

D3.1: Tenders for Transfer of Film to Digital Master

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1 INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

When commissioning a certain volume of work, archives that benefit from public financing will be obliged to issue a 'Request for Tender' (RFT). Many of the criteria used in an RFT are also applicable when said obligation is absent. The strict rules of an RFT procedure offer advantages and disadvantages: there should neither be opportunity for surprises, nor for negotiations.

Preparing an RFT requires thorough research and a critical evaluation of the archives' needs. The archive should be very precise in formulating the desired end result, while allowing the supplier room in applying its own proven workflow. Handling different types of source materials may or may not be awarded as separate Lots.

Integrity is to be maintained at all times when dealing with potential suppliers. Following publication of the RFT, contact with suppliers should be restricted to official queries and information notices.

Different assessment criteria can be applied to evaluate suppliers' suitability to perform the proposed assignment. Tenders are rated by Price; Service and Quality; Communication and Logistics. It is a must to get a 'procurement officer' on board to help with formalities, deadlines and (ever changing) rules.

Even when an RFT is not obligatory, archives have several options to economize and share experiences with fellow archives when commissioning work to third parties.

1.2 GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Between 2007 and 2012, EYE Film Institute Netherlands wrote, issued and executed three Requests for Tender, containing 6 different Lots and rewarding 6 different contracts to suppliers. The awarded volume for preservation and digitization was unprecedented and set Dutch archives ahead of any other archive worldwide.

Because of EYE's experience as a leader in this field, the institute was chosen as the leader of Work Package 3 in EFG 1914, which was designed to assist all the partners in understanding and writing Requests for Tenders, as needed. As leader of WP3 within EFG 1914, EYE shares its experiences with large-scale preservation and digitization with fellow European archives. Along with other documents, this paper is a result of that work package and serves as an instructive document for archives wishing to create their own RFTs.

1.3 BACKGROUND 'IMAGES FOR THE FUTURE'

The EYE Film Institute (formerly 'Netherlands Filmmuseum'; www.eyefilm.nl) is the largest and most important centre for cinematography in the Netherlands. The museum's collection of films spans the whole history of cinema: from silent films dating from the late 19th century when cinema first started, up to the latest contemporary digital productions.

This internationally renowned collection, to which old and new Dutch and foreign titles are added each year, is the source of inspiration for the numerous activities organised by the museum. Thematic programmes and exhibitions examining the many different aspects of film and film history are organised and held regularly. In addition, the museum distributes classics and contemporary films to art cinemas in the Netherlands.

Three Dutch archives jointly hold the country's visual history of the past 115 years. They are EYE (cinematic history); the Institute for Sound and Vision in Hilversum (mostly television history) and the National Archive in The Hague (photographs). The educational, cultural and economic value of this material is beyond compare. Only a few years ago, two major obstacles still stood in the way of silvering the wealth: the threat of physical decay; and the fact that the collections were not digitally available.

Jointly, the three archives turned to the Dutch FES (Economic Structure Enhancing Fund) with a project plan entitled 'Images for the Future'. Audiovisual material that spent years gathering dust on shelves was to be brought back to life by 'Images for the Future', preserved and disclosed for future generations.

On the day of the opening of the Dutch Parliament in 2006, it was announced that the 'Images for the Future' project had been included in the government budget for 2007. A € 173 million budget, financed by FES, the Ministry of Culture and the participating archives, was to be spread over a period of seven years. It was to remove the very real threat of deterioration and loss faced by vulnerable films, photographs, and video and audio tapes.

The aim of the 'Images for the Future' project was to make available the wealth of 20th century audiovisual material, stored in the archives of the parties involved. If nothing was done, this material would be lost. As part of the project, the material was to be restored, preserved and digitized and services were to be set up to make it accessible. The scope and scale of 'Images for the Future' was unparalleled worldwide: involving a total of 137,200 hours of video recordings, 22,510 hours of film, 123,900 hours of audio material and 2.9 million photos.

1.4 CALLS FOR TENDER 'IMAGES FOR THE FUTURE'

The majority of the activities within 'Images for the Future' had to be outsourced by the three archives involved. With the FES funds and the contribution by the Ministry of Culture being considered public money, it was apparent that the selection of suppliers had to be carried out as public tender procedures based on European Directive 2004/18/EC - which covers the coordination of public contracts for supplies, services and works, implemented by the Decree on Tender regulations for Public contracts (BAO) dated 26 July 2005.

EYE issued and executed three such European Public Invitations to Tender:

1. for 'Film Preservation'; containing two separate Lots for 'Photochemical and Digital Preservation' and 'Preservation via Separation Masters', in 2007.
2. for 'Film Digitizing & Encoding, Temporary Digital Storage & Asset Management', in 2008.
3. for 'Digitisation of Photographic Materials', containing three separate Lots issued jointly with the National Archive for 'Photographic Prints, Various Sizes, Black & White and Colour'; 'Glass Plate Negatives, Various Sizes, Black & White' and 'Film Based Negatives, Various Sizes, Black & White' plus a fourth Lot issued by the Institute for Sound and Vision for 'Film Based Negatives, 6 x 6 Black & White', in 2009.

Execution of the Tenders ran till 2012. Project Manager and Curator for EYE was Emjay Rechsteiner, with Anne Gant as Coordinator of Restoration and Digitization. Olaf Estoppey of

Alfa Delta Compendium in Amsterdam served as Procurement Officer on behalf of EYE and its partner archives on the RFT's mentioned above.

1.5 BACKGROUND 'EFG 1914'

EFG 1914 will digitize and make available 647 hours of film and 5.600 film-related items on the theme of World War I held by 20 European archives in 15 countries. The content will be made available through the EFG Portal and Europeana and, addition to that, in a special virtual exhibition dedicated to the content digitized in the project and to themes around WWI, film, the European film industries and their audiences in a decade of conflict and cataclysm. It complies with the requirement of the ICT-PSP Work programme 2011 in that it provides content complementary to content already available in Europeana, especially considering that several initiatives by Europeana itself and digitization projects already running are gathering collections from libraries, paper archives and private collections.

EFG 1914 proposes to fill a large part of the audiovisual gap on this theme for Europeana. It does so by utilizing the developments made by the EFG – The European Film Gateway Best Practice Network. With its tested and running D-Net application of the EFG Information Space, EFG provides the solutions needed for aggregating metadata in Europeana and, hence, making the content to be digitized available through Europeana. Drawing from the results of the EDCine IST project, EFG1914 also addresses some of the digitization, encoding and workflow issues that specifically apply to film.

The project is supported by the Association des Cinémathèques Européennes (ACE) and the Europeana Foundation itself. EFG1914 runs for 24 months, as of 15 February 2012.

Within the EFG 194 project, Work Package (WP) 3 deals with 'Transfer and Mastering Film to Digital Format'. The objective of WP3 is to streamline the process of transferring film elements held in archives into a standard digital master format. The transfer of film to a digital master is a very cost-intensive process and involves highly specialized equipment. Since the transfer hardware (scanners) is financially out of reach for many film archives, several archives will exercise the transfer from film to digital formats by sub-contracting. WP3 supplies the content providers, who need to outsource the transfer, with a standard tender comprising the quality and cost requirements expected. The project focuses on providing a model infrastructure for handling and distributing digital film elements as files. The project therefore creates a fully digital file-based solution supporting modern Digital Cinema formats, thus giving digital access to the film heritage in full cinema resolution. This will enable use both on web-platforms, as well as Video on Demand and cinema screens.

1.6 CALLS FOR TENDER 'EFG 1914'

Within WP3, Task 3.1 produces a standard template for a Call for Tender for transfer of film to video master, which can be used locally by the content providers that do not have the capabilities to scan their films in-house. D-Cinema quality (2K or 4K) is preferred, with High Definition as minimum requirement, in order to make the investment more future proof, even if the project main outlet, EFG/Europeana, will only need compressed Standard Definition files.

With EYE being the only film archive with extensive experience in issuing large-scale European Calls for Tender to transfer film to cinema quality files, Task 3.1 logically fell on EYE.

A presentation about this material was given at the first EFG meeting in Copenhagen on May 10th, 2012. Following that meeting, detailed notes, sample RFTs, questions received from

suppliers and 'Information Notices' issued during RFT procedures, and the lecture were made available to all archives on the project website.

EYE requested that archives contact them with questions on writing RFTs. 10 archives in the EFG 1914 project were planning to do some or all of their digitization work using an external commercial partner. In August, 2012, a request was sent asking all archives to report on their RFT activities. By September 2012, those archives had responded. For the most part, EFG 1914 participating archives found that it was not necessary to issue RFTs, because the amounts they had budgeted were lower than the amount where an RFT becomes obligatory – which in itself was considered a useful finding. A summary of these responses has been compiled. DIF is one of the archives who will tender, and who has used the notes from EYE as a guideline for their own RFT. Participating archives also indicated that the presentation and subsequent information provided by EYE had been of considerable practical benefit since many of the mechanisms and procedures outlined are equally applicable in situations where archives outsource digitization work without an RFT. For instance, the Magyar Nemzeti Digitális Archívum És Fil (Budapest) has indicated that they are doing a “mini-tender” with only 2 archives, at a budget lower than the required limit for a formal RFT. Because the information is not specific to EFG, it should prove useful to the participating archives in the future, should they wish to create a RFT for another project with a larger budget. As with most of the Work Packages in the EFG project, the goal is to build a knowledge base that serves not only the specific needs of this project, but allows the participating archives to become stronger and more knowledgeable in general, giving them the experience and tools for future activities within the archive. Although many of the partners were below the RFT levels for EFG1914, the information disseminated should continue to be relevant if they are able to receive future funding.

In September / October 2012, the internal presentation for EFG 1914 participating archives has been reworked and expanded by EYE into this publicly available document with a view to disseminating the provided information to any European archive facing questions of digitization and tender procedures. Along with this document, EYE continues to make itself available through the course of EFG1914, as a resource for questions regarding this process.

2 CALLS FOR TENDER BY FILM ARCHIVES

Chapter numbers refer to accompanying PowerPoint slides of the EFG presentation in Copenhagen, 10 May 2012 (see Annex 1).

2.1 INTRODUCTION TO CALLS FOR TENDER

For Film Archives looking to preserve or digitize their assets.

Meant for ACE members and participants in EFG 1914.

While this short introduction may be of particular interest to archives considering to issue a Call for Tender, some of the criteria described are applicable to any situation where an archive is looking to commission (digitization or restoration) work to a third party.

Quotes in Italics below still contain EYE's previous name of (Netherlands) Filmmuseum.

2.2 TERMINOLOGY

An archive does not 'write a tender'. An archive issues a 'Public Invitation to Tender', aka a 'Request for Tender' (RFT), meant to generate offers from companies competing for your work.

These companies, indicated as 'supplier', 'vendor', 'applicant', 'participant' or 'contractor' deliver a Tender containing answers to questions posed by the archive plus a price quote. The equivalent of a Request for Tender (RFT) in the commercial world is a Request for Proposal (RFP): also consisting of a set of criteria that you want a potential supplier to conform to. An RFP is less prescribed but it still goes through the same steps of describing what one wants from a supplier; asking the supplier what he can deliver, and against what price.

Issuing a 'European' RFT is an obligation imposed by the European Union when you are (largely) publicly financed and you are about to assign work worth > € 130,000 when you are central government; > € 200,000 when you are decentralized government (in the Netherlands: the National Archive is considered central government while the EYE Film Institute – an independent foundation partly financed by subsidies from the Ministry – is considered decentralized government.).

Cutting up an assignment in several parts each worth < € 200,000 generally won't help to free yourself from the obligation to publish an RFT.

RFT's are meant to create fair market conditions, enhance transparency and counter bribery and nepotism in the public sector. It is also meant to improve efficiency and create an economic advantage for the public body. While called 'European' that just means that Brussels obliges us to play by these rules; any company from a country that subscribes to a global free market economy can tender. In fact EYE received Tenders from the US and Canada.

An RFT procedure has to abide by strict rules and very formal criteria concerning e.g. eligibility and cut-off dates. The advantages of such rigidity tend to work as disadvantages as well. By describing exactly what you want from your supplier in your 'Descriptive Document', and on account of the supplier being forced to make an elaborate and detailed offer: theoretically there should never be any surprises or extra costs in the process. On the flipside: this means there is no room to negotiate and it is not easy to change the specifications after announcing the winner. Digitization is currently a very dynamic field with new technologies constantly being introduced. If you feel obliged to change your specs halfway you will need to be able to defend why you do so, and why you are not issuing a new RFT on the occasion (for instance: because these are new specs that you see being applied throughout the industry and as an archive you cannot stay behind just because you committed yourself for multiple years). You also need to ask yourself at all times if it is still fair to the other bidders; would their quotes have looked differently had they known about these new specs at the time of the RFT?

2.3 PREPARING THE RFT

Open or Restricted?

You have a choice between an 'Open' or a 'Restricted' RFP.

Restricted is only open to selected prequalified suppliers. It is often a two-stage process; the first stage of which produces a short list of suitable vendors.

A Restricted RFP may be useful if you expect lots and lots of Tenders. Film digitization however is a highly specialized market; you may get around 8 to 12 qualifying bids at the most. By making a pre-selection between these potential bidders you may invite criticism from companies not selected.

The alternative, hereby recommended, is an 'Open' RFP.

Research

While preparing the RFT you perform thorough research: which company does what; who are the usual suspects; what is their current market position; what are their wishes, their plans for expansion etc. Remember: at this stage you may still engage in open dialogue with any company, which may or may not decide to answer to your RFP. There is nothing wrong in using information that potential bidders provide you with when writing your Descriptive Document, as long as you don't include specifications that only they can answer to. You may even actively approach suppliers and invite them to tender, if you think they are suitable. If you intend to do so, always make sure to approach several of the most obvious parties.

A word on integrity: try splitting the restaurant bill; don't let potential bidders take you to a nightclub – but do take full advantage of the opportunity to talk freely about technology and workflows with potential suppliers before the RFT is published.

Scope and range

The 'Descriptive Document' you write constitutes a mutual commitment between archive and supplier. You are to indicate the indicated volume of the assignment, including number of hours and type of source material. Be sure you can live up to this! Are your digitization and its financing really guaranteed? What happens when there is a change of government? A number of tools may be used to mitigate an unexpected drop in the volume of work offered:

- a) commit yourself to only 2 or 3 years with 1 or 2 option years (flipside: bidder may give a lower price quote if 4 years are guaranteed)
- b) *"No rights can be derived from the numbers specified"*
- c) *"On the basis of exclusivity, source material will be regularly placed with the successful Participant. The number of hours of film for each type of source material cannot be specified beforehand in view of the fact that the selection phase has not yet taken place."*

Remember: on films with multiple elements you probably still need to find out which element is best suited for digitization.

Beware that the use of phrases like the above does not offer full protection against a discontented supplier. Best try and get an accurate and realistic approximation of the number of hours to be processed on the beforehand. Be conservative. Do not forget to indicate that the numbers specified in your Invitation to Tender relate to the volume of source material and not to the numbers of hours to be produced by means of digitizing.

2.4 ESTIMATED VOLUME

Example of a table from EYE's Descriptive Document for its Invitation to Tender Film Digitization, Encoding and (Temporary) Asset Management:

	Year 1	Year 2	OptionYear 3	OptionYear 4	All 4 Years
	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours
Total Digitizing	473	568	568	568	2177
Encodings from films digitized by Participant	473	568	568	568	2177
Encodings from films digitized by other parties	51	61	61	61	234
Total: Encoding	524	629	629	629	2411
Total Temporary Storage and Asset Management	524	1153	1782	2411	5870

2.5 INDICATE BUDGET?

It is wise to give some indication of the money you have at your disposal. This will also help restrain the number of bidders. You may even be completely transparent and make the budgeted amount your leading parameter, like EYE did on one of its RFTs:

“The amount budgeted in Images for the Future for digitizing by Filmmuseum is € 680 per hour of source material. The amount budgeted for encoding is € 360 per hour of source material. The amount budgeted for digital storage is € 11,920 in 2008 (year 1 of contract), € 19,866 in 2009 (year 2 of contract), € 27,813 in 2010 (optional year 3 of contract), € 35,759 in 2011 (optional year 4 of contract). The whole of the activities of digitizing, encoding, temporary storing and asset management will therefore need to be performed within these financial parameters. Tenders containing a quote outside the scope of these financial parameters can only be judged if no other tender conforms to the financial parameters outlined above.”

In 2008, the strategy above helped us obtain a number of quotes for digitization on 2K that conformed to the budgeted amounts.

By now, based on your research, you should have a good idea of what quotes can be obtained with the volume you can assign.

2.6 RFT DESCRIPTIVE PART

Describe current situation

What is your experience with digitization? What is your current workflow?

(A great excuse to finally write a careful description of your current set-up, if it has not been done in great detail already).

Describe purpose of the Invitation to Tender:

Be precise in what you want as an end product, while allowing the supplier room in applying its own proven workflow.

Some examples from EYE's RFT for Film Digitization:

EYE wanted to end up with both an archival master (without corrections) and a mezzanine master (cropped, with some corrections). This meant that we needed to describe exactly which corrections we did and did not want performed on the mezzanine files.

The files needed to be suitable for digital projection and were to be encoded at several renditions including one suitable for EFG and one suitable for our own VoD platform. In our research we had noted that some suppliers preferred to make all required renditions in one go, while for others it was cheaper to make each rendition on demand. Hence, we left it to the suppliers which workflow to apply.

EYE needed films to be stored, managed and retrievable. Realizing that a custom made storage and asset management platform would be far too costly we gave participants the opportunity to include usage of a proven technology working system as part of their Tender:

"Filmmuseum invites Participants to describe and offer at Filmmuseum's disposal an existing storage and asset management process. Points can be obtained by offering at Filmmuseum's disposal a more sophisticated asset management system that could also provide tools for making films online available to the creative industry and the general public with functionalities like VoD (SR and HD), download to own, DVD on demand, DRM, possibility to add metadata, reviews, stills, contextual information etc.

Realizing that many of such more sophisticated media asset management systems are already operational, each offering different features and modules, Filmmuseum does not ask Participants to design or procure to design functionalities for Filmmuseum. Rather, Filmmuseum invites Participants to describe and offer at Filmmuseum's disposal a proven technology working system, detailing existing functionalities and tools thereof."

During our research we came across potential participants with creative ideas about monetizing our collection as part of their offer. To temper unrealistic expectations we felt it necessary to include the following paragraph in the Descriptive Document:

"As a precaution against models based on exploitation revenues, Filmmuseum likes to point out the following: Filmmuseum has the obligation to make a return on investment with respect to the government money invested in Images for the Future by making films available to the creative industry, education and the general audience. However, most of the 4,194 hours to be encoded still need to be cleared for online exploitation. In the course of the coming 6 years Filmmuseum will make a dedicated effort to find and contact rightsholders with respect to the over 10,000 titles to be encoded, and to find a solution with respect to so-called orphan works."

Division into Lots

You will likely have different types of source material to digitize: 35 and 16; positive and interpositive; original negative and internegative; audio may be either on separate magnetic tapes (various formats), optical negative, or from an optical or magnetic striped print.

Different types of source material require different handling and can be divided into different 'Lots'. You will need to decide whether to award each Lot separately (advantage: you get the

right specialist for each Lot) or to award all Lots to one party (advantage: more volume so likely a better price quote).

On our RFT for Film Preservation, we made a division between a Lot for regular preservation (the great majority of the titles involved) and a more specialized Lot for creating separation masters. The Lots went to different winners: Haghefilm in Amsterdam and Cineric in New York, respectively.

On our RFT for Photo Digitization, we made a division into three Lots for prints (positives), negatives and glass negatives since each category requires different machines and handling. Apart from a price quote for each Lot, we also asked suppliers to provide us with an extra, separate quote in case they would be awarded either two or all three Lots – which did indeed bring down their quotes. The three Lots ended up with two companies (Pictura and Microformat).

On our RFT for Film Digitization, we wanted one supplier to be able to digitize different types of source material. We expected suppliers to use the same scanner for both positives and negatives; on top of that we found it difficult to make a breakdown between positives and negatives in advance, since decisions on which of available elements to digitize would be part of the process.

We realized that less current gauges, nitrate and shrunk source material would require different handling. To avoid high overall quotes, odd gauges and seriously shrunk material were dealt with outside the RFT.

For digitizing nitrate and somewhat shrunk films we had three options:

- 1) make it a separate Lot
- 2) require the overall quote to include a certain % of nitrate
- 3) ask for a separate quote per hour

We chose option 3:

“The ability to work from several types of material (including 16 mm and 35 mm; positive, negative and reversal) is a prerequisite. Material to be scanned can be both in colour and black&white. Participant’s overall quote is to be based on acetate or polyester source material. Catering to a wish of Filmmuseum, it is desirable that Participant can also scan nitrate source material and material with thick splices and somewhat shrunk films (up to 2% shrinkage) with damaged perforations and sequences without risk to the integrity of the material. For scanning nitrate and somewhat shrunk films, Participant is asked to provide separate quotes against additional costs per hour.”

Since we had more than enough acetate to keep us busy for the first two years, we decided against making nitrate digitization obligatory. We did however make it an important factor in deciding – at our discretion – whether to award the third and fourth option year:

“During the first two years, Supplier needs to be able to digitize acetate and polyester film source material, while his ability to digitize nitrate against a separate quote is desirable. As of the third (option) year, Filmmuseum reserves the right to also offer nitrate source material to be digitized. During the first two years, Supplier needs to be able to digitize acetate and polyester film source material, while his ability to digitize nitrate against a separate quote is desirable. As of the third (option) year, Filmmuseum reserves the right to also offer nitrate source material to be digitized.”

While the above constitutes a division along a vertical axe (different types of source material), one can also make a division along a horizontal axe by distinguishing steps

needed in the process. One participant may be good at digitizing while the other is specialized in encoding; by issuing separate Lots you can get the best possible supplier for each step.

At EYE we chose to approach digitization, encoding, storage and asset management as a single pipeline, requiring a single contractor or consortium of contractors. This would assure a smooth process with suppliers forced to take full responsibility in case of a hiccup. The contract was won by Thought Equity (now called T3 Media).

Issuing more Lots does imply more work for the archive when judging the Tenders.

2.7 RFT: ASSESSMENT

Questions

Following your research you have a good picture of which companies are likely to apply and you have probably met at least half of them.

Your task, quite simply, is to get the right party with the right offer to do the job.

There are at least 4 sets of assessment criteria at your disposal:

- 1) Ask the participants to provide references and annual accounts.
- 2) Have them answer to your 'Program of Requirements' by signing a 'Declaration of Conformance'. This is known as the 'knock-out criteria'. The choice is a binary yes/no: if there is a single requirement the Participant cannot conform to - he's out.
- 3) Award points for each answer to your list of 'Wishes'.
- 4) Variations.

Ad 1) References provided by third parties are not judged as such, but in the 'Wishes' section the Participant himself will need to elaborate on the references provided and why these are of a similar type and level of complexity as the subject of the Invitation to Tender.

Ad 2) The 'knock-out criteria' save you from having to read too many Tenders. A popular way to eliminate contestants in the past was by requiring a high annual turn-over. Recently, European rules have been adapted to prevent discrimination against smaller contractors.

Ad 3) The 'Wishes' are a far finer mechanism at your disposal where you can award points for relevant experience, the use of certain procedures, etc. You may want to have a look at the EYE (Filmmuseum) 'Descriptive Document Film Digitization' for inspiration.

Ad 4) Finally, you may invite participants to also propose a 'variation' of their tender; either by means of adding an alternative pricelist or, when the variation involves different answers to your 'Wishes': by submitting a second complete Tender. In our case, we boldly suggest suggested a variation at 4K, still within the parameters of our budget.

Define procedure to award points

BEFORE your Call for Tender is published you need to record in detail how you will award points for each answer. This is possibly the most important part of writing an RFT.

Tenders are usually rated along 3 subcriteria:

- 1) Price
- 2) Service and Quality

3) Communication and Logistics

In our case, we awarded 333 points for each subcriterion, thus 999 points in total.

The Tender with the highest total score is regarded as “the most economically advantageous Tender”, hence the winner.

Note here that “economically advantageous” also comprises of points awarded for Price, Service and Quality. Some archives have used a different method in the past, where Tenders were only judged by price quote (and one may be in for a big surprise). This method has lost favor with the EU.

Form an Evaluation Committee

Ideally your evaluation committee should be a mix of technical, managerial and curatorial staff. Of major importance is to secure consistency in judging answers from different participants. Make sure to keep all internal records of the awarding process.

2.8 REST OF PROCEDURE

Include Contract

Your Descriptive Document will include a Draft Contract between the archive and the winning supplier. During the procedure participants can make suggestions, which may be taken into account, after which a final version of the Contract will be circulated 6 days before the submission date of the Tenders. Participants need to conform to the Contract in advance; it is not negotiable afterwards.

Publish on TED: Tender Electronic Daily

Publish your Call to Tender on the EU’s Tender Electronic Daily (TED). The Descriptive Document can be made available to interested parties on demand – this allows you to keep track of all potential participants, allowing you to follow-up with additional information.

Inform prospective participants

From this point onwards: you may still approach suitable suppliers and point them to TED but apart from that: communications between (relevant people at) the archive and potential participants are now highly regulated. Every question of a participant needs to be submitted as an official query. Each query receives an official answer from you by means of an “Information Notice” which – including the supplier’s question, but now anonymized – is dispersed towards all known potential participants. Any new party asking you for the Descriptive Document is also provided with all previous information notices.

Sometimes, questions from participants may compel you to use an information notice in order to rephrase a paragraph in the Descriptive Document, which apparently is deemed confusing by suppliers. In this sense, queries and notices can serve a useful purpose in improving the text of the Descriptive Document.

During this period, it is advisable to keep any contact with potential participants curt yet courteous. It would be best to avoid taking calls and encourage participants, by email, to use an official query should they have any questions.

Deadlines

Miss a deadline and you run the risk of having to do the whole procedure over again.

In all, the tendering process is very delicate and regulated. It is a must to get a 'procurement officer' on board to help you with all the formalities, like publishing on the official website, abiding by all the right deadlines and each of the current (and ever changing) rules. At EYE we used Olaf Estoppey at Alfa Delta Compendium in Amsterdam on all three of our Invitations to Tender, which worked out much to our satisfaction.

To give you an idea of the timeframe on our RFT for Film Digitization:

From the announcement on TED, participants had 6 weeks to submit queries. EYE had another 4 days to answer the last queries received. A week later was the last opportunity to submit tenders (all participants did so personally and we publicly accepted their envelopes). We took 3 weeks to evaluate the tenders and inform the (un)successful participants, followed by 2 weeks in which other contestants had the legal opportunity to protest. The provisionally chosen supplier was required to carry out a set of tests after which we could sign the contract.

Issuing an RFT is exciting; it is also a lot of work. Consider it a great opportunity to formulate your ideal workflow.

You may benefit from the experience of other archives, like EYE. Feel free to use the Descriptive Document and the subsequent Information Notices of our Invitation to Tender for Film Digitization as inspiration, but behold of copy pasting. A lot has changed since this particular RFT was published 5 years ago, including tender regulations and technical specifications. We have also learned a lot during the execution of the contract.

2.9 CHOICES

When you are under no obligation to issue a European RFT (Request for Tender) you can opt for an RFP (Request for Proposal) instead. You still ask basically the same set of questions to a potential supplier but the procedure is less rigid.

Note: the rigidity of an RFT also has advantages by creating mutual clarity in your relationship with existing and potential suppliers.

Whether publishing a mandatory RFT or a voluntary RFP, you may consider the following options to economize and share experiences with other archives:

- 1) Hitchhike on the back of another archive's RFT. The volume of your films to be digitized is added to the volume of the archive issuing the RFT. This is advantageous to both archives: you may both get a better rate and you share experiences. It is imperative that the option of adding films from another archive is already mentioned in the RFT. We did so simply like this: *"Part of this volume may consist of material from the Institute for Sound and Vision, to be provided by us. If this were to occur, Supplier will still only have to deal with Filmmuseum with respect to handling and billing the digitizing and/or encoding of any films provided by Sound and Vision"*.
- 2) Include your work volume as a separate Lot with a separate set of Wishes in an RFT issued with other archives. This is what the Institute for Sound and Vision did on our joint 'Invitation to Tender for Photo Digitization', where the Sound and Vision photo collection was of a different nature than the collections of fellow archives EYE and the Dutch National Archive. This option helps attract participants, while the archives share overhead and experiences.
- 3) Publish a joint RFT with other archives. For this, the archives need to have the same technical requirements and formulate identical Wishes. Suppliers are simply invited to indicate that their offer applies to both archive A and archive B. You will benefit from a

lower price quote and gain a lot from working closely with a fellow archive. This option was chosen by EYE and the Dutch National Archive on, again, the joint 'Invitation to Tender for Photo Digitization' (which also included a separate Lot for Sound & Vision, see above under 2).

EYE Film Institute Netherlands gladly shares its experiences in issuing RFP's with other archives, both within and outside the context of EFG 1914.

3 SAMPLE DESCRIPTIVE DOCUMENTS

This chapter lists the documents that EYE produced for the 'Images for the Future' project that and that were provided to the EFG1914 partners as examples for RFT and related documents.

3.1 Descriptive Document 'Film Preservation'

- [Public Invitation to Tender 2007/S169-208772/NL "Film Preservation"](#)
- [Appendix A : Publication Text](#)
- [Appendix J Pricelist](#)

3.2 Information Notices 'Film Preservation'

- [Information Notice Nr. 1 / Open procedure public tender 'Film Preservation' 2007/S169-208772](#)
- [Information Notice Nr. 2 / Open procedure public tender 'Film Preservation' 2007/S169-208772](#)
- [Information Notice Nr. 3 / Open procedure public tender 'Film Preservation' 2007/S169-208772](#)
- [Information Notice Nr. 4 / Open procedure public tender 'Film Preservation' 2007/S169-208772](#)

3.3 Descriptive Document 'Film Digitizing & Encoding, Temporary Digital Storage & Asset Management'

- [Public Invitation to Tender 'Film Digitizing & Encoding, Temporary Digital Storage & Asset Management'](#)

3.4 Information Notices 'Film Digitizing & Encoding, Temporary Digital Storage & Asset Management'

- Information Notice Nr. 1: Open procedure public invitation to tender 'Film digitizing & encoding, temporary digital storage & asset management 2008/S62-084023
- [Information Notice Nr. 2: Open procedure public invitation to tender 'Film digitizing & encoding, temporary digital storage & asset management 2008/S62-084023](#)
- [Information Notice Nr. 3: Open procedure public invitation to tender 'Film digitizing & encoding, temporary digital storage & asset management 2008/S62-084023](#)
- [Information Notice Nr. 4: Open procedure public invitation to tender 'Film digitizing & encoding, temporary digital storage & asset management 2008/S62-084023](#)

3.5 Descriptive Document 'Digitisation of Photographic Materials'

- [Public Invitation to Tender: Digitisation Photographic Materials according to EU Tender Nr. 2009/S71-103232](#)
- [Contract Notice](#)
- [Appendices F and I](#)

3.6 Information Notices 'Digitisation of Photographic Materials'

- [Information Notice 1: Digitisation Photographic Materials 2009/S71-103232](#)
- [Information Notice 2: Digitisation Photographic Materials 2009/S71-103232](#)
- [Information Notice 3: Digitisation Photographic Materials 2009/S71-103232](#)

ANNEX 1: POWERPOINT PRESENTATION COPENHAGEN

[PowerPoint Presentation held by Emjay Rechsteiner \(EYE Film Institute\) at the EFG1914 "WP1 Content selection and digitisation monitoring workshop" in Copenhagen on 9-10 May, 2012](#)