



EUROPEAN SOUTHERN OBSERVATORY

Organisation Européenne pour des Recherches Astronomiques dans l'Hémisphère Austral
Europäische Organisation für astronomische Forschung in der südlichen Hemisphäre

ESO - EUROPEAN SOUTHERN OBSERVATORY
Karl-Schwarzschild-Straße 2 · D-85748 Garching b. München

Garching, 9 September 2003

Ref.: 7831/LET/CP/RFI-gmv

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ADVANCE INFORMATION ON A PRELIMINARY INQUIRY FOR THE DESIGN, MANUFACTURE, FACTORY ASSEMBLY, TRANSPORT AND INTEGRATION ON SITE IN CHILE OF THE 64 ALMA ANTENNAS

ALMA (Atacama Large Millimeter Array) is a bilateral project of Europe and North America to build an astronomical observatory that will operate at millimeter and sub-millimeter wavelengths.

Europe is represented by ESO (European Southern Observatory) with headquarters in Garching bei München, Germany, and North America is represented by NRAO (National Radio Astronomy Observatory) with headquarters in Charlottesville, Virginia, USA. NRAO is operated for the National Science Foundation (NSF) by Associated Universities, Inc. (AUI), under a Cooperative Agreement.

The array will be a synthesis radio telescope where a number of single antennas of 12 m diameter will be operated in interferometric mode.

The baseline number of antennas constituting the array is 64.

The ALMA Observatory will be built on the Llano de Chajnantor, situated near San Pedro de Atacama, Region II, in the Atacama desert, Chile. The average altitude of the site is slightly over 5.000 m.

ALMA operations will be carried out from the **Operations Support Facility (OSF)**, to be built near Toconao, at an altitude of 2.900 m. This support facility will also be equipped with facilities for the assembly and the maintenance of the antennas.

This is to inform you that the project has entered into the procurement phase for the supply of the 64 ALMA antennas. The expectation is that ESO and AUI/NRAO will each procure 32 antennas.

Please bear in mind that two antenna prototypes, based on different designs, have been developed and are presently undergoing extensive testing at the ALMA Test Facility in New Mexico, USA. The full technical documentation of both prototypes will be provided for information and illustration with the Call for Tender documents. It must be understood that the bidders will have to endorse the full responsibility for the antenna design that they will offer in satisfaction of the Technical Specifications and associated Statement of Work that will also be submitted with the Call for Tenders.



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This procurement will be performed by way of *competitive tendering*.

In preparation of this competitive tendering process, ESO will issue a Preliminary Inquiry in order to identify the potential bidders interested to participate in the forthcoming Call for Tenders as **main contractor** or **sub-contractor**. The aim and goal is to have the broadest possible industrial participation in the antenna procurement, to achieve reliable, efficient delivery of antennas at a minimum cost and risk.

To this end, ESO encourages and anticipates the formation of industrial teams of whatever legal composition, e.g. Consortia, Joint Venture, etc.. An important criterion for the selection of potential bidders to receive the Call for Tenders will be the demonstrated technical, managerial and financial capacity to deliver the entire production.

The Preliminary Inquiry will include all documentary information necessary for potential bidders to evaluate the project and assess if and in which form they may want to be included in the competitive tendering process. In addition, in the frame of this Preliminary Inquiry an *industry briefing* will be organized in Munich, Germany.

Should you be interested in this project, please consider the following schedule which might help you to prepare yourself in advance of receiving the Preliminary Inquiry:-

Calling Date of the Preliminary Inquiry: 19 September 2003

The Preliminary Inquiry will be issued in electronic form. Should you wish to receive it at a different e-mail address than the one used for this advance information, please let us know.

Acknowledgment of Receipt and confirmation of interest by potential bidders,
to be received by ESO at the latest on: **2 October 2003.**

Distribution of the database of companies having expressed interest, sent to all responders as well as invitation to the industry briefing on: **7 October 2003.**
Interested Bidders will be requested to confirm their participation in this meeting.

Industry briefing in Munich: 16 October 2003.
The details of the program will be communicated in the Preliminary Inquiry.

Closing Date of Preliminary Inquiry: 29 October 2003
All responses (qualification documents) must reach ESO not later than October 29, 2003.

We would very much appreciate it if you would acknowledge receipt of the present advance information and, of course, if you could also confirm your interest in receiving the forthcoming Preliminary Inquiry.



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Please send your reply to this letter - or any request for additional information - to the undersigned as follows:-

Robert Fischer, e-mail: rfischer@eso.org
(with copies to: gvossen@eso.org, cnieuwen@eso.org, aarndt@eso.org).

We look forward to your positive reply.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Fischer
Head of Contracts & Procurement

P.S. Additional information about ESO, NRAO and ALMA can be obtained by consulting the following WEB links:

ESO: <http://www.eso.org>
NRAO: <http://www.nrao.edu>
ALMA: <http://www.eso.org:8082/>