



A. INTRODUCTION

Business Center Corporation (BCC) is a state-owned enterprise (SOE) incorporated in 2017 to coordinate and oversee the management of regional business development service centers (BCs) established, by the Ministry of Economic Development, under the SME Act (6/2013).

The purpose of the Business Centers (BCs) is to contribute to the establishment of an enabling business environment to support inclusive economic growth by providing and building capacity for sustainable, demand-driven business development services and to facilitate market access which will serve the growth needs of the micro, small and medium-sized enterprise (MSME) sector in the Maldives.

B. PROJECT BACKGROUND (SEEDS)

The Sustainable Economic Empowerment and Development for SMEs (SEEDS) project, with financial support of the Government of Japan, aims to provide economic rehabilitation in order to mitigate the negative impacts of the COVID-19 crisis in the Maldives. The project has the objective of increasing agriculture production and promoting food security through an approach of building entrepreneurship amongst farmers and creating a new generation of agri-businesses that are innovative, productive and practices environment-friendly agriculture. The project will also provide technical support and capacity to the Government of Maldives to conduct support services for MSMEs to adapt to the “new normal”.

The project will be implemented through partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Maldives, the Ministry of Economic Development, Ministry of Fisheries, Marine Resources and Agriculture (MoFMRA), Agro National Corporation (AgroNat), Maldives Fund Management Corporation (MFMC), the Business Center Corporation (BCC) and Housing Development Corporation (HDC).

C. OBJECTIVE

Many local MSMEs find it challenging and struggle to secure a place for their products in the international market, especially products made from materials sourced locally due to the lack of an international certification body in the country. While certification is paramount in adding credibility to supplier products and services, a lot of time and money are exhausted on getting the products certified to an internationally accepted standard abroad. Information asymmetry, the technical nature of application procedure and rigid requirements make it cumbersome for firms to proceed with the certification process. BCC intends to become an authorized registrar to issue certification for various products and services in the country. The objectives of the project are three-fold and we intend to assist MSMEs in the following ways:

- Gain market access around the world
- Meet regulatory requirements and build buyer confidence for their products and services
- Reduce the overall cost, both in terms of operations and production



Hence, Business Center Corporation invites interested parties to express their interest in the procurement titled “Consultancy for the Establishment of a Certification Body”. The following are the research, studies and reporting the consultant is required to carry out in order to establish a certification service within the corporation.

D. SCOPE OF WORK

The consultant will be required to conduct a needs assessment through an appropriate data collection method on the products and services for which businesses mostly seek international certifications. A special focus shall be given to export-oriented production and services. The needs assessment should also be comprehensive enough to gauge the feasibility of the project. Focus group sessions or community consultations should be conducted in order to narrow down the focus area. The consultant will be provided with the necessary resources to conduct surveys and interviews.

1. Submission of the proposed project charter and inception report

The consultant will be required to submit a project charter and an inception report for the review of Business Center Corporation. The document shall detail [1] how the remainder of activities within the scope of work will be carried out [2] what deliverables we can expect out of every assignment [3] what activities will be undertaken by the consultant to complete the deliverables [4] when the assignments and their precursors will be completed (a timeline of activities). Only once these documents are endorsed by BCC shall the consultant proceed with working on the remainder of activities stated in this TOR.

Note: No charge can be levied on the development of the inception report and project charter. Should BCC deem that the proposed inception report and project charter are not to the required standard and should the parties not be able to reach an agreement on the caliber of work that needs to be undertaken, the agreement made between the parties may be nullified.

2. Recommend an appropriate standard and shortlisting

Based on the needs assessment and the resources available in the corporation, specific standards and sub-standards (such as ISO, ANSI or BSI but not limited to) shall be selected in going forward. At this stage the consultant must also evaluate various international standard options available and recommend the most appropriate standards to adopt. The corporation aims to provide the following minimum services regardless of the standard the corporation decides to adopt.



However, in both cases, there must be a dedicated team consisting of minimum two members to carry out the consultancy.

I. Registered Entities (firms)

Firms have the following two options to evidence their work experience.

Option 1 – Firm Experience: The firm may demonstrate up to three years of cumulative work experience in technical research in a related field and/or, provide document evidence of similar work conducted.

Option 2 – Team Leader Experience: The team leader of the project from the firm may demonstrate up to three years of cumulative work experience in technical research in a related field; or the team leader must provide document evidence of similar work conducted.

In this case, the team leader must have worked in the firm for at least one year by the deadline of the bid submission.

II. Non-registered individuals or team

The team leader of the project may demonstrate up to three years of cumulative work experience in technical research in a related field; or the team leader must provide document evidence of similar work conducted.

The scoring method for experience is explained in Section H – Scoring Criteria.

E. DELIVERABLES

Needs Assessment
Recommend an appropriate Standard and Shortlisting
Roadmap to IAF Membership
Resource Requirement
Business Plan and Financial Feasibility
Operational Framework

F. CONTRACT DURATION:

- The duration of the assignment is 60 calendar days. This **does not** include the buffer period(s) for discussions held with the corporation.



G. SELECTION CRITERIA:

Price	40%
Qualification(s)	20%
Experience	40%

Price: The lowest price will be set as the benchmark against which the remaining bid applications will be scored.

Qualification(s): Full marks will be awarded for the qualification if the team leader holds a bachelor's degree or equivalent in a related field.

Experience: Marks will be awarded if the applicant can prove the successful completion of similar projects and/or has necessary experience to undertake the consultancy through reference letters and/or work portfolio. If the applicant has not had undertaken a contract work in the past, then their job experience will also be considered. However, the job must involve undertaking similar research, report writing and/or data collection. The corporation may request additional documentation should it become necessary as part of evaluation.

H. DOCUMENTS REQUIRED:

- Bid Submission Form in *Appendix 1* – **must be password protected**
- Evidence of previous work – Mandatory
- Reference letter(s) – Mandatory (where necessary)
- Employment letter(s) – optional
- CVs of the project team – minimum two required
- Identification document(s) for the project team – for all team members

Refer down below and the checklist in Appendix 2 for more information.

I. Registered Entities (firms)

Option 1 – Firm Experience

Under this option, the firm must elect either (1) **duration** or (2) **reference letters** as evidence for work experience.

a. Duration (Method 1)

If the firm selects duration, then the firm must provide a self-declaration in form of a letter stating the below. The letter may be addressed to the procurement of this corporation.



- i. **Commencement date:** The firm may state the date they started work. We require this date because firm registration date and actual work start date might be different in some cases [no points awarded for this part but without this, the letter will not be accepted].
- ii. **Scale of the work:** the firm may explain whether they provide consultancy services for individuals, entities or government organizations [05 points].
- iii. **Scope of the work:** The firm may explain the type of work (e.g. economic research, data collection, surveying, tax consultancy, auditing etc....) they are engaged in with examples [05 points].
- iv. **Statement:** The firm may explain how their past and current scale of work and scope of work, and any projects they have been engaged in would help them complete this consultancy successfully. They may explain certain expertise, skills and strength of the firm when elaborating [05 points].

The total score will be adjusted on a pro rata basis to the total duration the firm experience. This score will be calculated using the below formula.

$$\text{Score for Experience} = \frac{\text{Points obtained}}{15} \times 40$$

b. Reference Letters (Method 2)

If the firm chooses this option, then each reference letter will receive a **maximum** of Ten points. Therefore, a reference letter may receive 5 or less than 5 points each for scope of work and scale of work. The following matrix will be used in awarding points to reference letters.

Scope of work	5 (max)
Scale of work	5 (max)
Referee contact details provided	must provide

Reference letters that do not provide referee contact details will **not** be accepted.

The maximum score for experience under this option is also 40 points. Firms will **not be** allowed the option to use both duration and reference letters as the work duration for the project(s) for which reference letters are also provided may be included in the duration (under duration method) for which the firm may have already claimed points. Hence it raises the possibility of double counting.



Option 2 – Team Leader Experience

Under this option, the firm must select either (1) **duration** or (2) **reference letters** or (3) **both** as evidence of work experience of the team leader. However, the firm **can only** opt for this option if the team leader has been working in the firm for **at least** 12 months. The firm will need to submit a letter confirming the employment period of the team leader with the firm, should the firm chooses option 2.

a. Duration – Job Experience (Method 3)

Under this method, the team leader must provide documents to prove their employment (past and/or current). They may provide **any** of the following documents to evidence this in the following order.

- i. Employer Reference Letter: The team leader may provide a reference letter from the employer stating the title, duration and the nature of the work (preferable) of the employee.
- ii. Job Contract and/or Terms of Reference (TOR): If for any reason, the team leader is unable to get a reference from their employer, the leader may provide their employment contract with the TOR attached (preferable), and also attach one of the following documents along with a self-declaration letter. The letter must include all the details that is required for the self-declaration letter under ‘Option 1 – Firm Experience’.
 - a. Pension Contribution Statement for the duration of the employment and/or;
 - b. Most recent salary slip and/or;
 - c. Recent bank statement showing salary received from the employer(s).

The above documents are required for the following reasons.

- a. To allow as many qualified teams to apply for this consultancy as much as possible.
- b. To not put qualified teams at a disadvantage for unfortunate reasons such as the above.
- c. To allow the corporation a method to conduct proper due diligence for the applications with limited document evidence due to various reasons.

The total score will be adjusted on a pro rata basis to the duration of the leader’s job experience using the formula provided under ‘Option 1 – Firm Experience’

b. Reference Letters (Method 4)



If the leader chooses this option, only points for experience letters will be counted. The maximum points allowed for experience will be 40. The same scoring matrix that is used for firm experience letters will be used under this method. Please refer the matrix that is provided for reference letter method under ‘Option 1 – Firm Experience’.

c. Both - Duration and Reference Letters (Method 5)

If the leader chooses this option, then the total points scored for (a) duration – job experience and (b) reference letters will be added together and capped at 40.

However, under this option, the leader will receive a maximum of 20 points for duration and 20 points for reference.

E.g. The team leader submits an acceptable one reference letter and evidence of two years work experience. Then the leader will receive a maximum of 20 points for the two-year experience instead of 26.66 (2 years / 3 years x 40 max), and five points for the reference letter.

II. Non-registered individuals or teams

The document evidence requirement for non-registered individuals or teams are detailed down below.

a. Duration – Job Experience (Method 6)

Under this method, the team leader must provide documents to prove their employment (past and/or current). They may provide **any** of the following documents to evidence this in the following order.

- iii. Employer Reference Letter: The team leader may provide a reference letter from the employer stating the title, duration and the nature of the work (preferable) of the employee.
- iv. Job Contract and/or Terms of Reference (TOR): If for any reason, the team leader is unable to get a reference from their employer, the leader may provide their employment contract with the TOR attached (preferable), and also attach one of the following documents along with a self-declaration letter. The letter must include all the details that is required for the self-declaration letter under ‘Option 1 – Firm Experience’.
 - a. Pension Contribution Statement for the duration of the employment and/or;
 - b. Most recent salary slip and/or;
 - c. Recent bank statement showing salary received from the employer(s).



I. DISQUALIFICATION

A bid submission is deemed disqualified or invalid if **any** of the following occurs.

- Bid Submission Form is not submitted.
- Document(s) to support the educational qualification is not submitted.
- CVs of minimum two members (leader must be one) are not submitted.

Note: If document evidence is not provided for the experience, the applicant will receive zero for experience.

J. APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND SELECTION

#	Activity	Time / Deadline	Details
1	Registration	21 st December 2020 1300 hrs	Interested parties must register their expression of interest via https://tinyurl.com/y8sg4l83 <i>* Information Session will be held via Zoom</i>
2	Information Session	21 st December 2020 1400 - 1430 hrs	The attendance is compulsory for the submission.
3	Bid Submission (1/2)	24 th December 2020 1400 hrs – 1415 hrs	Submit the documents required in Section H to procurement@bcc.mv . The Bid Submission Form must be password protected . For guidance on password protection please visit https://tinyurl.com/y6xf8tg6
4	Bid Submission (2/2)	24 th December 2020 1416 hrs – 1430 hrs	Send the password to procurement@bcc.mv
5	Confirmation	24 th December 2020 1431 hrs – 1445 hrs	Prices quoted by all bidders will be shared with all bidders.
6	Notification	25 th December 2020 2200 hrs – 2300 hrs	Score sheet will be sent to all applicants notifying the party selected.



			Appeals and/or complaints shall be sent to procurement@bcc.mv
7	Appeal	26 th December 2020 1430 hrs	Deadline for appeals and/or complaints.

K. PAYMENT

The selected consultant will be paid subject to any deductions upon the successful completion of the report.

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