



# Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States



## **ORGANISATION OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES**

### **REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

#### **Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States**

#### **Unleashing the Blue Economy of the Caribbean (UBEC) Project**

Grant No.: IDA – E0200

**Assignment Title:** Consulting Services for Business Development Services for Matching Grants Programme in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission has received funding from the World Bank toward the cost of the Unleashing the Blue Economy of the Caribbean (UBEC) Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds for Consulting Services for Business Development Services for Matching Grants Programme in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

The consulting services (“the Services”) include providing on island support for the implementation of the Regional MSME Matching Grants Programme (MGP) in the participating member state of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The regional MSME Matching Grants Programme (MGP) will operate on an iterative, demand-driven basis responding to proposals from the private sector, utilizing and, wherever possible, building the capacity to deliver the needed services to MSMEs in the targeted sectors of tourism, fisheries and waste management. The assignment is expected to be undertaken over a period of six(6) months.

The OECS now invites eligible Individual Consultants (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. The minimum required qualifications and experience are listed in section 6 of the Terms of Reference (TOR) below. The details of the services required are available in the TOR which is available on the official website: [www.oecs.org](http://www.oecs.org) or can be obtained at the address given below.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.13, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank’s Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers,

Fourth Edition, September 2023 ('Procurement Regulations'), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

Individual Consultants wishing to signify their interest in undertaking the prescribed services are to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) providing information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services (*Curriculum Vitae, description of similar assignments, etc*)

Expressions of Interest can be submitted via email.

For more information or to submit Expressions of Interest, please contact:

**Jossie Stephenson**  
**Procurement Officer**  
**OECS Commission Morne Fortuné**  
**P.O. Box 1383**  
**Castries**  
**Saint Lucia**  
**Telephone: 758-452-5895**  
**Email: [procurementbids@oecs.int](mailto:procurementbids@oecs.int)**

**Copied to:**

**Ms. Susanna De Beauville-Scott, [susanna.dscott@oecs.int](mailto:susanna.dscott@oecs.int)**

An Individual Consultant will be selected in accordance with the World Bank's Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, Fourth Edition, September 2023.

Expressions of Interest will be evaluated and the Individual Consultant with the most relevant experience and qualifications will be selected and requested to submit a proposal which will be the basis for negotiations leading to a contract.

An electronic copy of Expressions of Interest is to reach the OECS Commission by **October 18, 2024** addressed to:

**Ms. Jossie Stephenson, Procurement Officer**

**At the following email address:**

**[procurementbids@oecs.int](mailto:procurementbids@oecs.int)**

*copied to [susanna.dscott@oecs.int](mailto:susanna.dscott@oecs.int)*

The email submissions should include the name and address of the Consultant and shall be clearly marked in the subject line as "**Expression of Interest – Consulting Services for Business Development Services for Matching Grants Programme in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**".

The Terms of Reference for this consultancy is provided below.



**UNLEASHING THE BLUE ECONOMY OF THE CARIBBEAN PROJECT  
MATCHING GRANTS PROGRAMME**

Terms of Reference

**Consulting Services for Business Development Services for Matching Grants Programme  
in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**

July 2024

## **1. BACKGROUND**

### **1.1. Partner country**

Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States Commission

### **1.2. Contracting authority**

Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States Commission

### **1.3. Country background**

As Small Island Developing States (SIDS), OECS Member States face many challenges originating from small size, geographical location, small economies, limited infrastructure, and high vulnerability to natural disasters and socio-economic pressures that are ever evolving. These challenges are exacerbated by the impacts of globalization and multilateralism, coupled with increasing competition for limited resources, which combine to erode the ability of Member States to meet their development aspirations sustainably. More recently, the COVID-19 Pandemic has created a severe fiscal shock in the Region such that economic activity in the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union is projected to contract between 5.0 per cent and 7.0 per cent (in real terms) in 2020 accompanied by a sharp rise in unemployment. OECS Member States have long acknowledged that building resilience and sustainability requires that their individual efforts must be pursued within the context of regional unity, solidarity, and co-operation.

In July 2001, the 34th Meeting of the OECS Authority issued the mandate to deepen economic integration through the creation of an Economic Union. The Revised Treaty of Basseterre Establishing the OECS Economic Union (RTB), entered into force on January 21, 2011, paving the way for the establishment and operation of a single economic and financial space. The RTB has been ratified and incorporated into the domestic laws of all seven Protocol Member States.

Among the objectives of the Economic Union are (i) “the creation of a single financial and economic space; continuous economic growth and expansion through the optimal utilization of domestic and Economic Union-wide resources”; and (ii) “economic growth, development and international competitiveness by the convergence and co-ordination of the economic policies of Protocol Member States”. Further, one core principle of the Union is for a common policy toward development in agriculture, manufacturing, tourism, information and communications technology and other services.

The RTB provides, inter alia, for the abolition of the obstacles to the free movement of the factors of production (persons, services, capital) and the progressive harmonization of various social and economic policies. In relation to Development Policies, Article 13 of the Protocol of the Revised Treaty of Basseterre, provides “Each Protocol Member States shall participate in the setting of

both general and specific developmental objectives which arises from the OECS Development Strategy and the OECS Development Charter.” This would include general objectives comprising of economic transformation, growth, employment, poverty reduction and attainment of the appropriate levels measured by Human Development Indices as set by the United Nations. The overarching objectives for the Eastern Caribbean Economic Union (ECEU) covered under Article 2 of the Economic Union Protocol, provides the basis for the full implementation of an OECS Market Intelligence System as a key component of the ECEU Architecture.

Against this background, the OECS Commission, through its Competitive Business Unit, is working in collaboration with its Member States, the World Bank, along with regional and international agencies to support existing and emerging businesses in the Eastern Caribbean by providing relevant, timely and validated information through the implementation of the Matching Grant Programme (MGP).

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

The Unleashing the Blue Economy of the Caribbean (UBEC) Series of Projects aims to rebuild economic activities in the Caribbean region through a sustainable and integrated approach to using marine resources. This approach seeks to promote economic growth, improve livelihoods, and generate jobs while preserving the health of ocean ecosystems. Sectors such as fisheries, tourism, and waste management are interconnected and contribute to the blue economy. The blue economy approach requires anticipating and adapting to climate change impacts and incorporating low-carbon and climate-resilient measures across sectors.

The ongoing pandemic has highlighted the need for resilient and adaptive infrastructure that can withstand shocks, including climate-induced natural disasters. Component 2 of the UBEC projects includes a financing mechanism to support private sector-led growth and investment in innovative blue economy activities that generate jobs and promote climate resilience. It also aims to address the financing needs of women entrepreneurs. Specifically, this component involves establishing a regional Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (MSME) Matching Grants Programme, providing business development services, expanding access to fisheries risk insurance for fishers, and scaling up investments in a sustainable, technologically advanced, and climate-resilient manner in the targeted sectors.

### **Scale Up Access to Finance and Infrastructure Investment**

The regional MSME Matching Grants Programme aims to finance business development services (BDS) and matching grants to increase productivity and job creation and to upgrade the capabilities and resilience of MSMEs and communities in the blue economy value chains (such as tourism, fisheries and waste management). MSMEs in the region, particularly ones that are women-led or owned, have suffered badly during the COVID-19 crisis because they lack capacity, cash flows, and diversity of market and resources. COVID-19 brings an opportunity for

MSMEs to build back better while respecting the integrity of the marine and coastal resources in line with the region's blue economy vision.

The regional MSME Matching Grants Programme (MGP) offers comprehensive support through two (2) distinct windows, each strategically designed to empower the fisheries, tourism and waste management sectors of the MSME landscape within the blue economy.

### **Window 1: Individual MSMEs**

Window 1 focuses on individual MSMEs that demonstrate the potential for growth, innovation, and job creation within the blue economy sectors. Under this window, the program aims to enhance the competitiveness of firms through a combination of Business Development Services (BDS) and MGP support. These firms will receive grants ranging from USD \$5000 - USD \$25,000. To be eligible for Window 1, the MSMEs should meet certain criteria such as being legally registered in a participating OECS Member State, having a track record of at least two years of operation, and demonstrating commitment to growth and innovation. The grants offered through Window 1 will empower individual MSMEs to invest in activities that enhance their productivity, expand their market presence, and contribute to the sustainable development of the blue economy.

### **Window 2: Value Chain Groups**

Window 2 is designed to support collaborative efforts among groups of MSMEs that operate within the same value chain. This window recognizes the significance of integrated efforts in the blue economy sectors and provides a mechanism for fostering synergies among value chain partners. Window 2 targets value chain groups, each comprising a minimum of three firms, with grants ranging from USD \$100,000 - \$200,000. These grants are expected to be distributed among the group members, considering their role and contribution. Large firms within the value chain group, up to 40 percent of the total, can also be eligible for grants as lead entities if they play a crucial role in driving the group's objectives. This approach promotes collaboration, sharing of resources, and collective advancement within the value chain. Overall, Window 2 aims to elevate the growth trajectory of value chain groups, creating a multiplier effect that benefits the entire blue economy ecosystem.

The regional MSME Matching Grants Programme (MGP) will operate on an iterative, demand-driven basis responding to proposals from the private sector, utilizing and, wherever possible, building the capacity to deliver the needed services to MSMEs in the targeted sectors of tourism, fisheries and waste management. The aim of this BDS consultancy assignment is to support the implementation of the MGP. The MGP will provide cost-sharing grant support to facilitate the acquisition of assets, works, skill enhancement services, policy guidance, and advisory support, among other aspects. This initiative is geared towards fostering the competitiveness and expansion of MSMEs. This will be accomplished while ensuring sustainable management of

marine and coastal resources and enhancing market linkages and business relations with other value chain actors, with an emphasis on women-led and owned businesses. It is designed in order to maximize outreach and impact, to complement other ongoing initiatives, and to ensure viability and sustainability.

The OECS Commission is seeking to procure the services of an Individual Consultant to provide BDS which will be tailored to the specific growth needs of each MSME beneficiary as well as addressing gender-related information asymmetry. The support provided will include:

1. a diagnostic on the MSME's competitiveness potential and constraints;
2. problem solving and coaching on identified business challenges, including those that particularly affect women-owned firms;
3. improvements in know-how of buyer and market requirements, terms, and conditions;
4. mentorship to successfully complete grant applications

### **3. OBJECTIVES OF THE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES CONSULTANCY**

The main objective of the Business Development Service (BDS) consultancy is to provide on island support for the implementation of the Regional MSME Matching Grants Programme (MGP) in the participating Member State of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

The specific objectives are as follows:

- (i) Undertake climate related analysis of MSMEs' competitiveness potential and constraints;
- (ii) Consultation and engagement with stakeholders, specifically MSMEs
- (iii) Skills development of MSMEs within the tourism, fisheries and waste management sectors, addressing specific business challenges
- (iv) Transference of knowledge to enhance domestic and regional market linkages

#### **4. SCOPE OF WORK**

The Business Development Services (BDS) consultant will support the execution of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines' section of the MGP. The BDS consultant will provide training to a minimum of fourteen (14) firms within Window 1 and three (3) firms within Window 2.

The firm's tasks will be categorized into two (2) main phases, which are as outlined below:

##### **PHASE 1: PRE-GRANT APPLICATION - EVALUATION AND SCREENING**

###### **Duration: 4 weeks**

The purpose of this phase is to evaluate and screen potential programme participants before they submit their grant applications. It involves organising information sessions to inform and educate interested MSMEs about the programme, evaluating their financial documents and competitiveness potential, assessing their training and growth needs, their demonstration of commitment to social inclusion, and environmental sustainability and identifying those who meet the minimum requirements for the Matching Grants Programme. This pre-grant evaluation and screening phase helps ensure that the selected programme participants are well-prepared and have the potential to benefit from the grant and BDS support provided by the programme.

Provided below are the specific activities which fall within this phase:

1. Facilitate Information Sessions and conduct an initial diagnostic of potential MGP participant's competitiveness potential and constraints:
  - Organise on-island information sessions with the support of the OECS Matching Grants Team to provide an overview of the Matching Grants Programme (MGP) and its requirements.
  - Gather relevant financial documents, such as income statements and bank statements from interested MSMEs.
  - Review the provided documents to assess the financial performance and viability of the MSMEs.
  - Analyze the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and constraints faced by the MSMEs in their respective industries.
  - Identify areas where the MSMEs may require support and improvement to enhance their competitiveness.



2. Assess the training, capacity and growth needs of the interested MGP participants:
  - Conduct interviews or surveys with the interested MGP participants to understand their specific training and growth requirements.
  - Assess, identify and analyze the main capacity gaps
  - Identify the skills, knowledge, and capabilities that these MSMEs need to strengthen their business operations.
  - Consider factors such as financial management, sales and marketing, technological advancement, and technical assistance gaps.
  
3. Identify potential MGP participants that meet the minimum requirements for the MGP:
  - Evaluate the MGP participants based on the predefined eligibility criteria.
  - Assess their financial stability, business viability, social inclusion and environmental sustainability and alignment with the programme's objectives.
  - Select the potential applicants who meet the minimum requirements and have the potential for growth and development.
  - Share the outcome of the evaluation with the OECS UBEC Matching Grants Team for further consideration and decision-making.

## **PHASE 2: PRE-GRANT APPLICATION - TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

### **Duration: 1-3 months**

The purpose of this phase is to provide training to develop the skills of potential grant applicants in the fisheries, tourism and waste management sectors prior to the grant application phase. The specific activities to be undertaken under this phase is as follows:

1. Design a comprehensive group training programme for interested potential MSME applicants:
  - Develop a training programme that covers key areas of business development and addresses the specific needs of the MSMEs. Focus areas of the training should include the following:
    - Financial Management to cover topics such as Cost & Budgeting, Basic Recordkeeping, Financial Planning & Sales Forecasting, Expense & Revenue Tracking, Procurement, Cash Flow Management, Preparation of Basic Financial Statements, Saving, and Auditing of Financials.
    - Sales and Marketing training to include Customer Service, Introduction to Sales & Marketing, Promotion & Advertising, and Packaging or Presentation of Goods/Services.

- Technology training to cover the utilization of basic Microsoft Office programmes like Word, Excel, PowerPoint, QuickBooks, and implementing Point of Sale (POS) systems.
- Technical & Training Assistance to focus on Business Writing, Creating Business Plans, and Applying for Financial/Grant Assistance.

2. Training and capacity building:

- Execute the training programme for the selected MSMEs over a period of 1-3 months
- Provide at least 3 hours of business development mentorship and coaching support to each MSME
  - including on Market Validation, Product Launch, Market Entry/Customer Acquisition, Market Expansion, Promotion and Advertising, Access to Financing (regionally and internationally), domestic and regional market linkages, and Financial Management
- Review MSME business plans/strategies and suggest areas for improvement
- Review the product ranges and service offerings of MSMEs and provide recommendations for optimisation and/or diversification reflective of market needs
- Highlight capacity building opportunities to MSMEs
- Provide advice on general MSME operational processes and promote best practices
- Promote stable and growth-oriented trajectory for MSMEs

3. Logistics management for training and capacity building workshops:

- Undertake all logistical aspects of organizing and conducting the training workshops.
- Coordinate venue selection or venue rental<sup>1</sup>, ensuring it is suitable for the training requirements and accessible to participants.
- Prepare and manage attendance registers to keep track of participant attendance and engagement.
- Prepare and provide printed templates and resources that will aid participants in their learning and grant proposal preparation.

### **PHASE 3: APPLICATION – PROPOSAL PREPARATION**

#### **Duration - 30 days**

During this phase, the BDS consultant will concentrate on providing hand-holding support to eligible trainees as they develop or finalize their grant proposals. The specific technical assistance for grant proposal preparation includes:

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<sup>1</sup> This will occur if free conference room spaces are not sourced by the OECS Commission.

- Offer technical assistance to trainees in the development of their grant proposals.
- Assist trainees in understanding and meeting the requirements of the MGP.
- Work closely with trainees to ensure their proposals are of high quality and consistent with the objectives and guidelines of the Programme.
- Ensure that each proposal adequately addresses the assessment criterion questions under the MGP such as:
  - Is the proposal clearly justified?
  - Does the proposal include an appropriate results matrix?
  - Is the proposal's operational description (project design) appropriate?
  - Does the budget seem realistic and appropriate?
  - Is there a sustainability strategy?
  - Is there an environmental and social management plan, or a health, safety and emergency management plan or system (where necessary)?
- Provide guidance and support in preparing all necessary documentation, including project plans, budgets, and other required information for the grant application process.

## **6. SELECTION REQUIREMENTS**

It is expected that the consultant will be based in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for the duration of the assignment and as such, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines nationals are encouraged to apply. The OECS Commission is seeking to procure the services of an Individual Consultant to provide BDS. Required Qualifications and Experience:

- A minimum of a Master's degree in Finance, Business Administration, Economics, Marketing, Project Management or a related discipline;
- At least five (5) years of knowledge and experience specific to delivering business development training to MSMEs
- At least five (5) years in coaching and assessing entrepreneurs in the OECS region
- At least five (5) years of experience promoting and facilitating value chain development, market linkages and product development
- Knowledge of business solutions and demonstrated experience in helping MSMEs improve their operations and activities
- Expertise in grant proposal writing, having prepared proposals for other World Bank or international donor organization financed projects
- Understanding of the priorities and key issues facing MSMEs operating within the blue economy, preferably in the Grenadian context
- Knowledge of Blue Economy sectors and climate resilience is a plus

## 7. CONSULTANCY DELIVERABLES

| DELIVERABLE   | FINAL OUTPUT DUE                                   |
|---|--|
| <b>Output 1: Inception Report [work plan and schedule]</b>  | <b>Two (2) weeks after signing of the Contract</b> |
| <b>Output 2: Training package that defines and meets the training and growth needs of MSMEs.</b> This will include a clear set of goals and objectives, deliverables, and methodology (including findings from diagnostic assessments and a sound mix of theory and practice) before training begins. | <b>Month 2</b>                                     |
| <b>Output 3: Final Report containing training records and recommendations to the OECS Regional Matching Grant team<sup>2</sup></b>  | <b>Month 6</b>                                     |

<sup>2</sup> Report should also contain the gender disaggregated data of beneficiaries engaged/trained.

## 8. PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Requests for payment will be made through the Project Coordination in accordance with the conditions of the Contract. Payment will be made as follows:

| <b>Interim Payments</b> | <b>DELIVERABLE</b>   | <b>% OF CONTRACT SUM</b> |
|-------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| <b>Payment #1</b>       | <b>Inception Report [work plan and schedule]</b>   | <b>15%</b>               |
| <b>Payment #2</b>       | <b>Training package that defines and meets the training and growth needs of MSMEs.</b>                       | <b>40%</b>               |
| <b>Payment#3</b>        | <b>Final Report containing training records and recommendations to the OECS Regional Matching Grant team</b> | <b>45%</b>               |

## 9. LENGTH OF SERVICE

Work under this assignment is anticipated to be done over 70 professional days and undertaken over a period of 6 months.

## 10. REPORTING / COORDINATION

The Individual Consultant will direct all reports and records of outputs/deliverables to the OECS Matching Grants Unit.