

**Request for Quotations (RFQ) No: RFQ-2021-077**

<b>Solicitation Title:</b>	<b>Identifying and Referring Potential Consultants</b>
<b>Issue Date:</b>	<b>14 October 2021</b>
<b>Deadline for Written Questions:</b>	<b>18 October 2021, 5:30 PM Hanoi time</b>
<b>Clarifications based on Written Questions:</b>	<b>20 October 2021</b>
<b>Closing Date:</b>	<b>27 October 2021</b>
<b>Closing Time:</b>	<b>5:30 PM, Hanoi time</b>
<b>Project Title:</b>	<b>USAID LinkSME Project</b>

**Purpose:**

The International Executive Service Corps (IESC) seeks one or more individuals that can support efforts to attract expert consultants for the **USAID Linkages for Small and Medium Enterprises Project** (sometimes referred to as “**USAID LinkSME**” or the “Project”) in Vietnam. Such support would facilitate efforts of the Project by **linking the Project to consultants who can provide expert research and analysis on various emerging policy, legal, business, economic, and related areas involving the business enabling environment and support for SMEs.** The quotations must comply with the requirements in this RFQ and the detailed specifications and technical requirements in Annex 1, attached.

**Instructions to Offerors:****A. Submission of Questions and Offers**

Potential Offerors may request clarifications or submit questions in English via email to [procurement@linksme.org](mailto:procurement@linksme.org) before the deadline specified in this solicitation. Questions received after the deadline may not be answered. USAID LinkSME will post answers to the questions and requests for clarification asked by all Offerors and received by the deadline on the IESC website by the close of business on the date

specified in this solicitation. No questions will be answered over the phone or in person.

Submit offers to [procurement@linksme.org](mailto:procurement@linksme.org) before the deadline specified in this solicitation. Offers received after the specified time and date will be considered late and will be considered only at the discretion of IESC.

Please reference the RFQ number in any response to this RFQ.

Best offer proposals are requested. It is anticipated that a contract will be awarded solely on the basis of the original offers received. However, IESC/USAID LinkSME reserves the right to conduct discussions, negotiations, and/or request clarifications prior to awarding a contract.

**B. Evaluation and Award:**

The award will be made to a responsive Offeror or Offerors that follows the RFQ instructions, meets the eligibility requirements, meets or exceeds the minimum required technical specifications, and is judged to be the best value.

Please note that if there are significant deficiencies regarding responsiveness to the requirements of this RFQ, an offer may be deemed “non-responsive” and thereby disqualified from consideration. IESC/USAID LinkSME reserves the right to waive immaterial deficiencies at its discretion.

Please note that the anticipated contract type is a Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA). Prices will be those proposed by the prevailing Offeror(s) in this RFQ and agreed to by USAID LinkSME. From time to time, USAID LinkSME will issue firm, fixed-price release orders under the contemplated BPA, by which it will procure services described in the BPA at the corresponding prices.

**C. Source/Nationality:** All goods and services offered in response to this RFQ or supplied under any resulting award must meet USAID Geographic Code 937 in accordance with the United States Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), 22 CFR §228. The cooperating country for this RFQ is Vietnam. Other countries meeting this code requirement include, among others, the United States, India, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

**D. Prohibited Countries and Sectors:** The Project does not engage with lead firms or Offerors involved in activities in Cuba, Iran, Lebanon, Libya, North Korea, Somalia, Sudan, Syria or involved in producing arms, tobacco, or alcohol.

**E. Eligibility:**

By submitting an offer in response to this RFQ, the Offeror certifies that he/she is not debarred, suspended, or otherwise considered ineligible for an award by the U.S. Government. IESC will not award a contract to any individual that is debarred, suspended, or considered to be ineligible by the U.S. Government.

As a matter of policy and efficiency IESC will not consider bids from commercial companies or other organizations or enterprises (including nonprofit organizations) in which foreign governments or their agents or agencies have a controlling interest. Nor will it engage officials of the Government of Vietnam.

**F. Quotations:** Quotations in response to this RFQ must be priced on an all-inclusive basis considering the aspects specified under clause 6.2 ('Cost Arrangement') in Annex 1. Offerors are required to provide quotations in a PDF file with the following details:

1. A firm, fixed price cost for each successful introduction to a qualified consultant that results in a signed consulting agreement. See section 7 of Annex 1 for the quotation format.
2. Validity period for quotation (minimum 30 days).
3. A maximum 10-page attachment with any relevant information/approach to the Offeror's capacity for providing the services specified in Annex 1.

### Annex 1: Background and Specifications

#### 1. Background

The USAID LinkSME project (sometimes referred to as “the Project”), funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), supports the Government of Vietnam (GVN) in its efforts to develop, adopt, and implement policy and regulatory reforms to provide a more favorable environment for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) particularly through its Business Enabling Environment (BEE) Component. It also works with business support organizations (BSOs) and the GVN to improve the performance of SMEs and integrate them into lead firm supply chains, particularly through the Market Linkages Component of the Project. The project is implemented by IESC ([www.iesc.org](http://www.iesc.org)), under a contract with USAID and an operating license issued by the People’s Aid Coordinating Committee. Click [here](#) for more information in English and [here](#) in Vietnamese.

A substantial portion of LinkSME’s support is through national consultants engaged to provide research and analysis on various emerging policy, legal, business, and economic questions involving the business enabling environment and support for SMEs. These consultancies last for 3-9 months on average with the consultant usually providing assistance on a part-time basis. The terms typically call for the consultant providing various deliverables (reports, trainings, focused advice) in exchange for payments upon acceptance. A typical consultancy fee for all deliverables could range from 7,000-18,000 USD depending on the amount of expected work, the complexity of the topic, and the typical market prices for the required services.

In recent months, USAID LinkSME has been exploring ways to broaden the range of consultants which it might possibly engage, especially those who might be able to provide new perspectives to the counterparts it is assisting. It currently posts advertisements in social media and notices on job boards such as VUFO-NGO Resource Centre, Vietnamworks.com, the USAID Facebook page, etc.

To expand its possibilities, **USAID LinkSME is seeking one or more individuals (national or international) with deep networks among experts in economics, business, law, policy, and related areas.** When the project publishes a consultant scope of work, the headhunter will be notified and supplied with the scope. The project will also provide an updated list of consultants with whom there is already an existing relationship. The headhunter will be compensated if they connect the

project with a consultant outside of the project's consultant network who the project hires.

## **2. Scope Statement**

IESC is seeking an individual or individuals to support the recruitment of expert consultants to participate in the work of the Project.

Rather than procuring such services on a case-by-case basis, IESC is seeking to enter into a blanket purchase agreement that would define the consultant identification service and corresponding price. Additional information is included below.

The contemplated arrangement would allow the Project to procure such support through release orders it issues at prices established by the BPA.

## **3. Subcontract Objectives**

The overall objective of this subcontract is:

- To introduce the USAID LinkSME project to qualified consultants that can perform high quality work required by the Project, resulting in signed consulting agreements.

## **4. Limitations and Conditions**

Decisions on which Offerors to engage shall be subject to any conflict of interest or ethical requirements applicable to IESC or USAID LinkSME.

## **5. Period in which this Agreement is in Effect and the Period for which Performance is Required**

The agreement will be in effect from the date of signature until December 31, 2021 with the possibility of renewal for up to an additional year.

## **6. Statement of Work**

### **6.1 Illustrative Activities**

LinkSME welcomes proposals from Offerors for **consultant identification services and corresponding prices** that would support recruitment efforts. Payment will be an agreed upon fixed price and paid upon the

successful signing of an agreement with a consultant that the selected Offeror introduces to the project.

## **6.2 Cost Arrangement**

The cost arrangement, to be described in the contemplated BPA, shall be based on fixed prices for the above service at a per-unit basis.

## **7. Requested Quotation**

For each introduction resulting in a signed consulting agreement, quote a corresponding cost:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>GROSS</b>
Signed Consulting Agreement resulting from Headhunter Introduction	To be filled in by Offeror	To be filled in by Offeror	To be filled in by Offeror