national event* to support cities, promote co-implementation of projects and to enhance collaboration between cities, national and regional authorities, and other stakeholders. The services will also include encouraging the participation of CapaCITIES 2.0 partners or similar initiatives in this event.

Presentations and technical support will take place predominantly in Flemish, French or English; therefore, presenters must be fluent in the three languages. The collaboration and interaction with NetZeroCities partners will be in English.

The **general objective** of the described support is to enhance collaboration between cities in the same national context through the facilitation of training and peer-to-peer learning activities, the provision of specialized technical assistance, and other initiatives. Specifically, it aims to strengthen the community of practice for cities within the national platforms, creating collaborative spaces where Mission cities and other cities committed to decarbonization goals can receive support, work on common challenges, share learnings and make progress toward these objectives.

Additionally, this targeted support is intended as seed funding with the primary objective of maximising impact by strengthening collaborative networks within each country. Therefore, this initiative also aims to serve as kick-start and to encourage the continuity of funding once the support described in this procurement is completed.

### Context

NetZeroCities, through SGA2 Task 1.6, 'Sub-European Peer-to-Peer Collaboration', is actively working to provide tailored support in various national contexts. The aim is to provide additional support to cities, foster communities of practice between cities in each nation, i.e. to strengthen city-to-city collaboration spaces at national level and thus help to reinforce national platforms. To achieve this, NZC has developed a country-specific support framework tailored to the unique characteristics and needs of each context.

In Belgium, four public authorities are engaged in the EU Mission for Climate Neutral and Smart Cities (la Louvière, Leuven, Antwerp, and Brussels-Capital Region). As regional authorities have substantial legislative powers in Belgium, especially regarding urban, energy and climate policies, most of the cooperation regarding climate actions between cities is organized at regional level. In Wallonia, the



Region launched the POLLEC program within the framework of the Covenant of Mayors, other initiatives include the Cities Platform for Walloon cities, and the activities carried out by the Union of the Cities and Towns of Wallonia. In Brussels Capital Region, Innoviris animates a group of 17 municipalities involved in climate actions, with the support of Brulocalis and Brussels Environment. In Flanders, the Flemish Local Energy and Climate Pact (LEKP in Flemish) is a program supporting the objectives of the Covenant of Mayors 2030 and provides technical and financial support to local authorities. VVSG, the association of local authorities in Flanders, has been mandated by the Flemish Region to animate this program. Other relevant initiatives supporting the achievement of climate neutrality by local authorities include the Flemish Cities Knowledge Centre, an inter-local association of 13 Flemish cities, or the 100 Neighbourhoods Platform.

Despite these initiatives, there is room to facilitate collaboration on climate neutrality between cities to accelerate the learning, implementation and transformation curve, based on multi-actor collaboration.

Building on these developments, and as part of the broader NZC program of support to all countries, new services are planned for 2025. In the case of Belgium, these services, which will be contracted through this tender, are to be delivered by an individual or organization with deep expertise in the Belgian national context. This approach ensures targeted support that directly addresses the objectives outlined in this RFP.

Finally, as part of this specific support, each country has a NetZeroCities partner responsible for coordinating the work. In the case of Belgium, this role is fulfilled by Energy Cities.

## Required Experience and Capabilities

The supplier will ensure sufficient capacity to deliver the services in an efficient and effective manner. The organisation, team or individuals delivering the services should be able to demonstrate the following experience and capabilities:

### *Minimum Requirements*

- Fluency in Flemish and French (native speaker or C1 level)
- Minimum C1 level in English
- Proven knowledge of local authorities' competencies, and national regulatory frameworks
- Proven connection with national and local stakeholders for at least 5 years
- Ability to engage with local elected representatives, drive cooperation between local authorities of different sizes, proven by a demonstrated experience of at least 5 years working with local authorities
- Ability to propose systemic approaches to reach climate-neutrality and apply the Mission-approach
- Excellent understanding of policies and regulations at the intersection of climate / environment and urban development
- Good understanding of governance system and competencies relevant for climate neutrality across different levels of governance

### *Desirable experience and capabilities:*

- Good understanding of cities' challenges in achieving climate neutrality by 2030; direct connection to cities.
- Good understanding of the Mission approach
- Good understanding of NetZeroCities and CapaCITIES projects
- An apolitical / neutral role to ensure the ability to build trust among actors from different political spaces, both at the local and between other levels of government
- Good embeddedness into national structures; direct connection to critical national institutions and penholders, including financial eco-system players
- Enabler of cooperation with other stakeholders (private companies, third sector, etc.)
- Ability to coordinate the involvement of the national government, the European Commission and finance institutions (national banks, regional / municipalities public banks, etc).

The supplier will ensure sufficient financial, economic, technical, and professional capacity to deliver the services in an efficient and effective manner.

## Objectives

The following **objectives** are established for the outsourced services, defining the goals that the planned activities should support and accomplish.

Objectives	
Objective	Description
1	<p>Strengthening the community of practice among Belgian municipalities, that is, increase collaboration between cities on local climate neutrality transitions.</p> <p>A community of practice shall be established or strengthened bringing together cities committed to advancing their climate neutrality efforts.</p> <p>The community aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Foster collaboration, information sharing and the exchange of ideas, experiences, lessons learnt and best practices, especially regarding the adoption of the methodologies and tools proposed by NetZeroCities (Transition team, Climate Transition Map, etc.).</li> <li>- Help municipalities identify, address and tackle concrete and common challenges and barriers (for instance making the built environment climate-neutral, developing multimodal mobility systems or regional energy hubs for decarbonised heating and cooling).</li> <li>- Seek to empower those individuals delivering the work on climate in their local administrations and communities.</li> </ul> <p>Cities can also benefit from tailored training that enables them to develop concrete skills relevant for managing local climate neutrality transitions (capacity building). Such training must be adjusted to concrete needs and focus either on overall climate education and awareness raising for political leadership in cities (awareness raising) or more specific tasks, like data collection and GHG emissions accounting or sustainable finance. It could be built upon existing initiatives and frameworks where cities are already collaborating.</p> <p>In the context of the EU Cities Mission, this community shall provide support to local authorities from Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels Region Capital. Addressing only one region won't be sufficient.</p>
2	<p>Build skills and strengthen capacities amongst Belgian municipalities to implement innovative climate action, following a holistic, transformative and systemic approach</p> <p><b>There can be one description per objective or more than one objective per description, to avoid repetition.</b></p>
3	<p>Support the involvement of the community of cities in the multi-level collaboration between local, regional and national authorities, as well as in</p> <p>Support shall be provided to the community of cities to engage in the multi-stakeholder and multi-level collaboration spaces, in order to facilitate the expression of needs, to collaborate in the design of services proposed by national stakeholders, their governance, and in addressing policy barriers.</p>

	<p>the multi-stakeholder collaboration between public authorities, academia/research, the private sector and civil society.</p>	<p>This support shall be delivered in close collaboration with national partners (incl. CapaCITIES partners) that NZC is engaged with, to avoid the duplication of efforts. For instance, in Belgium, on-going dialogues are organised by members of the EU Mission Board to encourage multi-actor collaboration, and improve the dialogue with regional and national governments, based on the learnings from existing initiatives.</p> <p>The support provided will aim to help cities align their requests towards the regional and national level and to strengthen their capacities to engage with various stakeholders, such as businesses and investors, to secure commitments to climate neutrality and drive concrete action (facilitating multilevel and multistakeholder collaboration).</p>
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## Responsibilities

Responsibilities	
1	<p>Awarded supplier will take part of regular meetings (estimated at once per month) with NZC partners to ensure the coordination of the activities with other support provided by NZC (that we aim at coordinating with national stakeholders, including CapaCITIES, Covenant of Mayors, etc.). The awarded supplier will not carry out activities within the scope of the awarded services without the respective coordination with NZC.</p>
2	<p>Awarded supplier will use the NZC communication materials and apply the communication guidelines provided by NZC. Awarded supplier won't promote their own- or third-party services when delivering the required services, unless formally agreed by the NZC partner in charge of coordinating the work in the concerned country.</p>
3	<p>Awarded supplier will participate in NZC's Capacity Building Activities where necessary (up to one 2h-session per quarter).</p>
4	<p>Dates and location of activities proposed will be subject to the formal approval of NZC partner in charge of coordinating the work in the concerned country; this is especially the case for the in-person annual event to be organised.</p>
5	<p>Awarded supplier will involve the local authorities suggested by NetZeroCities in the delivered activities. Refusal must be duly justified.</p>
6	<p>Awarded supplier will propose, based on their expertise and knowledge of the national ecosystem, any adjustments deemed necessary to the planned activities and approaches during service provision. Any modifications to the proposed activities or approaches will be subject to the approval of the designated NZC partner responsible for coordinating efforts within the respective country.</p>

## Services and Activities

### 3.6.1 General information

The following workplan contains the activities to be delivered. It is designed to offer flexibility so that the service providers, taking advantage of their specific and valuable knowledge of the national ecosystem of Belgium, can adapt the activities as well as propose additional ones that they consider necessary to achieve the objectives described above.

Therefore, proposals including complementary approaches or additional services to enhance the process described above would be welcomed, where they can contribute to the objectives. To integrate this flexibility into the subcontracting process, it is foreseen that applicants will submit a 'Proposed Workplan' as part of the required documentation (See section 6.1).

In the 'Proposed Workplan,' the bidder may propose modifications to the mandatory activities, provided these are well-reasoned and justified.

### 3.6.2 Workplan: Mandatory Activities

To achieve the objectives stated in Section 3.4, the following activities should be carried out by the service provider in the period of 12 months (starting in March 2025). All activities will be carried out in coordination with the NetZeroCities partner responsible for coordinating the work, in this case Energy Cities. For each activity, the listed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) shall be achieved.

<b>Mandatory activities</b>	
<b>Activity 1. Organization of an in-person national annual event</b>	
<b>According to objective: 1 and 3</b>	
<b>Description</b>	<p>The subcontractor will organize one annual national event in 2025 to bring together the national ecosystem supporting cities in achieving climate neutrality.</p> <p>The key objectives of the event are to: A) raise awareness about the EU Mission on Climate Neutral and Smart Cities in Belgium; B) discuss how to best implement the Mission in the national context; C) bring together stakeholders relevant for local climate neutrality transitions.</p> <p>This event aims to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Belgian cities interested in accelerating their climate neutrality efforts, including the four Mission Cities,</li> <li>- Regional and national governments,</li> <li>- Representatives of the private, research and civic sector in Belgium.</li> </ul> <p>The event could be held alongside another major national conference. Collaboration with existing initiatives and organisations mentioned in the Context chapter above will be sought, especially the LKEP and POLLEC programs.</p> <p>While the invitation and close collaboration with CapaCITIES are fundamental to the organization of this event, the objective is to ensure that the allocated resources are utilized to create a new event in addition to those already existing or potentially organized by this project, with the aim of promoting the highest possible number of national initiatives in 2025. Nonetheless, it is essential to ensure proper coordination with CapaCITIES and the Covenant of Mayors to guarantee their active participation and to ensure that all organized events are complementary and mutually reinforcing.</p>
<b>Participating Stakeholders</b>	Cities (Mission Cities, other interested cities); relevant national ministries and agencies; regional authorities; private sector; academia/research and civil society organizations.
<b>KPI</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 50 participants</li> <li>• At least representatives from 20 Belgian cities join the annual event for 2025, including political representatives.</li> <li>• At least 5 other national or regional stakeholders join the annual event</li> </ul>
<b>Activity 2. Organize a community of practice for cities &amp; deliver a capacity-building programme</b>	
<b>According to objective: 1 and 2</b>	
<b>Description</b>	<p>The subcontractor will establish or reinforce the community of practice that brings together cities committed to advancing their work towards climate neutrality in Belgium, including the four Mission Cities.</p> <p>The community could be built upon existing initiatives and frameworks where cities are already collaborating. The community would be connected to the Mission Portal and granted access to NetZeroCities' resource repository, including useful tools, case studies, good practices and communication channels with other cities. The</p>

	<p>subcontractor will explain in its offer how the activities (in terms of approaches, or topics) will be complimentary to existing initiatives, increase the impacts of the existing activities and avoid duplication. In the context of the EU Cities Mission, this community shall provide support to local authorities from Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels Region Capital. Addressing only one region won't be sufficient.</p> <p>The subcontractor will organize a comprehensive capacity-building program for committed individuals from local administrations and communities, either from political leadership or operational teams. The curriculum shall be practical, tailored to cities' needs and focus on developing concrete skills in municipalities, like making the built environment climate-neutral, developing multimodal mobility systems or regional energy hubs for decarbonised heating and cooling, climate action planning, sustainable finance, partnerships with private sector and others. The service provider could collaborate with different specialised organisations for different topics, e.g. NZC, CapaCITIES, Covenant of Mayors, etc.</p> <p>The described sessions and activities will take place in either an online or in-person format, with a preference for the latter whenever feasible.</p>
<b>Participating Stakeholders</b>	City staff, e.g. climate and environmental departments, finance departments and treasuries, infrastructure departments and others. Ideally, representatives of the political level will also be included.
<b>KPI</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least representatives from 12 Belgian cities join the community of practice in 2025.</li> <li>• At least 4 sessions are delivered for the community of practice, including the capacity-building training.</li> </ul>
<b>Activity 3. Enabling participation of cities in multi-stakeholder and multi-level collaboration spaces</b>	
<b>According to objective: 3</b>	
<b>Description</b>	<p>According to Objective 3, multi-stakeholder and multi-level engagement shall be promoted, bringing together cities, regional public authorities, relevant national ministries, private sector representatives, academia, research institutions and civil society, with the aim to support cities in achieving climate neutrality. This collaboration shall foster information sharing, open dialogue, alignment of strategies, narratives, and objectives, collaborative problem-solving and cooperation among all participants.</p> <p>The awarded supplier will participate in a minimum of two meetings with national stakeholders, in order to improve the multi-level collaboration, and will support cities being part of the community of practice to prepare these meetings (providing inputs for the agenda, development of a common narrative, policy propositions, expression of needs and required services, etc.). During these meetings, feedback from the outcomes of Activity 2 will also be shared with the stakeholders engaged in the collaboration.</p>
<b>Participating Stakeholders</b>	Cities (Mission Cities, interested cities); relevant national ministries and agencies; regional authorities; private sector actors; academia/research and civil society organizations
<b>KPI</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in at least two meetings with the national support structure</li> <li>• At least 4 cities join the meetings with the national stakeholders</li> </ul>

The following deliverables are requested:

<b>Deliveries</b>	
<b>Detailed Workplan and Brief Baseline Report</b>	
<b>Description</b>	At the start of the contract, the awarded individual/organization will be required to deliver:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A detailed workplan aimed at precisely establishing the activities that will take place during the contract period. This Workplan will be approved by NetZeroCities partner in charge of Belgium.</li> <li>- Brief baseline report (2-page max) aimed at documenting the current state of key aspects of the national ecosystem. This document will serve as the foundation for monitoring the activities and services implemented as part of this support initiative.</li> </ul>
<b>Content</b>	<p>The Workplan will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A detailed outline of the activities to be carried out, specifying the dates, content, cities to be invited, other stakeholders involved, the criteria established for these selections, and any additional information deemed relevant.</li> </ul> <p>The Brief Baseline Report will include the following information on the existing community of Practice among local governments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Frequency of meetings among local governments, the participating local governments, types of representatives involved (e.g., technical staff and/or political level), participation of other stakeholders (e.g., other levels of government, private sector, academia, others), the existence of multi-city projects (if applicable), etc.</li> </ul> <p>In case the supplier proposes a methodology based on existing collaboration and initiatives, they should explain how the activities performed in this contract will be complementary and increase the impacts.</p>
<b>Deadline</b>	To be submitted in Month 2 (M2) of the contract start date.
<b>Final Report</b>	
<b>Description</b>	At the conclusion of the contract, the awarded individual/organization will deliver a comprehensive Final Report. This report will provide a detailed account of the outcomes of the activities and services delivered during the support period, as well as the progress achieved in relation to the baseline situation documented in the Baseline Report. The report will aim to assess the advancements made, evaluate the effectiveness of the actions taken, and propose strategic next steps to further strengthen both the Community of Practice among local governments and the national platform.
<b>Content</b>	<p>The Final Report (10-page max) will include details about the activities conducted throughout the contract period. It will include an evaluation of the outcomes achieved, highlighting key results, challenges encountered, and the strategies used to overcome them. Evidence should be provided regarding the achievement of the KPIs (list of attendees, agendas, pictures, etc.). A survey (proposed by NZC) addressed to participants to events, and to the capacity-building program, to assess their satisfaction and gather suggestions should be included in annex of the report, as well as any materials developed (concept note, advocacy note, materials for capacity building sessions, etc.). Furthermore, it will reflect on the alignment of the activities with the overarching objectives, including their contribution to strengthening the Community of Practice among local governments and the national platform. Lastly, the report will provide actionable insights and recommendations to inform and guide future initiatives, ensuring continued growth and collaboration within the ecosystem.</p> <p>Additionally, the report will include any information the awarded individual/organization considers relevant.</p>
<b>Deadline</b>	To be submitted in Month 12 (M12) of the contract start date.

## Indicative Budget

All tasks are defined to be performed in time period of 12 months, starting in March 2025.

The total quotations must not exceed 55,000 EUR, including a maximum allocation of 4,700 EUR designated for logistics associated with the annual event, including but not limited to catering, venue rental, and related expenses. For EU countries: this budget is without any VAT.

## Eligibility

Climate-KIC reserve the right to reject proposals where the proposed supplier:

- Has insufficient technical, professional or financial capacity to deliver the services.
- Has been bankrupt or insolvent (last 7 years)
- Is sanctioned by a relevant authority
- Does not comply or has previously not complied with our Ethical Standards for Contractual Counterparties
- Has been convicted of crime, links to terrorism, breach of tax or social security obligations
- Is an individual prior employee of Climate-KIC or group entity (discretionary basis)
- Will continue to be a full-time employee of an EIT grant recipient or Climate-KIC/NetZero City/CapaCITIES partner or any other organization that may attract a double funding risk, during the contract term (discretionary basis)

If any of these scenarios apply, please make Climate-KIC aware in your submission.

## Sustainability

In order to uphold our commitment to sustainability, Climate-KIC aims to minimise any negative impact we may have on the natural and built environment by effectively managing our resources.

In the efforts to procure in a sustainable manner with minimal impact, the following requests are made of the bidder:

- Where practical, the services are to be delivered digitally following a paperless policy
- For events and workshops, please strictly minimise the generation of waste. We ask our service providers to consider the greenhouse gas emissions from transport to our/city/partner offices and events. Cycling, walking, public transport and rail are preferable over air travel wherever possible.
- We love to hear what suppliers are doing to minimise impact. Feel encouraged to share your approach and policies if applicable.

## 4. Contracting (third parties)

The below is applicable for NZC External Parties only.

### Payment & Invoicing

- Payments will be made following provision of a correctly rendered undisputed digital (via email) invoice to Climate-KIC. Climate-KIC contract manager will inform the successful bidder where to submit invoices.
- Payment terms associated with delivery of the goods and/or services must be not less than net 30 days.
- Climate-KIC can provide a purchase order number to be referenced on invoices.
- Where Climate-KIC is requesting services over longer periods of time, bidders can invoice in a pay as we go model (e.g. a consolidated invoice based on work completed or completion of deliverables - to be clarified during contracting).
- Requests for deposit payments are generally not accepted.
- If the bidder is requesting any form of payment prior to delivery of goods and/or services, this must be raised with Climate-KIC.
- If submitting invoices for subscription services, please ensure these fees are itemised and priced at line level.

### Contract Management

A one-off agreement is proposed for award of work.

Climate-KIC can share their standard terms and conditions and will consider the bidder's own terms and conditions on the basis that the bidder can incorporate the following:

- Climate-KIC requires that that service providers provide an indemnity to Climate-KIC for breach of third-party intellectual property rights;
- In addition, Climate-KIC will ask that service providers comply with the Ethical Standards for Climate-KIC Contractual Counterparties available at <https://www.climate-kic.org/policies>
- Service providers are required to comply with Climate-KIC's standard data protection clauses (can be provided in advance on request) and provide an indemnity for any breach;
- The liability of the service provider to Climate-KIC (and affiliates) to be uncapped in respect of breach of data protection clauses. For all other heads, liability of the service provider to Climate-KIC (and affiliates) may be capped at a reasonable multiple of fees not less than 2X. If applicable, Climate-KIC liability to service provider also be similarly capped;
- No indemnities extended by Climate-KIC to service providers.

## 5. Award Criteria

The following criteria will be used.

### 5.1. Expertise / Experience (30%)

Expertise and Experience as a criterion determines whether or not the proposed supplier is able to actually deliver the services. The questions to be asked and evaluated in this criterion are:

- Relevant Experience – does the suppliers response show a history of delivering on projects like the package currently being evaluated? (20%)
- Relevant Expertise – do the individuals proposed for the delivery of this work have the relevant qualifications required to deliver this work? (10%)



Suppliers must provide evidence that they comply with the minimum requirements, and if applicable the desirable requirements, indicated in section 3.3.

## 5.2. Capacity to Deliver (30%)

Once it has been established that the supplier has the relevant expertise and experience, the next criteria examines whether the supplier has the capacity to take on the work. This criterion is to be addressed via the following questions:

- Current Workload – The suppliers shall provide the current list of projects being delivered by the individuals proposed for this package, this shall include the effort required for existing work as a % of their time. (20%)
- Management Measures – The supplier shall provide detail into how they manage capacity issues as well as provide any additional resources or measures they have in place in the event of capacity issues, or if there is a need for scope increases or acceleration. (10%)

## 5.3. Price Criteria (40%)

- Price will consist of 40% of the evaluation weightings. The evaluation method will ensure that the lowest price total of the Pricing Schedule achieves the maximum available marks, with other Bidders scores calculated proportionately. The scoring methodology will be applied per pricing schedule section and combined to identify the overall lowest price submission. The lowest price submission will achieve the maximum available score with the other Bidders prices scoring points inversely proportionate to the lowest.
- Pricing evaluation will follow the universally accepted formula of (Lowest Price / Tendered Price x Price Criteria Points (40)).
- An example of how this formula operates in practice can be found below:

Description	Formula	Tenderer		
		T1	T2	T3
Tendered Price	A	€500	€490	€510
Lowest Price	B	€490		
Calculation	$C = B/A$	0.98	1.00	0.96
Convert to Points	$D = C \times 40^*$	39.20	40.00	38.43

*\* The conversion to points will be based on the weighting attributed to price in the total evaluation.*

Table 3 - Example scoring methodology for price lots

## 6. Instruction to Bidders

### Responding with your proposal

Climate-KIC requests the following documentation to be submitted to bid on this contract:

1. **A Proposal** that sufficiently details the bidder's solution and responds to the prompts and requests contained in this RFP.  
This proposal must include:
  - A **Proposed Workplan** based on the content of Section 3.4, 3.5, 3.6 and 3.7, indicating how the supplier plans to deliver the activities (methodology, timeline, topics, demonstrating the added value compared to potential existing initiative or work, etc.). Any modifications, proposed adjustments, or additional activities should be specifically oriented towards addressing the needs of the stakeholders who will receive the support, namely the cities within the national ecosystem of Belgium. The proposed workplan should clearly

differentiate the methodology and activities proposed to address the mandatory activities included in section 3.6, and the ones proposed in addition (if any) to meet the objectives.

- **Evidence that the suppliers have the experience and expertise** to deliver the services as mentioned in section 5.1 and 3.3 (list of previous projects and activities, resumes of individuals that will be assigned to conduct the services described in this document), and **the capacities** as mentioned in section 5.2 (current workload, management measures)

This proposal may include:

- A **letter of support** containing the endorsement of various key stakeholders of the national ecosystem/platform. Namely, national authorities, representatives of different key municipal governments (Mission cities, Pilot cities, among others). This requirement is suggested, not compulsory.

Climate-KIC reserves the right to request this letter of support from potential bidders for awarding the bid.

2. The bidder is, amongst **other items**, also kindly asked to provide:
  - their trading name, VAT or tax identification number (if applicable) and registered trading address (please note, address is not required for an individual).
  - website links to examples of work previously performed by the bidder if applicable (e.g. portfolios, work products or other).
  - professional references that can be reached by Climate-KIC to verify previous services delivery.
3. **A Quotation** that meets the requirements described at Section 6.2.

Climate-KIC reserves the right to reject RFP responses that do not confirm with these guidelines. All responses shall be made to the Contract Manager (refer Section 1.1) via electronic copy, at tenders@climate-kic.org

## Quotation requirements

Climate-KIC request that bidders quote in the following manner, as appropriate to delivery of the services:

- Please provide itemised quotations in Euros and specify if the quote includes / excludes VAT or any other taxes. Please refer Table 4 as an example.
- Provide a rate card for relevant grades of employment that will be conducting services (e.g. day rate) instead of averaged rates. These may be used for additional services. Please refer Table 4 as an example.
- For External Suppliers (Non-NZC Consortium): Travel and subsistence for these services are strictly limited. Domestic travel and subsistence will not be reimbursed unless agreed in advance and in writing with Climate-KIC, please estimate costs in your quotation. If you require international transport and/or accommodation, please make this clear and estimate costs in your quotation. Time for travel will not be billable hours.
- Include all applicable costs or charges associated with providing the goods and/or services in your quotation.
- Please quote on a company letterhead or similar company form where possible with the resolution described in Table 4 at a minimum.

**Table 4: Provided quotations to include the following details**

Item and unit cost (in Euros excluding VAT)
Services for activity 1 as per Section 3.6.2
Services for activity 2 as per Section 3.6.2
Services for activity 3 as per Section 3.6.2

Deliverable 1 “Detailed Workplan and Brief Baseline Report” as per Section 3.7
Deliverable 2 “Final Report” as per Section 3.7
License fees (per user per month/annum, and in aggregate) if applicable
TOTAL (if applicable)
<b>Rate card for services (per day/hour, in Euros excluding VAT):</b>
Assistant – XX / day
Officer – XX / day
Specialist - XX / day
Project coordinator – XX / day
Consultant – XX/day
Principal consultant – XX/day
Partner – XX/day
...

## Terms of this RFP

1. Your proposal should be submitted according to the instructions as detailed in this section and should be valid for a period of at least six (6) months from the bid due date. Any proposal submitted outside the scope defined may be rejected without provision for re-submission.
2. Any further information pertaining to this RFP, of whatever nature, must be directed to the Contract Manager detailed in Section 1.1. If a point of clarification materially affects the RFP, our response will be circulated to all bidders, otherwise the response will only be sent to the bidder seeking clarification.
3. If any doubt exists concerning any element of this RFP, a clear statement should be made on the assumptions taken to arrive at your quoted costs, or alternatively contact us prior to submitting your proposal to seek clarification.
4. Entering into contractual arrangements with Climate-KIC in connection with this RFP does not guarantee work will be awarded.
5. Climate-KIC/GARAC reserves the right to reject any proposal(s) received after the submission date/time.
6. Climate-KIC/GARAC reserves the right to undertake post-bid negotiations with none, all or a shortlist of bidders.
7. Climate-KIC/GARAC, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to accept or reject any or all of the proposals received and not to award any business and shall not be bound to give reasons for any decision. Only the execution of a written agreement between a Climate-KIC entity and a supplier(s) will obligate a Climate-KIC entity in accordance with the terms and conditions contained in such agreement.
8. Climate-KIC reserves the right to procure services from alternative suppliers(s) where the successful bidder is, or becomes, uncompetitive within the market. However, issues over pricing and specification will be resolved through discussion and mutual agreement between Climate-KIC and the supplier.
9. Bidders are required to email soft copies of their proposal to the Contract Manager detailed in Section 1.1 based on the timeline at Section 1.3.
10. As per above and where applicable, bidders must acknowledge receipt of this RFP by return email to the Contract Manager detailed in Section 1.1 confirming whether they intend to submit a proposal by the Submission Deadline.
11. This RFP does not commit or obligate any Climate-KIC company to pay any expenses incurred by you in the preparation of your Proposal. All such expenses are solely at the risk of the bidder and by submitting a proposal you automatically agree that proposal becomes the property of Climate-KIC.

12. Proposals are to be kept as clear and concise as possible and should be sequenced and numbered in accordance with the format of this RFP.
13. The formatting of this document and the attached response document should not be altered.
14. Whilst this RFP confers no legal rights on its addressees, it is not intended that any other persons acquire rights or obligations in respect of or arising under it.
15. Unsuccessful bidders agree, by the submission of their proposals, to return to Climate-KIC this RFP and any and all papers, records, data and materials supplied to them in connection with it, including all copies made by them.
16. This RFP is for consideration in whole and not in part or parts unless otherwise indicated.
17. All efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy and validity of information contained in this RFP. However, Climate-KIC does not warrant the information accurate or comprehensive.