TERMS OF REFERENCE
(INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT)

DIGITAL SUPPLIER'S TOOL DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT

Institution:	Ministry of Finance
Country:	Belize
Project:	Trade and Investment Facilitation Program for Belize
Process ID:	BL-L1040 – P00033
Duration:	Six (6) Months
Duty Station:	Remote
Deadline:	**September 15, 2025;** 10:00 a.m. (Local Belize Time)

1. **BACKGROUND**

   The Government of Belize has entered into Loan Agreement for a Trade and Investment Facilitation Program with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in response to the low investment flows and limited international trade competitiveness faced by Belize. The general objective of the program is to promote Belize's foreign direct investment and trade performance. The specific objectives are to improve investment facilitation through simplification, standardization, and automation of key investment procedures, improve the investment promotion tools and SMEs internationalization through the strengthening of the trade and investment institutional apparatus; and improve trade facilitation through simplifying, standardizing, and automating key trade processes.

   The program is comprised of three (3) components that will support achievement of the objectives:

   - **Component 1. Facilitate Investments in Belize through the Implementation of a Single Investment Window** - This component will contribute to simplifying and automating key investment procedures through the implementation of the Single Investment Window (SIW hereinafter).

   - **Component 2. Investment Promotion and Export Development** - This component seeks to increase the positive spillovers of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI hereinafter) in the local economy through the improvement of investment promotion programs and the development of a new suppliers' program to accelerate SMEs internationalization, which will promote the growth of direct and indirect exports of the local firms in Belize.

- **Component 3. Trade Facilitation** - This component will contribute to reducing delays associated with administrative trade procedures by strengthening trade facilitation through the implementation of a Foreign Trade Single Window.

This consultancy is linked to Component 2: Investment Promotion and Export Development. BELTRAIDE is a statutory body under the Ministry of Economic Transformation. The organization serves as Belize's national Investment Promotion Agency and Export and Trade Promotion Agency. Their focus is on Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), Development, Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and delivery of industry-specific training. This component aligns with the mission and services provided by BELTRAIDE therefore, the Supplier Development Tool Development Consultant will be a part of the BELTRAIDE's team.

2. <u>OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF WORK</u>

The objective of this consultancy is to design, develop, and deploy a secure, scalable, and user-friendly online Supplier Development Tool within a six-month period. This tool will enable local suppliers to enhance their visibility, register and manage profiles, connect with large enterprises (LEs), and participate in Belize's Supplier Development Program (SDP). It will also facilitate monitoring and evaluation (M&E), promoting transparency, effectiveness, and data-driven decision-making within the program.

The scope of work for this consultancy involves the end-to-end design and implementation of an online Supplier Development Tool aimed at enhancing the visibility, connectivity, and competitiveness of local suppliers in Belize. The consultant will be responsible for developing a centralized, user-friendly platform that allows suppliers to showcase their capabilities, connect with buyers, access relevant resources, and engage with key stakeholders. The platform will also feature robust monitoring and evaluation functionalities to support the tracking of SDP activities, performance, and impact. To ensure responsiveness to user needs and alignment with project objectives, the consultant will apply an agile development approach, incorporating iterative testing and stakeholder feedback at every stage of the development cycle.

1. A functional web-based platform that enables seamless communication and linkages between Large Companies (LEs) and local suppliers.
2. A best practices research, including stakeholder consultations, and design a low fidelity wire frame of the Supplier Development tool to showcase understanding of the project feature requirements.
3. A M&E management tool integrated within the platform to track application, selection, evaluations and implementation activities. This should ensure ability to generate reports on the SDP Program.
4. Complete technical and end-user documentation for system use and maintenance. Once the project is completed, hand over all source code and configuration files to BELTRAIDE's IT Sub-unit.

5. Provide training of all user groups, including BELTRAIDE's IT Sub-unit, administrators, suppliers and anchor firms.
6. Undertake post-launch support and maintenance for a minimum of two months

Functional Requirements (*Additional* requirements might be included after planning and design has been conducted by consultant**)**
Below are some of the recommended functional requirements for the online platform ***but is not limited to*** and would require additional functionality or features based on the consultant's research of SDP tools from other countries or after the consultant's analysis.

I.   Public Website:
   a) Information relating to the program, benefits and onboarding process
   b) Statistical summary (# of buyers, local suppliers, linkages etc)
   c) List of local supplier profiles, products, services and sectors (Searching and Filtering list)
   d) Featuring of local supplier profile, products or services
   e) Registration (Supplier/Buyer)
   f) Testimonials

II.   Login Portal:
   1. Administrator/ExportBelize User (Based on permissions granted to user)
      a. Monitoring and Evaluation (***Not limited to the listing below***)
         i. User Satisfaction: request survey from local supplier or buyers (Requires more discussions)
         ii. Monitoring linkage of Local Suppliers to one or many LEs (Buyers).
         iii. Request / post supplier or Buyer Testimonial
         iv. How frequently do the suppliers (User Groups) access the application / Site Visits
         v. Number of new local suppliers or buyers created for the month (Should be customizable to daily, weekly or custom date range
         vi. Other graph reports
         vii. Approval of new local supplier accounts.
         viii. Approval of local supplier service or products.
      b. Management of Export Markets, HS Codes and Sectors
      c. User Account & Permission Management (Supplier, Buyer, ExportBelize)
      d. Feature local supplier profiles, products and services
      e. Management of all Supplier products and services
      f. (Outlines functionality and features available for end user)
   2. Supplier Account
      I. Profile Management
      II. Product and Service Management
      III. Buyer Linkage Request Management (Approve and Deny)
      IV. Buyer Linkage Listing
      V. Contact Buyers
      VI. Help page (Outlines functionality and features available for end user)

3. **Buyer Account**
   I. Profile Management
   II. Management of Linkages with local supplier (Request & Remove)
   III. List of local supplier profiles, products, sector and services (Search and filter)
   IV. Featured supplier profiles, products and services
   V. Contact Supplier
   VI. Help Page (Outlines functionality and features available for end user)

III. **Non-Functional Requirements**

Performance: The platform should be able to handle requests between 1-1.5 seconds without significant delays.

Scalability: The platform should be designed to scale if additional features or functionality are considered in the future.

Security: The platform should ensure the security of user data and transactions through encryption and secure authentication methods.

Usability: The platform should have an intuitive and user-friendly and responsive interface to ensure a positive user experience.

Maintainability: The platform should be easy to maintain and update, with clear documentation and modular design.

Portability: The platform should use containerization technology for ease of portability to another server, should the need arise.

PRODUCTION ENVIORNMENT

The Consultant will use the following tools, technologies, and configurations to develop, test, and deploy the project. The consultant can submit a recommendation on the best tools, language(s) or framework to use for the project with proper reasoning.

   Environment:
   - **Operating System**: Linux Ubuntu (TBD)
   - **Version Control**: Git (Github)

   Programing Language:
   - **Frontend**: HTML, CSS, JavaScript, jQuery
   - **Backend**: PHP 8 or Greater

   Framework and Libraries:
   - **Frontend**: Bootstrap V5/Tailwind CSS v4.0
   - **Backend**: Custom PHP framework (Laravel can be considered)

   Database:
   - **Type**: SQL
   - **Specific Database**: Mysql v8.0 or greater / PostgreSQL 16.8 or Greater

   Hosting and Deployment:
   The hosting, domain name, and SSL certification will be provided. The consultant shall be responsible for configuring and deploying a testing environment at the commencement of the project and production environment before the launch date.

- **Hosting Provider**: GoDaddy VPS (**TBD**)
- **Deployment Tools**: Docker
- **Web Server: Nginx** 1.27.3

API:
- **Email Transactions**: Constant Contact (V3 API) or recommended open-source Email Transaction service.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES/ACTIVITIES

The Consultant will carry out the following activities:

- Prepare a detailed work plan for the consultancy, which includes descriptions of the methodologies, activities, detailed timetable, and detailed workflow comprising the disbursement of activities accomplished.

- To comply with the general objectives of this Consultancy, specific activities should include:

Activities	
1. Planning and Design	Some key considerations when designing this online tool should include: a) **Needs assessment:** conduct an assessment to understand the specific requirements of the database, including the information to be collected, the user interface design, and the functionalities required. b) **Database design:** develop a database design in line with requirements, which should consider factors such as scalability, security, consistency and validation of data. c) **Data collection**: Gather all existing data to carry out the necessary migrations. d) **User interface design**: design an intuitive and user-friendly interface that meets the listed functional requirements above. e) **Data consistency and integrity**: System must ensure the integrity and consistency of the transmitted data. f) **Portability:** System must be designed in a manner that will not be coupled to any hardware specific technologies**.**

	g) **Data Security and Privacy**: Implement robust security measures to protect the data in the database from unauthorized access or breaches. Ensure compliance with relevant data protection regulations.
	h) **Testing Environment**: Ensure that there is a testing environment in place for testing to be conducted before rolling out to production.
2. Development of the online platform	a) **Database configuration:** set up the database infrastructure and configure it according to the database design.
	b) **User Access Management:** set up user accounts and access levels for **administrators, ExportBelize users**, **suppliers**, and **buyers**. *Consider including security measures to protect sensitive information such as implementing a permission-based system for administrators and ExportBelize Users.*
	c) **User Interface Development:** develop the user interface for the online platform, ensuring that it is user-friendly and intuitive. Include features such as search, filter, and sorting options to facilitate easy access to supplier information.
	d) **Data migration, entry, and validation**: The consultant will be provided with a finalized Excel dataset containing the selected anchor firms and suppliers (Around 150 records combined), following the completion of the call for applications and selection process by BELTRAIDE. Upon receipt, the consultant shall conduct a thorough assessment of the dataset to evaluate its size and quality, determining whether data cleaning and validation are required to ensure accuracy, consistency, completeness, and integrity before migrating the data into the Supplier Development Tool's database. This process will ensure a reliable and high-quality foundation for the platform's supplier information.
	e) **Testing and Quality Assurance:** While unit and integration testing are not mandatory, they are strongly recommended to help ensure that features are free of bugs and operate as intended. UAT, however, is mandatory and shall be conducted both after each development sprint and at the end of the project. During UAT, end users will review the platform to identify any issues or areas of confusion with the features before the system is deployed to the production environment.
	f) **Data Security and Privacy:** implement security measures to protect the data in the online database from unauthorized access or breaches. Ensure compliance with relevant data protection regulations.
	g) **Launch and Rollout**: launch the online database and communicate its availability to stakeholders.
Design an M&E tool	a) Define and develop a mechanism to monitor the usage of the platform and evaluate its impact on SDP.

	b) Design a monitoring and evaluation management tool that allows for tracking of the SDP, including application, selection, evaluations and implementation by beneficiary firms. This should ensure ability to generate reports on the SDP Program.
End User Training and Documentation	a) Provide a digital end-user manual for administrators to familiarize themselves with the current functionality and features available. e.g. Listing the steps to create an ExportBelize User with specific permissions assigned etc. b) Develop a help page that serves as a guide to the functionality and features available for suppliers and buyers. c) The consultant shall provide tailored training to all user groups, including ExportBelize personnel, local suppliers, and anchor firms, based on their specific roles and permissions. Training will cover core functionalities such as profile management, product and service listings, monitoring tools, user account management, and communication features. Sessions may be delivered in person, virtually, or both, and will include hands-on demonstrations, user guides, and real-time support.
Technical Training and Documentation	a) Provide technical documentation on the Database design, system architecture and framework or technologies used to develop the platform b) Provide training to BELTRAIDE's IT Sub-unit on key configurations, database design, system architecture and code-base maintenance required of the platform. c) Consultant will provide all source code and configuration files over to BELTRAIDE's IT Sub-unit after the completion of the 2 months maintenance is completed.

4. KEY OUTPUTS/DELIVERABLES

The consultant will present the following deliverables:

Deliverables	Timeframe from start of consultancy
1. **Work Plan**	Week 1

Updated action plan that outlines the main deliverables, methodologies, activities, timetable, and workflow	
2. Needs Assessment Planning and design of an online platform to manage local suppliers based on international best practices – Needs assessment to understand tools requirements, database design, define data collection and entry elements, define data protection elements, test and validate the tool, and propose key factors to monitor and evaluate the tool.	Week 4
3. M&E Framework Design a M&E framework into the tool that allows to track the SDP.	Week 6
4. Development of the online platform to manage suppliers based on international best practices Online tool to ensure it meets the requirements and expectations of both suppliers and program stakeholders. Also, launch the online tool, and define mechanisms to monitor and evaluate its usage.	Week 14
5. End User Documentation and Training End-user documentation detailing the functionality and features available. Also provide training, showcasing the functionality and features of the platform to ExportBelize, suppliers and anchor firms.	Week 15
6. Technical User Documentation and Training Provide technical documentation and transfer all source code and configuration files to BELTRAIDE's IT Sub-unit. Additionally, deliver training to IT Unit	Week 16

to ensure familiarity with the system infrastructure and maintenance requirements.	
7. Maintenance Two months of maintenance to address any issues or bugs following the platform's launch; no new feature development is required during this period.	Week 22
Total	**6 months**

5. <u>QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE</u>

Academic and Education Qualification (Kindly submit relevant attestations)
- Bachelor's Degree in Software Development, Software Engineering, Information Technology or related field to Web Application Development is required.
- Master's Degree in Software Development, Software Engineering, Information Technology or related field to Web Application Development will be considered an asset.

- Relevant professional certifications related to Supplier Tool Development (E.g. Certified Software Development Professional (CSDP), Certified Scrum Developer (CSD), Salesforce Certified Developer, SAP Certified Development Associate, Power Platform & Power BI Certifications) is desirable.

General Work Experience (Kindly specify in the curriculum vitae)
- 4 Years General Professional Experience in a field related to the consultancy

Specific Work Experience (Kindly specify in the curriculum vitae)
- At least three (3) years of experience in full-cycle web application development. This may include experience in one or more of the following areas: system analysis, backend development, and database design.
- Demonstrable experience designing and implementing online web applications for clients in the public or private sector, including government agencies, MSMEs, or development projects will be considered an asset. Specify number of applications.
- Demonstrable experience using the Agile or Scrum methodologies used in web application development will be considered an asset.

Skills, Knowledge and Abilities

- Fluency in written and spoken English is required (**provide proof if not native language** e.g. a secondary school transcript, TOEFL – 75 iBT or higher, IELTS - 6.0 or higher, PTE – 60 or higher, Duolingo 105 or higher, SAT– 500 or higher, ACT – 19 or higher, B2 or higher)
- Demonstrated communication, leadership, problem-solving, and organizational skills

Applicants are encouraged to ensure that the materials submitted are comprehensive and tailored to demonstrate their capacity to fulfil the objectives of this Terms of Reference.

6. <u>REPORTING RESPONSIBILITY</u>

The consultant will be supervised by the Senior IT Officer with coordination and support offered by the Manager of EXPORTBelize, BELTRAIDE.

The Administrative focal point for this consultancy is the Project Manager of the Trade and Investment Facilitation Program, Central Executing Unit, Ministry of Finance. BELTRAIDE will lead the technical supervision of this project, and the Central Executing Unit (CEU) will supervise the project management aspect.

7. <u>PAYMENT SCHEDULE</u>

The estimated budget for this consultancy is US$30,000.

Deliverables	Timeframe	Payment %
1. Work Plan 2. Needs Assessment	Week 4	15%
3. M&E Framework	Week 6	15%
4. Platform Development and Launch	Week 14	20%
5. End User Training and Documentation 6. Technical Training and Documentation	Week 16	25%
7. Maintenance	Week 22	25%

Total	6 months	100%

8. **DURATION**

   Six (6) Months

9. **CRITERIA FOR SELECTION**

   The selection for this contractual position will be in accordance with the procedures set out in the Inter-American Development Bank: Policies for the Selection and Contracting of Consultants financed by the Inter-American Development Bank GN-2350-15 and the Government of Belize procurement policies and best practices and is open to all eligible candidates as defined in the policies. The Consultants will be selected based on qualifications including a positive professional reference check.

10. **APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

   Applications should be submitted in the English language before or on **September 15, 2025; 10:00 a.m. (Local Belize Time)**. **Late applications will not be accepted.** Please note that the required application template should be utilized. The Template can be obtained online at https://procurement.gov.bz/opportunities/.

   Applications should be submitted in one (1) pdf document via email to procurement@ceu.mof.gov.bz or three (3) hardcopies to the below address:

   ATTN: Trudy Joseph
   Procurement Specialist
   Central Executing Unit
   Ministry of Finance
   2nd floor Sir Edney Cain Building
   Belmopan, Belize
   Email: procurement@ceu.mof.gov.bz

   Ref: Digital Supplier's Tool Development Consultant - Your name