

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

CONSULTING SERVICES

Institution: Association of Caribbean States (ACS)

Country: Multiple – Barbados, Belize, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Trinidad & Tobago

Project: Micro, small and medium-sized Enterprises International Trade and Development Project

Sector: Trade and Sustainable Development

Abstract: Development of a competitiveness toolkit for Small Business Development Centres (SBDC), establishment of a Regional SBDC Network and design and execution of a capacity building programme to strengthen support services to MSMEs

Project No.: RG-T4191 ATN/OC-19778-RG

Deadline: 21 November, 2023

The ACS received financing from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) through the Regional Public Goods Initiative toward the implementation of the Micro, small and medium-sized Enterprises International Trade and Development Project. For this project, the ACS intends to contract consulting services (“the Services”) described in this Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI). In this regard, the ACS is seeking a firm to:

- i. develop a competitiveness toolkit to improve the business development services offered to MSMEs by SBDCs and other business support organizations with a particular focus on MSMEs in the three target sectors (agribusiness, community-based tourism and creative industries)
- ii. develop a framework for a regional network of Small Business Development Centres (SBDC); and
- iii. design and execute a comprehensive training programme to operationalize the competitiveness toolkit and regional network of SBDCs.

The firm must work in close coordination with the relevant SBDCs and representatives in the beneficiary countries. Further information on the scope of works is detailed below:

1. The Development of a Small Business Development Centres (SBDC) Competitiveness

Toolkit

- a. Undertake a situational analysis of the institutional capacities of the four SBDCs in the beneficiary countries that have them (i.e. Barbados, Belize, Honduras and Jamaica)
- b. Undertake an assessment of the types of business development services offered by the SBDCs to MSMEs in the beneficiary countries
- c. Assess the needs of MSMEs in the three target sectors of the project (community-based tourism, creative sector, agribusiness) and develop recommendations for the four SBDCs to better meet those needs
- d. Develop a training programme that addresses the following:
 - i. Enhancement of the quality of business development services offered
 - ii. Recommendations to improve the administrative processes and strategic frameworks that govern the services provided by the SBDCs to MSMEs
 - iii. Alignment of performance standards of SBDCs that meet existing global business support standards
 - iv. Recommendations to expand technical capacity and efficiency of the four SBDCs.
- e. Identify BSOs in the other two beneficiary countries where there is no SBDC (Nicaragua and Trinidad & Tobago) to receive training on toolkit

2. The Establishment of a Regional Network of SBDCs

Design a framework for a regional network of SBDCs in Barbados, Belize, Honduras and Jamaica – four of the six beneficiary countries of this project

- a. Determine the ideal structure, resources, requirements, model, and enabling environment
- b. Recommend a baseline for technical assistance offered
- c. Identify opportunities to connect MSMEs and build regional partnerships
- d. Develop a plan and toolkit for the creation of the regional network
- e. Develop a methodology and recommendations to include in the network other BSOs in countries where SBDCs do not exist
- f. Develop an implementation and action plan for the first 3 years, which will include KPIs, sustainability of the model and Monitoring & Evaluation

3. The Development of a Capacity-Building Programme

The Consultant will develop and deliver a training programme to operationalize the competitiveness toolkit and framework for a regional network of SBDCs. This training should also be offered to the relevant BSOs in the other two beneficiary countries (i.e. Nicaragua and Trinidad & Tobago) where SBDCs do not exist.

Duration: The Services are expected to start in January 2024 and should be delivered within **10 months** from the start date of the contract. The Consultant will be responsible for ensuring that the project is completed on time, within scope, budget, and in accordance with the performance requirements and expectations of the ACS and IDB.

The ACS now invites eligible consulting firms (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the services described in this REOI. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services. Responses should include at least the following information:

1. Background of the firm
2. General experience/specialities of the firm
3. Description of experience in undertaking assignments similar to the scope of activities described in this REOI
4. Skills and qualifications of staff/personnel for the assignment

Short lists shall comprise **not fewer than five and not more than eight eligible firms** with a wide geographic spread. Consultants will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the [IDB procurement policies](#). This REOI is open to all eligible bidders from IDB countries as defined in these policies.

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications. For the purpose of establishing the short list, the nationality of a firm is that of the country in which it is legally incorporated or constituted and in the case of a joint venture, the nationality of the firm appointed to represent it.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the **Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS)** method set out in the Consultant Policies.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours: Monday to Friday 09:00 - 17:00 (AST).

Expressions of interest must be emailed **in a written form in English** to acsmsme@acs-aec.org by **21 November, 2023 23:59 (AST)** and should be addressed to:

Association of Caribbean States

Attn:

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