nature of the project so requires. According to the Bank, the majority of successful consulting firms are those that are willing to visit the executing agency two or three times. It might be worthwhile for Canadian companies to associate themselves with partners or local consulting firms to maximize their chances of success at a relatively low cost.

Some facts you should check include the dates of calls for tenders, the composition of various supply lots, and the best methods of ensuring your offer arrives before the deadline date. Do not forget that any tasks not specifically assigned to the Bank are the responsibility of the executing agency, including the call for tenders and the selection of successful bidders. International tender calls are published in *Development Business* and in local newspapers.

The selection process is based on technical evaluation of bids, which must be compliant with the Terms of Reference and the task at hand, as outlined in the bid document. Only the tender with the highest ranking on the technical evaluation, and those ranked within 10 per cent of the highest, will be retained. Envelopes containing the financial proposals are then opened, and the contract is normally awarded to the firm with the lowest bid. The following factors are taken into consideration during the evaluation:

- Consulting engineers:
  - general reputation of the company;
  - technical qualifications and general experience;
  - experience in similar projects;
  - knowledge of the country and project environment;
  - adequacy of work plans and proposed approach; and
  - qualifications of personnel responsible for providing services and, particularly, the proposed leader (here, association with a local company might earn you points).
- Suppliers of goods:
  - quality and availability of proposed equipment and of spare parts;
  - availability and quality of after-sales service; and
  - length of time required to deliver equipment, parts, etc.

Once the executing agency has made its final selection, copies of all technical and financial proposals from firms that answered the call for tenders or that were invited to submit tenders will be sent to the ADB where the appropriate division, acting as an expert committee, will verify the methods and operations used by the executing agency in its call for tenders. It is, in fact, a matter of verifying whether the process was conducted in accordance with the Bank's guidelines on the acquisition of goods and services, and accepted by the borrowing countries in signing the credit agreement. Unless expressly ordered otherwise, only the executing agency is the official recipient of submissions.