



Sierra Leone Economic Diversification Project (SLEDP)



CALL FOR APPLICATION FOR THE SELECTION OF EMERGING BUSINESS INCUBATORS AND ACCELERATORS FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND CAPACITY BUILDING SUPPORT

1. BACKGROUND

The Government of Sierra Leone and the World Bank are implementing the Sierra Leone Economic Diversification Project (SLEDP or the Project). The Project Development Objective (PDO) is to increase investment and growth of small and medium enterprises in non-mining productive sectors. The project is expected to deliver on its objectives by strengthening the business enabling environment, facilitating strategic public investments to improve competitiveness and investments, supporting SMEs and entrepreneurs, and building capacity of public institutions and private sector operators.

Component 2 of the SLEDP aims to facilitate SME growth and stimulate entrepreneurship in high-growth productive sectors by addressing critical firm-level and sector-level constraints including (i) low access to information (ii) poor last mile infrastructure (ii) limited access to finance, (iii) weak capacity to scale businesses. Specific activities in this component to address these challenges include public goods investment, SME and start-up acceleration, and early-stage financing.

To help strengthen the overall nascent entrepreneurship ecosystem, the Project has identified the support for emerging business development service (BDS) providers, including incubators and accelerators through technical capacity building support. The expectation is that, having these supporting services in place will help stimulate entrepreneurship by expanding the capacities of emerging incubators/accelerators, so that they can be positioned to provide quality services to businesses that adds value to their existing operations. This support to emerging technical capacity of BDS providers will help businesses access the right training and services that help them develop and accelerate their entrepreneurial ideas.

The support the Project expects to provide includes capacity building, technical assistance, small grants for enhancing physical spaces (where appropriate) and financial support to promote entrepreneurship activities such as hackathons, competitions, boot camps, and targeted training and networking events.

In this context, the project together with its SME technical implementing agency SMEDA are looking to select 5 emerging business incubators / accelerators that will be provided with needed support highlighted earlier.

2. OBJECTIVE

The Project is looking to select 5 emerging business incubators/accelerators with existing track record of incubation and acceleration of emerging entrepreneurs, in order to provide these incubators/accelerators with support that further builds their capacity and enables them to deliver more services and additional entrepreneurship support activities in the country that make their services attractive and affordable to such emerging business ideas and start-ups.

3. SCOPE OF SUPPORT

The selected incubators/accelerators will be provided with the following support where necessary: capacity building, technical assistance, small grants for enhancing physical spaces (where appropriate) and financial support to improve their capacities to provide technical assistance services to businesses and equip them with the right expertise that helps them promote entrepreneurship activities such as hackathons, competitions, bootcamps, and targeted training and networking events. The support program will last for 6 months from the agreement signing, that may be extended where needed.

4. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The institutions wishing to participate in this Project must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- 1) A proven track record of operating an entrepreneurship programme for the last 12 months.
- 2) Must be a legal entity registered in Sierra Leone
- 3) Must have credible Fiduciary performance system
- 4) Must have quality and experienced staff with expertise in entrepreneurship and innovation.

5. ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

The support will be performance based and support for activities and technical assistance will be directly linked to agreed milestones and delivery timelines with penalties for late completion.

The selected incubators/accelerators will work closely with a consultant that will provide technical support to them (where applicable) with close monitoring by SMEDA and the SME Specialist in the Project Coordination Unit (PCU). The selected incubators/accelerators will submit monthly activities report with detailed progress update.

The following reports will have to be submitted to and approved by PCU and SMEDA before the performance payments will be released:

- 1) Within 1 month of Contract signing, submit an inception report describing the procedures, methodology and timetable for completion of contract.
- 2) Submit a proof of knowledge acquired through adaptation of service delivery approach based on recommendation of technical assistance training
- 3) Submit a monthly activity report summarizing progress of contract implementation and documenting the success stories.
- 4) Not later than 2 weeks before the end of the contract - submit the final report on project undertaken and documenting the success stories with the lessons learnt for circulation with other upcoming service providers.

6. DEADLINE

Interested tertiary institutions must provide a properly filled-in Application in accordance with format below until **19th October 2021** by sending your completed form to

Project Coordination Unit
Ministry of Finance
35 Percival Street, Freetown
or

By E-mail application as attachment (including all supporting documents) to: info@sledp.gov.sl

Please indicate clearly on the envelope (in the case of hard copy application) or in the email subject heading and attachment (in the case of electronic proposal) the title of the procurement for which the Application is being submitted.

Any submission after the deadline will not be considered.

7. SELECTION

After the first evaluations in early September, if shortlisted to the second round, we will contact you to discuss your application. The results for selection will be announced by the end of **October 2021**.

8. APPLICATION FORM

Interested applicants can pick up the form at the Project Coordination Unit 35 Percival Street, Freetown, or request via E-mail at info@sledp.gov.sl