Procurement of a Consultancy firm to Assess Freelancer Engagement with the Information Technology & Business Process Management (IT-BPM) Industry

1.0 Background of ICTA

Information and Communication Technology Agency (ICTA) of Sri Lanka is the apex ICT institution of the Government and has been mandated to take all necessary measures to implement the Government's Policy and Action Plan in relation to ICT.

ICTA, is a wholly owned institution by the Government of Sri Lanka, a high level entity for providing National Level Guidance and Co-ordination for National Priorities including providing efficient and citizen centric services. With the overall vision of making Sri Lanka, a digitally inclusive country, ICTA's scope spans across 4 main pillars; Digital Government, Digital Economy, Digital Services & Digital Laws and Policies.

ICTA's Digital Economy Strategy looks to utilize existing programmes and all relevant partners in the ecosystem to develop and implement an integrated Digital Economy transformation in Sri Lanka that will pave the way for a thriving and effective digital economy, with higher operational efficiency, lower costs and better services and out-comes for its citizens.

2.0 Background of the Assignment

The Technology Industry Development program of ICTA has its primary role of being a catalyst of change in ensuring the future readiness of the technology ecosystem. The program has acted with foresight and have designed projects localized to Sri Lanka to align tech ecosystem with global trends. Overall objectives are to improve competitiveness in IT-BPM industry while creating IT-BPM related jobs across all sectors.

In view of reaching the national goal, USD 3Bn annual foreign exchange revenue by end of 2024, the Digital Economy strategy has identified the prime role "freelancer segment" could potentially contribute to reaching the above goal. Thus, the Industry Development unit intends to engage with the industry stakeholders to facilitate and conceptualize a "Freelancer Graduation Program" that will focus on up-skilling freelancers and to bridge the gap between the industry and the target segment for better engagement. Thereby, it will support to entice up-skilled freelancers to engage with the IT-BPM industry and contribute to National Digital Economy Goals.

3.0 Main Objective of the Assignment

To source a consultancy firm to explore and review the current status of the target segment (freelancers) and to assess potential avenues to up-skill and attain their skillful contribution to engage with the IT-BPM industry.

4.0 Scope of the Assignment

- Conduct awareness campaign to the citizens of Sri Lanka (residing in Sri Lanka and globally) targeting freelancers and encouraging them to apply for ICTA freelancer graduation program (in order to entice and obtain details about the freelancer segment)
- Identify and use other sources to capture freelancers
- Definition for a freelancer (in-line with global practices but localized into Sri Lankan context, in consultation with ICTA and relevant stakeholders)
- Conduct a SWOT and PESTLE analysis of the Freelancer segment in Sri Lanka
- Analysis should be conducted by the consultant;
  - On the awareness for online freelancing opportunities (#/%)
  - Advantages of Online freelancing
  - Key concerns/challenges faced when pursuing a freelancer career
- Conduct an analysis on the Up-skilling required to offer consultancy/advisory services to local IT-BPM companies / potential international companies in the Digital industry
  - Identify skills/personal attributes/ capacity building requirements
  - Identify assistance required for active contribution to National Economy goals

Proposed Research Methodology

Nationwide baseline survey to include minimum 25% or 200 whichever is higher from below category covering the freelancer segment

District wise (covering all 25 districts of the country)

5.0 Time frame for Deliverables

No of Months – 04 months

6.0 Deliverables

1. A database of Freelancers in Sri Lanka (use the attached format as Annex 01 – consultant is free to propose any value additions thereto.)

- No of freelancers to be classified;
- Demographically
- Male/female ratio
- Age groups
- Geographical
- Duration of engagement – No of work hours spent
- Employed / unemployed (professional status / background)
- Educational background

2. Definition for a freelancer; Define who a freelancer is? Individual (self-employee) vs entrepreneur, freelancer vs consultant etc.
3. SWOT and PESTLE analysis of the Freelancer segment in Sri Lanka
4. Report on Analysis of the awareness for online freelancing opportunities (#/%)
   - Popular freelancing platforms/web portals
   - (%/#) interested and willing to work on online freelancing jobs
   - Most demanded freelancer jobs available through platforms (graphic design, data entry, proofreading, translation, market research, website design/development, programming etc.)

5. Report on Advantages of Online freelancing
   - Key factors contributing towards encouraging freelancing work
   - Average monthly income (individual) (local and foreign exchange)
   - Average revenue earned by the freelancer segment (local and foreign exchange)

6. Report on Key concerns/challenges faced when pursuing a freelancer career
   - Skills/personal attributes required

7. Strategic guidelines to up-skill the freelancer sector in Sri Lanka
8. Formulate an Action plan to up-skill the freelancer sector to be implemented from 2022-2024

7.0 Responsibilities of the Client

- Support provided to the consultant
  - Provide content, logo's to design awareness campaign
  - Introduction to relevant stakeholders
  - Tool to obtain responses from freelancers

8.0 Qualifications of the consultant

- Minimum 05 years of experience in conducting National level surveys.
- During the 05 years, minimum of 03 national level (similar nature) surveys conducted.
- Proof of experience to be submitted
- Team composition and credentials to be submitted (in-line and reference to Section 9.0 – Team and Qualifications of the Key staff)
- Proven ability to manage an awareness campaign to collect data from the target segment (freelancers); including a campaign on printed, social and online media platforms
- Any similar assignments handled focusing on freelancers and related initiatives will be considered as an advantage.

9.0 Team and Qualifications of the Key Staff

The Key experts shall have sufficient qualifications and relevant experience preferably focusing on freelancers and related initiatives. Table below shows the details of the positions required, respective qualifications and experience.

Table: Qualifications and Experience of the key experts

Position	Preferable Academic Qualification	Preferable Experience
Team Leader (1 position)	Minimum Master Degree qualifications in social science or economics and any other relevant qualifications specific to the assignment.	A minimum five years of work experience in the field of research and survey and /or as an external evaluator/ consultant of managing independent evaluation assignments, surveys etc. Demonstrated experience in compiling evaluation reports, survey reports on development projects especially in the field of IT-BPM industry development. Skills in both qualitative and quantitative data analyses and proven experience in developing M&E tools. Skills in M&E related capacity building will be an added qualification. Proven skills in report writing in English language. Should have pleasant personality & ability to maintain good interpersonal relationships. Good analytic, writing and communication skills.
Senior Evaluation Expert/ Consultant (2 positions)	Minimum Master Degree qualifications in social science or economics. Qualifications in Program designing and evaluation, econometrics, and research methods will be advantageous	A minimum three years' experience in a similar field. Experience in producing evaluation reports and survey reports. Proven experience in managing development projects/consultancy assignments. Strong skills in Microsoft Excel and statistical software such as SPSS. Experience in analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data. Experience in developing data collection instruments, best practices in evaluation, effectively using mixed methods and cost effective M&E techniques etc, experience in preparation of log frames, or goal oriented project planning documents (ZOPP/GOPP techniques),
Data analyst/statistician (3 positions)	Basic Degree in Statistics. Qualifications in Program designing and evaluation, econometrics, and research methods will be advantages	Minimum two years' experience conducting analyses of quantitative and qualitative data using the most up-to-date analysis techniques and relevant analytic software packages and reporting on them in a clear, coherent and concise way for diverse audiences; Knowledge of at least of advanced data analytics and visualization tools, such as SAS, SPSS etc. Advanced knowledge of Spreadsheets is required. Demonstrated experience designing quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments.

Monitoring and Evaluation Field officers (5 positions)	A Degree – in a relevant discipline	Minimum 3 years of experience in collecting and managing qualitative data (handling field level coordination / promotion of activities and data collection activities) Proven knowledge and skills in conducting Focus Group Discussions, Key Informant Interviews, carry out systematic observations, data entering skills, preparation of transcripts of FGDs/KIIs is also required; Excellent skills in interpersonal communications; skills in working with spread sheets, SPSS etc.

Annexure 01

Serial No	Name	Male / Female	Age	District / Province	No of work hours (full/part) time basis	Professional status	Educational background	Method of capturing