REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

**Georgia**

**Project Name: Georgia I2Q - Innovation, Inclusion and Quality**

**Loan No. 89550-GE**

**Assignment Title: Competitive Innovation Fund (CIF) Administration Unit – Financial Specialist/Contract Manager**

**Reference No. GE-MESCS-287461-CS-INDV**

Georgia has received financing from the World Bank towards the cost of the **Georgia I2Q - Innovation, Inclusion and Quality Project** (“the Project”)and intends to apply part of the proceeds to payments for goods, works, and related services and consulting services to be procured under this project. The Project will support the establishment of a Competitive Innovation Fund (CIF) (for public and private universities). The CIF will be established as a competitive grant mechanism coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia (MES), to award up to 40 CIF grants over a 3-year period from 2022-2024.

The Project is seeking the qualified Financial Specialist/Contract Manager (“the Consultant”) to provide administrative support to the MES in managing the day to day implementation of the CIF. The consulting services (“the Services”) of the Financial Specialist/Contract Manager include work with the assigned Head of CIF Administration Unit (AU) and provide assistance to the implementation process of the CIF.

The Consultant will be responsible for the following activities:

1. Establish and operate the financial management system for the CIF AU;
2. Ensure administrative and grant expenditures meet the agreed budget and eligibility criteria;
3. Prepare relevant documents for processing transfers of grants to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs);
4. Overseeing all aspects of grant negotiations, conclusion and implementation; ensure contracts move quickly and smoothly from negotiation to execution based on the CIF Operational Manual (OM);
5. Work in coordination with relevant counterpart at Project Management Unit (PMU) under MES; assist in developing the annual budgets and all relevant financial reports;
6. Participation in the evaluation process of the CIF project proposals, conducting a desk review of the eligibility and completeness of the submitted Project as well as initial screening of the submitted documents based on the CIF OM;
7. Contribute to monitoring and evaluation process based on the CIF OM; ensure that grant projects are being implemented to plan (including monitoring of eligibility of expenditures) and are achieving a satisfactory level of outcomes and results;
8. Assist audit processes, prepare the project annual financial documentation as requested by PMU Financial Specialist;
9. Ensure that documentation for processing the transfer of grant funds to HEIs are made on a timely basis and according to contract terms and conditions;
10. Coordination with financial units of beneficiaries/HEIs; ensure their financial documents and invoices are in accordance with project budget and guidelines;
11. Work with the PMU Financial Specialist in preparing the transfers to be processed under the unit and in producing financial reports, documents etc. in terms of the grants;
12. Maintain procedures for collecting, checking and preparing documentation required for verifying documented expenditures incurred by the HEIs/beneficiaries;
13. Collecting, organizing, and storing information and filing of project related documentation;
14. Report progress to the Head of the CIF AU;
15. Fulfil other tasks and contribute to project activities as assigned by the Head of CIF AU.

The implementation period of the consultancy is full time and 1 year (including probation period of first three months). The contract can be extended subject to satisfactory performance as well as operational needs of the Project. Expected start date of the services is end of July, 2022.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) for the primary procurement stage for the can be found at the following link: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/gquajijomkehhh9/CIF_Financial_Specialist_ToR_as%20issued.docx?dl=0>

The Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia now invites eligible Individual Consultants (“the Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. The shortlisting criteria are:

1. At least a Master's degree in Finances, Economics or Social Sciences;
2. Minimum 5 years of relevant professional experience in financial management of organizations/projects;
3. Demonstrated experience in contract management (negotiation, administration, overseeing the implementation, including M&E) and administration of grants agreements;
4. Ability to work effectively in a team environment;
5. Fluency in English and Georgian;
6. Knowledge of MS Word, Excel, Project, PowerPoint;
7. Good report writing skills;
8. Experience of working with state institutions would be an asset.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank’s “Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers” revised on November 2020 (“Procurement Regulations”), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the “Open Competitive Selection of Individual Consultants” described in the Procurement Regulations.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours:

Email: procurement@iiq.gov.ge

Expressions of interest must be delivered electronically indicating the name of position on the subject to the address below by mail, by **July 29, 2022, COB Tbilisi Time**

Attn: Ia Iashvili, Procurement Specialist of the Georgia I2Q - Innovation, Inclusion and Quality Project

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