

Typical Contents of 'Needs Definition' Output Documents

The guidelines on outputs below are based on the assumption that there are two aims:

- a) To gain internal approval, both to proceeding with the project overall and to the specific request for use of consultants
- b) To describe the context and nature of consultancy support required sufficiently to enable consultancy firms to respond with a full proposal

The guidelines assume two separate output documents are produced to meet these aims, but with overlapping content, as summarised below:

Item	Internal: Approval Document	External: Brief for Consultants	Description of suggested content	Notes
Organisational context		Y	- Organisational and project context required to help a consultancy unfamiliar with the organisation to respond effectively	
Project business case – part 1	Y	Y	- Context and rationale for the overall project - Scope, objectives and intended outcomes - Projected benefits, quantified where possible - Constraints, assumptions, dependencies – e.g. on resources, time-scales, policies, standards, etc.	- Include clear problem statements where applicable
Project business case – part 2 (for internal use only, until consultancy selected)	Y		- Top level assumptions on approach - Projected costs, including both the estimated consultancy costs and all other costs - Key risks - Summary financial case (e.g. ROI, payback, NPV)	- This section will likely need to be updated once the consultancy proposal is received
Required consultancy contribution	Y	Y	- Nature of consulting contribution required - How will success of the consultancy contribution be assessed? - Detailed parameters/requirements, as needed, to enable the consultancy to develop the approach / size the resource requirement	- Refer to Consultancy Value Framework - Important not to be too prescriptive. The consultancy should be told the desired project outcomes and the general nature of the consultancy contribution required, without specifying the approach or resources to be used. This will allow scope for innovation and likely lead to greater diversity of response.

Item	Internal: Approval Document	External: Brief for Consultants	Description of suggested content	Notes
Internal justification for use of consultants, and evaluation criteria	Y		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rationale for the use of consultants: why can't the project all be done internally? - Quantified estimate of value from use of consultants, with explanation - Evaluation criteria for consultancy selection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Think about sources of value: Better decisions? Better delivery (of project or operational service)? Building internal capability? - Consider value as % of overall project benefits (i.e. increasing the chances of success)? Or as reducing overall project costs (i.e. do it quicker / with a lower cost team)?
RFP/RFI guidelines & contractual conditions		Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RFP/RFI response guidelines (approach and mechanics) - Key contractual obligations (IP etc.) and T&C's 	

Internal Approval Document

- Produced first, to gain approval for the project and for seeking consultancy support for the project
- Typically aimed at the Business Sponsor, the CFO and any other General Management who need to sign off
- With contributions from the Business Sponsor, Project Manager, End Users, Finance and Procurement
- Optionally updated after consultants are selected
- Referred to in post-implementation review and assessment of consultancy contribution

External Brief for Consultants

- To enable one or more consultancies to respond to the requirement
- Builds on the Internal Approval document, with additional contributions principally from the Project Manager (assuming they are in post) and Procurement