



**GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
FEDERAL BOARD OF REVENUE
(PAKISTAN RAISES REVENUE PROGRAM)**

Re. No. PK-FBR-531077-CS-QCBS

Islamabad, the 7th July, 2026

Subject: **MINUTES OF THE PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE - DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTEGRATED AI-POWERED KNOWLEDGE, TRAINING & ASSESSMENT PLATFORM FOR PAKISTAN CUSTOMS**

A pre-proposal conference of the shortlisted firms, to hire services of the captioned engagement, was held on 30th June 2026, 11:30 hours at FBR Headquarters, Islamabad. Officials of FBR and representatives of the firms as per the attached table at Annex - I attended the pre-proposal conference. The purpose of the pre-proposal conference was to provide clarifications on queries/questions raised by the participating representatives of the firms on Request for Proposal (RFP) and on the Terms of Reference (TORs) document to facilitate them in preparation of technical and financial proposals.

2. The representatives of firms were then invited to present their queries for clarification by the Team which were accordingly addressed and discussed at length. Deputy Project Director, NTC, informed the participants to forward any subsequent queries on the e-mail address given in the RFP and thanked them for their interest and efforts in attending the meeting. The following table provides all queries by the firms received through email along with the corresponding clarifications and responses:

S#	Queries by Firms	Clarifications/Responses
1.	A. Scope and Boundaries: Please confirm that the following are outside the current scope, with this assignment required only to keep the architecture and APIs extensible to them: the public e-learning portal for Women Entrepreneurs and SMEs (noted as contingent on curriculum development); the use of CAPLMS for promotional examinations (noted as a future goal); and downstream modules such as Legal Case Management, Automated Valuation Advisory, and advanced Risk Management.	Confirmed. Current scope excludes the use of CAPLMS for promotional examinations and any downstream Legal Case Management, Valuation Advisory, or Risk Management applications; the architecture, data model, and APIs must remain extensible to them, per the ToR. The public e-learning portal for Women Entrepreneurs and SMEs is not part of this assignment.
2.	Under the Reuse-First principle (ToR §6.2), are there existing Customs Academy of Pakistan TMS/LMS assets, or certified domestic CBT providers, that the Client expects the Consultant to integrate with or extend? If so, can their technical details and licensing terms be shared?	Under the ToR's Reuse-First principle, the Consultant shall evaluate and propose integration with any available CAP/government systems; where relevant assets are identified, technical and licensing details will be shared during Inception.

3.	Will the Client confirm that Knowledge Hub responses are advisory guidance carrying an appropriate disclaimer, and define which categories of query must be routed to an official determination by an authorised officer rather than answered by the system? This fixes the boundary between system-provided guidance and binding interpretation	Confirmed. Knowledge Hub responses are informational guidance; RAG-grounded, with verifiable citations and a displayed confidence score, and carrying a disclaimer (including the indicative data disclaimer for valuation content per the ToR); they are not binding determinations. The categories requiring an authorised officer's determination (e.g., binding rulings, legal interpretation, case-specific assessments) will be finalised with the successful Consultant during Inception.
4.	<u>B. Data, Hosting, and Sovereignty:</u> ToR §5.1.1 assigns the Consultant a comparative CAPEX (on-premises) vs. OPEX (cloud) analysis, including a data-sovereignty assessment, as a Phase I deliverable. Is this decision genuinely open for the Consultant to recommend, or are there prior constraints the Client can share – specifically: (a) will FBR provide and host the compute/hosting infrastructure, with the Consultant only responsible for sizing and solution design, or must the Consultant propose, provision, and cost its own cloud solution; and (b) is offshore/outside-Pakistan hosting or model inference permissible at all, or is in-country/sovereign hosting mandatory?	The deployment decision is open. The Consultant shall design and size the solution and provide a justified on-premises vs. cloud recommendation in Phase I, compliant with the Cloud-First Policy (2022), the draft Personal Data Protection Bill, the National AI Policy (2025), and a DPIA; and after a thorough assessment of available FBR ICT infra. (a) The FBR shall fund/provide infra, based on the approved Phase I recommendation. (b) Customs data, particularly restricted and valuation data shall be hosted and processed within Pakistan in line with data-sovereignty requirements; any offshore hosting or inference must be justified in the recommendation and is subject to the Client's prior written approval and a DPIA.
5.	Will recurring cloud/GPU infrastructure and hosting costs, and any third-party or component licence costs, be borne by the Client (and therefore excluded from the Consultant's remuneration), or are they to be included by the Consultant in the Financial Proposal?	Recurring cloud/GPU, hosting, and third-party or component licence costs are excluded from the Consultant's remuneration and will be borne by the Client. Because the deployment model and its sizing are outputs of the Phase I recommendation and depend on user and volume data not fixed at this stage, these costs cannot be firm-priced in the Proposal.
6.	In what formats will the legal and procedural corpus (Customs Act 1969, Customs Rules 2001, SROs, CGOs, valuation rulings, Pakistan Customs Tariff, allied OGA laws) be provided, and who will designate the authoritative in-force versions and act as content Approvers?	The legal and procedural corpus (Customs Act 1969, Customs Rules 2001, SROs, CGOs, valuation rulings, the Pakistan Customs Tariff, and allied OGA laws) will be provided during Inception; source formats may include electronic text (PDF/Word) and scanned documents requiring OCR. Authoritative in-force versions will be certified by the designated Customs officials acting as Approvers under the ToR's Drafter/Reviewer/Approver workflow.
7.	Does the Client accept open-weight LLMs fine-tuned and hosted within the agreed environment, with the commitment that no customs data is	Confirmed. Consistent with the ToR requirement to select a state-of-the-art open-source LLM with mandatory RAG, an open-weight model fine-tuned and hosted within the agreed, compliant environment is acceptable and preferred. No

	sent to third-party commercial model APIs unless expressly approved?	customs data may be sent to third-party commercial model APIs without the Client's express prior written approval.
8.	For legal version control, will the Client provide or formally approve the effective dates and the amendment and supersession relationships between instruments, define the legal precedence hierarchy (for example Act, then Rules, then SRO, then CGO), and designate the authority that resolves conflicts the hierarchy does not settle? The system will flag such conflicts for human decision rather than infer its own legal interpretation.	The Client will provide or formally approve effective dates and supersession relationships, confirm the legal precedence hierarchy (e.g., Act, Rules, SRO, CGO), and designate the authority to resolve residual conflicts during Inception. The system shall default to the in-force version and flag such conflicts for human decision, per the ToR.
9.	Will the Client provide its data security-classification scheme and a role and permission matrix defining which user types (public, trader or agent, officer, administrator) may access restricted content such as valuation data and restricted instruments? This governs the role-based access controls and the restricted-data test scenarios.	The Client will provide its data security-classification scheme and confirm a role-and-permission matrix during Inception. Access to restricted content, including anonymised valuation data under Directorate General (Valuation) controls, shall be governed by role-based access controls per the ToR.
10.	Can the Client provide expected user populations and peak, concurrent, and public query volumes (public, traders, agents, officers, and candidates) so that infrastructure can be sized and the deployment cost model prepared on a common basis, rather than sized by licensed-user count alone?	Indicative user populations and peak/concurrent query-volume estimates will be provided during Inception. Where firm figures are unavailable, the Consultant shall size the infrastructure against assumptions agreed with the Client, rather than by licensed-user count alone.
11.	<u>C. Acceptance Criteria and Performance Gates:</u> Will the Client agree, during Inception, a quantitative RAG evaluation rubric and pass thresholds for Gate 1 (covering retrieval quality, answer groundedness, citation accuracy, abstention behaviour, and latency), evaluated on a sealed, representative test set?	Agreed. A quantitative RAG evaluation rubric and Gate-1 pass thresholds retrieval quality, groundedness, citation accuracy, abstention behaviour, and latency will be agreed during Inception and evaluated on a sealed, representative test set.
12.	For Gate 2, will the Client facilitate timely PSW and We BOC API documentation, credentials, and sandbox access, and accept a shared-responsibility schedule with a defined fallback (for example, stubbed interfaces for UAT) if a third-party dependency slips?	The Client will facilitate timely PSW and WeBOC API documentation, credentials, and sandbox access, and will agree a shared-responsibility schedule. Where a delay is attributable to a third party, a defined fallback (e.g., contract-tested stubbed interfaces for UAT) is acceptable; the mandatory Gate 2 connectivity requirement remains.
13.	Given the bilingual (English/Urdu) requirement, will Gate-1 acceptance	Confirmed. Gate-1 acceptance metrics will be reported per language (English and Urdu), and

	metrics be reported per language, and will the Gate-1 test set include Urdu and code-mixed queries?	the sealed test set will include Urdu and code-mixed queries, consistent with the ToR's bilingual requirement.
14.	Beyond the aggregate thresholds in Q11, will the Client agree a defined list of zero-tolerance failures that block Prototype Gate approval regardless of the overall score (for example a fabricated provision, superseded law presented as current, unauthorised disclosure of restricted content, an unsupported citation on a material conclusion, a role-based access failure, or a prompt-injection that defeats a mandatory control), and co-approve the prototype reference question set and model answers used to evaluate the gate?	Agreed. A defined list of zero-tolerance failures will block Prototype-Gate approval regardless of the aggregate score. The prototype reference question set and model answers will be co-approved during Inception.
15.	Which security standard governs acceptance, and will the specialised AI and application security testing (including the OWASP LLM Top-10 and adversarial red-teaming) be performed and accepted by the Consultant, by a Client-nominated independent third party, or by a national authority, and is any formal certification required before go-live?	OWASP (Web and the LLM Top-10) governs security acceptance. The Consultant shall perform the specialised Generative AI security testing and red-teaming and remediate findings; the Client reserves the right to independent verification. A DPIA and the Client's sign-off on the security report are required before go-live.
16.	<u>D. Assessment Integrity:</u> What are the Client's requirements for candidate identity verification and, if any remote testing is contemplated, proctoring; for secure item-bank management and question-exposure control; and for human/psychometric review of AI-generated items before live high-stakes use?	Examinations are invigilated and in-person, using secure login, secure test generation by authorised personnel, auto-generated admit slips and attendance sheets, and auditable logging, per the ToR. Candidate identity shall be verified against the candidate register (e.g., CNIC) at the venue. Items shall be drawn randomly from an approved, access-controlled item bank with exposure control, and AI-generated items shall undergo subject-matter-expert review and approval before high-stakes use. Detailed requirements will be confirmed during Inception.
17.	Does the Client accept AI-assisted, human-moderated grading for open-ended (constructed response) items where the score affects a licensing or promotion outcome?	Confirmed. AI-assisted, human-moderated grading is acceptable for open-ended items, with mandatory human moderation and final sign-off where the score affects a licensing or promotion outcome, consistent with the ToR's automatic-vs-manual grading provision.
18.	<u>E. Commercial and Contractual:</u> How should service levels, response times, and the boundary between defects attributable to the Consultant and new change requests be defined for	The Consultant shall propose, for the Client's approval, warranty SLAs for the 90-day stabilisation period (defect severity levels with response and resolution targets) and the 2-year support SLAs, including surge support during

	the 90-day stabilisation period and the 24 month technical and advisory support period?	budgetary cycles per the ToR. A "defect" is non-conformance with the approved requirements/UAT baseline (Consultant-borne under warranty); a "change request" is new or changed scope, handled through change control.
19.	The estimated Key Experts' input is 80 person-months (Data Sheet §14.1.2). Is this indicative only, or a fixed basis for the Financial Proposal, and how should Non-Key Experts be treated?	The 80 person-month Key Experts' input stated in the Data Sheet is indicative. Proposals will be evaluated on the adequacy of the proposed methodology and staffing against the ToR roles. Non-Key Experts shall be listed but are not individually score-evaluated, per the Data Sheet.
20.	Please confirm the anonymisation specification and the Directorate General (Valuation) approval path for valuation data, and that such data may be on-boarded after Gate 1 under a separate data-sharing protocol and DPIA addendum.	Confirmed. Valuation data will be provided in anonymised form only, access-controlled, and subject to the direct oversight and approval of the Directorate General (Valuation), with indicative-nature disclaimers. It will be on-boarded after Gate 1 under a separate data-sharing protocol and a DPIA addendum; the anonymisation specification will be approved by the Directorate General (Valuation).
21	Are you comfortable with a subscription-based model, or would you prefer a perpetual licensing model with separate annual support and maintenance charges, allowing you to retain ownership of the licenses?	The Consultant shall propose the most appropriate licensing approach consistent with the proposed solution architecture and the Terms of Reference. The recommended approach shall ensure long-term sustainability, operational continuity, value for money, and compliance with the Government of Pakistan's applicable ICT policies. All licensing arrangements, including recurring costs (if any), shall be clearly identified in the Financial Proposal. Ownership of all project deliverables, source code, documentation, and knowledge assets shall remain with the Procuring Agency in accordance with the Contract.
22	Are you looking for a turnkey solution that includes hardware, hosting, implementation, and support, or do you expect us to propose only the required infrastructure components?	This assignment is for consultancy services for the design, development, implementation, deployment and operationalization of the AI-Powered Knowledge Hub and CAPLMS. The Consultant shall assess the existing ICT environment and recommend the required infrastructure and deployment architecture. Where additional hardware or infrastructure is required, the Consultant shall clearly specify the technical requirements and recommendations. Procurement of infrastructure, if required, shall be undertaken separately by the Procuring Agency.
23	If a turnkey solution is required, would you be open to a hosting-based deployment model where the data remains within Pakistan but is hosted at a secure third-party data centre rather than on your premises?	As provided in the TORs, the Consultant shall undertake a comprehensive deployment assessment, including Cloud versus On-Premises options, supported by CAPEX/OPEX analysis, data sovereignty considerations, security, scalability, and sustainability. The final deployment recommendation shall be based on the Consultant's assessment and shall comply with the Government of Pakistan's applicable policies, including data sovereignty and information security requirements.
24	Do officers have specific examination periods where we can expect a large load of	Examination schedules may vary depending upon operational and training requirements. The Consultant

	users? What is the estimated number of officers taking an examination at a time?	shall design the solution as a scalable enterprise platform capable of supporting concurrent examination sessions and anticipated future growth. The exact concurrency requirements shall be finalized during the inception phase in consultation with the Procuring Agency.
25	Estimated number of documents that need to be added into the Training / Knowledge Base?	The Procuring Agency will provide access to available authoritative reference materials. However, the Consultant shall be responsible for digitization, OCR (where required), metadata tagging, content structuring, taxonomy development, knowledge organization, and transformation into a machine-readable AI-ready knowledge base in accordance with the Terms of Reference. Since documentation is continuously evolving, no fixed quantity is prescribed. Consultants are expected to propose an appropriate methodology accordingly.
26	Are there other formats of content such as Video, Audio and Images?	Yes. The platform shall be capable of managing and processing multiple content formats, including text, scanned documents, images, audio and video, as envisaged in the Terms of Reference. The Consultant shall recommend appropriate content management and indexing mechanisms for all supported formats.
27	Does Roman Urdu need to be supported as output and input in the chatbot?	The minimum mandatory language requirements are English and Urdu as specified in the Terms of Reference. Consultants may propose additional language capabilities, including Roman Urdu, where considered beneficial; however, such additional capability shall not form part of the mandatory evaluation requirements unless specifically proposed by the Consultant.
28	Does Roman Urdu and Urdu Script need to be supported in the examination questions, MCQ generation and training material?	The mandatory language support requirements are English and Urdu. Consultants may propose additional multilingual capabilities, including Roman Urdu, provided they are fully integrated into the proposed solution architecture and do not adversely affect overall system performance or functionality.
29	Does a virtual classroom tool need to be integrated within the CAPLMS?	The Terms of Reference require the platform to facilitate both online and instructor-led learning environments. Consultants may integrate or propose appropriate virtual classroom capabilities where necessary to satisfy the functional requirements of the CAPLMS. The selection of technology shall remain the Consultant's responsibility, subject to compliance with the TORs.
30	Does the Consultant need to provide in-person support to train officers and prepare them for examinations and certifications, or should the system only provide training material to instructors?	The Consultant shall provide comprehensive knowledge transfer, administrator enablement, training of trainers, user training, and institutional handover in accordance with the Terms of Reference. The assignment includes delivery of training programmes, preparation of training materials, administrator manuals, user manuals, and support for successful user adoption. The objective is to establish sustainable institutional capacity rather than merely providing system documentation.
31	We also need data backlog details which need to be digitized under this project.	The Procuring Agency will provide access to available legacy documents, publications, manuals, laws, rules,

		SROs, procedures, training material, and other authoritative reference content. The Consultant shall be responsible for assessment, digitization, OCR (where required), metadata enrichment, knowledge structuring, taxonomy development, and ingestion into the Knowledge Hub. The precise volume shall be validated during the inception phase as part of the Consultant's assessment and implementation methodology.
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3. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks.

Annex – I

Table – a: List of FBR’s Participants-

Sr. #	Name	Designation	Role
1.	Mr. Salman Javaid	Deputy Project Director, NTC	Member, PEC
2.	Mr. Ali Asad	Secretary TDU	Member, PEC
3.	Mr. Shehzad Ali Shah	Contract Management Specialist, Pakistan Raises Revenue, FBR, Islamabad.	-
4.	Syed Zafar Ali Shah	Procurement Specialist, Pakistan Raises Revenue, FBR, Islamabad.	Member, PEC
5.	Shaoor Javaid Alvi	Assistant Procurement Specialist, PRRP	Member, PEC
6.	M. Islah ud Din	Program Associate Procurement, PRRP,	-
7.	M. Kahif Nazir	Program Assistant	-

Table – b: List of Firms’ Participants-

Sr. #	Firms’ Name
1.	M/s Merik Solutions
2.	M/s PwC as Lead with M/s ISSM Labelling Solution (Private) Limited as JV Partner
3.	M/s Centangle Interactive Pvt. Ltd.
4.	M/s Jaffer Business Systems (Private) Limited (JBS) as Lead with M/s Botnostics Solutions as JV Partner
5.	M/s EY Ford Rhodes Consulting (Private) Limited (Lead Firm) with M/s PAC College of Accountancy and M/s Ideate Innovation as Sub-Consultants
6.	M/s EXTOL SOLUTIONS LLP as Lead with NEXENG AI as JV Partner
7.	M/s KPMG Taseer Hadi & Co. as Lead with M/s Data Pilot as JV Partner
8.	M/s Softengi Sp. z.o.o as Lead with and M/s Laxycone (Private) Limited as JV Partner