



Request for Proposals

Study on the use of Distributed Ledger Technologies (DLTs) and
Blockchain for the postal sector

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1 Introduction

1.1 Profile of the UPU

The Universal Postal Union (UPU) was founded in 1874 in Berne, Switzerland, with the main goal of establishing a single postal territory for the reciprocal exchange of letter-post items and adopting common principles for the international postal service in a non-discriminatory manner. Currently comprising 192 member countries, the UPU became a specialized agency of the United Nations in 1948.

The main mission of the UPU is to stimulate the lasting development of efficient and accessible universal postal services of quality, in order to facilitate communication between the inhabitants of the world. This encompasses the commitment towards free circulation of postal items over a single postal territory composed of interconnected networks, adoption of fair common standards and use of technology, cooperation and interaction among stakeholders, promotion of effective technical cooperation, and satisfaction of customers' changing needs. The UPU is thus expected to play a major role in the constant revitalization of postal services.

Furthermore, the UPU facilitates the development of worldwide postal services by providing an information and communication technology environment which allows designated operators (DOs)¹ of UPU member countries to concentrate on the delivery of postal services to their customers. In this context, the UPU provides a global network with value-added services, as well as computerized applications for the management of international mail and international postal money orders.

2 Terms and conditions

Unless otherwise stated in this request for proposals (RFP), the term "Bidder" shall refer to any person, company or legal entity submitting a proposal in response to this RFP. The term "Vendor" shall refer to a successful Bidder, as the case may be.

2.1 Confidentiality

Bidders shall treat in strict confidence all information contained in this RFP and its attached documents which is not already publicly known or generally accessible, particularly any documentation marked as confidential and distributed by the UPU to Bidders as additional confidential RFP documentation. Bidders shall prevent disclosure or distribution of all such information to third parties and other entities and persons not expressly authorized herein. In case of doubt, these confidentiality provisions shall nevertheless be observed. All Bidders are obliged to observe these confidentiality provisions before, during and after the tendering process. These provisions shall not affect the UPU's and the Bidder's legal obligations to disclose information.

Bidders shall not use such information for any purpose other than the purposes associated with this RFP. This RFP and all attached documents may only be distributed or made available to persons directly involved in the tendering process on behalf of Bidders. In case external agents or subcontractors are involved in the preparation of the tender documents, they have to be named and indicated in the participation notification (see section 2.3 below).

Bidders assume full responsibility for compliance of their agents, employees and subcontractors, as well as any third parties involved on their behalf in this tendering process, with these rules of confidentiality and shall be liable for any damages resulting from misconduct or unauthorized disclosure.

If a Bidder violates the confidentiality provisions contained herein, it shall be liable to pay a penalty to the UPU unless the Bidder can prove that no fault is attributable to it. This penalty shall amount to no more than CHF 50,000 per infringement. Payment of any such penalty shall not release Bidders from their obligation to observe these confidentiality requirements.

Bidders willing to submit proposals in response to this RFP shall contact the persons specified in section 2.15 below and may request receipt of additional information related to this RFP from the UPU, as the case may be.

Without prejudice to the confidentiality provisions set out above, Bidders hereby agree that the receipt of any

¹ In accordance with article 1.7 of the Constitution of the UPU, a designated operator is any governmental or non-governmental entity officially designated by the member country to operate postal services and to fulfil the related obligations arising out of the Acts of the Union on its territory.

such additional information may be subject to the prior signature of a non-disclosure agreement between the Bidder and the UPU, under conditions to be determined and communicated by the latter.

2.3. *Legal status of the Vendor*

The Vendor shall be regarded in law as having the legal status of independent contractor. The Vendor and its consultants, employees, and subcontractors (as authorized by the UPU) shall in no way be regarded as employees of the UPU. Such consultants, employees and subcontractors of the Vendor shall not be entitled to any employment benefits of the UPU. The Vendor shall be solely responsible for due payment of all compensation owed to such consultants, employees, and subcontractors, including payment of any employment taxes, benefits, compensation and insurance. The Vendor represents and warrants that it will comply with all laws, rules and regulations required by the relevant authorities, including the appropriate withholding, reporting and payment of all necessary taxes.

The Vendor shall be liable for all work performed by its employees, consultants, and subcontractors, as well as for any act or omission by such employees, consultants, and subcontractors.

The Vendor shall not assign, sublicense, subcontract, pledge or otherwise transfer or dispose of its offer, or any of the rights and obligations contained in it, without prior written consent of the UPU.

The approval by the UPU of the engagement of any subcontractor shall not relieve the Vendor of any of its obligations or responsibilities concerning the work performed by any subcontractor.

2.4. *Scope of the RFP*

This RFP concerns the provision of consultancy services to the UPU for the conduct of a study tentatively entitled “**Study on the use of Distributed Ledger Technologies (DLTs) and Blockchain for the postal sector**” (the “Study”). This Study shall be aimed at identifying the potential use, by the postal sector, of DLTs, including Blockchain, particularly within the context of improving postal logistics and facilitating the inclusive postal financial services.²

2.5 *Background*

Leveraging Distributed Ledger Technologies (DLTs), including Blockchains, to transform core business operations is a concept that has gained a lot of traction lately. However, the benefits that DLTs can bring to any business varies by sector, use-case, underlying processes.

The obvious uses of DLTs in the financial sector, which have been substantiated in various studies, brought about the rise of blockchain based cryptocurrencies which promised everything from an instant, decentralized, cross-border settlement system to the promise of an alternate store of value to precious metals.

In that regard, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) has stated, in a recent report on the use cases of DLTs, that “[c]ommon to many use cases is the view that DLT is a secure, cost effective technology that enables the deployment of globally scalable services. It supports a multitude of disruptive innovations that can improve existing solutions and drive the development of new products and services. DLT is considered as a tamper-resistant and auditable technology that is resistant to systemic failures. It is also an effective tool to detect and mitigate fraud.”³

As its Constitution prescribes, the aim of the UPU is to secure the organization and improvement of the postal services and to promote in this sphere the development of international collaboration. Within this context, the UPU is currently exploring the potential benefits arising from the use of DLTs to improve international postal logistics, including the facilitation of international mail processes as well as the provision of inclusive postal financial services for the unbanked and underbanked population.

Accordingly, the UPU is already exploring the potential use of DLTs to achieve inclusive postal financial services and postal logistics goals.

² For the purposes of this RFP, the expression “postal financial services” may refer to (i) postal payment services as currently defined and regulated in the Acts of the UPU; (ii) other postal services of a financial character defined and regulated in the same Acts (now or in the future); and (iii) other financial services provided by DOs or, as the case may be, other postal supply chain stakeholders.

³ ITU, Technical Report FG DLT D2.1 - Distributed ledger technology use cases. <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/focusgroups/dlt/Documents/d21.pdf>.

Concerning postal logistics, DLTs may be able to enhance data transparency, accountability, traceability and security, as well as allow new logistical modalities to be adopted by DOs (and other postal supply chain stakeholders). As such, DLTs may assist in enabling more advanced policy, regulatory, and payment settlement modalities for the postal sector, notably to ensure security along the entire logistical chain.

Currently, the most pressing use cases are centred on enabling rapid, tamper-proof certifications and digital authentication to facilitate cross-border letter-post and parcel-post exchanges. However, there is scope to expand beyond postal logistics, the tokenization for payment services using DLTs may create a global mechanism for instantaneous payment settlement between DOs.

The UPU is also exploring the potential to use DLTs to facilitate inter-DO lending and also transmission and validation of secure documents between DOs, as well as the issuance of certificates of origin for postal items, collection-point identity management, and even voting processes in the UPU's governing bodies.

Moreover, the UPU is already exploring, in-depth techno-feasibility assessments for some of these use cases.

From an inclusive postal financial services perspective, the use of DLTs may be through tokenization/use of stable coins, as a potential mechanism to serve the unbanked, underbanked, and vulnerable populations of UPU member countries.

In this regard, in collaboration with the ITU, the UPU has published a white paper on the potential use of cryptocurrencies for postal financial inclusion. The study identifies three potential areas where DLTs may affect this sector, including instantaneous remittances, transparency improvements in government-to-people payments, and more efficiently serving vulnerable populations, including refugees.⁴ The UPU is also exploring the potential of using DLTs to expand the issuance of digital ID in a wider range of UPU member countries.

A number of DOs are also assessing or piloting the use of DLTs for a number of use cases. However, a proper implementation of such technologies is incipient due to a lack of sector-wide guidance, a coherent vision, or a more tangible study to assist DOs in designing their DLTs/Blockchain strategies.

2.6. Objectives

Through the development and publication of the Study, the UPU wishes to assist DOs (and potentially other postal supply chain stakeholders) which are currently exploring DLT solutions, including Blockchain, to improve their processes related to postal logistics and the provision of inclusive postal financial services.

Accordingly, the UPU wishes to engage an experienced consulting firm, for the provision of specialized consultancy services in order to conduct the Study over a six-month period, bearing in mind the following main goals:

- Identify current and emerging uses of DLTs in the domain areas of (i) postal logistics and supply chain, and (ii) inclusive postal financial services;
- Identify and conduct a qualitative and in-depth individual analysis of up to eight end-to-end use cases that hold the highest potential to positively impact the aforementioned segments – the focus will be on the quality and in-depth assessment for each case study, not the number of cases produced;
- Recommend methods and actions through which the UPU can promote DLTs to the benefit of its member countries; and
- Prepare concept notes for three pilot projects that will use DLTs to improve the provision of inclusive postal financial services.

2.7. Use of the emblem, name, and initials of the UPU

Bidders/Vendors shall not advertise or otherwise make public the fact that they intend to provide, are providing or have provided services to the UPU, or use the emblem, name or initials of the UPU in connection with their business for purposes of commercial advantage or goodwill without prior and explicit permission from the UPU. Bidders/Vendors shall take all reasonable measures to ensure compliance with this provision by their agents, employees, and subcontractors.

⁴ UPU, Potential use cases of cryptocurrencies by Posts: A White Paper on Postal Financial Inclusion.

<https://www.upu.int/UPU/media/upu/publications/whitePaperPotentialUseCasesOfCryptoCurrenciesByPostsEn.pdf>

2.8. *Collusive bidding, anti-competitive conduct, or any other similar conduct*

Without prejudice to the provisions contained in sections 3 and 4 below, Bidders (including their agents, consultants, employees, and subcontractors) shall not engage in any collusive bidding, anti-competitive conduct or other similar conduct, in relation to:

- the preparation or submission of offers
- the clarification of offers
- the conduct and content of negotiations, including final contract negotiations.

For the purposes of this RFP, collusive bidding, anti-competitive conduct or any other similar conduct may include disclosure to, or exchange or clarification with, any other Bidder of information (in any form), regardless of whether such information is confidential to the UPU or to any other Bidder, in order to alter the results of the RFP in such a way that would lead to an outcome other than that which would have been obtained through a competitive process. In addition to any other remedies available to it, the UPU may, at its sole discretion, immediately reject any offer submitted by a Bidder that, in the UPU's opinion, has engaged in any collusive bidding, anti-competitive conduct or other similar conduct with any other Bidder in relation to the preparation or submission of offers, whether in respect of this RFP or other procurement processes conducted by the UPU.

2.9. *Intellectual property*

This RFP and all its attached documents, including any content, forms, statements, concepts, projects and procedures explicitly or implicitly forming part of this RFP, constitute the exclusive intellectual property of the UPU. This RFP is communicated to the various Bidders with the sole purpose of assisting them in the preparation of their respective offers. Any hard copies of this RFP shall be destroyed or returned to the UPU by non-selected Bidders upon request of the UPU.

2.10. *Privileges and immunities*

Nothing in or relating to this RFP, the activities described herein or any potential agreements related thereto shall be deemed as a waiver, expressed or implied, of any of the privileges, immunities and facilities which the UPU enjoys as a specialized agency of the United Nations system, pursuant to the Swiss Host State Act and the Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations (on Swiss territory), the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialised Agencies (outside Switzerland), as well as any other conventions and laws recognizing and/or granting such privileges, immunities and facilities to the UPU and its officials (such as the International Organizations Immunities Act in the case of the United States of America).

Accordingly, Bidders shall expressly acknowledge and agree that the property and assets of the UPU, including any archives, data, documents and funds belonging to the UPU or held by it (including without limitation the data/hosting environments and servers pertaining to or associated with the provision of the services, as well as any data or document in any form belonging to or held by the UPU on behalf of UPU member countries and their DOs), are inviolable and shall be immune from search, requisition, confiscation, expropriation and any other form of interference, whether by executive, administrative, judicial or legislative action. Bidders shall immediately contact the UPU in case of any attempt to violate or any violation of the UPU's privileges and immunities and take any reasonable measures to prevent such a violation.

In the light of the UPU's status as a specialized agency of the United Nations (and without prejudice to the observance, by the UPU, of any sanctions established by the United Nations Security Council), Bidders shall expressly certify their legal and operational willingness and ability to provide the services on a non-discriminatory basis for the benefit of all eligible entities established and/or situated in the territory of any UPU member country, irrespective of the existence of diplomatic relations between a Bidder's country of incorporation and/or operation and any UPU member country (including its DOs).

2.11. *Tax exemption*

Pursuant to article III, section 9, of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies, the UPU is exempt from all direct taxes and from customs restrictions, duties, and charges of a similar nature in respect of articles imported or exported for its official use.

Furthermore, the UPU, as an intergovernmental organization and a specialized agency of the United Nations,

is exempt from Value Added Tax (VAT) in Switzerland (OLTVA, article 22; *Instructions 2001 sur la TVA*, articles 574, 816 and others), as well as in other countries; **therefore, any prices shall be indicated "net", without VAT or similar taxes.**

2.12. Language

Tender documents shall, in their entirety, be formulated by Bidders in English.

2.13. Signature

Tender documents shall be signed by a representative (or representatives) duly designated and authorized to act on the Bidder's behalf and with the authority to legally bind the Bidder and accept the terms and conditions of this RFP.

2.14. Participation notification

Upon receipt of this RFP, the Bidder shall send a confirmation of participation to all contact persons listed in section 2.15.

2.15. Contact persons

Secretary of the Tenders and Procurements Committee

Universal Postal Union
International Bureau
Weltpoststrasse 4
3000 Berne 15
Switzerland
Telephone: +41 31 35 03 502 / +41 31 35 03 162
E-mail: caa@upu.int

2.16. Further inquiries and questions

Questions regarding the content of this RFP or any associated requests for clarification from Bidders shall be transmitted to the UPU in written form to the contact persons listed in section 2.15 above, **by 16 July 2020.**

Answers to questions submitted by Bidders or additional information shall be published and regularly updated on the UPU website (<https://www.upu.int/en/Universal-Postal-Union/Procurement>).

2.17. Delivery of offers and deadline

In the light of the current situation relating to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, all bids shall, on an exceptional basis, be submitted electronically to the UPU **ONLY at RFP-2020-015@upu.int** with "RFP-2020-015 DPRM Study on DLT and Blockchains for the Postal Sector" as subject.

The deadline for bid submission is 14 August 2020, at 16:00 Central European Time (CET).

Offers received after this date will not be considered by the UPU. Moreover, **offers sent to any address other than the one specified above or by any other means shall not be accepted** by the UPU.

The preparation and submission of tender documents by Bidders shall be free of charge for the UPU.

2.18. Evaluation procedure

The objective of the evaluation process is to ensure the selection, by the UPU, of a qualified, reliable and experienced Vendor that can deliver specialized consulting services and fulfill the objectives set out in section 2.6 above.

The evaluation procedure shall be conducted by the UPU with a view to determining, at the UPU's sole discretion and as objectively as possible, the bid that best meets the specific requirements of the UPU, on the basis of its assessment of bids received against the requirements defined herein. The prescribed structure of the tender documents (as set out in sections 3 and 4 below) is mandatory for all Bidders. Bids not fulfilling the

mandatory criteria as indicated in sections 3 and 4 below shall not be taken into further consideration by the UPU.

Bids received by the UPU must address all aspects of the RFP for which they envisage necessary modifications or identify missing elements.

Package selection will be based upon a non-exhaustive list of selection criteria as set out in section 4.2. Bidders are therefore required to consider how their package fits in with the criteria listed and to clearly indicate this in their response document.

The deliberations of the UPU Tenders and Procurements Committee (TPC/CAA) are strictly confidential. The TPC shall submit a report on the evaluation of bids received to the Director General of the UPU International Bureau, together with its final recommendation for his assessment and authorization.

The UPU General Terms and Conditions for the Provision of Services (see Annex 1) shall be accepted by Bidders. The final terms of any resulting contract shall be defined by the UPU and accepted by the Vendor. Contract negotiations shall only start after final selection by the UPU of a Vendor. Bidders will be informed immediately after a selection decision is taken by the UPU.

2.19. *Modification, suspension, or cancellation of the RFP*

The UPU reserves the right, **at its sole discretion and at any time** before conclusion of the RFP (i.e. at any time prior to the signature of the relevant contract with the Vendor), to modify, suspend or cancel all or part of this RFP.

2.20. *Tentative schedule*

Publication of RFP	9 July 2020 – revised on 4 August 2020
Deadline for receipt of offers by the UPU	14 August 2020, at 16:00 Central European Time (CET)
Estimated start of engagement	1 October 2020

3 Offer structure – Response format

All information provided shall be delivered by Bidders in full conformity with the terms and conditions set out in section 2 above.

Moreover, the requirements stipulated in this RFP shall be covered in their entirety, according to the structure defined below and following the sequence and numbering provided in this section. The UPU shall evaluate all Bidder responses in accordance with the structure defined herein.

3.1 *Cover letter*

Bidders shall submit a cover letter including:

- A statement that the Bidder has read, understands, and agrees to all provisions of this RFP.
- its name, telephone number, address and e-mail address, and the name(s) of its representative(s).

The cover letter shall be signed by a representative (or representatives) duly designated and authorized to act on the Bidder's behalf and with the authority to legally bind the Bidder and accept the terms and conditions of this RFP, and shall also include a confirmation of such authorization by the Bidder, as well as a statement that the Bidder's proposed tender documents are valid for a minimum period of 120 days.

3.2 *Executive summary*

The Bidder shall provide an executive summary highlighting the most important aspects of its offer.

3.3 Bidder information

- Company structure, locations/subsidiaries;
- Financial data (turnover, profit, etc.);
- Partners and equity holders of the company;
- Company history;
- Market position and share in the relevant markets.

3.4 Subcontractor information

Vendors may not assign, sublicense, subcontract, pledge or otherwise transfer or dispose of its offer, or any of the rights and obligations contained in it, without prior written consent of the UPU.

The approval by the UPU of the engagement of any subcontractor shall not relieve the Vendor of any of its obligations or responsibilities concerning the work performed by any subcontractor.

3.5 Technical Proposal

The Bidder must ensure that the Technical Proposal meets all requirements outlined in Section 4.

The Bidder shall prepare and submit for consideration a technical proposal that outlines the methodology, process, and timelines of how the Bidder intends to deliver all the objectives of this RFP as outlined in Section 4. Assessment criteria for the Technical Proposal is outlined in Section 4.2.

3.6 Pricing structure

Bidder shall provide a detailed pricing structure as required under Section 4.6 below. Bidders shall not include VAT in the aforementioned pricing structure (see section 2.11 above). Furthermore, **all pricing information shall be set out exclusively in United States Dollars (USD)**.

3.7 UPU General Terms and Conditions

Bidders shall include a statement of acceptance of the UPU General Terms and Conditions for the Provision of Goods and Services, attached hereto for reference.

3.8 Delivery and payment schedule

Delivery and payment schedules shall be proposed by Bidders in their financial proposals and agreed upon with the UPU.

4 Requirements of the Study

4.1 Description of the consultancy services

The Vendor shall conduct the study and fulfil the objectives as follows:

- **Objective 1 – Analyse:** Identify current and emerging use of DLTs in the domain areas of (i) **postal logistics and supply chain**, and (ii) **inclusive postal financial services**.

The Vendor shall conduct a limited desk study, including interviews with sector stakeholders (private sector, financial services providers, other United Nations system organizations, DOs, the UPU, third party experts, among others), and a broad mapping of which activities and processes in the two domain areas above where postal and comparable institutions have already employed DLTs solutions.

In order to fulfil the objectives herein, the Vendor is expected to have an established expertise in the two domain areas above and be able to further develop its knowledge by liaising with relevant postal stakeholders.

The Vendor shall provide prior justification for any anticipated field visits it deems necessary, along with the expected results of these field visits.

While the outputs of this objective set the scene for the rest of the study, this will not form the core of the Study. We expect the Vendor to bring a pre-prepared body of knowledge and expertise in these two domain areas which will be augmented with a postal perspective and postal stakeholder views.

- **Objective 2 – Define:** Identify and conduct a qualitative and in-depth individual analysis of up to eight end-to-end use cases, four per domain area, that holds the highest potential to positively impact the activities of postal operators in these domain areas.

The Vendor shall identify and analyse current use cases that employs the most feasible emerging technologies, be appropriate to the postal context, expected to bring net positive benefits for DOs and their customers, as well as be sustainable for DOs to implement without requiring mid to long term external assistance.

These use cases must highlight initiatives in which the employment of DLTs might contribute to significant efficiency benefits and serve as first guides for the implementation of future-proof postal operations in the domain areas of (i) **postal logistics and supply chain**, and (ii) **inclusive postal financial services**.

These uses cases must be innovative in nature rather than simply 'blockchaining' existing processes for marginal efficiency gains.

In fulfilling this objective, the Vendor shall perform an analysis with focus on quality over quantity of use cases. Thus, the Vendor is expected to demonstrate an in-depth analysis of the most promising use cases instead of only an enumeration of use cases identified at a superficial level.

While the UPU initially proposes up to eight case studies, the final number of case studies to be conducted by the Vendor may vary in accordance with the sector analysis to be carried out under Objective 1.

Preference will be given to in-depth analysis for individual use cases, rather than the number of cases identified/elaborated. In consultation with the Vendor, the UPU shall determine the final number of case studies following the conclusion of the Inception Report deliverable under section 4.5.

- **Objective 3 – Recommend:** Recommend methods and actions through which the UPU may promote DLTs to the benefit of UPU member countries – whether at the institutional level or through projects that directly benefit UPU member countries.

The Vendor shall prepare tangible policy recommendations on how UPU can leverage DLTs for the postal sector, as well as specific mechanisms needed to achieve these recommendations.

- **Objective 4 – Outline:** Based on the outputs of Objective 2 above, prepare concept notes for three pilot projects that will use DLTs to improve the provision of inclusive postal financial services with a goal of serving the unbanked and underbanked population.

The pilot projects that the Vendor shall outline should be focused on **inclusive postal financial services only**, not postal logistics. Since their inception, these pilot projects shall consider and assess relevant security and data protection issues. The concept notes to be prepared under this Objective shall clearly identify the results chain, budget, timeline, and success criteria for each pilot project.

Bidders shall design a detailed methodology to achieve the goals outlined above and submit to the UPU as part of their proposal. The methodology shall clearly identify the processes used to achieve these objectives, timelines, and resources required.

Bidders may consider the following guidance on time allocation to the different objectives of the study:

- Objective 1 – Analyse : 15%;
- Objective 2 – Define : 40%;
- Objective 3 – Recommend : 25%; and
- Objective 4 – Outline : 20%.

4.2 Bidder Requirements and Assessment Criteria

The Bidder shall be a consultancy firm of international repute in the area of activities defined herein.

Moreover, Bidders are expected to demonstrate:

- Established experience in successfully delivering global, impact-driven studies in the relevant areas in the English language;
- Experience of designing emerging, innovative financial services leveraging DLTs and blockchains;
- Experience structuring permissioned and hybrid business DLT platforms;
- Solid knowledge of the logistics sector, including e-commerce value chains, leveraging DLTs, including blockchains;
- Access to key ecosystem stakeholders;
- Experience in designing projects in the financial inclusion sector to benefit the unbanked and underbanked population;
- Experience delivering multi-country, multi-stakeholder projects;
- Experience working with United Nations entities and/or other intergovernmental organisations; and
- Experience working in the postal sector.

Bidders with networks and deployed teams in emerging economies (thus minimizing the need for a central team to travel into each field visit location, if so required by the UPU), will be given preference.

The selection criteria for the Vendor will be of 70 points for the technical proposal, and 30 points for the financial proposal.

The technical proposal shall be assessed on the following criteria:

Criteria	Points Obtainable
Experience of carrying out similar actionable studies	10
Experience and understanding of DLTs and their application in the domain areas	20
Proposed methodology	30
Team composition, and experience of team leader	10

Bidders shall provide evidence of meeting these requirements through a list of citations.

4.3 Estimated duration of the services

The services are scheduled to commence in September 2020 and expected to be six months in duration (including any field visits). Bidders shall clearly define any risks, constraints, and mitigation measures to be put in place to successfully conduct the Study, including mitigation mechanisms in the event travel is still restricted beyond September 2020 as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Bidders shall outline a detailed project plan, by phases and deliverables, to deliver the Study. The timeline shall also include an appropriate project management mechanism.

4.4 Study governance

The Study shall be conducted under the overall supervision and guidance of a Study Steering Committee to be defined by the UPU. In overall terms, the Steering Committee shall be responsible for:

- Monitoring the direction and progress of the Study;
- Approving the proposed methodology;
- Commenting on and setting expectations for interim deliverables;
- Approving the use cases and associated recommendations;
- Approving the pilot project concept notes; and
- Approving all other deliverables under the study.

The UPU shall define a programme manager as leader for this Study who will also be responsible for continuous project management and project supervision of the Vendor.

Project management meetings shall be held virtually using appropriate telecommunication tools. Face-to-face meetings, if required and feasible, shall be held at the UPU's headquarters in Berne, Switzerland.

Bidders are also expected to outline a detailed Project Governance and Project Management plan as part of their proposal, including milestones, project management meetings/calls and mechanisms, and deliverable acceptance processes (which shall be jointly determined by the UPU in consultation with the Vendor).

4.5 *Project Plan and Deliverables*

Notwithstanding any interim documents, the project deliverables are:

- **An Inception Report**, to be delivered at the end of the first month from the start of project, which finalises the project methodology, timelines, and approach. The Inception Report should draw upon Key Informant Interviews to finalise the methodology;
- **A Draft Study** that meets the Objectives 1 – 3 detailed in section 4.1, and demonstrates the main findings from the analysis undertaken, present use cases as outlined in the Objectives 1 – 3, and recommend methods and actions through which the UPU can promote DLTs to the benefit of Member Countries.
- **Three Pilot Project Concept Notes**, as outlined in Study Objective 4 under section 4.1.
- **A Final Study** that incorporates the comments and observations from the Study Steering Committee into the Draft Study and which is sent for editing and publishing by the UPU.

Bidders are expected to detail the process, timeline, how and when each deliverable will be prepared, as well as mechanisms to receive comments and approvals from the Steering Committee to finalize each deliverable.

The draft and final versions of the Study as well as the Pilot Project Concept Notes, shall be submitted to UPU in editable documents (MS Word or similar).

4.6 *Budget*

Bidders shall prepare a detailed, phase-by-phase budget, based on daily rates and time allocation for their relevant consultant(s).

The **budget ceiling is USD 175 000 inclusive of all costs and any applicable taxes**; this includes support, communications, and travel costs.

Proposals that fail to deliver all study objectives within this budgetary ceiling or exceed the budget ceiling shall not be considered.

4.7 *Bidder requirements*

The UPU shall have the right to reject any bids that do not fulfil the requirements set out herein.

Bidders shall describe any relevant procedures pertaining to project handling and communication.

Bidders shall also confirm that their bids shall cover all costs for provision of the services referred to herein. Other costs to be incurred by the selected Vendor shall be subject to the prior written consent of the UPU. No other fees shall be paid, with the exception of reimbursement of other unavoidable costs incurred for successful completion of the services, equally subject to prior written consent of the UPU.

4.8 *Additional Information*

Bidders may include any additional information may deem necessary or relevant for a clear and detailed understanding by the UPU of the services being offered.