



PUBLIC HEALTH FOUNDATION OF INDIA (PHFI)

OPEN TENDER

**Tender No: PHFI/Health Promotion /AI Based Conversational Interface-
2026/01/01-01**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

FOR SELECTION OF AGENCY FOR

**DEVELOPING AN AI-BASED CONVERSATIONAL INTERFACE TO STRENGTHEN
EXISTING CESSATION SERVICES OFFERED THROUGH TOBACCO CESSATION
CENTRES (TCCs).**

JANUARY 2026

Call for Tender Opening: January 27, 2026 by 05:00 PM

Cut off Date for downloading RFP: February 01, 2026 by 05:00 PM

Last date of submission of Bid: February 13, 2026 by 05:00 PM

Public Health Foundation of India

4th Floor, House No 60, Property No. Khasra No. 293 294 295, Westend Marg,
Saidulajab Extn Saidulajab, New Delhi, South Delhi, Delhi – 110 030, India

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Purpose of call for Proposal

(a) The purpose/intent for this proposal is to hire the services of the Agency to develop an AI-based Conversational Interface to strengthen existing cessation services offered through Tobacco Cessation Centres (TCCs) of Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI).

(b) This Request for Proposals (RFP) must be in the format as mentioned in this RFP. Agencies are required to submit a detailed Proposal (20 pages max) clearly indicating Deliverables, Timelines and Budget. The Proposal submitted by Agencies will be reviewed by Tender Evaluation Committee at PHFI to be formed for this purpose. The duration of the contract will be for 2 Years from March 2026

1.2. Background of the Study/Project

The Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI) is working towards building a healthier India. It is helping to address the limited institutional and systems capacity in India by strengthening education and training, advancing research and technology and facilitating policy and practice in the area of Public Health. PHFI is headquartered in New Delhi with national presence through its constituent units of regional Indian Institutes of Public Health (IIPHS) and Centers of Applied Research in core public health themes. The Foundation, established in 2006 as a public private initiative, is governed by an independent board comprising of senior government officials, eminent Indian and International academic and leaders, civil society representatives, and corporate leaders. For more information, please visit the website www.phfi.org.

The Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI) in collaboration with Tata Memorial Centre (Mumbai), Dr. B. Borooah Cancer Institute (Guwahati, Assam) and NIMHANS (Bengaluru), IIT BOMBAY, is implementing a study entitled “Implement and Evaluate CARE (Comprehensive AI-powered ConveRsational IntErface to Quit Tobacco). The study aims to co-develop an AI-based conversational tool. This tool leverages Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG)-enabled Large Language Models (LLMs) and multilingual speech recognition technologies to enhance and evaluate the effectiveness of tobacco cessation services delivered through Tobacco Cessation Centres (TCCs). The app will offer tobacco cessation guidance and deliver age-specific messages. App-based solutions for tobacco cessation leverage technology to make support and resources easily accessible to users, promoting a more convenient and personalized approach to quitting tobacco. The proposed app will offer information on the health risks of tobacco, benefits of quitting, and strategies for successful cessation.

1.3. Key Dates

Schedule of Tender Processing (Key Dates)

	Tender Inviting Authority	PHFI, 4th Floor, House No 60, Property No. Khasra No. 293 294 295, Westend Marg, Saidulajab Extn Saidulajab, New Delhi, South Delhi, Delhi – 110 030, India	
Sl. No	Description	Date	Time
1.	RFP released on PHFI Web Site- AND In Newspaper (Hindi and English) Notice	January 27, 2026	By 5.00 PM Morning Edition
2.	Last date for receiving Queries from Agencies, if any	February 02, 2026	By 11.00 AM (Queries to be sent on PHFI's tender email id only)
3.	Response to Queries from Agencies, if any	February 05, 2026	By 5.00 PM (Through PHFI tender email id)
4.	Last date for submission of Bids / Proposal	February 13, 2026	By 5.00 PM (may be dropped in Tender Box/By Courier/Speed Post)
5.	Opening of Tender Box and Technical Bids	February 18, 2026	At 3.00 PM (Authorized representatives of Agencies may be present for opening of Tender Box)
6.	Intimation to the Agencies who qualify in the Technical Bids	February 19, 2026	By 4 PM
7.	Interview of Qualifying Agencies (Format will be intimated through PHFI Tender email to concerned Agencies)	February 24, 2026	From 11 AM Onwards
8.	Opening of Financial Bids	February 26, 2026	11.30 AM (Authorized representatives of Agencies may be present for opening of Financial Bids)

9.	Interview cum Financial Negotiation with the short-listed Agency(s)	February 27, 2026	From 11 AM onwards
10.	Issue of Letter of Intent/Award/Agreement	As per the decision of PHFI Management	

2. QUALIFICATION/ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The Qualification/Eligibility criteria for the Agency are given below:

Sl. No	Qualification Criteria	Proof Required
1	I. Name and address of the Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency II. Year of Establishment III. Whether the Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency is registered under Society Registration ACT or is an autonomous body or a Limited company or partnership firm, etc. and details thereof (e.g.-name (s) of partners, Managing Directors, Chief Executive Officers, Key Authorized Persons)	Copy of Certificate of Incorporation/ Registration/MoU as applicable
2	The Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency should have a valid PAN and Goods & Services Tax (GST) Registration in India	Copy of PAN card and GST Registration
3	The Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency should have a minimum average annual turnover of Rs 4 Crores (Rupees Four Crores) from assignments made during the last three financial years.	Copy of Audited Profit and Loss Statement and Balance Sheet
4	The Agency should have a previous experience of the development of AI-based Applications/Platforms, with time and delivery commitment.	Necessary documents as evidence.

5	The Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency should not have been blacklisted by Central/State Government departments/Undertakings	No conviction certificate duly signed by the Authorized Signatory of the organization.
6.	Previous experience of working with PHFI*	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Name of the Project & Department/Division of PHFI sponsoring the RFP (Tender No & Date) 2. Reference & Date of Service Agreement 3. Date of Commencement & Date of Completion (Whether completed as per Time Line) 4. Value of the Project 5. Any comments on the conduct of the Project

*** Any Agency which does not have a previous working experience with PHFI shall also be eligible for the Tender Process.**

3. Terms of References (ToRs)

3.1. During the assignment, the Agency would be responsible for completion of the below mentioned ToRs:

Provide support as an Agency to handle backend integration, front-end development, USER interface. Detailed ToRs for the agency include:

- Complete understanding, documentation, and integration with AI Chatbot for tobacco cessation
- Deployment and maintenance of the tobacco cessation interface (Android and iOS)
- Development of a web dashboard for monitoring and supervision
- Maintenance of the software platform post-acceptance phase and live launch
- Data hosting on a secured cloud server

4. IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE/TIME LINES

The engagement would be for the period of 24 months. The details of Deliverables along with Time Line are given in the table below:

Deliverables Table	Timeline
API Documentation for AI Chatbot for Tobacco Cessation	0-1 month
Development, deployment, and maintenance of tobacco cessation app (Android and iOS)	1-4 months
Web Dashboard with multiple features for monitoring and supervision	4-6 months
Maintenance of the software platform after the initial acceptance phase and go-live	6-24 months

5. PERFORMANCE BANK GUARANTEE (PBG)

5.1. The successful final selected Organization shall have to submit a Performance Bank Guarantee within 30 (thirty) days from the date of issue of Service Agreement. Extension of time for submission of PBG beyond 30(thirty) days and up to 60 days from the date of issue of Service Agreement may be given by the Authority who is competent at PHFI. However, a penal interest of 24% per annum shall be charged for the delay beyond 30 (thirty) days i.e. from 31st day after the date of issue of Service Agreement. In case the organization fails to submit the requisite PBG even after 60 days from the date of issue of Service Agreement, the contract shall be terminated.

5.2. The successful Organization shall submit the PBG matching with the First Advance payment. (This clause of PBG shall not apply if the agency will not take any advance)

5.3. The PBG will be valid till completion of the Project period and shall be released only after 60 days of physical completion of the work based on Satisfactory Completion Certificate issued by the PI stating that the Organization has completed the work in all respects satisfactorily.

6. PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Payment schedule is given below:

Sl No.	Key milestones in terms of Deliverables	Payment (as a % of the total Professional Fee)
1	Development of User Interface (UI)/App for Tobacco Users	10 %

2	Development of User Interface (UI)/App for Tobacco Cessation Counsellors (TCC)	10%
3	Integration of User Interfaces/Apps with AI Chatbot	15%
4	Development of Web Dashboard for Monitoring and Supervision	10%
5	System Testing, User Acceptance Testing (UAT), and Go-Live	25%
6	Platform Maintenance and Technical Support – payable in six-monthly (half-yearly) instalments over a total maintenance period of 18 months	30% — payable in three equal half-yearly instalments of 10% each

7. GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSAL

7.1. Preparing the Technical Proposal

The Agency is required to submit a technical proposal and a separate Financial Proposal.

7.1.1. Technical Proposal Submission Format:

The Proposal should follow the format given below (but not necessarily limited to the following) and should be in English and formatted on standard A4 paper with single space, 12 point font Times New Roman and each page numbered consecutively. The proposal should capture the following information, with a maximum of 20 pages including references (CVs could be enclosed as annexure and will not be considered as part of 20 page write-ups):

- a) Technical Proposal- Should have creative approach/ concept note in support of the proposed website designing and hosting.
- b) Proposed Team Structure- Clear definition of roles and responsibilities for each personnel has to be stated. Qualifications and work experience of agency and its personnel, needs to be clearly articulated
- c) Proposed Project Team Members with curriculum vitae of the senior professional members
- d) Details of the consortia, if any, with defined roles and responsibilities of each personnel involved in the website development.

7.1.2. Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency profile

- a. Name and address of the Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency.
- b. Year of Establishment.
- c. Legal status of the Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency – Whether Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency is registered under the Societies Registration Act or is an autonomous body or a Limited Company or Partnership Firm, etc. and details there of (e.g. – name(s) of Partners, Managing Directors, Chief Executive Officers, key Authorized Persons)
- d. Principal nature of activities undertaken.
- e. Organizational structure and names of personnel, their titles, and *curriculum vitae* including nature of appointment and duration with the Organization of the key personnel proposed to be involved in the study, roles and responsibilities of the persons to be engaged for study, where they propose to undertake the work. Please mention each key person's specific role and time allocation for undertaking activities in study.
- f. Details of manpower as prescribed above.
- g. Communication details of the Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency: mailing address, telephone and fax numbers, email address, etc.
- h. Signed consent of the Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency's head and the identified Project Coordinator (State Level) to sign a MoU and agree to abide the Terms & Conditions set out in the Project of conducting the study/survey.

7.1.4. Financial Status of the Organization

- a. Total revenue and expenditure of the Organization for the past three fiscal years.
- b. Copies of the certified Audited Annual Accounts in support of the Financial Status.

7.1.5. Income Tax Details

Whether the Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency are exempted from Income Tax? If yes, please furnish the exemption certificate number and date up to which exempted. A copy of exemption certificate is to be attached.

If no, furnish PAN/TAN number, the copy of the latest Income Tax returns and assessment order.

7.2. Preparing the Financial Proposal

- a. The Financial Quotes should cover the following:
 - (i) Entire cost for the running the campaign with the activities defined.
 - (ii) personnel to be involved including number, their time commitment, unit cost, and overall personnel costs;
 - (iii) travel costs, if envisaged, including number of local and outstation trips, unit costs for travel, per diem, etc., and overall costs of travel;
 - (iv) material costs including stationary and printing materials;
 - (v) communication costs;
 - (vi) equipment costs, if any
 - (vii) other institutional overheads

* Please note institutional overheads must be mentioned with break-ups including cost of rent for space, utilities, etc.

- b. The total cost quoted should be inclusive of all taxes.
- c. The Financial Proposal will be evaluated only if an Agency qualifies based on the assessment of the Technical Proposal.

7.3. Submission of Bids

- a. The Bidder shall submit a sealed cover consisting of these two sealed envelopes with a clear label for each:
 - i. Technical Proposal, super scribing on the right-hand side top of the cover as Technical Bid (2 copies).
 - ii. Financial Proposal super scribing on the right-hand side top of the cover as Financial Bid (2 copies).
- b. All the pages of the Financial Proposal shall be duly signed by the Authorized Signatory of the Bidder before submission. Corrections, if any shall be counter signed.

7.4. General Instructions and Terms and Conditions

- a. The Proposal along with all the correspondence and documents exchanged by the Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency and PHFI shall be written in English language.
- b. **Amendments to the Tender:** Tender Committee at PHFI reserves every right to amend any of the Tender conditions or a part thereof, before the last date

for the receipt of the Tender, if necessary. Amendments, if any, would be put on the website. The decision of extending the due date and time for the submission of Tender documents on account of amendments will be the sole discretion of PHFI.

- c. **Reserved Rights:** PHFI reserves the following rights with regard to this call for proposal:
 - (i) to cancel this call for proposal at any stage without assigning any reason.
 - (ii) to disqualify any Applicant(s) based on Applicant(s) failure to follow solicitation instructions
 - (iii) PHFI reserves the right to waive any deviations by Applicants from the requirements of this solicitation that in PHFI 's opinion are considered not to be material defects requiring rejection or disqualification; or where such a waiver will promote increased competition;
 - (iv) Extend the time for submission of all RFP responses after notification to all Applicants;
 - (v) Terminate or modify the RFP process at any time and re-issue the RFP to whomever PHFI deems appropriate;
 - (vi) PHFI reserve the right to select and negotiate with those applicants it determines, in its sole discretion, to be qualified for competitive proposals and to terminate negotiations without incurring any liability;
 - (vii) PHFI reserves the right to negotiate the fee or issue an award based on the initial evaluation of Applicants without discussion;
 - (viii) Award only part of the activities in the solicitation or issue multiple awards based on solicitation activities.
- d. No proposal shall be accepted unless it is properly sealed. Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency shall not be allowed to fill in or seal their proposal at the PHFI office. The documents should be sent by speed post/registered post/courier or hand delivered.
- e. If the envelope is found to be open, not sealed and not marked as instructed above, PHFI will not be responsible for misplacement or premature opening of the proposal submitted. Any proposal opened prematurely due to this cause shall be rejected.
- f. The Bidder is advised to attach any additional information that is considered necessary in regard to establish the capabilities. No further information will be entertained after submission of application unless it is required by PHFI. PHFI, however, reserves the right to call for additional information and clarification on information submitted by the Bidders.
- g. Proposals must be received by PHFI at the address specified not later than the date and time specified in the Invitation of RFP. In case the specified date for the submission of proposal being declared holiday by the PHFI, the same will

be received on next working day with the same specified time. Proposals received after the due date and time specified will automatically be rejected.

- h. **Withdrawal of Proposals:** Applicants may withdraw proposal by written notice via email received at any time before contract. Proposals may be withdrawn in person by an offer or his/her authorized representative, if the representative's identity is made known and the representative signs a receipt for the proposal before award.
- i. **Opening of Tenders:** Sealed Tenders received up to February 13, 2026, by 05:00 PM will be taken up for opening. Tenders received after specified date and time will not be accepted. PHFI reserves the right to disqualify any of the Tender in case it is not satisfied with the documents furnished or otherwise without assigning any reasons thereof. The Technical Proposals will be opened on February 18, 2026, at 03:00 PM at PHFI, address as mentioned. A representative from each Bidder is invited to be present. The Financial proposals of those Agencies qualifying on the basis of the assessment of Technical Proposals will be opened on February 26, 2026 at 11:30 AM at PHFI, address mentioned below. A representative from each Qualifying Bidder may be present.
- j. Any efforts by Agency to influence the PHFI personnel or representatives on matters relating to proposals under study in the process of examination, clarification, evaluation and comparison of proposal and in decision concerning award of Contract, shall result in the rejection of the Agency's proposal. Failing to execute the Contract Agreement within the said period may result in termination of Contract and award of the same to other Agency/ Agencies at the risk and cost of the Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency.
- k. The person to sign the Contract Agreement shall be duly authorized.
- l. The data, questionnaires, reports and other materials used by the Agency during the conduction of the survey shall remain the property of PHFI. The Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency will not be allowed to use this information in any forum, national or international, without the explicit permission given in writing by PHFI.
- m. The RFP shall not bind PHFI in any way whatsoever to offer any job to the applicant if it is decided to abandon the study.
- n. PHFI assures that the documents and presentations by the applicants will be kept strictly confidential and will not be used for any purpose other than the process of selection of the final applicant. All documents created/prepared during the assignment by the selected application shall be the property of PHFI and they will have the rights associated with such documents.

- o. **Offer Verification:** PHFI may contact Applicant to confirm contact person, address, bid amount and to confirm that the Bid was submitted for this solicitation.
- p. **Conflict of Interest:** Applicants must provide disclosure of any past, present or future relationships with any parties associated with the issuance, review or management of this solicitation and anticipated award. Failure to provide full and open disclosure may result in PHFI having to re-evaluate selection of potential Applicants.
- q. **Arbitration:** Should any dispute arise, it may be referred to an Arbitrator appointed by mutual consent. The place of Arbitration shall be New Delhi.
- r. The cost of travel and stay of the officials from Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency for attending meetings with PHFI will be met by the respective Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency.
- s. **All queries/ correspondences pertaining to this RFP will be done through PHFI Tender email i.e. tenders@phfi.org**

Hard copies of the Proposals should be addressed to:

**The Chairman
Tender Committee
RFP: DEVELOPING AN AI-BASED CONVERSATIONAL INTERFACE TO
STRENGTHEN EXISTING CESSATION SERVICES OFFERED THROUGH
TOBACCO CESSATION CENTRES (TCCs).**

At

PUBLIC HEALTH FOUNDATION OF INDIA

4th Floor, House No 60, Property No. Khasra No. 293 294 295, Westend Marg,
Saidulajab Extn Saidulajab, New Delhi, South Delhi, Delhi – 110 030, India

The last date for submission of complete Proposal with all supporting documents (by hand or by post) is February 13, 2026 by 05:00 PM. Any Proposal received after this prescribed time will not be entertained. PHFI will not be responsible for any loss in transit or postal delay.

8. EVALUTION OF PROPOSAL

8.1. Evaluation Committee

An Evaluation committee formed by PHFI would first examine the Technical bids based on the details provided in the Invitation for proposal for those Institution/

Organization/ Consulting Agency who are short listed as per the qualification criteria. The Financial bids would be assessed only for those agencies whose technical bids are considered to be adequate and secure minimum Technical qualifying marks as mentioned in paras below.

8.2. Selection of Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency

- a. An Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency is required to score a minimum qualifying marks of 70 points out of 100 which will be recalibrated out of 60 in the Technical Proposal in order to qualify for Interview and Financial Bid opening.
- b. Financial Bids of Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency will be opened only if the Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency qualifies in the Technical Evaluation (score of a minimum of 70 percentage). Financial Bids will be opened on February 26, 2026 at 11:30 AM_at PHFI.
- c. For the Final evaluation, the weightage for the Technical proposal, Interview and Financial proposal, would be 60%, 20% and 20%, respectively.
- d. PHFI shall reserve the right to negotiate with the Bidder whose proposal has been ranked first by the Committee on the basis of Technical and Financial Evaluations and the Interview.
- e. The submitted proposals will be valid for 60 days from the date of submission. PHFI will make its best effort to select the Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency within this period.

8.3. Technical Evaluation (60)

Technical evaluation shall be carried out based on the following:

Criteria	Points
Have a reputable background and should be established in business for at least two years	20
Have experience of working on ICMR or State/National Govt. supported initiatives	20
Compliance with the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) – M1, M2, M3	25
Prior experience or ongoing AI/ML technology collaborations and API integrations (preferably with govt. institutions)	25

Experience in developing cross-platform mobile applications and integrated role-based dashboards. Ability to develop applications that can work in offline and online modes.	10
Total	100 points (will be recalibrated out of 60)

Note: Certificate that the company is not blacklisted by any government organization.

8.4. Interview (20)

Those agencies who will qualify in the Technical Evaluation will be invited for an Interview, wherein, the Agencies will be given time slot to give a presentation. Format of Presentation will be shared with the selected Agencies via tender email after opening and scrutiny of Technical Bids.

8.5. Financial Evaluation (20)

Financial evaluation shall be carried out based on the following:

Cost will primarily be evaluated for reasonableness, realism, allowability and the Applicant's understanding of the work to be performed. Effective cost saving measures to improve cost efficiency of the project will also be considered. Applications that demonstrate realistic scenario to accomplish the job in a time-bound manner with minimal resources would be considered.

Full marks will be awarded to the lowest qualifying bidder. For subsequent bidders the marks will be a ratio of the lowest bidder. If the lowest bid is "X" and bid for "Y" needs to be evaluated then its marks will be "highest mark x (X/Y)" Once the Institution/ Organization/ Consulting Agency is finalized, additional information and discussion will occur between the Applicant and PHFI during development of detailed Technical Proposal.

9. CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION

For all correspondence please refer to PHFI general Tender Email: tenders@phfi.org with subject line marked as "RFP/NIT for - PHFI/Health Promotion /AI Based Conversational Interface-2026/01/01-01"

END OF RFP

DISCLAIMER:

This RFP represents only a definition of requirements. It is merely an invitation for submission of concept paper and does not legally obligate PHFI to accept any of the submitted RFP in whole or in part, nor is PHFI obligated to select the lowest priced proposal. PHFI reserves the right to negotiate with any or all applicants, both with respect to price, cost and/or scope of services. PHFI has no contractual obligations with any offer or based upon issuance of this RFP. It is not an offer to contract. Only the execution of a written contract shall obligate PHFI in accordance with the terms and conditions contained in such contract.