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## EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST TO PARTNER WITH IFAC TO BUILD THE CAPACITY OF PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANCY ORGANIZATIONS WEBINAR—OCTOBER 17, 2014 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**1. What is meant by “professional accountancy organizations (PAOs)”? Are they the practicing firms or the supervisory bodies who set the standards?**

A PAO is an organization, with a core focus of *accountancy*, which meets the key attributes of a *profession* such that its members who hold a certification, license, or authorization to practice are subject to education, including examination of professional competence, practical experience requirements, and continuing education, ethics, and enforcement.

Each PAO determines the specific criteria for its members, in accordance with any applicable legislation or regulation. Members of PAOs may operate at different levels of competencies and professional profiles.

**2. Who are the organizations that IFAC invites to indicate their interest in providing PAO capacity-building services under this agreement? Are they the practicing firms or the supervisory bodies who set the standards?**

The Call for Expressions of Interest is not limited to any organization or individual. All organizations and individuals likely to meet the established criteria are welcome to express their interest (see the section *Criteria for Evaluation* in the Instructions to Interested Organizations).

**3. Please confirm which tier of PAOs will be selected for strengthening.**

We are committed to build the capacity of PAOs in approximately ten countries over a period of seven years. The countries will be drawn from the list of [UK Department for International Development \(DFID\) focus countries](#). Our selection will include PAOs at various levels of development.

**4. Can you share more details on the scope of work for the project?**

The scope of the overall program is described in the section *Objectives of the Program and the Scope of Services* in the Terms of Reference. The scope of specific regional/country projects will be described in the Requests for Proposals.

**5. Can you share the list of countries where this program will be implemented?**

We are committed to building the capacity of PAOs in approximately ten countries over a period of seven years. The countries will be drawn from the list of [DFID focus countries](#).

**6. From which location will the program be managed—NY (IFAC HQ) or UK (DFID location)?**

The program will be managed from the IFAC NY Office. IFAC staff works closely with DFID staff, both in the UK and in the regions/countries, in implementing the program. IFAC has also appointed in-

region managers, who are from the region, to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the country/PAO project plan in the country.

**7. Will the nature of the specific capacity-building project be for individual consultants or team?**

It can be either.

**8. What size and organization type would be preferable for this? A larger existing PAO interested in assisting other countries? Would private firms with relevant experience be considered at all? Or would it be more ideal for such firms to join forces with an existing PAO?**

The Call for Expressions of Interest is not limited to any organization or individual. All organizations and individuals likely to meet the established criteria are welcome to express their interest (see the section *Criteria for Evaluation* in the Instructions to Interested Organizations).

As noted in the Instructions to Interested Organizations, joint ventures are permitted.

**9. Would preference be given to large accounting firms?**

We do not plan to reserve work for any of our member organizations or for any of the accounting firms. All expressions of interest will be evaluated against the established criteria (see the section *Criteria for Evaluation* in the Instructions to Interested Organizations). The criterion approved by the Program Oversight Committee. The selection of potential partner organizations will be made by the Independent Selection Panel (the panel operates under the oversight of the Program Oversight Committee).

**10. Is it acceptable to team up with other firms?**

As noted in the Instructions to Interested Organizations, joint ventures are permitted.

**11. Is it possible to respond to a Request for Proposals to render services to build the capacity of a PAO when you are a member of the board of the PAO?**

See the section *Conflicts of Interest* in the Instructions to Interested Organizations. You should disclose this relationship in your proposal, as this is a matter for decision by the Independent Selection Panel.

**12. How many firms do you plan to shortlist and engage for the capacity building of PAOs?**

We do not plan to limit the number of potential future partner organizations entered into the database. Although not yet decided, we are considering whether to limit the Requests for Proposals to organizations in the database that are likely to meet most of the criteria to be established for a successful proposal.

**13. Can you kindly comment on how you are going to contract this, for example, whether a Long-Term Agreement (LTA)/Framework Agreement will be signed with the firms who are shortlisted based on the expressions of interest, or whether any other contracting mechanism will be used?**

The Call for Expressions of Interest will not give rise to any contracts. The purpose is to identify potential partner organizations. We plan to keep the information of organizations that responded to the Call and meet the established criteria in a database. We will draw from the database when issuing Requests for Proposals for specific regional/country projects. We will enter into contracts with those

organizations drawn from the database that are successful in submitting proposals for specific regional/country projects.

**14. We have a general concern about confidentiality especially regarding commercial contracts. This does not seem to be covered in the Terms of Reference.**

The Instructions to Interested Organizations contain a section *Confidentiality*, which states: “Detailed information relating to the Expressions of Interest and their evaluation will not be disclosed by anyone involved in the evaluation, even after awarding of any contracts.” This means that those involved in reviewing the evaluations, which will include certain IFAC staff and members of the Program Oversight Committee and Independent Selection Panel (ISP), are committed to keeping all information confidential. The Program Oversight Committee and Independent Selection Panel members are required to sign an annual declaration, which include confidentiality.

**15. In relation to question 8 in the Expression of Interest:**

- **Role—is a sole or lead consultant enough or what is required?**

We are looking for the role that your organization played—for example, did you do the work, did you fund the project and have others do the work, were you a sole or lead consultant, etc.

- **Do dates need to be so specific? For some work it is really difficult to determine exact start/finish dates.**

We are primarily interested in understanding the timing of the project, and do not need exact dates. Approximate dates, for example, month and year or year only, would be acceptable.

- **A number of questions seem to be overlapping, for example, outputs/outcomes/impacts/satisfaction. Can you clarify what is required?**

Outputs are the services provided by an entity to recipients external to the entity. Outcomes are the short-term and intermediate changes that occur as a result of the project, while impacts are the broader changes. However, outcome is also often used to refer to the impacts on society, which occur as a result of the entity’s outputs, existence, and operations. Since those interested in partnering with us may have used different terms in evaluating projects, the terms and questions allow for flexibility for Interested Organizations to tell us what measures they used to evaluate the success of the project.

- **What constitutes evidence of satisfaction?**

The measures used during the project to evaluate its success.

- **Attach relevant information—what are you looking for?**

This is an optional question, and can be used to share any reports that you issued to funders, articles published about your project, or other reports or project summaries that may provide additional relevant information about the project.

**16. Questions 11 and 12 in the Expression of Interest appear to overlap?**

You are correct. The third bullet point in question 11 will be deleted.

**17. Question 19 in the Expression of Interest requires an analysis of Accountancy Profession Development Work (APDW) taken from the income statement. If the income statement does not analyze this income, may the question be left blank?**

If the annual revenue from APDW is not separately disclosed in the income statement, we request an estimate (if one can be provided). We will add a comment box to this question to enable Interested Organizations to provide the reason for not being able to provide the information.

**18. In relation to questions 21, 22, and 23 in the Expression of Interest:**

- **We have specific concerns regarding confidentiality.**

As noted above, we take the confidentiality of the information very seriously. We are committed to keeping all information confidential.

- **It is not possible to upload the files requested; we received an error message on uploading docs—file too large.**

If you attempted to upload large files shortly after the Expression of Interest was issued, you may have encountered some problems uploading these files. That problem has been corrected, but if you encounter any difficulties, please email [danajensen@ifac.org](mailto:danajensen@ifac.org) and she will be able to assist you.

**19. What specific details are you looking for in the Expression of Interest, such as firm profile, credentials, team, approach/methodology, presence in the countries where program will be implemented?**

Please refer to the Terms of Reference, Instructions to Interested Organizations, and survey questions to determine the information to be provided.

**20. If it is not required for a private firm to be audited under current local legislation, would the firm's financial statements be accepted without an accompanying audit report?**

Yes, unaudited financial statements will be accepted for Expression of Interest purposes; however, we have not yet made any decision as it relates to future responses to Requests for Proposals.

**21. Kindly let us know the weight or ratio that will be given to the financial management component versus the technical systems.**

The issue of financial vs. technical ratio is currently under consideration and will be communicated in the Requests for Proposals for specific country/PAO projects. The first Requests for Proposals are scheduled for the Quarter 1 2015.

**22. We are requesting the Word version of the Expression of Interest survey.**

Please email [DanaJensen@ifac.org](mailto:DanaJensen@ifac.org) for a Word version of the survey. Please note that certain information, such as drop-down menus, will not appear. Also, please note that small boxes for data input appear in this document, but the ones in SurveyGizmo are actually much larger to accommodate large amounts of text.