

Decision on new Task Leader for Energy Sector Behavioural Insights Platform

Matter for the ExCo

This brief has been prepared to update Executive Committee members on the process undertaken to hire a new Task Leader for the Energy Sector Behavioural Insights Platform (BI Platform). ExCo members are requested to:

- Note the process undertaken by the existing Task Coordinator (IEA Secretariat) and BI Platform Experts to recruit a new Task Leader who will take over from the IEA Secretariat.
- Approve the hiring committee's decision to select The Behaviouralist as the new Task Leader, based on their winning proposal, which offered the best value for money considering their expertise and international network.

Background

The IEA Secretariat is stepping down as the Task Coordinator for the BI Platform, having successfully delivered the first phase of the work (the environment scan report). As the work moves into a second phase, a Task Leader with expertise developing tools and guidance materials on behavioural insights for policy makers is needed. In addition to knowledge of behavioural insights, other desirable attributes include a strong knowledge of demand-side energy policy, experience conducting workshops and training sessions, and the potential to develop the BI Platform community, ideally leveraging their existing networks.

Summary of hiring process

Call for proposals

A public call for proposals was advertised through userstcp.org, social media networks, and circulated to BI Platform expert group networks. Four firms submitted formal proposals: The Behaviouralist (UK/Europe); Affective Advisory (Switzerland); Common Capital (Australia); and BEWorks (Canada). Of these, the first three were shortlisted for interview, with BEWorks excluded due to a lack of detail provided in their proposal.

Interviews

On 22 March 2021, the three shortlisted firms were interviewed by a panel comprised of the existing IEA Task Coordinators (Elisbetta Cornago, Jeremy Sung) and a representative from the Expert Group (Karl Purcell). While all three proposals were strong, the panel determined that The Behaviouralist represented the overall best value for money (Refer to Annex 1).

For more information on the process, please contact jeremy.sung@iea.org.

Annex 1: Analysis of proposals

The Behaviouralist

- Pros: Solid experience advising utilities and governments (ministries, local admin) in applying BIs to energy policy making. Expertise both in developing tools for policy makers / distilling insights from research / developing primary research by designing, running and assessing experiments. Important connections to academic community in UK / US (one of their academic advisors joined the call). They have run workshops with different stakeholders and have been developing an online course on BIs. They have allocated considerably more hours to the project with respect to other applicants, while giving the most competitive quote.
- Cons: Junior consultant has less experience in interacting with governmental institutions than the project manager, but the time split between him and the more senior project manager is quite balanced on most tasks.

Affective Advisory

- Pros: With a member already on the expert group, the firm is very familiar with work of the BI Platform and the pitch reflected this. The firm provided more details about their work developing a guidebook on using BIs for energy policy making for the Swiss Federal Office of Energy – impressive material. Solid experience in community building having co-launched the Global Association of Applied Behavioural Scientists.
- Cons: Firm is the newest among those that have sent us proposals, underscoring less experience. Only a couple of projects in the energy policy sector. Staff time allocated to the project is considerably lower with respect to the other candidates, for a higher price (see below), and consultants are allocated most of the hours (rather than Torben himself).

Common Capital

- Pros: Very solid knowledge of energy sector issues and good understanding of how BIs can support the policy making process. Long-term experience in advising energy policy makers and in developing workshops.
- Cons: Much more expensive than the other two quotes – hard to justify the price difference. Australia-based firm would unfortunately increase travel costs for in-person workshops and events such as ExCo attendance when ExCos are generally held in the northern hemisphere.

	The Behaviouralist		Affective Advisory		Common Capital	
	Staff time	Cost	Staff time	Cost	Staff time	Cost
1. Toolkit	58	€ 28,642	48	€ 54,000	56	€ 76,539
2. Outreach	56	€ 27,378	15	€ 16,000	34	€ 48,534
3. BI Platform communications (e.g. contacts with expert group)	13	€ 6,529	12	€ 13,000	8	€ 10,182
4. ExCo communications	10	€ 4,844	10	€ 9,000	8	€ 10,182
5. Development of future work plan	30	€ 14,742	6	€ 6,000	11	€ 14,986
Total:	167	€ 82,134	91	€ 98,000	116.5	€ 160,423

Table 1. Comparison of proposed staff time and cost for each sub-task required in BI Platform Phase 2