

ARIAS SOCIETY

Assam Rural Infrastructure and Agricultural Services Society (ARIASS)

(An Autonomous Body under Govt. of Assam)

Project Coordination Unit (PCU), World Bank financed Assam Agribusiness & Rural Transformation Project (APART),

No. ARIASS/APART/CD/182/2017/21-A

Dated, Guwahati, the 21st January 2017

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (REOI)

For Hiring of Consultancy Services for Formation of Industry Associations (IAs) & Implementation of Agro Industrial Development Plans (AIDPs)

1. The Government of Assam (GoA) has applied for a loan from the World Bank to implement Assam Agribusiness & Rural Transformation Project (APART), which is likely to start from April 2017. The Project Development Objective (PDO) is “increasing value-added and improve resilience of selected agricultural value chains, focusing on smallholder farmers and agro-entrepreneurs in targeted districts of Assam”. The Assam Rural Infrastructure and Agricultural Services (ARIAS) Society now intends to apply a portion of the loan for hiring of “**Consultancy Services for Formation of Industry Associations (IAs) & Implementation of Agro Industrial Development Plans (AIDPs)**”.
2. The key indicators of the project would be (1) Farmers reached with agricultural assets or services (number) of which female (%) (2) Increase in quality as measured by price premium of commodities sold by beneficiaries in the selected value chains (%) (3) Share of agricultural commodities sold through new marketing channels (%) and (4) Farmers adopting improved agricultural technology (number).
3. APART activities are grouped into four major components: (i) Component A: Support to Agri Enterprise Development (ii) Component B: Facilitate Agro Cluster Development (iii) Component C: Market-led Production and Resilience Enhancement (iv) Component D: Project Management, Monitoring and Learning.
4. A key project thrust will be on enhancing agglomeration of agri processing enterprises to improve economies of scale in processing and joint marketing of processed produce. In this context, it has been decided to hire a consultancy agency (hereinafter referred as Service Provider or “SP”) for formation of around 17 Industry Associations (IAs) under the project.
5. Briefly the scope of the Consultancy assignment would cover- (a) Conducting Community Needs Assessment (CNA) of the IAs to investigate key issues, assess local capacities, resource constraints, common infrastructure and service gaps, latent opportunities with respect to agro processing in the project districts; (b) Development of effective block level (enterprise cluster) specific business development strategies and plans based on evidence and tailored to local needs and context; (c) Engagement of business enterprises and service agencies in the implementation of the designed strategy, plan at the local level and monitor the work of these agencies; (d) Adherence to Environment Assessment & Social Management Framework of the project and ensure incorporation of environmental social development principles of APART in designing and implementation; (e) Mentoring, handholding, technical backstopping and monitoring effectiveness of the IAs on regular basis and revising and adapting planning and implementation arrangement to respond to the emerging needs and demands on the ground; (f) Support the enterprises in the IAs to evolve and become pro-market sensitive business groups so that the IA as an organization can make rational joint strategies in the common interest of the members.
6. The State Project Director (SPD), ARIAS Society now invites eligible consultancy firms/ agencies to submit their Expression of Interest (EOI) for “**Consultancy Services for Formation of Industry Associations (IAs) & Implementation of Agro Industrial Development Plans (AIDPs)**”. 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/notification).
7. **The list of documents to be submitted along with EOI are**(*Expression of Interest shall not be more than total 60 pages*):
 - a. Name and address, fax number, e-mail address along with a note on the Ownership and organizational structure & core business area;
 - b. Document (s) to demonstrate that the firm is in the business for the last five (5) years;
 - c. Details of at least 3 similar assignments executed in the last 5 years (2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15 & 2015-16) to support the short-listing criteria accompanied by completion or acceptance certificate(s), including experience, if any, of having worked with public sector agencies in India/ projects funded by International Multilateral/ Bilateral agencies;
 - d. Certificate from the statutory auditors/ Chartered Accountant certifying the total turnover during each of the last 3 financial years (i.e. 2013-14, 2014-15 & 2015-16);
 - e. In-house available expertise with domain knowledge and experience in similar assignments.
8. **The short-listing criteria include:** The firm/ agency should
 - a. be in business for at least last five (5) years;
 - b. have Average Annual Financial Turnover of minimum **Rs.2.5 crore** in the last 3 financial years (2013-14, 2014-15 & 2015-16);
 - c. have proven experience of successfully completed at least 3 similar assignments in last 5 years (2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15 & 2015-16);
 - d. have a multidisciplinary in-house technical team and expert staff available with them.
9. The consultant will be selected in accordance with the Quality & Cost Based Selection (QCBS) method set out in the World Bank’s “Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers; Procurement of Goods, Works, Non-Consulting & Consulting Services, July 2016”, available at www.worldbank.org. Attention of the interested agencies is drawn to paragraph 3.14 of the said Regulations relating to the Conflict of Interest. Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture (JV) or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications. However, nature of association i.e. whether JV or Sub-Consultant, must be clearly mentioned in the Expression of Interest.
10. Interested Consultancy Firms/ Agencies must deliver their EOIs in written form in English language to the address given below on or before **16th February 2017** in hard copy as well as a soft copy. Further information can be obtained at the address of the SPD given below from 11.00 am to 04.00 pm (IST) on all working days.

The State Project Director, ARIAS Society, Agriculture complex, Khanapara, G.S. Road, Guwahati-781022 (Assam)

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