



NATO STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

Kalnciema iela 11B, Rīga, LV-1048, Phone: +371 67335467 e-mail:
info@stratcomcoe.org

Invitation to Tender for the Provision of Research Services

The NATO Strategic Communication Centre of Excellence has a requirement to identify research partners and contributors to work on an ongoing project which looks at hybrid threats in the context of NATO Strategic Communications.

Revision	Version 1
Release Date	26 JANUARY 2017
Issuer	Mr Ben Heap
Response date	02 FEBRUARY 2017 submitted via e-mail tender@stratcomcoe.org by 10:00hrs (Eastern European Time zone: UTC +02:00)

By participating in this tender you are indicating your acceptance to be bound by the guidelines set out in this document. We provide below the key details of the NATO StratCom COE requirements, which you should take into account in your response.

Please direct any questions regarding the ITT content or process to the Project Manager, Mr Ben Heap. You should not contact other NATO StratCom COE personnel unless directed to do so by the NATO StratCom COE representative. The NATO StratCom COE reserves the right to disqualify and reject proposals from suppliers who do not comply with these guidelines. All questions should be submitted in writing to the project manager: benjamin.heap@stratcomcoe.org

As part of this tender process the NATO StratCom COE makes no obligations in any way to:

- Pay any supplier for and ITT response; or
- Award the contract with the lowest price proposal or any bidder; or
- Accept any ITT information received from suppliers; or
- Include suppliers responding to this ITT, in any future invitations; or any other commitment to suppliers whatsoever.

Whilst care and attention has been exercised in the preparation of this document, it remains subject to contract and all warranties whether express or implied by statute, law or otherwise are hereby disclaimed and excluded.

These limitations are not intended to restrict continues business discussions between the NATO StratCom COE and suppliers. Any proposal received by the NATO StratCom COE is subject to contract with the NATO StratCom COE.



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1. Introduction and Overview.

- a. **NATO StratCom COE Background.** The NATO StratCom COE, based in Riga, Latvia, contributes to improved strategic communications capabilities within the Alliance and Allied nations. The NATO StratCom COE designs programmes to advance StratCom doctrine development and harmonisation, conducts research and experimentation to find practical solutions to existing challenges, identifies lessons from applied StratCom during operations, and enhances training and education efforts, and interoperability.
- b. **NATO StratCom COE Research.** At the 2016 Warsaw summit, NATO restated its commitment to effectively address the challenges posed by hybrid warfare; a broad, complex, and adaptive combination of conventional and non-conventional means, overt and covert military, paramilitary, and civilian measures, are employed in a highly integrated design by state and non-state actors to achieve their objectives.
- c. This research will assist NATO, Nations, Partners and other bodies by supporting NATO's capability development process, mission effectiveness and interoperability by providing comprehensive and timely expertise in the field of Strategic Communications (StratCom) and hybrid threats.
- d. **Aim of tender.** The COE will establish a pool of individuals or organizations who can contribute to this research by providing specialist expertise as required. There will be two phases in 2017. The COE is looking for research partners for both immediate and future engagement.
- e. **Phase One Q1-Q2 2017.** Analysis of representative sample of case studies using a methodology developed by the COE.
- f. **Phase Two. Q2-Q4 2017.** Review of methodology, re-scoping of thematic areas, in depth research of case studies.
- g. Overview of analysis framework for each case study:
 - (1) A brief summary describing the case study and explaining why it is assessed to be an example of a threat to the national security interests of a NATO nation.
 - (2) A description of the actors¹ involved and key events and interactions over time using the CAMEO taxonomy as a framework and supplementing with additional research.
 - (3) Using different levels of analysis, provide an assessment which accounts for the decision making and behaviour of the actors involved.
 - (4) Assess how this behaviour affected national security interests.

¹ An actor can be an individual, organisation or nation-state.



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- (5) Identify vulnerabilities, resiliences and lessons that can be used to inform policy makers and practitioners.

2. Requirements.

We are looking to identify experts and organisations that are able to provide research capacity in the following areas. You may copy and paste this table into any proposal document you submit.

Area	Attribute	Requirements	Offered
1	Common to all research areas	Familiarity with NATO StratCom policy and doctrine or that of any particular NATO nation. Understanding of conceptual frameworks of hybrid threats, ambiguous warfare and subversion. Expertise in research methodology related to security, strategic communication and conflict.	
2	Specialist Research areas (thematic areas of threat related to hybrid conflict) Research expertise would be required for just one of these areas.	Non-Government Organisations Government Organised Nongovernment Organisations Energy dependency Bribery and corruption Media (disinformation and propaganda) Territorial violations Lawfare / Legal leverage Agitation Front groups Espionage and infiltration Economic coercion Cyber operations	
3	Analysis of actors and events	Use of ICEWS system and CAMEO coding Processing and presentation of datasets using MS Excel	
4	Decision making analysis	Able to use different levels of analysis to account for the decision making and behaviour of actors.	
5	Assessment of impact on national security interests, policy and objectives	Able to conduct security policy analysis of NATO nations and assess impact on security interests from thematic areas of interest	



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6	Geopolitical areas of interest.	NATO nations, particularly Nordic-Baltic region Russian Federation China and Far East Middle East	
7	Analysis and policy recommendations	Capable of drawing conclusions from research and to produce policy recommendations for Strategic Communications practitioners.	

a. **Deliverables.** The COE is looking for input to the analysis of case studies which would take the following format.

- (1) Review and modification of research methodology.
- (2) Regional geopolitical insights.
- (3) Event coding using ICEWS data.
- (4) Completed research in thematic areas of threat.
- (5) Recommendations in the context of NATO and NATO Nations Strategic Communications capability.

3. Timetable.

General	
Delivery time for submission	10:00hrs (Eastern European Time zone: UTC +02:00) on 2nd February 2017.
Contract implementation date	As required.
Questions	Questions arising from this document should be given to Mr Ben Heap.
Full contact details	Mr Ben Heap Benjamin.heap@stratcomcoe.org , +371 267335476

4. Respondent Instructions.

This section provides detailed instructions to be followed in responding to this ITT. Included are Response Guidelines and the NATO StratCom COE Contact Information.



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a. Response Guidelines.

In most cases a PDF format CV or company profile with a brief proposal document or letter that responds to the indicated requirements will be sufficient, along with an indication of daily or monthly rate.

Please deliver this electronically to: tender@stratcomcoe.org at 10:00hrs (Eastern

European Time zone: UTC +02:00) on February 2nd 2017

In order to replicate the facilities of sealed bid process without the need to use the postal service, the NATO StratCom COE will to receive submissions electronically and at the same time. Most email systems allow for timed delivery of e-mails. Instructions are available at:

<https://support.office.com/en-gb/article/Delay-or-schedule-sending-email-messages026af69f-c287-490a-a72f-6c65793744ba>

The NATO StratCom COE will disregard any response submitted after the timetable deadline.

Any assumptions used in preparing responses should be clearly stated. Any appropriate supporting documents e.g.: brochures, demo videos, presentations, should be included.

Questions relating to clarification of the ITT will only be accepted in writing to the NATO StratCom COE representative and all responses from the Centre will be written and may be confidentially made available to other suppliers. In the event that any answer materially affects the ITT specification, an amendment of the ITT will be disseminated.

The NATO StratCom COE reserves the right to modify the provisions of this ITT at any time prior to the scheduled date for written responses. Additional scope and requirements can be added. Notification of such changes will be provided to all suppliers.

Should you wish to propose a deviation from the specification please ensure that you clearly identify and highlight where appropriate in your response.

All information supplied in this tender to date, any further information supplied during the tender process will remain confidential and available only to the Contract Award Committee members.

5. Tender Assessments.

Evaluation Criteria and Process

A set of evaluation criteria has been prepared by the NATO StratCom COE for the evaluation of every submission. Within each stage an initial evaluation will consider whether or not every instruction and requirement contained within the ITT has been fulfilled.



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The evaluation criteria will be based upon some or all of the following aspects of the Bidders' proposals (not in order of significance):

- a) Expected price. (as a guide, this will be negotiable depending on areas of expertise offered and time involved)
- b) Evidence of previous research or experience in relevant areas.
- c) Educational qualifications or awards in related areas of expertise.
- d) Direct experience in geo-political areas of interest.
- e) Language proficiency in English.

You are reminded that through the process the NATO StratCom COE will continually assess all contact with the bidders' organizations including compliance to the process. The NATO StratCom COE reserves the rights at its sole discretion to disqualify without further consideration any submission that does not satisfy this basic requirement.

6. Contract Details.

Contractual and payment details will be subject to negotiation with any selected suppliers. The contractor(s) will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement with the NATO StratCom COE.