REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

(CONSULTING SERVICES - FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT – SELECTION OF FIRMS)

Georgia

Project Name: The Relief and Recovery for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)

Project No: P173975

Loan No. 9239-GE

Assignment Title: **Provision of Consulting Services in Taxation through Consulting Centers (Growth Hubs)**

Reference No. GE-EG-CS-QBS-2025-05

LEPL Enterprise Georgia within the Relief and Recovery for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Project supported by the World Bank intends to apply part of the loan proceeds for consulting services **in the area of Taxation**. The purpose of this call is to create a qualified companies that can deliver these services.

**All potential consultants which express interest to receive the Request for Proposal (RfP), will be sent the document. However, the evaluation of the submitted proposal shall be made only for those consultants, which meet the below stated evaluation criteria, and the consultants will be selected in accordance with the Framework Agreement arrangements described in the Procurement Regulations and specifically set out in the Request for Proposals (RfP). Therefore, it is advised that the potential consultants assess their profile relevance against the required criteria prior to requesting the RfP, in order to save time and resources.**

The Project will be implemented nationwide and will consist of four components:

**Component 1** – Financial relief and recovery for MSMEs

**Component 2** – Digital payments & financial infrastructure upgrading

**Component 3** – Project management and monitoring

**Component 4** – Contingent Emergency Response Component

A substantial portion of the Project activities fall under Component 1. Component 1 will be implemented by LEPL Enterprise Georgia (hereinafter – Agency), which is a government economic development agency operating under the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia. It comprises of the following sub-components:

* ***Sub-component 1.1*** will provide micro-grants to finance working capital and fixed assets for micro and small firms.
* ***Sub-component 1.2*** will co-finance interest payments on loans underwritten by participating financial institutions (PFIs).
* ***Sub-component 1.3*** will provide partial credit guarantees for loans issued by PFIs.
* ***Sub-component 1.4*** will provide technical assistance to MSMEs in COVID-proofing, strengthening managerial skills, and digitalization through establishing Consulting Centers in the regions of Georgia (Growth Hubs - hereinafter GHs) to deliver specific services to MSMEs locally.

The GHs established under the *Sub-component 1.4* will offer MSMEs three main services:

1. **Consulting Services** – this entails (1) identifying the problems, obstacles, and opportunities facing a specific business (hereinafter – beneficiary MSME) in terms of growth and productivity through a comprehensive diagnostic interview, (2) offering a service of a consulting company (hereinafter - Consultant) to remedy these problems and design specific solutions, and (3) co-financing the cost of this service. At the first stage, the Consulting service covers the following six areas:

* Sales and Marketing
* Taxation
* Legal Issues
* Finance and Accounting
* Business Modeling and Strategic Planning
* Digitalization

1. **Improving Business Skills** – this covers delivering seminars, talks, trainings, and workshops that match the needs of the businesses, organizing business meetings, and providing necessary infrastructure for these purposes.
2. **Providing Information** – this means providing businesses access to information about ongoing business support programs, business sector news, and the latest available research.

The consulting services (hereinafter - the Services) **in the area of Taxation** includes one basic package developed by the Agency with a respective list of deliverables and preliminary description of the work scope. The package is:

* Ensuring Tax Compliance and Optimizing Taxes

This list can be further expended and/or modified as needed to meet any other needs of beneficiaries, provided that additional services will not go beyond the scope of services as defined in the ToR. Accordingly, upon agreement between the Consultant and the beneficiary in the Call-Off Contract, the Consultant may tailor the consulting services related to the above packages to the specific needs of the beneficiary in order to improve the packages and make them more fit to the beneficiary.

**The Terms of Reference** (TOR) for the primary procurement stage for the assignment is attached to this request for expressions of interest:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1J46NlpFcUqBsk1WvSnslvzgYnJBqpfA3/view?usp=sharing>

The Agency now invites eligible consulting firms (Consultants) to indicate their interest in providing the Services **in the area of Taxation**. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

**The evaluation criteria are:**

1. Registered as a business entity - in line with the Law of Georgia *on Entrepreneurs*, registered as a legal or individual entrepreneur, excluding the enterprises where shareholders are state or self-government authorities. (**The Consultant must submit latest Extract from the Registry of Entrepreneurial and Non-entrepreneurial (Non-commercial) Legal Entities**)
2. Does not have a tax debt to the state (except for the cases when the payment of the tax debt is postponed or the obligation to pay is suspended in accordance with the law); (**The Consultant must submit** **latest** **Verification from the Revenue Service** regarding not having tax debt to the state (or an agreement about its postponement/suspension of payment)
3. Is not registered in the Debtor Registry.
4. Is not in the process of liquidation or recognized as economically insolvent (bankrupt);
5. **The Consultant has served contracts with a total value of at least 200,000 GEL within the last 3 years in the area of taxes, tax-related legal issues, regulatory compliance, or similar; (The Consultant must submit proof of completion of contract, i.e. contracts and respective delivery and acceptance certificates on the RfP stage).**
6. Adequacy and quality of the proposed approach and methodology in responding to the Terms of Reference (details of evaluation methodology and respective scoring are indicated in the RfP) ;
7. Key Experts’ qualifications and competence for the Assignment (details of evaluation scoring are indicated in the RfP).

The potential Consultants which consider that they meet the above-mentioned qualification criteria, may submit a formal letter requesting RfP document.

After receiving the RfP document, based on it, the Consultant shall prepare Technical Proposal and submit it to EG within the deadline indicated in the RFP.

EG will evaluate the Consultant’s qualifications and experience vis-à-vis required criteria, and if the Consultant qualify, their Technical Proposal will be evaluated as well.

**Requirements for the Consultant’s Staff**

In order to provide quality services Consultant should mobilize qualified personnel (key experts). The Consultant is liable for the quality of the provided Service.

List of required experts and narrative of minimum qualification requirements is given in the table below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Expert Position (Quantity) | Minimum Specific Experience (Years) | Area of Minimum Specialization, Qualification |
| **KEY EXPERTS** | | |
| Team Leader (1) | 5 | At least 5 years of experience in the field, and prior experience in the management of similar projects;  Minimum Master’s degree in law, accounting, or other relevant field; |
| Specialist (2) | 3 | At least 3 years of experience in the field;  Minimum Bachelor’s degree in law, accounting, or other relevant field; |

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank’s “Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers” July 2016, revised November 2017, revised August 2018 and revised November 2020 (“Procurement Regulations”), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest. In addition, please refer to the following specific information on conflict of interest related to this assignment: The Consultant shall not receive any remuneration in connection with the assignment except as provided in the contract. The Consultant and its affiliates shall not engage in consulting or other activities that conflict with the interest of the client under the contract. The contract shall include provisions limiting future engagement of the Consultant in other services resulting from or directly related to the firm’s consulting services in accordance with the requirements of paragraphs 3.16, 3.17 and 3.18 of the Regulations.

Consultants may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications, but should indicate clearly whether the association is in the form of a joint venture and/or a sub-consultancy. In the case of a joint venture, all the partners in the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract, if selected.

**The Agency will co-finance up to 90% of the Service(s) with a maximum amount of 10,000 GEL. The cost of the Service(s) offered by the Consultant may exceed the given amount.**

The Formal Letter of Expressions of Interest in English language must be submitted electronically. The Consultants are requested to clearly indicate in the letter the area of Consultancy service(s) they are applying for.

The Potential Consultants may express their interest till July 31, 2025.

**Attn:**To the Administrative Department

**E-mail To:**[**gmaisuradze@enterprise.gov.ge**](mailto:gmaisuradze@enterprise.gov.ge)