



Request for Proposals: Supply and Installation of Liquid Handler at The National Institute of Health/Instituto Nacional de Saude (INS) of Mozambique

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Summary

The Association of Public Health Laboratories, Inc. (APHL or the Association), in collaboration with The National Institute of Health of Mozambique (INS) and the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), expects to install one Liquid Handler at the INS Laboratory in Maracuene-Maputo to assist in the automation of sample preparation for NGS testing. APHL is looking to identify and select an applicant to work with the APHL and CDC to deliver, install and commission this technology to better manage the accuracy of workflow and productivity in NGS testing process at the Virology lab in INS.

Background

APHL is a non-profit organization that works to safeguard the public's health by strengthening public health laboratories (PHLs) in the United States and globally. APHL is organized under the laws of the United States of America's District of Columbia with its headquarters office at 7700 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 1000, Bethesda, MD 20910. The Association's members include state and local laboratories, state environmental and agricultural laboratories and other government laboratories that conduct testing of public health significance. APHL is recognized as tax-exempt in the United States under Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code, and its work on behalf of PHLs spans more than 60 years.

In collaboration with its members, APHL advances laboratory systems and practices and promotes policies that support healthy communities globally. The Association serves as a liaison between the PHLs and federal and international agencies and it ensures that the network of PHLs has current and consistent scientific information in order to be ready for outbreaks and other public health emergencies.

Eligibility

Eligible entities include companies or organizations capable of delivering, installing, and commissioning a liquid handler for automation of NGS sample preparation at the Virology Laboratory in INS, Mozambique. To qualify, applicants must meet the following criteria outlined in [Appendix A: Expectations](#) for on the Supply and Installation of Liquid Handler. All applicants are required to agree to the following minimum requirements as outlined in [Appendix B: Minimum Requirements](#)

The eligible applicant must be able to contract directly with APHL or have an existing relationship with a third-party organization that can contract directly with APHL. Acceptance of the award means agreement with the compensation structure and amounts agreed upon with the awardee and APHL.

Recipients must be legally able to contract within the United States and not be disbarred or prohibited from contracting with businesses or the federal government.

Anticipated RFP Schedule

Proposals are due to the individual(s) specified in the Final RFP Response section of this RFP by 5:00 pm Central Africa Time (CAT). APHL anticipates the following schedule for the entire competitive bidding process.

Date	Assignment	Details
1/17/2025	APHL issues RFP	APHL Procurement site www.aphl.org/rfp
1/27/2025	Letter of Intent Due to APHL (see below)	
2/7/2025	RFP Responses Due by 5:00 pm CAT	Submit proposal including exhibits via email to Solon.Kidane@moz.aphl.org and cc: sarah.snyder@aphl.org
2/14/2025	Evaluation committee completes review	
2/17/2025	APHL announces selection of vendor(s)	
2/24/2025	Anticipated start date of work by selected vendor(s)	
8/1/2025	Equipment delivered to Mozambique	

APHL will communicate any modification to this anticipated schedule on APHL's procurement website (www.aphl.org/rfp) and via an email blast to public health laboratories (PHLs) if applicable.

Contact for Questions and Submissions

Please submit any questions via email to Solon Kidane (Solon.Kidane@moz.aphl.org) and Sarah Snyder (sarah.snyder@aphl.org).

Response Submittal

Confirmation of Intent to Respond

APHL requires that prospective applicants submit a brief email statement indicating an intent to submit a proposal. APHL must receive this email by no later than **5:00 pm Central African Time (CAT)**, on the date listed above in the schedule. Applicants may send proposals by the following methods: via email to Solon Kidane (Solon.Kidane@moz.aphl.org) and Sarah Snyder (sarah.snyder@aphl.org). **To allow for appropriate review process planning, a letter of intent is required for consideration.**

Final Response

APHL must receive complete responses by **5:00 pm Central African Time (CAT)**, on the date listed above in the schedule. Please see [Proposal-Required Submissions](#) section for items that must be included in the completed proposal. Applicants may send proposals via email to Solon Kidane (Solon.Kidane@moz.aphl.org) and Sarah Snyder (sarah.snyder@aphl.org).

APHL will send an email acknowledging the receipt of your application; if you do not receive an acknowledgement within 2 business days, please email the RFP point of contact to confirm receipt.

APHL may terminate or modify the RFP process at any time during the response period. All changes to the RFP will be posted to the APHL's procurement website, www.aphl.org/rfp.

Award

This award will be for an amount not to exceed a minimum of \$250,000.

Milestone-Based payment structure.

Applicants must propose a milestone-based payment structure in their proposal, with payment tied to the successful completion of key project deliverables. The proposed milestone should include, at minimum:

1. Delivery of liquid handler to INS laboratory in Maracuene-Maputo, Mozambique and the successful installation and commissioning of the liquid handler.
2. Completion of on-site training for INS laboratory staff on the operation and maintenance of the liquid handler.

Term of Project

The project term will be as indicated in the [Anticipated Project Schedule](#).

The project term will commence, with the primary objective of delivering and installing the liquid handler at the INS Laboratory in Maracuene-Maputo by the dates listed in the schedule above. The initial contract period will include equipment delivery, installation, commissioning, and comprehensive staff training, with a minimum two-year warranty period covering maintenance and support. APHL reserves the right to modify the project scope or timeline based on funding availability and the successful completion of key project milestones as outlined in the RFP.

Evaluation Team

An evaluation team will be assembled to evaluate competitive proposals and then assess their relative qualities based on Evaluation Criteria that will look at experience, cost of the equipment location of the company, a timeline of delivery and installation, ability to provide local services for maintenance, and but not limited to the quality of the submission. Applicants may be interviewed by the evaluation team after submitting their complete RFP submission package.

Any incomplete application on the proposal due date specified in [Anticipated RFP Schedule](#) section above will not be considered and will not receive a formal evaluation.

Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation team will evaluate proposals based on responses to the questions in the [Proposal – Required Submissions](#) section and will give a numeric score of up to 100 maximum points based on the scorecard template in [Appendix C](#).

Evaluation Process

The evaluation team will conduct the review via a combination of email communication between APHL's representative and the members of the evaluation team, or among the evaluation team members and teleconference and/or webinar evaluation sessions. APHL's representative will coordinate the review process and the evaluation sessions.

The reviewers may request follow-up interviews with all or some of the applicants and, following these interviews, may request supplemental information on an applicant's proposal. The evaluation team will use these interviews and any supplemental information to clarify an applicant's capacity or experience in one or more of the evaluation criteria, or to explain other information contained in an applicant's proposal.

There will be no formal evaluation performed by a member of APHL staff. In cases where all other evaluation criteria are substantially similar, APHL will have the ability to advise the evaluation team on selections that would provide geographical representation or otherwise diversify APHL's funding allocations. In addition, the evaluation team may request documentation from APHL staff on an applicant's past performance in other capacities noted in this RFP as part of the evaluation criteria.

Post-Evaluation Procedures

APHL staff will notify the selected applicant(s) within ten business days of the completion of the evaluation and will post the names of the recipient(s) to APHL's procurement website, www.aphl.org/rfp, within three business days of the applicant's acceptance of the award. Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of these results by e-mail within thirty business days after the name of the selected awardee is posted.

All applicants will be entitled to utilize APHL's RFP Appeals Process to formulate a protest regarding alleged irregularities or improprieties during the procurement process. Specific details of this policy are located on the procurement [website](#).

Conditions of Award Acceptance

The eligible applicant must be able to contract directly with APHL or have an existing relationship with a third-party organization that can contract directly with APHL. Applicants must agree to comply with expectations outlined in [Appendix A](#). Acceptance of the award means agreement to the compensation structure and amounts agreed upon with the awardee and APHL.

Awardees must be able to obtain a SAM UEI if they do not already have one. A Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) is a number issued by the System for Award Management (SAM) to identify businesses and other entities that do business with the federal government. Any **entity** that wishes to do business with the federal government and who will receive direct federal funds (or an entity that will act as a sub-awardee or subcontractor and will receive federal funds through the prime recipient) must have a UEI number issued via sam.gov. In certain circumstances, the entity will also be required to have a valid registration on SAM.gov. **Individuals** are not required to have a SAM UEI or be registered in SAM.gov.

Prior to making the official award, a group of individuals from CDC and APHL will be entitled to elect to tour the facilities to assess compliance with requirements for testing and/or have a teleconference with applicant laboratories. Post award, monitoring site visits may be conducted to include an assessment of continued compliance.

Proposal – Required Submissions

An interested applicant must submit both a letter of intent to apply and a proposal. Applications must comply with submission requirements set out in the [Additional Information and Deadlines for Application Submission](#) below. A complete proposal will include the following items:

- **A completed and signed copy of [Appendix B](#),**
Note: If you cannot respond “yes” to each of the minimum requirements, you do not meet the minimum qualifications required to apply for this award.
- **A completed response table of [Appendix A](#),**
 - Responses should be limited to no more than ten (10) single spaced pages (font size ≥ 11pt, 1 inch margins)
 - The proposal should include responses to the questions below, including each aspect of the question. The proposal should indicate what question is being answered.

Additional Information and Deadlines for Application Submission

Applicants must direct all questions to Solon Kidane (Solon.Kidane@moz.aphl.org) and Sarah Snyder (sarah.snyder@aphl.org). APHL will post all questions received, together with the answers provided, to APHL’s procurement website associated with the specific RFP (www.aphl.org/rfp).

To allow for appropriate review process planning, a **letter of intent is required for consideration**. Applicants should submit letters by the due date listed in the [Anticipated RFP Schedule](#) to Solon Kidane (Solon.Kidane@moz.aphl.org) and Sarah Snyder (sarah.snyder@aphl.org).

Applications are due to Solon Kidane (Solon.Kidane@moz.aphl.org) and Sarah Snyder (sarah.snyder@aphl.org) **by 5:00 pm CAT** on the due date listed in the [Anticipated RFP Schedule](#). APHL will send an email acknowledging the receipt of your application. If you do not receive an acknowledgement within two (2) business days, reach out to the [Contact for Questions and Submissions](#) to confirm receipt.

[Appendices on following pages.]

Appendix A: Requirements for the Liquid Handler Installation and Training RFP

Expectations on the Supply and Installation of the Liquid Handler All applicates for this RFP will be expected to meet the following requirements:

NO	Equipment Specifications:	Specifications Offered (Must be answered)	Notes, remarks, ref to documentation	Evaluation Committee's notes (DO NOT FILL IN)
1	Unit Dimensions: Unit Weight:			
2	On-deck thermal cycler			
3	Single and multichannel pipette heads			
4	Stable supply chain for plastic consumables			
5	Customizable protocols that the laboratory can modify			
6	On-deck UV light			
7	HEPA filter			
8	NGS qualified protocols			
9	High pipetting accuracy			
10	Open source for custom protocols			
11	On-continent field application scientists			
12	Ability to process up to 96 samples			
13	Volume ranges down to 0.2 uL			
14	Autoclavable tools			
15	Illumina, ONT, Qiagen, and NEB library methods			
16	Ability to miniaturize reaction volumes			
17	Barcode reader on deck for consumables and reagents			
18	Onboard thermal shaker			
19	Plate transfer heads (gripper)			
NO	Installation, Maintenance & Support	Specifications Offered (Must be answered)	Notes, remarks, ref to documentation	Evaluation Committee's notes (DO NOT FILL IN)

1	Provide on-site training for INS laboratory staff on the operation, maintenance, and troubleshooting of the liquid handler.			
2	Install and commission the equipment, ensuring it is fully operational and integrated into the laboratory's workflow.			
3	Deliver the liquid handler to the INS laboratory in Maracuene-Maputo, Mozambique by August 1 st , 2025,			
NO	Maintenance & Support	Specifications Offered (Must be answered)	Notes, remarks, ref to documentation	Evaluation Committee's notes (DO NOT FILL IN)
1	Provide a minimum 2-year warranty on the liquid handler, including all necessary corrective/breakdown maintenance during this period.			
2	Comprehensive maintenance plan outlining the recommended service schedule and procedures.			
3	Share evidence of factory testing and performance validation for the liquid handler (certification)			
NO	Training	Specifications Offered (Must be answered)	Notes, remarks, ref to documentation	Evaluation Committee's notes (DO NOT FILL IN)
1	Supplier shall provide training on operation, management, and maintenance of the liquid handler for the local facility staff. A detailed training plan is required.			
2	Submit a detailed implementation plan outlining the delivery, installation, and training timeline.			

Appendix B: Minimum Requirements for the Liquid Handler Installation and Training

Please review and respond to each of the minimum requirements below. By signing this agreement, you are affirming that your organization can meet each of the minimum requirements described.

Training & Support		
YES	NO	MINIMUM REQUIREMENT
☐	☐	Does your organization have experience supplying liquid handlers for NGS sample preparation?
☐	☐	Is your organization able to install the liquid handler and ensure full commissioning into the laboratory workflow?
☐	☐	Can your organization deliver the liquid handler to INS, Maracuene-Maputo, Mozambique by 8/1/2025?
☐	☐	Does your organization have the ability to provide integrated components, such as a thermal cycler, barcode reader, HEPA filtration, and UV light decontamination?
☐	☐	Will your organization provide installation and factory testing documentation for the liquid handler?
☐	☐	Can your organization customize protocols and validate them for NGS library preparation methods (Illumina, ONT, Qiagen, NEB)?
Training & Support		
YES	NO	MINIMUM REQUIREMENT
☐	☐	Can your organization provide on-site training to INS laboratory staff on the operation, maintenance, and troubleshooting of the liquid handler?
☐	☐	Will your organization be able to provide a comprehensive user manual and training materials in English and/or Portuguese?
☐	☐	Does your organization have a local scientist or an in-country partner capable of providing technical support and maintenance services in Mozambique?
Maintenance & Warranty		
☐	☐	Can your organization provide a 2-year warranty on the liquid handler covering both corrective and preventive maintenance?
☐	☐	Does your organization offer a maintenance plan detailing the service schedule and recommended procedures?
☐	☐	Can your organization ensure availability of spare parts and consumables for the liquid handler throughout the warranty period?
		Is your laboratory able to contract with APHL or do you have an existing relationship with a third party that can contract directly with APHL on behalf of the laboratory?
		Is your laboratory able to contract with APHL or do you have an existing relationship with a third party that can contract directly with APHL on behalf of the laboratory?
		Is your laboratory able to contract with APHL or do you have an existing relationship with a third party that can contract directly with APHL on behalf of the laboratory?

On behalf of the applicant organization, I agree that the applicant organization is able to meet the minimum requirements necessary to apply for this award as outlined above.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Appendix C: Score Card

The following table is a copy of the score card that will be used to evaluate RFP responses.

Category/Question	Maximum Value	Score	Comments (REQUIRED)
Liquid Handler for NGS Preparation 1. Does the applicant have significant experience supplying liquid handlers for Next-Generation Sequencing (NGS) sample preparation? 2. Will the vendor perform installation and ensure integration into INS's laboratory workflow? Ideal (16-20 points): Ability to meet all technical specifications Adequate (11-15 points): Ability to meet many of technical specifications, with some limitations. Limited (6-10 points): Applicant has limited ability to meet the technical specifications requirements Inadequate (0-5 points): Applicant does not demonstrate the ability to manage the technical specifications capabilities and functions needed.	20		
Equipment Integrated Components for the System 3. Does the liquid handler system include essential integrated components (thermal cycler, barcode reader, HEPA filtration, UV decontamination)? 4. Is the liquid handler system customizable and validated for NGS library preparation protocols (Illumina, ONT, Qiagen, NEB) Ideal (14-20 points): Fully customizable and validated for all specified protocols; meets all technical specifications. Adequate (7-13 points): Partially customizable or validated, with some limitations. Inadequate (0-6 points): Lacks customization or validation for NGS protocols.	20		
Training and Support 5. Is on-site training provided to for INS staff on operation, maintenance, and troubleshooting? Yes (5 points), No/Unclear (0 points) 6. Does the vendor provide a comprehensive user manual and training materials in English and/or Portuguese? Yes (4 points), No/Unclear (0 points) 7. Is there local or in-country technical support available for troubleshooting and maintenance? Ideal (5 points): Dedicated support team with response times within 48 hours.	17		

Adequate (3 points): Support provided within one week Inadequate (0 points): Limited or on in-country support			
Maintenance & Warranty 8. Does the vendor offer a 2-year warranty covering both preventive and corrective maintenance? Yes (5 points), No/Unclear (0 points) 9. Does the vendor offer a maintenance plan within the RFP, including a recommended service schedule? Ideal (3 points): Comprehensive plan with preventative and corrective service Adequate (1 points): Basic plan provided, lacks preventive details. Inadequate (0 points): No maintenance plan provided. 10. Can the vendor ensure the availability of spare parts and consumables during the warranty period? Yes (4 points), No (0 points)	13		
Installation & Delivery Timeline 9. (Delivery by required date to Mozambique) Is the vendor able to deliver and install the liquid handler at INS Mozambique, by specified deadline? Ideal (20-30 points): Ability to meet delivery and installation by deadline. Adequate (10-19 points): Applicant requires flexibility on timeline Inadequate (0- 9 points): Unable to meet delivery and installation deadline.	30		
TOTAL SCORE	100		

Appendix D: Federal Funding Accountability & Transparency Act (FFATA)

Applicability: The awarded entity must disclose the information below when the award is over \$30,000 and the contracting entity is not an individual person.

APHL will collect this information during the contracting phase and will keep your completed statement in the corporate records of the Association.

Contractor/Award Recipient's Name:	
Amount of Compensation (obligated amount):	
Funding Agency:	
CFDA Number: See the definition of the "Cooperative Agreement" in the Work Order.	
Award Title Descriptive of the Purpose of the Funding Action (See definition of the "Project" in the Work Order):	
Contractor/Award Recipient's Location:	
Contractor/Award Recipient's Congressional District:	
Contractor/Award Recipient's Place of Performance:	
Contractor/Award Recipient's Place of Performance Congressional District:	
Contractor/Award Recipient's Unique Entity ID (SAM UEI):	
Contractor/Award Recipient's Unique Entity ID of Parent Organization, if applicable (SAM UEI): In order to determine whether you are required to provide executive compensation data, answer the following question(s):	
1. In your business or organization's preceding completed fiscal year, did your business or organization (the legal entity to which this specific CCR record, represented by a SAM UEI, belongs) receive:	
a) 80 percent or more of your annual gross revenues in U.S. federal contracts, subcontracts, loans, grants, subgrants, and/or cooperative agreements?	☐ Yes ☐ No

b) \$25,000,000 or more in annual gross revenues from U.S. federal contracts, subcontracts, loans, grants, subgrants, and/or cooperative agreements?		☐ Yes ☐ No	
If you selected 'Yes' for both a) and b) in question 1 please go to question 2. If you selected 'No' for either or both a) and b) in question 1 you are done completing the form.			
2. Does the public have access to information about the compensation of the executives in your business or organization (the legal entity to which this specific CCR record, represented by a SAM UEI, belongs) through periodic reports filed under section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (15 U.S.C. §§78m(a), 78o(d)), or section 6104 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (26 U.S.C. §6104)?		☐ Yes ☐ No	
If you selected 'Yes' to question 2 you are done completing the form. If you selected 'No' to question 2 please provide the names and total compensation for your five highest compensated executives (i.e. officers, managing partners, or any other employees in management positions):			
Name:		Total Compensation:	
Name:		Total Compensation:	
Name:		Total Compensation:	
Name:		Total Compensation:	
Name:		Total Compensation:	