



# Request for proposals: Biosafety and biosecurity capacity strengthening in support of the 100 Days Mission

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## Background

Emerging infectious diseases pose a growing threat to global health security in a world of higher population density, increased mobility, and ecological change. CEPI's mission is to accelerate the development of vaccines and other biologic countermeasures against epidemic and pandemic threats so they can be accessible to all people in need. CEPI leverages its unique position within the global health and Research and Development (R&D) ecosystems, building on its proven track record of bringing together public-sector, private-sector and academic partners, to accelerate the development of vaccines against emerging viral threats. Specifically, CEPI is committed to achieving the 100 Days Mission: a bold goal to develop new vaccines against future viral threats within 100 days of their identification. It is critical that the cutting-edge research, development and manufacturing (R&D&M) required to achieve the 100 Days Mission be conducted safely and securely, so as to not inadvertently start the next outbreak or pandemic. To this end, in September 2024, CEPI launched its inaugural [Biosecurity Strategy](#), which highlights five priority areas for strengthening CEPI oversight, strengthening global capacities for safe and secure R&D&M, advancing equity, and mitigating risks of emerging technologies while driving innovation. Overall, the Biosecurity Strategy underscores CEPI's commitment to the 100 Days Mission and tackling emerging epidemic and pandemic threats in any region of the world, whether arising naturally, accidentally or through deliberate misuse.

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## Objectives and Scope

This Request for Proposals (RfP) will support the establishment of a group of implementation partners to enable successful implementation of CEPI's Biosecurity Strategy, focused on objectives associated with capacity strengthening, equity, and health-security partnerships, as described in CEPI's Biosecurity Strategy [Implementation Plan](#). The selected applicants will sign a Framework Agreement under which CEPI can make "call-offs", i.e. requests for services, related to specific tasks. At CEPI's direction, services rendered under this Framework Agreement may be provided to CEPI internally, or to a partner organization (e.g. partner countries, affiliates within CEPI's laboratory and manufacturing networks particularly in the Global South, international organisations, etc.); such partners may govern aspects of the content of the work, but the legal agreement remains with CEPI.

Given the diverse nature of CEPI-funded R&D&M, the geographic distribution of existing and potential future CEPI-funded partners, and the landscape of biological threats across the health-security spectrum, we are seeking services and expertise from prospective implementing partners with experience in one or more of the following focus areas. Multiple implementing partners may be selected to support each focus area based on variation in expertise, geographical reach, etc.

### Focus Area A: Infrastructure, equipment, and facilities support for improved biosafety and biosecurity

Applicants to this focus area should be able to demonstrate experience and competence in project management in addition to one or more technical areas related to strengthening physical, material

and infrastructural biosafety and biosecurity capabilities in diverse world regions (and in line with applicable national, regional and/or international standards), including but not limited to<sup>1</sup>:

- High containment (BSL 2+ or equivalent and above) laboratory design or construction
- Installation of air and water filtration systems (e.g., HVAC) or waste management systems for biomedical/healthcare settings
- Procurement of equipment, consumables, reagents and other material relevant to implementation of biosafety and biosecurity practices in the context of vaccine R&D&M and associated research, including for safe and secure specimen acquisition, handling, inventory and storage
- Installation, validation, calibration, maintenance, (re-)certification and/or repair of biosafety/biosecurity-relevant laboratory equipment (e.g. biosafety cabinets), instruments and systems
- Design and installation of physical and information security systems (including cyberbiosecurity) in a laboratory or vaccine manufacturing context
- Facilities commissioning/decommissioning
- Procurement of equipment, consumables and material relevant to implementation of biosafety and biosecurity practices in the context of infectious disease outbreak response and related emergency situations
- Laboratory decontamination and incident response

## **Focus Area B: Training, mentorship, expertise provision and management systems implementation/evaluation for biosafety and biosecurity**

Applicants to this focus area should be able to demonstrate experience and competence in project management in addition to skills and knowledge related to provision of training (delivered in person, online and eLearning modalities), mentorship and implementation of biorisk programs and management systems in diverse world regions. Specific desired competencies include but are not limited to:

- Design, delivery and evaluation of tailored training and associated resources (i.e. instructional videos, explainers, training manuals, checklists, online sharing platforms, etc.) on topics relevant to biosafety and biosecurity in the context of vaccine R&D&M and the 100 Days Mission
- Conducting biosafety/biosecurity risk assessments for vaccine R&D&M and related projects
- Provision of recommendations for biorisk mitigation and performance evaluation
- Delivery of tailored training, mentorship, recommendations, and guidance in support of implementation of, and conformity with, recognized regional or international performance-based standards and guidelines for biosafety and biosecurity (e.g., ISO 35001, WHO Laboratory Biosafety Manual and associated monographs, Africa CDC Regulatory and Certification Framework for Institutions Handling High Risk Pathogens, etc.)
- Demonstrated competence and/or certification as an auditor/assessor for recognized regional or international performance-based standards for biosafety and biosecurity
- Experience overseeing twinning or other peer-based approaches for strengthening biosafety and biosecurity capacities in biomedical laboratories and/or vaccine manufacturing facilities
- Provision of applied biosafety/biosecurity expertise to support CEPI and CEPI-supported programmes in topics such as inactivation of pathogens, sequencing techniques, effective decontamination strategies, biosecurity safeguards around use of AI, biosecurity-relevant data management for access and shared benefits, etc.
- Rapid provision of training, mentorship, or related biosafety and biosecurity capacity support in the context of infectious disease outbreak response and related emergency situations.

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<sup>1</sup> Efforts should also be in line with other international initiatives to sustainably strengthen infrastructural biosafety and biosecurity capacities, e.g. BioPrevail: <https://www.bioprevail.org/>

## Focus Area C: Event design, organisation, dissemination, logistics, and travel in support of equitable biosecurity capacity and health-security partnerships

Applicants to this focus area should be able to demonstrate experience and competence in project management in addition to experience in one or more of the following:

- Ability to design, organize and implement health security-themed side events, convenings, and other meetings at high-profile national, regional and international fora (e.g., Munich Security Conference, Biological Weapons Convention Meeting of States Parties, World Health Summit, etc.), including logistical and travel arrangements for participants
- Identification of suitable experts to contribute to facilitation of dialogues, workshops and other events related to strengthening health-security partnerships, emerging technology/innovation, and/or other aspects of advancing biosecurity as an enabler of the 100 Days Mission
- Organization of travel support, either *ad hoc* or via competitive application, to CEPI-sponsored individuals (as approved by CEPI) to participate in national, regional and international biosecurity-relevant events
- Ability to support CEPI in dissemination of events, activities and other outputs achieved through implementation of the Biosecurity Strategy, as well as post-event reports, papers, and other media products.

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## Successful Proposals

We are seeking to engage with implementing partners who can provide and commit resources for specific call-offs across the Framework Agreement's duration of between 1 to 2 years. The services are expected to blend seamlessly into CEPI's operations and will report to the Biosecurity Department in the Governance, Strategy, Portfolio Management and Biosecurity Division.

Performance under the Framework Agreement(s) will be evaluated regularly and the option to renew, replace or terminate may be provided based upon that evaluation.

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## Applicant Qualification

Eligible proposals can be accepted from individual consultants; consultants who are established within a partnership, with a consultancy firm, or part of a consortia; or organizations.

To be considered for a contract award under this tender, all proposals must meet the following criteria:

- Experience providing relevant services (as described above, for one or more focus area; applicants with demonstrated capabilities to provide services across more than one focus area are preferred) for reputable national or international organizations or groups; demonstrated prior successful collaboration with CEPI-funded R&D&M partners preferred.
- Experience with biosafety and biosecurity as applied to global health, life sciences, the end-to-end vaccine value chain (e.g., discovery, R&D, manufacturing), or outbreak preparedness/response is preferred.
- Documented capabilities in terms of resource and time management.
- Individual consultants must be able to commit to the priorities and time-requirements of specific projects.
- Partnerships, consultancy firms or other types of organizations must have the ability to mobilise resources to satisfy the needs of each project.
- Experience working in matrixed, international, and multicultural environments is a must; individuals and organizations based in the Global South are particularly encouraged to apply.
- Ability to conduct efficient, productive and diplomatic communication with relevant internal and external stakeholders.
- Professional level of spoken and written English.
- Ability to travel regularly to meetings with CEPI and CEPI's partners when required.

Please note that as part of our assessment we may ask applicants to provide references from clients you have worked with to validate your experience in similar work. CEPI will also carry out due diligence and ask applicants to complete a due diligence questionnaire/s.

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## Submission guidelines

### CEPI Portal

Proposals must be submitted via the CEPI Portal. To apply to the RfP through the Portal, prospective applicants must first be registered as a Portal User.

To register as a Portal User, please click on the 'Register Now' button on the page and complete the registration form. The registration form will require submission of basic contact information about the applicant – it is **not** equivalent to submitting a full application. **Please do not attach application documents to the registration form.** We encourage prospective applicants to register as Portal Users as soon as possible, to avoid any issues with registration and ensure a timely submission of proposals.

Following verification of registration, applicants will receive a confirmation email from CEPI, with guidance on how to use the CEPI Portal to submit their full proposal. A separate auto-generated email will be sent with a link to log on and create a password.

Full proposals and any applicable appendices will need to be uploaded via the CEPI Portal. Further details on allowable file types, sizes, etc. will be provided in the Portal.

**Proposals must be submitted via the Portal by 30 July 2025 no later than 11:59pm UTC.** We encourage submissions well in advance of the deadline.

Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered. Proposals sent by email or otherwise submitted without using the CEPI Portal will not be considered. Costs for the preparation of proposals will not be refunded.

For support with using the Portal, please use the contact information for the Support Team listed on the website.

### Proposal format

To be considered for a contract award under this RfP, please submit the written proposal in English through the Portal, using [this template](#).

**The main proposal should not exceed 5 pages, not counting the cover page or any appendices uploaded separately.**

The proposal must include the following information, as referenced in the template:

- Indication of which focus area(s) of work you/your organisation wants to be considered for
- Indication of geographical areas in which you/your organization can provide services
- Brief background information on the individual, consortia, partnership or organization
  - Up to three CVs of key personnel can additionally be provided as appendices to the main proposal, and **will not count towards the 5-page limit**
- Details of previous experience in relevant technical areas
- Documented ability and capacity to perform the work to a high standard, on time, and on budget
- An indication of the availability of each proposed resource and associated budget, including fee rates for additional services
- Indication of expected cost / rate for work completed, based on an example of potential services in line with the call

- Succinct descriptions of two examples of similar work undertaken with similar clients (we may ask for relevant contact details should we decide to take up references)

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## Evaluation Criteria and Review Process

We will assess the proposals against the information presented in the Objectives and Scope detailed above and in line with the Bidder Qualification criteria. CEPI will also consider the overall portfolio of implementation partners it selects under this framework agreement to ensure appropriate coverage of the various focus areas and geographies. The contract(s) will be awarded to the tenderer(s) who: have demonstrated that they can meet the technical capabilities and qualifications detailed in the scope (70%) and provided an economically competitive offer (30%), across the range of technical and management competencies described in the focus areas and required for implementation of the Biosecurity Strategy.

Please note that CEPI will negotiate contracts with only shortlisted applicants. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified (via email or CEPI portal) Three brief examples (one per focus area) of potential call-off topic areas are described below (appendix A), for illustrative purposes. Further detailed examples of scope, scale and timing of potential call-offs can be discussed during the contract negotiation phase.

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## General terms

This RfP and any of the information contained in it does not constitute an offer or invitation on the part of CEPI to enter into an agreement. Any prospective implementing partner shall be required to enter into an agreement with CEPI.

The information in this RfP is provided by CEPI. It does not purport to be comprehensive and has not been independently verified. While it has been prepared in good faith, no representation, warranty, assurance or undertaking (express or implied) is or will be made. All and any such responsibility or liability is expressly disclaimed by CEPI.

CEPI will not in any circumstances be liable for any costs, expenditure, work or effort incurred by a applicant in carrying out enquiries in relation to, proceeding with, or participating in, this RfP.

CEPI reserves the right to:

- withdraw or change the requirements of this RfP from time to time without giving notice;
- seek clarification or documents in respect of proposals;
- disqualify any applicant that does not submit a proposal in accordance with the instructions in this RfP;
- disqualify any applicant that makes any misrepresentation in relation to its proposal; and
- choose not to award any agreement as a result of the RfP.

CEPI will retain the intellectual property rights in the published RfP materials. Applicants will retain ownership of all intellectual property rights contained in their proposal. By submitting a proposal, applicants agree to grant to CEPI a non-exclusive, worldwide, royalty-free license to use, reproduce, and analyse the submission for the purposes of evaluating proposals and improving our RfP process, including enhancing our internal systems and tools.

Applicants should note that CEPI is permitted to disclose the contents of proposals to:

- third parties who may be involved in the assessment of the proposals; and
- CEPI's investors to facilitate oversight and monitoring over CEPI's activities, provided that these they are bound by confidentiality obligations.

Any personal data included in a proposal shall be processed by CEPI in accordance with CEPI data protection notice.

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## Tentative timetable



The expected time scale for the procurement process is summarised below. However, CEPI reserves the right to change the time schedule at any time.

RfP published 16 June 2025

Deadline for submission of written proposal 30 July 2025

Initial selection process completed 29 August 2025

Contract agreement Upon completion of due diligence and successful contract negotiation

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## Additional information

If you have any technical questions, please contact the CEPI Biosecurity Team at [contact.cepibiosecurity@cepi.net](mailto:contact.cepibiosecurity@cepi.net)

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Examples of potential call-off topics

#### Focus Area A:

Example call-off: Upgraded air flow and ventilation system to support safe and secure expanded vaccine testing capabilities at a CEPI lab network partner.

The support provided by the implementing partner would include an assessment of the existing ventilation, air flow and pressurisation systems at the lab network partner, as well as considerations of the new vaccine testing approaches to be implemented at the facility based on CEPI's vaccine development and scientific priorities. It would further include close collaboration with the lab partner to create contextually-appropriate designs for upgrading or replacing existing air flow and ventilation equipment, as well as execution of the procurement, installation and validation of the designs, keeping in mind available industry standards (i.e. ANSI/ASSP Z9.5:2022, CEN/TS 17441:2020, etc.) local/national regulations, sustainability considerations, and anticipated future needs.

#### Focus Area B:

Example call-off: Designing and implementing a hybrid training programme on biosecurity, aligned with WHO's 2024 edition of the Laboratory Biosecurity Guidance. The training should consist of up to seven eLearning modules, consistent with the content of the Laboratory Biosecurity Guidance, which can be delivered asynchronously to learners in diverse geographic settings and available in English, French, and Spanish. The eLearning should also include quizzes and other opportunities for testing knowledge retention. The eLearning content would be reinforced through a subsequent, in person workshop, formulated as a training of trainers, to extend expertise in the covered topic areas and enable participants to organise and deliver biosecurity trainings at their home facilities, complete with pre- and post-training evaluations and other means of assessing training impact.

#### Focus Area C:

Example call-off: Organising and implementing a biosecurity side-event on the margins of an international security meeting.

The support provided by the implementing partner would include liaising with the organisers of the international security meeting (i.e. Global Partnership meeting, Meeting of States Parties of the Biological Weapons Convention, or Munich Security Conference, as examples) to identify appropriate timeslot and venue for the biosecurity side-event and managing all on-site logistics. Where appropriate, the implementing partner may also contribute suggestions for speakers or other contributors to the event, and assist with their travel arrangements, as well as for other CEPI-sponsored participants at the event. The implementing partner would also contribute to social media advertising of the event, where relevant, as well as coordination of post-event outputs, including reports, summary papers, participant satisfaction evaluations, etc.