

# AFRICA AND MIDDLE EAST REPORT

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*African Development Bank*

## HOW TO BID ON PROMISING AfDB PROJECTS

Canadian companies wishing to bid on African Development Bank (AfDB) projects should first consult the Bank's *Quarterly Operational Summary* and the *Annual Loan Program*, published in November of each year. These documents are available from the Canadian Embassy in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire) or in Canada from the Africa and Middle East Trade Development Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. Tel.: (613) 944-6579.

Companies should limit themselves to investigating only one or two projects at a time. They should focus their action plan on countries with which they are familiar, and on projects that fall within their main fields of specialization.

Once a project is selected, additional information can be obtained from the Canadian Embassy or High Commission responsible for the country in question (consult the *Trade Commissioners Directory*). The information usually required includes:

- contact information for the executing agency;
- the present stage of the project;
- costs and components of the required products or services;
- pre-qualification schedule for consultants, if applicable;
- approximate period for evaluation by AfDB project officers;
- names of other funding bodies and components they are funding;
- names of Bank officers responsible for each successive stage of the project.

Once it has the information required for the project, the company should concentrate its market development efforts on the executing

agency involved. Direct contact with the agency allows the company to introduce itself, assess the competition and position itself for future tender calls. *Interpersonal relations, which are essential to success in Africa*, should not be neglected. The company should also inform the Canadian Embassy in Abidjan of its visit to the executing agency so that the Embassy's liaison officer can inform the AfDB of Canada's interest in the project.

The executing agency is chosen by the individual country and the Bank. It may be a government ministry, a public or semi-public corporation, a government agency or even a local or foreign firm. Its work begins with the preparation of the terms of reference and continues through the screening process or drawing up of short lists, if any; the call for tenders; examination of proposals received and selection of one of them; and, finally, negotiations of contracts for implementation of the project.

When visiting the executing agency, Canadian firms should identify and evaluate various avenues for co-operation and association with local counterparts, as the AfDB accords preferential treatment to African companies or partnerships.

An association with a local company can certainly help reduce the many expenses related to the cost of preparing and following up tenders. (A good starting point might be to consult the directory published by the Federation of African Consultants (FECA).)

*Contrary to popular belief, it is not the Bank which is responsible for the selection of tenders within a project, but rather the executing agency of the borrowing country. The Bank's intervention is limited to monitoring and overseeing the selection process in accordance with its regulations.*