

Date: 30/09/2026

REQUEST FOR QUOTATION n. UNSSC/2026/07

**Design, development and piloting of a Machine-Assisted Crisis Simulation (MACS)
Methodology, Toolkit and Prototype Simulations**

Submission deadline: 15 October 2026 hrs 23:59 CET

The United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC) requests your price quotation for the services specified in this Request for Quotation (RFQ) and as described in the Terms of Reference below.

In order to be considered for the present RFQ, you are required to send the quotation together with documentation listed in section 6. below to procurement@unssc.org on or before **15 October 2026 hrs 23:59 CET**.

Evaluation criteria are listed in section 7 and the award will be given to the lowest cost technical acceptable offer. The successful bidder shall be awarded a Purchase Order from UNSSC subject to the applicable [United Nations General Conditions of Contract](#) (UNGCC). By submitting an offer in response to the present RFQ, you are accepting the UNGCC.

Questions in relation to the present RFQ can be sent to procurement@unssc.org. Answers to the questions may be replied in writing and answers published.

UNSSC may reserve the right to accept the offer in full or in part. UNSSC expects prices to remain unchanged.

Please note that UNSSC has VAT exemption status and can provide documentation for the same. Hence, your quotation shall be provided without VAT. In case of quotations received in different currencies, financial evaluation will be based on the USD value calculated at the UN exchange rate of the time of the RFQ closing deadline.

1. Background and Context

The United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC) is the UN's trusted interagency learning partner, delivering innovative, scalable, and cost-efficient solutions that support transformative change. Established in 2002 and headquartered in Turin, Italy, with offices in Bonn, Germany, and Madrid, Spain UNSSC delivers cutting-edge learning solutions, advisory support, and change facilitation to foster a shared organizational culture. Leveraging our deep, long-standing relationships, system-wide credibility and knowledge of UN mandates and context, we work with UN entities to design and deliver learning that meets their specific needs. Utilizing cutting-edge platforms and methodologies, we provide exceptional value. Our learning technologies and platforms ensure high-quality learning is accessible to the entire UN workforce, reducing duplication and maximizing cost-efficiency for the system. For more information, please visit the [UNSSC website](#).

The United Nations operates increasingly in environments characterized by uncertainty, complexity, accelerating change and constrained resources. Across peace and security, humanitarian and development contexts, personnel are expected to analyse rapidly evolving situations, anticipate emerging risks and make high-stakes decisions with incomplete information. While crisis simulations, tabletop exercises and foresight methodologies are recognized as among the most effective approaches for strengthening decision-making capabilities, they remain time- and resource-intensive and difficult to scale.

At the same time, although UN personnel increasingly work with information that is generated, summarized, filtered, and analysed through AI-enabled systems, there are a few opportunities for them to practise engaging AI outputs under realistic operational conditions: determining when to trust AI-generated information, how to identify errors, biases, or hallucinations, and how to decide when machine-generated insights conflict with human judgement.

Given the above, the UNSSC conducted a learning needs assessment with 36 practitioners from peace operations, special political missions, UN Country Teams, headquarters departments and other organizations. The assessment revealed a growing demand for operational rather than exploratory AI-related capacity, with a strong preference for experiential, scenario-based learning and practical skills in information synthesis, risk analysis, forecasting, verification of AI-generated outputs and responsible AI use.

In response, the UNSSC is developing and piloting the **Machine-Assisted Crisis Simulation (MACS) Methodology**: a learning methodology that combines strategic foresight, crisis simulation and AI-assisted learning support, in which AI acts as a dynamic scenario engine, inject generator and decision-support challenger while humans retain control over learning objectives and facilitation. The initiative deliberately prioritizes **methodology over technology**. UNSSC is *not* seeking the development of a standalone AI platform, but a reusable, tool-agnostic methodology and toolkit that enables facilitators to design and deliver adaptive, scalable and context-specific simulations. The primary audience is personnel from UN peace operations, special political missions, agencies, funds and programmes (including humanitarian coordination structures) and UN entities engaged in strategic planning, crisis management, foresight and anticipatory action. Learning professionals and training designers are a secondary audience.

2. Objectives of the Assignment

UNSSC is looking for a qualified service provider, (company, academic or research institution, think tank or consortium) with demonstrable experience in all or at least three of the following areas:

- a) crisis simulation and scenario-based learning;
- b) emerging technologies and AI;
- c) futures thinking; and
- d) UN peace and security and/or emergency contexts

to **design, develop, pilot and evaluate the MACS Methodology, together with a practical toolkit and two prototype simulations**, in close collaboration with the UNSSC project team.

The methodology should enable facilitators to use AI (primarily commercially available or UN-approved generative AI tools) across the full simulation cycle, including but not limited to:

- **Scenario development**
 - o AI-assisted “world-building” of plausible crisis scenarios and alternative futures, anchored in recognized foresight methods (e.g. horizon scanning, drivers of change, scenario matrices).
 - o Human review and validation steps ensuring scenarios are credible, context-sensitive and aligned with learning objectives.
- **Crisis inject generation**
 - o Generation of realistic injects such as situation reports, media and social media content, analytical briefs and stakeholder communications.
 - o Calibration of injects to learning objectives, participant profiles and exercise difficulty.

- **Dynamic exercise adaptation**
 - o Approaches enabling the scenario to evolve in response to participant decisions in real time, while the facilitator retains full control over the exercise flow.
- **AI as decision-support challenger**
 - o Provision of AI-generated analysis, forecasts and recommendations to participants, including deliberately designed inaccuracies, omissions, biases, hallucinations and conflicting outputs.
 - o Mechanics that require participants to verify, challenge or override machine-generated information and to justify their decisions.
- **Participant reflection and debriefing**
 - o Structured debriefing frameworks, including AI-assisted synthesis of decision logs, focusing on the quality of human judgement in AI-supported decision-making.
- **Learning analytics and evaluation**
 - o Tools to capture decision data and assess learning, including pre- and post-exercise assessments of participants' ability to evaluate AI outputs.

The primary objectives of the awarded service provider are:

1. Develop a practical, scalable and tool-agnostic MACS methodology, documented in a handbook with a toolkit for facilitators and learning designers.
2. Provide guidance and ready-to-use tools (e.g. prompt libraries, templates, facilitation scripts) for the use of AI in scenario development, inject generation, dynamic adaptation and debriefing.
3. Embed learning mechanics that strengthen participants' ability to critically assess AI-generated outputs and to balance machine-generated insights with human judgement.
4. Design and develop two prototype simulations covering distinct UN operational contexts.
5. Co-facilitate and assess at least two pilot exercises with a total of 50-60 UN personnel, generating evidence on learning effectiveness.
6. Evaluate pilot results, refine the methodology and produce a scale-up and sustainability roadmap enabling UNSSC to integrate MACS into its programme portfolio.

3. Scope of Work

The assignment is structured in five work packages (WP). The service provider will work under the overall guidance of the UNSSC Peace and Security Hub, which leads the initiative, with the Hub for UN Transformation responsible for the review of foresight and AI-enabled learning components.

- **WP1 – Inception, Research and Co-Design**
 - o Kick-off meeting with the UNSSC project team and preparation of a detailed work plan.
 - o Literature and practice review on AI-enabled learning, crisis simulations, wargaming and foresight methodologies, including relevant UN, governmental and multilateral experience.
 - o Stakeholder mapping and consultations (indicatively 6-8 interviews and one co-design workshop), building on the preliminary consultations and learning needs assessment already conducted by UNSSC.
 - o MACS concept note and theory of change, and a monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) framework including pre/post assessment instruments.

- **WP2 – Methodology Development and Toolkit Design**
 - o MACS methodology handbook covering the components listed in section 2, including facilitator roles, human-in-the-loop controls and quality-assurance steps for AI-generated content.
 - o Practical toolkit: scenario and inject templates, prompt libraries, guidance on designing deliberately flawed AI outputs, debriefing frameworks and assessment tools.
 - o Responsible AI and data protection guidance for facilitators, and guidance on adapting the methodology to different tools and contexts.
 - o Incorporation of comments from one round of UNSSC internal peer review.
- **WP3 – Simulation Prototype Development**
 - o Two prototype simulations in distinct operational contexts (for example, a political or peace and security crisis in a mission setting, and a humanitarian or development crisis in a UN Country Team setting), to be agreed with UNSSC.
 - o For each prototype: scenario pack, inject library, role descriptions, AI prompt sets, facilitator script, participant materials and assessment instruments.
 - o Internal test run (dry run) with the UNSSC team and partners, and refinement of materials.
- **WP4 – Pilot Delivery and Testing**
 - o Co-facilitation, with UNSSC, of at least two pilot exercises (indicatively April and May 2027) reaching a total of 50-60 participants, delivered online and/or in person.
 - o Collection and analysis of participant feedback and learning assessment data, and observation notes for each pilot.
 - o Participation in a pilot review workshop and preparation of a lessons-learned report.
- **WP5 – Evaluation, Knowledge Sharing and Scale-Up Strategy**
 - o Evaluation and learning report assessing results against the MEL framework.
 - o Final, refined MACS methodology package incorporating lessons from the pilots.
 - o Scale-up and sustainability roadmap, including options for integration into UNSSC programmes and delivery as a service to UN entities.
 - o Delivery of a knowledge-sharing webinar and dissemination materials (e.g. a short brief and presentation).

UNSSC will provide: access to the learning needs assessment findings and preliminary consultation outcomes; introductions to partner entities and stakeholders; recruitment of pilot participants and pilot logistics (venues and/or virtual platforms); and review of deliverables within 10 working days of submission.

4. Requirements

To be considered eligible for the RFQ, bidders shall meet the following requirements:

1. **Experience in crisis simulation, immersive and scenario-based learning.** The bidder must demonstrate at least 5 years of experience in designing or delivering crisis simulations, tabletop exercises, serious games, wargames, immersive (e.g. VR/XR) crisis experiences or scenario-based executive education for professional audiences. Experience must be evidenced by a minimum of two references from comparable engagements, defined as projects involving:
 - a. scenario-based, simulation or immersive exercises with a focus on crisis contexts for audiences in international organizations, governmental, UN or multilateral institutions;
 - b. the use of emerging technologies (e.g. AI, VR/XR) in learning, analysis or decision-making; and

- c. delivery to professionals in an institutional context.
2. **Applied AI, emerging technologies and futures thinking.** The bidder must demonstrate expertise in AI and emerging technologies applied to peace and security, diplomacy or governance, and in futures thinking or strategic foresight, evidenced by at least one relevant project and/or peer-reviewed publications or policy research.
3. **Experience with international organizations.** The lead expert must have at least 5 years of professional experience in working within or with counterparts in the UN system or other international organizations, in crisis management, mediation, or conflict prevention, humanitarian affairs in a field context, including involvement in innovation or technology initiatives. Number of years working in crisis contexts in international field operations is an advantage.
4. **Learning design and evaluation capacity.** The bidder must demonstrate experience in executive education or training design for senior professionals, and capacity to measure learning outcomes (e.g. pre/post assessments, behavioural and performance indicators).
5. **Responsible AI and data governance.** The bidder must identify every AI tool, platform and external service it proposes to use, describe how data will flow through them, and confirm that no personal data or non-public UN information will be entered into tools that retain or train on user inputs without UNSSC's prior written approval.
6. **Language.** Proposed personnel must be fluent in English.

5. Indicative timeline and time schedule of deliverables

UNSSC wishes to conclude the selection process by the end of October 2026, with the assignment starting in early November 2026. All deliverables must be completed no later than **31 July 2027**. All deliverables shall be submitted in English, in editable format, and are subject to UNSSC approval. The indicative schedule is as follows:

#	Deliverable	Indicative timeline
1	Inception report (WP1): work plan, literature and practice review, stakeholder consultation summary, MACS concept note and theory of change, MEL framework	November 2026
2	MACS methodology handbook and toolkit (WP2): draft by end January 2027; final version incorporating UNSSC peer review	December 2026 - February 2027
3	Two prototype simulations with complete facilitation and participant materials, tested in an internal dry run (WP3)	March - April 2027
4	Pilot delivery (WP4): at least two pilots co-facilitated, pilot data analysis and lessons-learned report	June - July 2027
5	Final package (WP5): evaluation and learning report, refined methodology package, scale-up roadmap, knowledge-sharing webinar and dissemination materials	End of July 2027

6. Submission Requirements

To participate in the present RFQ, bidders shall submit:

- **Technical proposal**, by filling-in Appendix A, including:

- a) Company registration certificate or, for academic and research institutions, proof of legal status (for consortia, of the lead entity, together with a letter of intent from each partner)
 - b) Brief company profile with evidence of number of years of relevant experience
 - c) List of main relevant clients with at least 2 references
 - d) At least one relevant examples of similar past works (crisis simulations, tabletop exercises, serious games, immersive or foresight exercises), which integrates AI or other emerging technologies, demonstrating points 1 and 2 of the requirements section (links and publications are accepted)
 - e) Proposed approach, methodology, work plan and timeline covering WP1-WP5, clearly addressing points 4 and 5 of the requirements section
 - f) List of AI tools, platforms and external services to be used, with a description of data flows and data protection measures
 - g) Team composition with concise CVs of key experts evidencing their expertise, including the lead expert's qualifications as per point 3 of the requirements section.
- **Quotation**, by filling in Appendix B, detailing:
 - a) Either An all-inclusive lump sum per deliverable, as listed in section 5, and the total cost (exclusive of VAT)
 - b) Or daily rates and number of working days per WP
 - c) Costs of any software or tool licences required, itemized separately

In case of offers in different currencies, evaluation will be based on the USD value calculated on the UN Rate of Exchange at the time of the RFQ closing deadline.

For the specific project, travels are not envisaged. However, in case supplier is requested to travel, UNSSC will arrange travel in accordance with its travel policies, rules and administrative instructions. Travel costs should not be indicated in the financial proposals.

In case of travel, it is responsibility of the awarded supplier to ensure having the required authorizations, visas or medical clearances to undergo travel to the required location(s).

7. Evaluation criteria

Offers will be assessed on the pass/fail criteria described in the table below. Only offers passing all criteria will be considered technically compliant.

Criteria description	Evaluation methodology
Crisis simulation, immersive and scenario-based learning experience. The bidder demonstrates at least 5 years of experience designing or delivering crisis simulations, tabletop exercises, serious games, wargames, immersive (e.g. VR/XR) crisis experiences or scenario-based executive education, evidenced by at least 2 comparable references.	PASS/FAIL
Applied AI, emerging technologies and futures thinking. The bidder provides at least one relevant project and/or peer-reviewed publications or policy research on AI and emerging technologies in peace and security, diplomacy or governance, and demonstrates expertise in futures thinking or strategic foresight.	PASS/FAIL

Criteria description	Evaluation methodology
Experience with international organizations. at least 5 years of professional experience in working within or with counterparts in the UN system or other international organizations, in crisis management, mediation, or conflict prevention, humanitarian affairs in a field context, including involvement in innovation or technology initiatives. Number of years working in crisis contexts in international field operations is an advantage.	PASS/FAIL
Learning design and evaluation. The bidder demonstrates experience in executive education or training design for senior professionals, and the technical proposal includes a credible approach to measuring learning outcomes, including pre/post assessment.	PASS/FAIL
Responsible AI and data governance. The technical proposal explicitly identifies every AI tool, platform and external service through which UNSSC data will pass. Any undisclosed data routing pathway identified during review will constitute a failure.	PASS/FAIL
Proposed approach covers the full scope of WP1-WP5	PASS/FAIL
Proposed timeline meets the indicative timeline of section 5.	PASS/FAIL
Proposed team composition shows that the assigned staff, individually or collectively, cover crisis simulation and experiential learning, AI and emerging technologies, futures thinking or strategic foresight, and learning design.	PASS/FAIL
Fluency in English of key expert(s) assigned	PASS/FAIL
Auto-declaration that the bidder is compliant with relevant privacy legislation and that have appropriate organizational, administrative, physical and technical safeguards and procedures implemented to protect the security of personal data, including against or from unauthorized or accidental access, damage, loss or other risks presented by data processing (by signing Appendix A).	PASS/FAIL
Acceptance of the UN General terms and conditions by signing Appendix A	PASS/FAIL

Selection will be based on the lowest cost offer among the technically compliant ones.

8. Additional conditions

- **Intellectual property.** All materials produced under this assignment, including the methodology, toolkit, prototype simulations and associated content, shall be the property of UNSSC, which may use, adapt, reproduce, translate, distribute and offer them as part of its services without restriction. Any pre-existing materials of the service provider incorporated in the deliverables shall be licensed to UNSSC on a perpetual, royalty-free basis.
- **Responsible use of AI.** All AI-generated content included in the deliverables must be reviewed and validated by the service provider's experts before submission. Simulation scenarios shall be fictional or anonymized, and shall avoid content that could be perceived as referring to real ongoing situations or as politically sensitive, unless otherwise agreed with UNSSC.

- **Working arrangements.** The assignment will be carried out remotely, with regular (indicatively bi-weekly) progress meetings with the UNSSC project team. Travel for in-person pilots, if required, will be agreed in advance with UNSSC.
- **Privacy:** As part of the services requested, awarded supplier may need to process personal data. In doing so, they shall process personal data in accordance with standards requested by the data protection legislation affecting the Contractor. The supplier should have appropriate organizational, administrative, physical and technical safeguards and procedures implemented to protect the security of personal data, including against or from unauthorized or accidental access, damage, loss or other risks presented by data processing.
The protection of this data is essential to upholding fundamental rights to privacy and the [UN-system wide personal data protection and privacy principles](#).