**ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA**

**Department of Environment**

**Terms of Reference**

**Consulting Services**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Job Title** | Consultancy Firm to undertake Technical Assistance for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSEs) to access a range of financial instruments to include equity to be programmed by the Sustainable Island Resource Framework (SIRF) Fund and the Department of the Environment. |
| **Contracting Authority** | Department of Environment, Ministry of Health and the Environment, Antigua, and Barbuda |
| **Date of Issue** | July 12th 2023 |
| **Deadline** | August 11th 2023 |
| **Duration**  | 12 Months |
| **To Apply** | Individual consultants and/or firms are invited to apply for this opportunity. The following documents (listed below) must be submitted to this link: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/c90d1aa1970649598be71b24a7736434>1. **Cover Letter** *(no more than 2 pages)* outlining how your experience, skills, qualifications are suited for the position
2. **Technical Proposal** that details the:
* Proposed approach, methodology, tools as well as the activities to be undertaken for the implementation and management of the assignment, including an operational work plan with timelines for achieving the objectives of the consultancy *(not exceeding 10 pages in length).*
* Curriculum vitae detailing the credentials, experience, and the expertise of the firm or a team of experts, achievements, and qualifications.
* Contact information for three (3) professional references
* Business information of the consulting firm
1. **One writing sample** of previous work (technical reports and studies, knowledge products, etc.)
2. A **Financial Proposal**
* With a budget inclusive of a breakdown of costs for key activities
* list of TOR deliverables and other deliverables may be included based on international best practices and the plans for the SIRFFund

Where applicable, please use the subject line: “PATH to 2020 MSEs Technical Assistance Consultant”***Please send any clarification questions to this link:*** [***https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/6488c47987d742e6981cd6701b5724ea***](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/6488c47987d742e6981cd6701b5724ea)***Clarification questions will be responded to and the response sent to the potential bidder asking the question and also published at this site:*** <https://www.environment.gov.ag/procurement-opportunities#procurements/opportunities>Please note that the deadline for clarification questions is August 8th 2023 |
| **Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)** | The Department of Environment (DOE) provides equal opportunity and fair and equitable treatment in employment to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation. The DOE also strives to achieve equal employment opportunity in all personnel operations through continuing diversity enhancement programs.  |
| **Prohibited Practices**  | The DOE has a zero-tolerance Policy for Prohibited Practices, which means: * The DOE will review 100% of any complaints received for these practices
* The complaint will then be submitted to an external independent contractor for further investigation
* The DOE shall report all prohibited practice complaints to the GCF
* If the investigator finds that there is a breach of the Prohibited Practice Policy by the contractor, the contract will be terminated

These Prohibited Practices include:   * Abuse;
* "Coercion" or Coercive practice;
* "Collusion" or Collusive practice;
* "Corruption" or Corrupt practice;
* Financing of Terrorism or Terrorist Financing
* "Fraud" or Fraudulent practice;
* Money Laundering;
* Obstructive practice; and
* Retaliation against Whistleblowers or Witnesses.

 If the Contractor and/or staff of the Accredited Entity-Department of the Environment (DOE), the Development Control Authority (DCA), the Ministry of Works or the MOF-PMU violates any of the above in the process of executing this contract the contractor may report directly to the GCF at the following website:   <https://iiu.greenclimate.fund/reporting-fraud/how-to-report>   Or to the DOE complaint mechanism at:     <https://www.environment.gov.ag/contact> Your complaint and its information will be sent to the Integrity Commission and then processed at the DOE. Complainants can be kept confidential, but the accusations will be communicated to the relevant persons. Before any actions are taken, the DOE will assess the accuracy of the information provided. Complainants must note that there is a penalty under the laws of Antigua and Barbuda for providing false information. Noted further that once the investigation is completed the DOE is legally obligated with a duty to report to the GCF.  |
| **Background Checks Information**  | The DOE is, therefore, asking that all applicants who are shortlisted be prepared to provide information to allow the DOE to better communicate to our partners at the Green Climate Fund, our contractors and service providers. Information needed includes, but is not limited to, company registration, police record, certificate of good standing with the Inland Revenue Department, registration numbers for Social Security, Medical Benefit Scheme, and Board of Education. Applicants are encouraged to be in good standing with these organizations. Please note that if the police record indicates that the individual/company has violated any laws this does not necessarily disqualify the individual/company from winning the bid. Where references are requested at least one of these must come from an immediate past (3-6) months client/employer. In addition to this, the contract will be subject to further background check if required. If this is required, the successful individual/company will be notified accordingly.  The DOE will also be conducting checks to determine if the bidder has been placed on relevant international sanctions lists, or “blacklisted” by the Caricom Climate Change Center (5Cs), if so, the bidder will not be considered. |
| **Data Ownership and Confidentiality**  | The data, information, output, or material that are collected and/or developed under, or in connection to, the execution of funded activities and this AGREEMENT is property of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda. The Government of Antigua and Barbuda shall retain ownership to the aforementioned property including its title, interest, copyright, and other intellectual property rights. |
| **Privileges and Immunity Notification**  | The GCF, its proceeds, and other assets are accorded certain status, privileges, immunities, and exemptions as are necessary for the fulfilment of its purposes and carrying out the functions entrusted to it in the territory of Antigua and Barbuda, and that its staff and experts similarly enjoy such privileges, immunities, and exemptions as are necessary for the independent exercise of their official functions in connection with the GCF, in accordance with the Privileges and Immunities Agreement between the GCF and the Government of Antigua and Barbuda dated 20th July 2016.  The Government of Antigua and Barbuda has therefore, undertaken to be responsible for the management and remedy for any legal judgement against a project, or in its capacity as an Accredited Entity (AE) or an Executing Entity (EE). |
| **Rights Of Acceptance** | The Department of Environment reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal, to render any or all of the proposals as non-responsive and to reject all proposals at any time prior to the award of contract, without incurring any liability, or obligation to inform the affected bidder(s) of the grounds for the Department of Environment’s action. The Department of Environment shall not be obliged to award the contract with the lowest priced offer. The decision of the Department of Environment in this regard is final and binding. |
| **Conflict Of Interest Requirements** | The individual/company receiving the contract award must sign a conflict-of-interest declaration and cannot sub-contract or pay staff members of the Department of Environment to complete the assigned tasks outlined within this TOR. |

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

1. **BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

*The Department of Environment*

The Department of Environment is a Government agency within the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment in the Government of Antigua and Barbuda. Its overall mission is to provide technical advice on the environment and to design and implement projects on behalf of the Government and the people of Antigua and Barbuda. These interventions are designed to protect and enhance the environment, as well as seek common solutions to national, regional, and global environmental challenges.

The Department of Environment (DOE) manages projects within four main Programme, aligned with national legislation and international environmental agreements. These are:

* 1. Climate Change Programme (Adaptation, Mitigation, and Capacity Building)
	2. Biodiversity Programme
	3. Pollution Programme
	4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Data Management Programme

The DOE is focused on. The DOE has an active portfolio of more than 14 projects, with project sizes ranging from US$50,000 to US$15 million, with an additional 16 projects under development. Partners of the DOE include UN Environment, UNDP, IUCN, Caribbean Development Bank, Government of Italy, Global Environment Facility (GEF), Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Adaptation Fund (AF), among others. The DOE was accredited as a direct access entity to the Adaptation Fund in 2015 and to the Green Climate Fund in 2017.

To learn more about the Department of Environment, please visit: <https://environment.gov.ag/en/>

*The Sustainable Island Resource Framework Fund*

The SIRF Fund is a national environmental funding facility initially set up as a Special Fund through the Finance Administration Act of 2006, Section 42 (1)(a) to support environmental management and climate adaptation and mitigation. It currently serves as a primary source to channel environmental, climate mitigation and adaptation funding from international and domestic sources. The SIRF Fund aims to provide adequate and sustainable financing for the implementation of the Environmental Protection and Management Act (EPMA) of 2019 and Regulations (2020) as well as Antigua and Barbuda’s commitments under Multilateral Environmental Agreements to which it is party. The SIRF Fund receives income from domestic and international sources. For international funding, the SIRF Fund acts as an implementing entity and sustainable financing mechanism for bilateral and multilateral funding sources such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF), Adaptation Fund (AF), and the Global Environmental Facility (GEF).

*Path to 2020 Project*
This project aims to implement Objective 1 of Antigua and Barbuda’s National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2014 – 2025): *A national system, including protected areas, for the management and conservation of biodiversity conservation is developed and established*. By strengthening institutional coordination for protected areas, supporting legal frameworks, and blending local co-investment with international financing, this project will position Antigua and Barbuda to tap into global opportunities in conservation investments.

The GEF-funded Path to 2020 ‘Blended Finance Program’, through the SIRF Fund, will implement component 3 of the project entitled “Pilot livelihood financing mechanisms that support conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and plant genetic resources in the newly designated Shekerley Mountain Management Area (SMMA)”**.** The programme will provide funding support to local MSEs within the SMMA whose businesses are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change as they depend on the natural environment for revenue generation. The programme seeks to pilot the expansion and blending of various financial instruments to include equity along with small grants for Technical assistance, highly concessional non-collateralized loans to qualifying MSEs for the greening of their businesses.

The overall development objective of this component is to catalyze conservation investment to promote private investments and firm growth in natural-resource-dependent sectors. The guiding principle of the program is to promote and strengthen a growth model that is conducive to sustainable production and consumption via small business development. The SIRF Fund Business Plan is dedicated to the protection and sustainable use of the environment and recognizes the nexus it shares with the sustainable use of the environment and business development. The Fund also recognizes that many local “informal” businesses are natural resource/climate dependent, therefore considered high risk to traditional banking sectors. The Government views this sector as having the potential to contribute to the protection and sustainable use of the resources generated by the forest, sea, sun, land, and wind, as well as to assist the government implement its very ambitious NDCs (2021). The Government is also hoping to sustainably grow its local economy and to minimize the reliance on public sector employment.

The Blended Financing Scheme will operate as follows:

* Grants via Technical Assistance (TA) will be provided to participating businesses to collect and provide all necessary information about the MSEs, inter alia business valuation, and initial and future growth projections. Technical assistance will also be used to ensure the MSEs’ compliance with national legislation.
* Based on the assessment and information provided from the TA, the ideal blended finance package of loans and equity will be provided to the business to enable sustainable growth and utilization of climate and environmentally friendly technologies/innovations.
* The information from the TA will inform and determine the cash dividend or in-kind payments to the SIRF Fund and options available between the company and the Fund;
1. **OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTANCY**

The Department of Environment (DOE) intends to collaborate with a Consultant/Consulting Firm, facilitated by the SIRF Fund, to offer comprehensive technical assistance (including accounting, financial, and legal expertise) to 4-5 enterprises. The TA will assist these enterprises to access a range of financial instruments, including equity, as well as provide advisory services to the PMU (Project Management Unit) within the DOE to facilitate the implementation of the programme. Additionally, the Consulting Firm will be entrusted with the task of furnishing dependable initial data about each business to monitor their advancements subsequent to the implementation of financial interventions.

The Technical Assistance has five main components. These are:

**Component 1 - Comprehensive Business Assessment and Financial Analysis**
Conduct a thorough business assessment and financial analysis to evaluate and analyze the businesses operations, performance, and financial health of participating enterprises. The assessment should include, but is not limited to, financial statement analysis, Ratio analysis, SWOT analysis, Market analysis, Risk Assessment, Cashflow analysis, Financial forecasting, Sustainability analysis, Financial Validation and recommendations and actions.

**Component 2** - **Capacity Assessment of Business Owner and Staff**
Evaluate and assess the skills and capabilities of the business owner and personnel to determine their capacity to efficiently manage the business. The capacity assessment should identify existing gaps and recommend an action plan to build capacity and help businesses improve their financial and overall readiness to successfully secure funding.

**Component 3** - **Business Compliance and Registration**
Provide guidance and support to businesses to fulfilling their legal and regulatory obligations, ensuring proper registration, and maintaining compliance with relevant laws and regulations including environment and labor laws.

**Component 4 - Monitoring and Evaluation Plan**
Develop a comprehensive plan for Monitoring and Evaluating the business over a period of five years. This plan will track and assess the performance and impact of the blended finance program. The M&E plan should measure the degree to which financing is effectively utilized, objectives are met, and outcomes are measured.

**Component** **5 – Training and Contribution to Investment Manual**
Provide support, and training resources to DOE and SIRF Fund staff to implement the Blended Financing Program as well as make recommendations to be included in the investment manual that will guide the initiation, expansion, and future financing programs for businesses reliant on the environment.

1. **SCOPE OF WORK AND RESPONSIBILIIES**

The Consultant’s scope of work includes but is not limited to the following:

1. Collaborate with the DOE to develop and structure financing strategies for 4-5 nature dependent MSEs to execute the blended financing program.;
2. Provide Technical Assistance to 4 - 5 enterprises as the first batch of beneficiaries under the PATH 2020 Programme. This entails:
	* + - 1. Conducting on-site visits to assess the operations, infrastructure, and potential of the participating businesses.
				2. Facilitate the formulation of comprehensive financial projections and investment plans
				3. Incorporating environmental and social sustainability practices into the business models.
				4. Develop a Monitoring and Evaluation plan to track the companies and the payment of dividends in cash or in kind to the SIRF Fund.
				5. Develop and implement Capacity Building training material for environment dependent MSEs inclusive of ;

A 360-diagnostic assessment of the 4-5 enterprises

Based on the diagnostic assessment, design and provide a training plan for each of the businesses to develop key financial and business documents to access finance and funding opportunities.

* + - * 1. Develop the Investment manual to present for the approval of the SIRF Fund Board. This includes:

Governance structure;

Operational risk management framework;

Monitoring and evaluation framework;

SIRF Fund exit Strategy as it divests of its equity investment from the Businesses;

* + - * 1. Provide a confidential report on the businesses as well as a business prospectus.
1. Train SIRF Fund Staff, and the Business evaluation committee to participate in the smooth operation of the Program.
2. Provide the Evaluation Committee with advisory and analytical support in the implementation of the Program.
3. Support the Program with the preparation and disbursement plans and forecasts based on the status of application processes to inform the relationship of the Fund with the DOE and the Path 2020 project;
4. **DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

The consultancy is expected to be awarded for 12 months. The contract could be terminated in case of non-performance.

1. **SUPERVISION AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS**

The Consultant will report directly to the Director of the Department of the Environment.

1. **REPORTING OBLIGATIONS AND INDICATIVE DELIVERABLES**

The Consultant will submit the following reports to the SIRF Fund through the Director of the Department of Environment. These reports will be reviewed and approved by DOE

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Indicative Deliverables** | **Description** | **Schedule** |
| Inception Report    | The inception report should detail the approach/methodology for delivering the objectives and responsibilities under this consultancy, the availability of the key staff in the proposal submitted, detailed work plan outlining all critical activities to be undertaken under this assignment for the full length of the contract period, with clear dates of delivery and specific deliverables at the conclusion of each activity. | The inception report shall be submitted within 4 weeks from the commencement date/contract signing.  |
| Work Plan   | Detailed work plan inclusive of deliverables, and timelines. This workplan will be established in Smartsheet for achieving the stated objectives of the Consultant.  | 1 month after signing the contract  |
| Quarterly Reports | Quarterly progress reports on the status of contract implementation,  | Quarterly |
| Business Assessment and Financial Analysis Reports | The Business Assessment and Financial Analysis Reports should provide a holistic view of a business's financial health, operational efficiency, market positioning, and growth potential to determine areas for improvement, and develop strategies to enhance overall performance and profitability.  |  TBD |
| Business Templates | Develop business templates including but not limited to Business Plan Template, Financial Statement Template and Proposal Template, that will serve as a framework for creating various business related materials and documents. The templates will support the financing program to build the capacity of businesses to apply for other funding opportunities. | TBD |
| Capacity Assessment and Development Action-plan | The Capacity Assessment and Development Action-Plan should provide a comprehensive assessment of the businesses capacity to manage a business and make recommendations inclusive of training and development initiatives to address any identified gaps or weaknesses. These may include  | TBD |
| Business Registration and Compliance Report | The Business Registration and Compliance Report should outline the activities undertaken to support businesses in navigating the regulatory landscape, to ensuring legal compliance. | TBD |
| Monitoring and Evaluation Plan | The M&E plan should detail a robust framework for tracking the financial performance and measuring the importance of the blended financing program. | TBD |
| Training Materials and Recommendations  | Develop training materials for DOE / SIRFF Staff to internalize lessons, skills and competencies arising from the implementation of the Program to ensure sustainability of the project and make recommendations as input into a Blended Finance Investment Manual.  | TBD |
| Training Workshops | Enhance the capacity of at least 4 staff members in the areas provided in the “training Manual” so that they can be training other staff by the mid-term of project | TBD |
| Final Report | The final report should be a comprehensive document that summarizes the activities, outcomes of the support provided and recommendations for any further actions to enhance the program.  | TBD |

1. **QUALIFICATIONS**

The ideal consultant will be a firm or a consortium of firms/individuals with the following qualifications:

1. The firm(s) must be a legally registered consulting/Accounting firm(s) - Registration Certificates with relevant regulatory authorities;
2. The Consultant will be a firm or a consortium of firms with a demonstrated record of successfully working with MSEs, including natural resource dependent businesses, to provide business advice and capacity building
3. The firm should be able to demonstrate how capacity building like that desired in this consultancy was achieved with at least two businesses;
4. Experience in engaging with MSEs, especially with argo-business and nature dependent is an asset;
5. Expertise in financial analysis, business planning, and investment evaluation.
6. Knowledge of environmental and social sustainability practices in the agricultural sector is an asset.
7. Strong communication and training facilitation skills is an asset
8. A track record of structuring financing for MSEs is an asset;
9. Experience providing quality assurance for the implementation of accounting and planning software for MSE development;
10. Experience working with public sector institutions in Antigua and Barbuda
11. Experience managing reporting relationships with government and multilateral agency
12. Knowledge of best practices or experience working to provide Technical Assistance to institutions that support MSEs;
13. At least 5 years relevant experience providing business advisory services to MSEs to support growth and capacity building
14. Experience in providing business advisory services restructuring private and public sector entities to facilitate sustainable growth and effective service delivery
15. Experience in the design and implementation of capacity building curriculum for MSEs to access finance
16. Experience working with government and development agencies to measure the impact of development interventions
17. Experience in the design and implementation of M&E systems for at least two SME financing programs;

(b) The Company’s Team shall include at minimum:

* Financial Specialist/Advisor - An advanced degree in Finance, Investment, or related fields with a minimum of 10 years' experience
* Accounting Specialist/Advisor – At least a first degree in Accounting or related field with minimum of 5 years' experience
* Legal Advisor – At least a first degree in Law or related field with minimum of 3 years' experience
* Training and Capacity Building Specialist/Advisor – A first degree in Business Management or Administration/ Entrepreneurship/ Project Management or related field
1. **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

The evaluation criteria and weightings that will be applied to this TOR are as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Category**  | **Description**  | **Weighting**  |
| **Experience and expertise in providing technical support and advisory services:** | This evaluation criteria collectively assesses the candidate's experience and expertise, and their alignment with the objectives and scope of this consultancy, particularly those operating in nature-based or dependent sectors. The ideal candidate should possess strong financial analytical skills, a background in "green financing" and sustainable development, and the ability to deliver effective capacity building training to support the growth and success of MSEs. | 35 |
| **Team Composition and Qualifications:** | This criterion assesses the credibility of the candidate and the team's ability to deliver the services in this TOR. | 25 |
| **Methodology and Approach: Technical Proposal** | This criterion evaluates the candidate's proposed methodology and approach to determine the alignment, suitability, and capability to deliver the required services effectively and efficiently. | 25 |
| **Budget and Cost Effectiveness: Financial Proposal** | This criterion will evaluate the financial proposal to assess the budget, cost breakdown, as well as determine the reasonableness, and effectiveness of the proposed budget. | 15 |