



Sierra Leone Economic Diversification Project

CALL FOR APPLICATION FOR THE SELECTION OF BENEFICIARIES FOR THE SUPPORT TO TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

ISSUE DATE

5th JULY 2023

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 project 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.

SLEDP acknowledges that there are a lot of cultural bottle necks with entrepreneurship in the country with most of the youths and young students not considering the field of entrepreneurship as a viable career for sustainable livelihoods, so as a result, the Project in line with its development objective is looking to work with tertiary institutions to change this perception and mindset among tertiary students and make the idea of owning a business a very attractive proposition. This is because the country's demographic structure is made up of generally young people and having them leading and actively involved in entrepreneurship is crucial for the long-term development of the country.

The Project considers working with tertiary institution to incubate and develop innovative ideas by young students that take advantage of new business opportunities and address key challenges in the country as a critical intervention that contributes to the objective of diversifying the economy of the country.

In this context, the SLEDP together with its SME implementing agency SMEDA are looking to recruit 2 tertiary institutions with existing entrepreneurship structures that will be provided with capacity building support to help with existing efforts to build the culture of entrepreneurship among young people in these institutions.

2. OBJECTIVE

The Project is looking to select 2 tertiary institutions with existing entrepreneurship support structures (student entrepreneurship clubs, incubators, business competitions, courses etc.) to facilitate promotion, running and management of these entrepreneurship structures for their students.

The Project will look to build the capacity of these institutions based on challenges and gaps highlighted in the proposals to help develop their capacities to implement programmes that are

additional and complimentary to their existing curriculums that encourage and prepare their students to practically venture into entrepreneurship.

3. SCOPE OF SUPPORT

The selected tertiary institutions will work in coordination with SMEDA to strengthen their existing entrepreneurship support structures like student entrepreneurship and innovation clubs, business information clinics, business trainings, piloting pitch nights, hackathons and similar initiatives for students with innovative business ideas, which they are looking to incubate for development into proper business solutions.

The institutions are also expected to build on their experience in delivering entrepreneurship courses to develop additional and complimentary courses or trainings to the ones that already exist. This is aimed at supporting students with the passion and desire to enter entrepreneurship as a career to access additional practical training support in the most relevant business start-up areas. The support program will last through the academic year of 2023/2024 (from September 2023 to August 2024), that may be extended for the additional 1 academic year.

4. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

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

- i. A proven track record of operating an entrepreneurship programme and already existing entrepreneurship support structure for over 2 years (student entrepreneurship or innovation club, incubator, business competitions, course etc.);
- ii. Must be a tertiary institution, accredited by the Tertiary Education Commission under the Category A;
- iii. Must have a credible fiduciary performance;
- iv. Must have quality and experienced staff members, with expertise in entrepreneurship and innovation programs.

5. ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

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

Monthly status calls with the SLEDP Project Coordination Unit (PCU) team, SMEDA and or the service providers building their capacity, and monthly submission of activities report with detailed progress update on each entrepreneurship initiative the institution is undertaking.

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 MOU signing, submit an inception report describing the procedures, methodology and timetable for completion of programme.
- 2) Submit a monthly activity report summarizing progress of activity implementation and documenting the success stories.
- 3) Not later than 2 weeks before the end of the MOU- submit the final report on projects undertaken and documenting the success stories.

6. DEADLINE

Interested tertiary institutions must provide a properly filled-in Application in accordance with format below until **26th July 2023** 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: **sleconomicdiversification@gmail.com**

Copy: **saiokuyateh@sledp.info**

SELECTION

After the first evaluations in early September, if shortlisted to the second round, we will contact you to discuss your application. The final results for selection will be announced by the end of **July 2023**.

7. APPLICATION FORM

The Application Form can be requested for via email:

The SME Development Specialist

saiokuyateh@sledp.info

or at the front desk to the

Administrative Assistant

Sierra Leone Economic Diversification Project

35 Percival Street Freetown

