

# ELRHA R2HC: Research Protocol for a Multi-Country Undernutrition Prevention Intervention: the AHEAd Nutrition Initiative Call for Proposals

14.01.2025

Elrha is pleased to issue this Call for Proposal (CfP) in connection with the competitive procurement for **the R2HC: Research Protocol for a Multi-Country Undernutrition Prevention Intervention (AHEAd Research Initiative)**. Proposals for the delivery of the Services are expected no later than **February 10, 2025**.

## Contents

<b>I: Services Description .....</b>	<b>3</b>
1. Background .....	3
2. Objectives, deliverables and activities .....	4
3. Ways of working.....	6
4. Timeframe .....	6
<b>II: Requirements and Evaluation .....</b>	<b>6</b>
5. Requirements.....	7
6. Evaluation criteria.....	9
<b>III: Submission Instructions.....</b>	<b>11</b>
7. Documents submission .....	12
8. Anticipated timeline .....	15
9. Questions .....	15
10. Contract award.....	16
<b>IV: General Information.....</b>	<b>16</b>
11. ToR information .....	16
12. Consortium and sub-contracting arrangements .....	17
13. Confidentiality .....	17
14. Conflict of interest .....	18
<b>V: Attachments .....</b>	<b>19</b>
Schedule 1: Cost structure template.....	19
Schedule 2: Technical proposal template .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Annex 1: Bid submission letter (template) .....	19
Annex 2: Non-collusive bid certificate (template).....	19
Annex 3: Terms and conditions acceptance letter (template).....	19
Annex 4: Consortium and sub-contracting information form .....	19
Appendix 1: Elrha contract terms & conditions .....	19
Appendix 2: Elrha incident prevention and management policy.....	19



# I: SERVICES DESCRIPTION

## 1. BACKGROUND

### Elrha Overview

We are Elrha. A global organisation that finds solutions to complex humanitarian problems through research and innovation. We are an established actor in the humanitarian community, working in partnership with humanitarian organisations, researchers, innovators, and the private sector to tackle some of the most difficult challenges facing people all over the world.

Through our globally recognised programmes, we have supported more than 200 world-class research studies and innovation projects, championing new ideas and different approaches to evidence what works in humanitarian response.

### Research for Health in Humanitarian Crises (R2HC)

The aim of R2HC is to improve health outcomes for people affected by humanitarian crises by strengthening the evidence base for public health interventions. Elrha's globally recognised research programme focuses on maximising the potential for public health research to bring about positive change in humanitarian response and helps inform decision making in humanitarian response. Since it was established in 2013, R2HC has funded more than 100 research studies across a range of public health fields, bringing together researchers and humanitarian practitioners to collaboratively undertake vital research.

### Context to AHEAD Nutrition Initiative & Research Protocol

Elrha's R2HC programme is part-way through an [ambitious, multi-year programme of work](#) with a focus on undernutrition and food insecurity.

With our partner, NutritionWorks, we have recently developed an evidence-based decision framework and resource guide to prevent undernutrition among children under 5 and pregnant and breastfeeding women in humanitarian (food insecure) contexts. The decision framework will be used to develop "packages" of nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions that will respond to identified drivers of undernutrition in the contexts in which they are implemented.

Phase 2 of this work will involve testing the "packages" in a number of different contexts. The contexts in which the testing takes place will be variable and is yet to be determined. The intervention packages will comprise interventions that may be 'packaged together' in different combinations. We therefore anticipate that the testing phase will be complex and will need to be guided by an overarching research protocol to ensure we can accurately measure and document the impact and success of the implemented interventions, and are able to compare across different countries.

We are now commissioning an academic consultant to develop the [testing protocol](#) for this work, through a competitive Call for Proposals (RfP) process. It is expected that the research will use a cluster-randomised controlled trial design with the addition of an accompanying qualitative process evaluation, and ideally a simple cost-effectiveness analysis.

The three steps outlined by the decision framework for designing the package of interventions are: 1) context and causal analysis 2) response design options, and 3) considerations for programme monitoring and evaluation. The interventions which could be part of the package range from those targeting individual children or women, to those at household and/or community level. For example, it could be a combination of balanced energy protein (BEP) supplementation for pregnant and breastfeeding women, infant

feeding support, micronutrient supplements for children, hygiene and sanitation supplies at household level, and women's empowerment opportunities through community projects.

We are seeking a Nutrition Research Academic Expert(s) (hereafter referred to as a service provider) to deliver a research protocol (with accompanying tools and templates) and some additional linked publications and communications materials (the 'Services').

**Please note, this C4P is NOT seeking research teams to implement the protocol. That will be undertaken in a future stage of work.**

## 2. OBJECTIVES, DELIVERABLES AND ACTIVITIES

### 2.1. Overall aim and objective(s)

**Aim:** To develop a rigorous research protocol and accompanying tools and materials for the AHEAD Nutrition Initiative.

**Objectives:**

- To write a technically-sound research protocol that will guide implementing agencies across multiple locations, using a tailored intervention package, to execute a standard and robust research project. The protocol should include the creation of standardised research tools, or tool templates, such as data collection tools and participant consent forms.
- To undertake an analysis and priority ranking of countries / sub-national geographies where the decision tool and protocol could be rolled out, to guide the testing phase. This may also include some recommended criteria of what should be considered in final selection of study location and capacities of the implementing partners.
- Register the protocol on a clinical trials registry for transparency and to prevent any risk of future publication bias and outcome selection bias
- Adapt the protocol for publication in a peer-reviewed journal
- Write a communications piece that highlights this research process and the role of research in addressing prevention of undernutrition. This piece should be designed for broader dissemination beyond academic readers and complement the primary outputs.

### 2.2. Deliverables and activities

The Services will be executed through the satisfactory completion of the Deliverables described below. While the service provider is expected to propose their own approach for carrying out the Deliverables, the activities described under each Deliverable frame the scope of work and define critical aspects of the Services delivery.

Deliverable	Activities	Timeframe
A written research protocol (using the recommended template (Annex 1) which has been adapted from the WHO) outlining the study rationale,	Review of decision-framework and resource guide that was developed in Phase 1 to understand how "packages" of interventions will be developed.	By June 2025

<p>methods, ethical considerations, data management and statistics, quality assurance, expected outcomes, and results dissemination plan. The protocol should also include standardized research tools, or tool templates, for inclusion in the protocol, such as data collection tools and participant consent forms.</p> <p>While it will not be possible to apply for ethical approval until the location(s) are determined, the protocol should be as complete as possible to submit to a Research Ethics Board.</p>	<p>Consult with implementors of programmes and other key stakeholders in food insecure contexts to ensure research feasibility.</p> <p>Draft a research protocol.</p> <p>Draft the research tools.</p> <p>Gather feedback from Elrha's Steering Committee members.</p> <p>Finalise research protocol and tools.</p>	
<p>To undertake an analysis and priority ranking of countries / sub-national geographies where the decision tool and protocol could be rolled out, to guide the testing phase.</p>	<p>Develop criteria for determining which countries / sub-national geographies should be used when deciding where to roll out the tool &amp; undertake the testing phase.</p> <p>Develop a list of recommended capacities of the implementing partners to guide selection of appropriate partners</p> <p>Rank 10–12 geographies where the tool &amp; protocol could be rolled out, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevalence rates of undernutrition, suspected main drivers, and considerations for access and security of research teams.</li> <li>• Suggestions of potential partners (national/regional academic institutions, implementation partners),</li> <li>• A brief summary of the prevention of undernutrition policy landscape and funding situation in the country, with links to key documents where available</li> <li>• A brief summary of the process for getting approval to conduct research in that country/geography, including key Ministry bodies that should be consulted and ethics boards.</li> </ul>	<p>By August 2025</p>
<p>Register the protocol on a clinical trials registry for transparency and to prevent any risk of future publication</p>	<p>Review options for trial registries and discuss the most appropriate one with Steering Committee.</p>	<p>By October 2025</p>

bias and outcome selection bias.	Once ethical approval is granted for the protocol, register it on a suitable trial registry.	
Write a communications piece that highlights this research process and the role of research in addressing prevention of undernutrition.	Draft a communications piece and, with Elrha's support, identify dissemination platform(s).  This piece should be designed for broader dissemination, beyond purely academic audiences, and complement the primary outputs.	By October 2025
Adapt the protocol for publication in a peer-reviewed journal	Review options for appropriate journals for publishing the protocols and discuss options with Steering Committee.  Amend the format of the protocol to fit that of the journal requirements.  (The paper will only be submitted to the journal once ethical approval is granted).	By December 2025

### 3. WAYS OF WORKING

Elrha requires the service provider to adopt an adaptable and collaborative approach to working with Elrha and remain accessible to Elrha throughout delivery.

Elrha expects the service provider to be aligned with Elrha's ways of working, being accessible throughout the Services, providing the additional skills and capabilities Elrha needs to deliver effectively.

At the end of the Services, and as relevant, the service provider shall transfer all documentation to Elrha in a professional and timely manner.

### 4. TIMEFRAME

The work will start no later than April 2025, and it will conclude no later than end-December 2025 (except for attending to reviewer comments for the peer reviewed publication, which may come later).

The table above shows the expected timeframe for the completion of each Deliverable, although final deadlines and delivery periods will be agreed with the service provider. Include any suggested amendments to the timeframe in your proposed approach.

## II: REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

## 5. REQUIREMENTS

The Proposal offered by the service provider will be assessed against the Requirements described below, in order to ensure the partner's understanding of and ability to deliver the Services.

### 5.1. Registration and nationality

The service provider(s) must be legally registered with a relevant institution. This registration can be in any country in the world.

There are no restrictions to the legal status of the service provider(s). We expect that the service provider will be affiliated to an academic institution, or a highly-regarded non-academic research institution.

### 5.2. Technical requirements

#### - Quality assurance

The proposal must present an effective approach to define, measure and/or demonstrate the quality of relevant outputs, and to which Deliverables such approach will be applied.

#### - Key personnel – experience, qualifications and skills

Key personnel involved in the Services must meet the following requirements in terms of experience, qualifications and skills:

- Extensive experience of writing research protocols for malnutrition studies in food insecure contexts
- Experience of the ethical approval process at your institution
- Prior experience in leading implementation of multi-sectoral research programmes (eg. Nutrition, WASH, health, food insecurity) in LMICs contexts, and especially in humanitarian settings. Experience should include assessment of a variety of outcomes on the pathway to wasting and stunting in children under 5 years and/or pregnant and breastfeeding women
- Strong knowledge of undernutrition prevention evidence and programming
- Expertise in quantitative statistics suitable for assessing the impact of a package of interventions on nutrition indicators
- Expertise in qualitative process analyses
- Experience in implementation research
- Experience of designing research tools such as information sheets, consent forms, and data collection forms
- We particularly welcome applications from academic institutions based in humanitarian or food insecure contexts.

### 5.3. Project management requirements

#### - Delivery modality

The Proposal must demonstrate the chosen delivery modality is fit-for-purpose for the effective and efficient fulfilment of the Services and Deliverables completion.

##### *Consortiums*

Only submissions from a individual / organisation will be accepted. Consortium of providers are not allowed.

##### *Sub-contracting*

The Services cannot be delivered through Sub-contractors.

Please see section 12 below for the definitions of Consortium and Sub-contractor under this contract.

#### - Delivery structure

The Proposal must demonstrate how the Services will be delivered in an effective manner, within the agreed period. The team structure must show roles and responsibilities are clearly identified and allocated against each of the Deliverables, and they are fit-for-purpose for the delivery of the Services.

#### - Work plan

The proposal must identify key activities and delivery paths in completing each Deliverable, and the time required. It must also clearly determine critical dependencies between activities.

#### - Risk management

Relevant assumptions and risks in delivering the Services and finalising the Deliverables must be identified, together with the risk management strategies to be put in place in order to minimise their impact in the Services.

#### - Organisational capacity

Applicants must have the organisational and managerial capacity to deliver the Services in an effective and timely manner. Areas to be assessed include (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Legal registration with a relevant regulatory body
- Financial capacity and stability
- Insurance arrangements
- Experience managing contracts of a similar size and value

### 5.4. Costing requirements

#### - Cost structure

The cost structure for delivering the Services must demonstrate the Bidder's knowledge of the resources (people's time, goods, outsourced services etc.) needed to complete the Deliverables. It must also show a balanced, cost-efficient and appropriate use of those resources across the Deliverables.

The ratio between contract-specific cost versus overheads is expected to be according to the Service Provider's industry standards, although, as a charity, Elrha strive to make the most efficient use of its financial resources.

#### - Costing parameters

All prices and rates must be set in GBP only, as the contract will be signed in this currency.



The prices and rates quoted shall be the fully inclusive value of the Services, including all costs and expenses that may be required to complete the Services, together with all general risks, liabilities and obligations, set out or implied, necessary to comply with the terms and conditions of the contract.

UK-registered bidders shall not display VAT costs in the quoted prices and rates. If VAT is displayed, bidders must clearly indicate the pre-VAT costs of each of the Services and itemise VAT separately.

Non-UK registered bidders shall include in their quoted prices and rates all taxes they are subject to under their country of registration.

The total value of the contract is expected to be within a £25,000 - £50,000 range. As part of the Bid evaluation, and without prejudice of all other elements described in this Part II, particular consideration will be given to the cost structure and unit costs, as well as quality of Services and value added to the offered Technical Proposal.

#### - Pro bono and other non-financial contributions

Elrha is committed to maximise its financial resources, so that more funding can be spent on programmes that benefit people affected by crises.

Providing any element of the service on a pro bono basis, offering a cost reduction and/or service enhancement, or any other charitable support to Elrha the organisation, will be assessed favourably. However, this is not a requirement and therefore it will not be marked as part of the proposal evaluation. It might thought be taken into consideration when making the contract award decision.

If the Bidder is offering such charitable support, this must be clearly set out the Proposal.

## 6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Elrha is committed to ensuring its financial resources are used as effectively and efficiently as possible, so that it can focus them on achieving maximum impact for the humanitarian actors and they communities affected by crisis they serve. Proposals will therefore be evaluated against the Requirements described above and under the criteria set out below.

Bidders must provide information that demonstrates and supports their understanding of, and ability to meet, the Services and Requirements contained within this document.

### 6.1. Evaluation grid

Proposals will be scored by a cross functional evaluation panel. All members of the panel will evaluate the information provided according to the following grid:

Criteria	Weighting
<b>Technical capabilities</b>	<b>60%</b>
Previous performance	12% sub-weighting
Approach to delivering the services	12% sub-weighting
Methodology and tools	12% sub-weighting
Quality assurance	12% sub-weighting
Key personnel - experience, qualifications and skills	12% sub-weighting

Criteria	Weighting
<b>Project management capabilities</b>	<b>30%</b>
Delivery structure	10% sub-weighting
Work plan	10% sub-weighting
Risk management	5% sub-weighting
Organisational capacity	5% sub-weighting
<b>Costing analysis</b>	<b>10%</b>
Cost structure	5% sub-weighting
Costing parameters (incl. total cost)	5% sub-weighting
Pro bono and other non-financial contributions	Yes / No

## 6.2. Proposal Evaluation

### - Technical and Project Management Capabilities

In evaluating the Technical and Project Management element of the Proposals, each criterion defined above will be evaluated against the relevant Requirement. They will be marked based on the level for which the requirement is met, as demonstrated in the Proposal and in accordance with the following table:

Score	Guidelines
0 Points	Wholly unsatisfactory – fails to meet the requirement or not answered.
1 Point	Poor – only partially meets specified requirements.
2 Points	Satisfactory – meets specified requirements in full.
3 Points	Good – exceeds the specified requirements and provides significant added value to Elrha.

### - Costing proposal

The cost evaluation will take into account both the proposed cost structure to deliver the Service for the duration of the contract and across the Deliverable, as well as unit costs and total costs.

The costing proposal will be scored from 0 to 3 points based on the Bidder demonstrating they have understood the resources needed for the completion of each Deliverable, as well as good value for money. The table below provides examples of elements to be considered during this evaluation, but the list is not exhaustive and other considerations might be taken into account:

Score	Guidance
0 Points	Wholly unsatisfactory – not all Deliverables have been costed; template has not been followed or fully completed; overhead ratio is significantly higher than the one in the next highest bid; highest unit costs; highest total value.
1 Point	Poor – only partially meets expectations in their understanding of the resources needed for the completion of the Services; overhead ratio higher than average*, by more than 5%; higher than average unit costs; higher than average total value.
2 Points	Satisfactory – meets expectations in their understanding of the resources needed for the completion of the Services; overhead ratio within 5% range average*; average unit cost; average total value.
3 Points	Good – exceeds expectations in their understanding of the resources needed for the completion of the Services (e.g. provides additional relevant costing analysis); overhead ratio average, by more than 5%; lower than average unit cost; lower than average total value

\* 'Average' in this table refers to the average across the relevant cost presented by the other bids.

### ***Elrha Not Bound***

Elrha will award the contract on the basis of obtaining the best value for money, having regard to the evaluation criteria set above, for all technical, project management and costing elements.

Elrha does not bind itself to accept the lowest priced offered among the bidders.

## **6.3. Presentation to Stakeholders**

All Proposals that have been received by the receipt deadline will be evaluated using the criteria and methodology described in this CfP document.

Following the evaluation of all Proposal received before the deadline, bidders for the top highest scored Proposals will be invited for interview.

Shortlisted bidders will be asked to present an overview of how their Proposal meets the Requirements and ensure an effective delivery of the Services set in this document. They might also be asked questions to clarify any aspect of the Proposal.

Shortlisted bidders are expected to be represented by at least one senior member of staff involved in the preparation of the Proposal, and one senior member of staff who would be responsible for the execution of the Services.

Format and agenda for the Presentation to Stakeholders will be sent out to all shortlisted bidders in advance.

## **III: SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

The deadline for submitting proposals in response to this Call for Proposals is **23:59 UK time on 10 February 2025**.

Submissions missing any of the documents listed below or received after the deadline might not be considered.

Please submit the Technical and Cost Structure Proposals, the completed Annex 1 & 2 & 3 & 4, and any supporting documents (as relevant) (the 'Proposal'), to Gillian McKay, as per the following instructions:

- email address: [g.mckay@elrha.org](mailto:g.mckay@elrha.org) , with [bidsandproposals@elrha.org](mailto:bidsandproposals@elrha.org) in copy
- subject line: Call for Proposals – AHEAD Nutrition Initiative Research Proposal – [your organisations name]
- signed with the name and title of the person making the submission

Submissions emailed to any other Elrha email address will not be considered.

Submissions not following the 'subject line' instructions might not be considered.

## 7. DOCUMENTS SUBMISSION

### 7.1. General instructions

All documents shall be written in English.

The complete Bid must be submitted in electronic format. Electronic files must be set out and named in such a way that Elrha evaluators can easily find any information.

Documents must be properly formatted to allow easy reading and understanding of its content. Documents that have not been adequately formatted might not be considered.

In order to evaluate the Bid, all required documents must be included with the submission. If any of the required documents are not submitted with the Bid, Elrha reserves to itself the right to reject it.

Please follow the instructions below for the completion of the following documents that are to be part of each Proposal:

- Technical Proposal
- Cost Structure Proposal
- Certificates and Assurances
- Bidder information questionnaire, including requested documents
- Examples of relevant work and materials produced

### 7.2. Technical Proposal

The information requested below must be submitted following a format of your choice, within a page limit of 10 pages maximum (excluding appendices), using the font Arial 11 with Normal page margins.

#### Introduction (2 pages maximum)

Provide background on your organisation and your credentials for delivering the Services.

- The section should clearly specify available research skills and capacities.
- This should include brief background on personnel.
- This section should include 2-3 brief examples of prior work. The most relevant work would be a multi-sectoral intervention for preventing undernutrition, and/or research in a food insecure or humanitarian context, and/or research across multiple countries. (These can be hyperlinked or included as appendices).

- Please ensure you include a description of you/your teams' experience of designing nutrition research in food insecure contexts

#### Technical approach (5 pages maximum)

Set out the technical approach for successfully delivering the Services, covering the following items:

- methodology or approach to be adopted to complete each Deliverable
- approach to be applied to measure or demonstrate the quality of the Deliverables
- key steps for completing the Deliverables and estimated time required
- key personnel and resources involved in finalising the Deliverables

#### Project management (3 pages maximum)

Describe how the Services delivery and completion of Deliverables will be managed, including obligations set under the contract, and escalation process for issues. The following items must be covered, in addition to any other relevant information:

- proposed structure of the team set to deliver the Services and Deliverables, detailing the roles and responsibilities of personnel and an organisational chart
- approach to working with Elrha, clarifying key reflection points where Elrha will be invited to provide technical input, quality assurance and/or decision making
- proposed work plan for delivery of the Services, separated into key milestones and establishing key dependencies
- description of identified risks and how they will be managed, and clarify any assumptions made about an output or activity to be delivered.

#### Appendices

- Please include CVs for all team members
- Please include short bios for all team members

### 7.3. Cost Structure Proposal

Bidders must follow the Cost Structure format set in Schedule 1, submitted as an Excel file (i.e. it should not be converted to PDF). Please make sure that worksheets are properly formatted to ensure clear reading when printing.

Inserting additional rows and/or columns to this format is only permitted when and how indicated, in which case, bidders should ensure any calculations are amended accordingly.

Additional information and/or pricing breakdowns may be added through inserted worksheets in the same document.

Bidders who submit a Cost Structure Proposal with minor arithmetical errors leading to a revised Total Cost of +/- 15%, once the errors are corrected, will be given the opportunity to accept the revised total Cost or withdraw the Proposal.

A Proposal containing major arithmetical errors, or a large number of arithmetical errors may be rejected on the ground that there is serious doubt about the competence of the bidder.

#### - Costing parameters

All quoted costs should be in GBP.

UK-registered bidders shall not include VAT costs in the quoted prices and rates.

Non-UK registered bidders shall include in their quoted prices and rates all taxes they are subject to in their country of registration.

Costs for Implementing Partners and/or Sub-contractors and/or Vendors should be clearly defined (please see section 12 for definitions).

Clarifications and/or assumptions related to the proposed costs must be set out in the Cost Structure Proposal.

Fee-type costs must be clearly differentiated from proposed reimbursable expenses.

#### 7.4. Certificates and assurances

The following documents must be printed in the Bidder's headed letter, signed and submitted as part of this Call for Proposals:

- Proposal submission letter, as per Annex 1
- Non-collusive Proposal Certificate, as per Annex 2
- Terms and Conditions acceptance letter, Annex 3

These letters and certificates must be signed by an authorised person.

Unless the submission email is sent by the same person signing the listed letters and certificates, these must be signed in ink before scanning, or through an e-signature service.

#### 7.5. Organisational information questionnaire

Bidders must complete the questionnaire in Annex 4, which provides information about the organisational set up, finances, organisational policies, and relevant business activities and past performance.

Every question in the questionnaire must be answered:

- if the question does not apply to your organisation, write N/A, and explain why it does not apply
- if you do not know the answer, please write N/K.

Questions marked with an asterisk (\*) indicate a fail/pass question. Explanations on why information cannot be provided are acceptable, but blank answers and lack of any information for any of these questions represents an automatic ineligibility for your organisation to be awarded the contract.

Please ensure the following documents are attached to the questionnaire (Annex 4):

Copy(ies) of at least one of the following:

- a. Your last two most recent audited accounts; or
- b. Statements of your turnover, profit & loss account and cash flow of your last two most recent years of trading/activity (if your accounts are not audited); or
- c. A statement of your cash flow forecast for the current year and a bank letter outlining the current cash and credit position (if a. & b. are not available).

Proposals might not be considered if the documents listed above are not submitted.

## 8. ANTICIPATED TIMELINE

Activity	Deadline
Call for Proposals issued	15 January 2025
Proposals submission deadline	10 February 2025
Evaluation of Proposals completed (anticipated)	17 February 2025
Presentation to Stakeholders (anticipated)	w/c 17 February 2025
Communication on contract award (anticipated)	24 February 2025
Due diligence and contracting (anticipated)	24 February 2025
Start date of Services delivery (anticipated)	01 April 2025

## 9. QUESTIONS

### 9.1. Scope of enquiries

Elrha will only provide clarity on content or items that might not be sufficiently self-explanatory in this Call for Proposals, but no additional information will be supplied to potential or actual bidders on individual basis.

Elrha will use best endeavours to provide such explanation as a matter of assistance to the bidder, but it shall not be construed as to add, modify or take away from the meaning and intent of the proposed contract and/or the obligations and liabilities of either party.

No representation, explanation or statement made to a bidder, or anyone else by or on behalf, or purportedly on behalf of Elrha as to the meaning of the procurement documents, or otherwise in explanation as aforesaid, shall be binding on Elrha in the exercise of its obligations under a subsequently awarded contract.

Where the enquiry is beneficial to all bidders, both the original enquiry and the response will be sent to the other bidders anonymously.

### 9.2. Timeframe

Questions can be submitted up to 3 working days before the submission deadline, to allow sufficient time to respond to the query.

Once the submission period has been closed, Elrha will not respond to any question or query.

### 9.3. Contact information

Queries concerning information or documents required as part of this Call for Proposals and/or unclear content, can be submitted to Gillian McKay as per the following instructions:

- email address: [g.mckay@elrha.org](mailto:g.mckay@elrha.org) , with [bidsandproposals@elrha.org](mailto:bidsandproposals@elrha.org) in copy
- subject line: QUERY – CfP – AHEAd Nutrition Initiative Research Protocol – [your organisations name]



## 10. CONTRACT AWARD

At the conclusion of the evaluation process and subject to the provisos contained in these Call for Proposals, Elrha will decide to whom the Service Contract will be awarded, and the successful bidder will be expected to enter into a formal agreement.

The acceptance of the Proposal shall be formalised through a Letter of Acceptance signed and sent by Elrha's authorised contract signatory. No other purported method of acceptance, (i.e. telephone call, correspondence from any other Elrha staff) shall be binding on Elrha.

In addition, any action on the part of the successful Bidder shall be of no contractual effect and not binding on Elrha without a Letter of Acceptance letter from Elrha being issued to the Bidder.

Unless otherwise agreed by Elrha and the Bidder, the contract agreement will be in a form prepared by Elrha.

All documents shall be written in English and the Service Contract subsequently entered into and its formation, interpretation and performance shall be subject to and in accordance with the law of England & Wales.

## IV: GENERAL INFORMATION

### 11. CALL FOR PROPOSALS INFORMATION

This Call for Proposals (CfP) is issued to ensure that all received Proposals are given equal and fair consideration. It is important therefore that bidders provide all information asked for in the format and order specified in this CfP.

Proposals shall be submitted in accordance with the instructions contained in this ToR, save as may be allowed elsewhere in the issued document, without alterations or qualifications.

No alteration or addition shall be made by bidders to any part of the CfP except where expressly allowed herein or in the other issued documents.

Proposals that do not comply with any mandatory requirement (i.e., where the words "shall" or "must" are used) will not be considered.

Elrha does not bind itself to accept any Proposal. Elrha reserves the right to accept a Proposal in part, rather than in full, and Elrha reserves the right and to award a Contract to more than one bidder.

#### 11.1. Issued Documents

As part of the Service Contract to be signed between Elrha and the successful bidder, arising from Elrha's written acceptance of Proposal, the following documents referred to in these ToR might be considered part of the contract:

- Part I Service Description and Part II Requirements and Evaluations of these Terms of Reference
- Non-collusive Proposal certificate signed by the bidder
- Technical and Cost Structure Proposals submitted by the Bidder and accepted by Elrha



- Any additional documents and annexes submitted by the Bidder

## 11.2. Preparation of Bids

Proposals shall not be subject to any pre-condition or otherwise qualified or accompanied by statements that might be construed as rendering the Proposal equivocal. Only unconditional Proposals will be considered. Elrha's decision as to whether or not a submitted Proposal is in an acceptable form will be final.

A fully compliant Proposal must be submitted. Where a bidder wishes to submit a modified or alternative Proposal this must be in addition, and submitted separately, to the compliant Bid and may or may not be considered by Elrha. Any modified or alternative Proposal must also be free of qualifications, fully priced and complete.

Bidders must obtain for themselves, at their own responsibility and expense, any additional information deemed necessary for the preparation of their Proposal. Information supplied to bidders by Elrha is provided to the best of its knowledge at the time of issuing these Terms of Reference. If bidders are uncertain of the accuracy of any information provided, they are advised to contact Elrha to seek clarification and/or to satisfy themselves by their own investigations. No responsibility is accepted by Elrha for any loss or damage of whatever kind or howsoever caused arising from the use by bidders of such information.

## 12. CONSORTIUM AND SUB-CONTRACTING ARRANGEMENTS

Regarding the delivery modalities under which the Services could be delivered, the following definitions apply:

A **Sub-contractor** is defined as an individual or organisation who delivers a portion of the contract on behalf of the lead service provider, or the other consortium member(s).

A **Consortium, or Partnership**, arrangement involves two or more individuals or organisations working together to deliver a contract. Each consortium will have a lead service provider ('Lead'), closely working with one or more other organisations ('Implementing Partner(s)').

**NOTE: for this contract sub-contracting or consortiums are NOT permitted.**

## 13. CONFIDENTIALITY

All information and documents received by Elrha in response to this CfP shall be treated as private and confidential, save where the disclosure is required by law.

Bidders shall not:

- Release to third parties any information relating to the Proposal that they intend to submit, other than with professional advisers who need to be consulted with regards to the preparation of the Proposal.
- Canvass directly or indirectly with any other bidder concerning the award of the contract or directly or indirectly obtain or attempt to obtain information.
- Canvass directly or indirectly with a member of Elrha or their trustees concerning the award of the contract or directly or indirectly obtain or attempt to obtain information from said individuals.

If a bidder does not observe points a), b) and c) above, Elrha will reject their Proposal and may decide not to invite the agency to bid for future business opportunities.

## 14.CONFLICT OF INTEREST

In order to ensure a fair and competitive procurement process, Elrha requires that all actual or potential conflicts of interest are identified and resolved to Elrha's satisfaction.

### 14.1.Conflict of interest in connection to this procurement process

Without limitation and common definition of conflict of interest standing, Elrha may perceive conflicts of interest to arise in connection to this procurement process where:

- (a) the bidder, or their Implementing Partners and/or Sub-contractors, or any person employed / related to / engaged by / otherwise connected with them, has been within the last two years engaged or employed by, or otherwise connected with Elrha
- (b) the bidder, or their Implementing Partners and/or Sub-contractors, or any person employed / related to / engaged by / otherwise connected with them has discussed within the last 12 months matters relevant to this procurement process with Elrha
- (c) a bidder, or their Implementing Partners and/or Sub-contractors, propose to provide services or advice to, or is otherwise connected with, more than one other bidder in relation to this procurement process.

### 14.2. Notification

Bidders should notify Elrha in writing of any actual or potential conflict of interest in their response to this procurement of the Services.

If the Bidder becomes aware of an actual or potential conflict of interest following submission of their Proposal, it should immediately notify Elrha in writing providing details of such actual or potential conflict of interest.

Notifications of a perceived, potential or actual conflict of interests must be communicated to [incidentreporting@elrha.org](mailto:incidentreporting@elrha.org), providing as much information as possible.

### 14.3. Exclusion on the basis of conflict of interest

Elrha reserves the right to exclude bidders from this procurement process should actual or potential conflicts of interest be found, which confer an unfair competitive advantage on one or more bidder, or to otherwise undermine a fair and competitive procurement process and, following consultation with the Bidder, such actual or potential conflicts are not resolved to the satisfaction of Elrha.

## V: ATTACHMENTS

Schedule 1: Cost Structure Proposal

Annex 1: Proposal Submission Letter (Template)

Annex 2: Non-Collusive Proposal Certificate (Template)

Annex 3: Terms And Conditions Acceptance Letter (Template)

Annex 4: Applicant Information Questionnaire

Appendix 1: Elrha Contract Terms & Conditions

Appendix 2: Elrha Incident Prevention and Management Policy