

**Government of Assam
ARIAS SOCIETY (ARIASS)**

Proposed World Bank aided Assam Agribusiness & Rural Transformation Project (APART)

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (REOI)

For Hiring of a Consultancy Firm for “Feasibility Assessment to set up an Investment Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises in the Agribusiness Sector in Assam”

ARIASS/APART/100/2016/45

Dated Guwahati the 17th September, 2016

1. The Government of Assam (GoA) through the Government of India has applied for a credit of US\$ 200 million from the World Bank (WB) for implementation of the APART. The APART’s objective is to increase value-added and improve resilience in the production and processing of selected agriculture commodities, focusing on small farmers and agro-entrepreneurs in the targeted districts of Assam. An important component of the APART is setting up an investment fund for SMEs in the Agribusiness Sector. This fund would be called as “GoA SME Fund”. The ARIASS now intends to apply a portion of the credit for a consultancy service relating to “Feasibility Assessment to set up an Investment Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises in the Agribusiness Sector in Assam”.
2. The key indicators of the project would be (1) Number of beneficiaries with improved resilience (2) Number of new agri-enterprises established (3) Number of jobs created by targeted agri-enterprises, including for women and (4) Increase in value of marketed output at the farmer level. Project activities are grouped into three major components: (i) Component A: Support to Agri Enterprise Development (ii) Component B: Farm - Market Infrastructure Development (iii) Component C: Market-led Production and Resilience Enhancement. The investment fund mentioned above would be set up as a part of Component A.
3. Implementation of the project activities would be through the line Departments of the Govt. of Assam such as Agriculture, Public Works, Industries & Commerce, Cooperation, Dairy Development, Fisheries, Sericulture & Animal Husbandry and Veterinary etc. The Project Coordination Unit (PCU) of the ARIAS Society would act as the nodal coordinating & monitoring agency of the project and would also provide technical support to the implementing departments in a few areas.
4. Briefly the scope of the consultancy assignment would cover -
 - a) A detailed analysis of existing SME investment funds in Assam and other states;
 - b) An analysis of relevant local and international experience with sector-specific SME funds (particularly those that are government sponsored, or hybrid funds) and other types of interventions that catalyze risk financing for SMEs Based on analysis of the desk based research and mission produce a draft report for review by the Government of Assam (GoA);
 - c) A study of legal, regulatory and taxation framework within which this GoA SME Fund would be set up;
 - d) Reporting the status of development of SMEs in general and SMEs in the agribusiness sector in particular in Assam and the business enabling environment within which they operate as inputs into the estimation of potential deal flow for the Fund;
5. **The short-listing criteria includes the following:**
 - a) The firm should be in business atleast for the last five **(05)** years;
 - b) The firm should have an average annual turnover of Indian **Rs. 1.5 crore** in the last three (03) financial years (i.e. 2015-16, 2014-15 and 2013-14);

- c) Proven experience of similar assignment (Governance/development sector) in government/externally aided projects in India in the last five years (i.e. 2015-16, 2014-15, 2013-14, 2012-13 and 2011-12);
 - d) Availability of in-house multidisciplinary technical team and expert staff for the assignment;
6. **The lists of documents to be submitted along with the EOI are (not more than total 60 pages):**
- a. Cover letter in firm's letter head including information relating to Name, address, e-mail, telephone, ownership and organizational structure of the consulting firm/ agency;
 - b. Document (s) to demonstrate that the firm is in the business for the last five (05) years;
 - c. Audited Financial statements and Profit & Loss Accounts for the last three years (i.e. 2015-16, 2014-15 and 2013-14) along with an abstract certified by a Chartered Accountant showing the year wise Financial Turnover on consultancy assignments for the last three years.
 - d. Details of Work Experience and Similar Assignments undertaken during the last five years (i.e. 2015-16, 2014-15, 2013-14, 2012-13 and 2011-12) accompanied by completion or acceptance certificate(s).
 - e. Self-certified details of available personnel with qualifications, domain expertise and experience;
7. A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the **CQS** method set out in the World Bank's Guidelines: **"THE WORLD BANK Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers PROCUREMENT IN INVESTMENT PROJECT FINANCING Goods, Works, Non-Consulting and Consulting Services- July 2016"** (IPF: Investment Project Financing). Attention of the interested Consultants is drawn to the Section-III of the Guidelines relating to 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: conflict between consulting activities and procurement of goods, works or non-consulting services; conflict among consulting assignments; and relationship with Borrower's staff.
8. Consulting firm may associate with other firms in the form of a Joint Venture (JV) or a Sub-Consultancy (with joint and several liability) to enhance their qualifications, however this shall be stated very clearly in the EOI and subsequent modifications shall not be allowed.
9. The State Project Director, ARIAS society now invites eligible consultancy firms/ agencies to submit their Expression of Interest (EOI) in providing the Services as mentioned above. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services as indicated in the Draft Terms of Reference (TOR) for the proposed assignment, which may be seen at the website of ARIAS Society viz. www.arias.in .
10. Interested consultancy firms/agencies may submit their expression of interest to the following address not later than **7th October, 2016** as well as obtain further information at the address below during working days *from 11-00 am to 4-00 pm*.

The State Project Director, ARIAS Society, Project Coordination Unit, Agriculture Complex, Khanapara, G.S. Road, Guwahati-781022 (Assam, India); Tel: 0361-2332125; Tele-Fax: 0361-2332564; email: spd@arias.in