



## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF A CONSULTING FIRM TO DEVELOP THE SMART AFRICA DIGITAL LITERACY FOR CITIZENS FRAMEWORK

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<b>Closing date:</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> January 2023; 5pm (Local time, Kigali)
<b>Contact</b>	For any questions or enquiries, please write to: <a href="mailto:tenderenquiries@smartafrica.org">tenderenquiries@smartafrica.org</a>  For Proposal Submissions: <a href="mailto:procurement@smartafrica.org">procurement@smartafrica.org</a>

## 1. ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

Smart Africa is a bold and innovative commitment from African Heads of State and Government to accelerate sustainable socio-economic development on the continent, ushering Africa into a knowledge economy through affordable access to Broadband and usage of Information and Communications Technologies.

The Smart Africa Manifesto aims to put ICT at the center of member countries' national socio-economic development agenda, promote the introduction of advanced technologies in telecommunication, and leverage ICT to promote sustainable development.

The Smart Africa Initiative is geared towards connecting, innovating, and transforming the continent into a knowledge economy, driving global competitiveness and job creation. The initiative also aims to enable the Member States to become more competitive, agile, open, and innovative smart economies with the most favorable business climates that attract large-scale investments, reward entrepreneurship, and enable fast growth and exports, leveraging ICT innovations to transform African nations into innovative societies. The Smart Africa Secretariat (SAS) head office is in Kigali, Rwanda.

## 2. PROJECT BACKGROUND

With a population estimated to approximately 1.3bn people who are majorly youthful, ensuring quality jobs to leverage on the continent's demographic opportunity is set to be one of Africa's game-changers. An estimated 15 to 20 million increasingly well-educated young people will join the African workforce every year for the next three decades.

The Smart Africa Digital Academy (SADA) is the delivery vehicle of the Smart Africa capacity building and skills development activities across the various digital skills spectrum. It is a pan-African dynamic learning ecosystem in which African citizens of all ages and social classes can gain or improve their digital skills, gain qualifications, meet the emerging talent needs of employers, industry or be self-reliant.

The birth of SADA was driven by the need to meet a genuine need of sustainable jobs driven by the fact that 15% of the world's working-age population are expected to be from Africa by 2030. The governments of the Smart Africa Member States recognize the urgency to drive inclusion and economic growth through the development and adoption of strategies for education and skills development to build this required future workforce and meet the Sustainable Development Goals 4. Essential to this strategy is the need to ensure that all African citizens are digitally literate, meaning that they are equipped with the required capabilities to live, learn, and work in a digital society. Digital literacy is one of the fundamental building blocks for promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all under the Action's framework for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which includes a specific target (4.4) "By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship"

The development of a **Digital Literacy for Citizens** framework for Africa will promote and measure the safe use of digital technologies to access information, communication, eGovernance services, job skills, learning, financial or eHealth services. This framework must endorse inclusion of vulnerable populations and encompass the various inequalities within the African digital contexts such as low access, low awareness, low literacy and low infrastructure, variations in access, core literacy levels, or perceived value of digital technologies.

The Smart Africa **Digital Literacy for Citizens** policy framework will support the implementation of the Smart Africa Digital Academy (SADA) by focusing on access, creating awareness on digital services such as eEducation, eHealth, ePayment, eCommerce, eSafety, or governance services meant for inclusion. It will define a structural approach to provide citizens with the competences they need to become healthy and responsible citizens in the online environment.

### 3. OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTCOME

The primary objective of the consulting firm's mission is to develop and to pilot a **Digital Literacy for Citizens** Policy Framework for Africa to facilitate the development of effective approaches and mechanisms within the African region. Frameworks and building blocks already exist. The contract focusses on identifying common ground, but also on the adaptation to the African context to ensure an inclusive and sustainable digital literacy improvement outreach in local regions. The specific objectives are:

- Development of the Africa **Digital Literacy for Citizens** Policy Framework for an inclusive and sustainable digital literacy improvement.
- Curation of generic courses with the aim to improve sustainable digital literacy. They should at least transfer knowledge in the fields of basic digital transformation, basic digital skills, current and emerging technologies as well as contain general information on digital regulation, digital business models and the digital gender gap.
- Development and implementation of a rapid prototyping approach to piloting the implementation of the framework in the context of five (5) selected countries through specifically designed projects and initiatives.

### 4. SCOPE OF WORK

#### 4.1 Digital Literacy for Citizens Policy Framework

This area of work will provide a tool to improve African citizen's digital skills to remain digitally competent. It involves the understanding of the scope of and validation of the **Digital Literacy for Citizens** Policy Framework in accordance with the Smart Africa Digital Skills development strategy.

- Undertaking extensive desk research to compile a synthesis of digital literacy frameworks in their respective contexts in the region and globally and to design a localization to the African context. This will include:
  - o Deep analysis of the digital literacy initiatives in the continent
  - o Common approaches adopted in successful interventions – opportunities, challenges, gaps and innovations
- Build synergies from existing works conducted in the region:
  - o [Africa Blueprint for Capacity Building and skills development in education \(Smart Africa\)](#)
  - o [ITU Digital Skills Insights 2021](#)
  - o [Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016 – 2025](#) by the Africa Union
  - o [Pan African Initiative for Digital Transformation of TVET and Skills Development Systems in Africa](#)
  - o [ITU Digital Skills Toolkit](#)
- Facilitate technical reviews of the resulting framework, using secondary data from such sources as the World Bank country diagnostics, and collating primary source information from relevant members states of the Smart Africa Alliance as well as partners through the established Working group.
- Define guiding principles for Policy Makers in the implementation of digital literacy strategies through learning provision (digital and face-to-face modalities). Including consideration of the relevant interventions in response to Covid19 pandemic and how they impacted the acceleration of digital literacy programs.

#### 4.2 Digital Literacy Content Curation

- Source or develop and ensure access to a foundational set of generic courses and content on digital literacy as a part of the framework and as a base for localization regarding varying country-wise adaptations and implementation. Key considerations should be that materials are sourced from openly licensed materials (open educational resources), which allow reuse and adaptation.

#### 4.3 Piloting for scale

Based on the digital principle for development “[design for scale](#)” (“Keep your design simple, flexible and modular to make it easy to change your content and adapt to other contexts”), the contractor should propose an implementation plan to pilot the Digital Literacy framework in specific contexts.

## 5. DELIVERABLES

The **Digital Literacy for Citizens** Policy Framework should:

- Provide a comparative synthesis report based on desktop research on current digital literacy frameworks in their respective contexts, with a detailed review and analysis of the digital literacy initiatives across the continent.
- Provide a **Digital Literacy for Citizens** Policy Framework, validated through consultation of stakeholders and experts’ feedback and findings. The framework should be designed as a user-friendly and ready-to-go tool for policy makers, implementing agencies and country members.
- Develop a digital readiness assessment tool for implementation in the pilot countries
- provide a set of generic courses and content on digital literacy to support the developed framework.
- An Expert Workshop to launch the framework to a wider community
- Provide a context-based implementation plan based on the rapid [prototyping](#) for five (5) specified countries in Africa (identifying challenges and designing concrete actions to improve the country’s digital literacy levels)

## 6. DURATION OF THE CONSULTANCY

The selected consulting firm must carry out the project within six (6) months from the date of signing the contract.

The indicative timetable is as follows:

Timeline	Deliverables
T + 2 weeks	“Inception Reports” for the <b>Digital Literacy for Citizens</b> framework validated by the Smart Africa Secretariat
T + 3 weeks	Submission of work plan to Digital Skills Development Working group (DSD WG)
T + 4 weeks	comparative synthesis report based on desktop research on current digital literacy frameworks in their respective context
T + 6 weeks	Present a set of principles, phases or stages that reflect a systematic process of implementation of digital literacy frameworks in the region Present findings to DSD WG
T + 8 weeks	- 1 <sup>st</sup> Draft of <b>Digital Literacy for Citizens</b> Policy Framework Presented to DSD WG Submission of draft to Smart Africa and Working Group and Feedback gathered
T + 10 weeks	- 2 <sup>nd</sup> Draft of <b>Digital Literacy for Citizens</b> Policy Framework Presented to DSD WG Feedback gathered
T + 12 weeks	Develop a digital literacy readiness assessment tool to be applied in pilot countries
T + 14 weeks	- Present Digital Literacy curated content to support developed framework

T + 16 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consulting firm submits final draft (French <u>and</u> English),</li> <li>- Consulting firm submits PowerPoint / Keynote presentations with insight, executive summary and summary of the <b>Digital Literacy for Citizens</b> Policy framework</li> </ul>
T + 20 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expert Workshop to Launch the framework – Hybrid Mode</li> <li>- Final Soft (Original High-resolution files) and Hard copies submitted to the secretariat (French and English copies)</li> </ul>
T+24 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Digital literacy content submitted for an integration into the SADA eLearning platform.</li> </ul>

## 7. MISSION EXECUTION

The activities and outcomes of the consultancy will be guided by the ICT Skills development working group for Digital Literacy, to give overall strategic guidance with the support of the Smart Africa Secretariat. The purpose of this document is to present the details of hiring a consulting firm to help achieve the stated objectives.

## 8. FIRM PROFILE AND EXPERIENCE

The ideal firm must meet the following minimum requirements to be considered during the evaluation:

- Must have and demonstrate technical, economic, and regulatory expertise and experience for the development and implementation of ICT related policy frameworks
- Have conducted ICT policy development research relating to digital education in the last five (5) years.
- Demonstrate the ability to design user-friendly, intuitive deliverables and toolkits for disseminating learning,
- Firms should submit signed recommendation letters from previous clients of similar projects (in the field of policy formulation in Digital Skills development or related) with the same magnitude and complexity.
- Ability to work in French and English.

The work shall be carried out by a firm with a lead team of at least (3) three highly qualified consultants/experts with a master's degree or above in the requested specialties, namely:

- **Lead Consultant (Education policy Expert)** with the minimum requirements below to be considered for the evaluation:
  - At least 10 years of experience in formulating Education or skills development policies.
  - Demonstrate experience working with regional bodies, including but not limited to the African Union, ITU, NEPAD, and understanding the Africa digital skills development landscape
  - Experience including working in Africa is an advantage.
  - Fluent in both French and/or English.
  - Having participated successfully in at least Two (2) projects of similar or higher level of complexity in the last 5 years.
- **Digital Policy expert** with a focus on ICT skills development policy, and with the minimum requirements below to be considered for the evaluation:
  - A Master's degree in public policy, digital transformation, education, or related fields
  - Extensive experience in the design, development, implementation of digital transformation policies and strategies
  - Having participated successfully in at least two (2) projects of similar or higher level of complexity in the last 5 years.

- Experience working in Africa
- **Instructional Designer expert** with the minimum requirements below to be considered for the evaluation:
  - A master's degree in relevant fields
  - A minimum of five (5) years of extensive experience in instructional designing in digital fields, preferably in the digital literacy
  - Experience in planning, analyzing, designing, and creating effective and memorable learning experiences for learners.
  - Having participated successfully in at least two (2) projects of similar or higher level of complexity in the last 5 years.
  - Experience working in Africa.

The Consultancy firm shall propose additional staff as part of the consulting team as necessary with adequate justification towards the realization of study objectives with dedicated roles/positions for evaluation explicitly detailed. The related financial quotation should be included for additional staff.

## 9. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following model will be used to evaluate all respondents and proposals submitted:

### a) Technical Evaluation Criteria

Item	Assigned Points	Point Range
<b>Approach, Methodology, and Work Plan</b>		
Firms will provide based on their experience and understanding of the task, the best technical approach, methodology and tools that will lead to the attainment of the desired outcome.		/30
- Adequacy of the proposed methodology in responding to the Terms of Reference	20	
- Technical Approach and workplan	10	
<b>Firm Experience</b>		/30
- Three Annex (3) documents (with links published online) of written or developed reports, frameworks or policy formulation carried out by firm in the past 5 years.	15	
- Three (3) signed and stamped recommendation letters from previous clients of projects relating to policy formulation in Digital Skills Development (One of which must be in Sub Saharan Africa).	15	
<b>Staff Experience</b>		/40
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lead Consultant/ Education Policy Expert</b></li> </ul>		
i) At least 10 years of experience in Digital Education policies or related,	5	
ii) Having participated successfully in at least two (2) projects of similar or higher level of expectations	8	
iii) Experience working with International or regional bodies (in a leading role)	2	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Digital Policy Expert</b></li> </ul>		
i. More than 5 years of proven experience in public policy, digital transformation, education, or related fields.	5	
ii. Having participated successfully in at least two (2) projects of similar or higher level of complexity in the last 5 years.	8	
	2	

iii.	Experience working in the continent		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Instructional Design expert</b></li> </ul>		
i)	At least 5 years of proven experience in the instructional designing in digital fields	5	
ii)	Having participated successfully in at least two (2) projects of similar or higher level of expectations in the last 5 years	4	
iii)	Experience working in Africa	<u>1</u>	

The financial proposal of only those firms which secure a minimum score of 70/100 in the technical evaluation will be opened.

St= Score for the Technical Evaluation

#### b) **Financial Criteria**

Once the technical criteria have been evaluated, the costs of all bids will be listed from low to high. Computing the cost criteria score will be accomplished by use of the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Lowest Cost of All Proposals}}{\text{Cost of Bid for Respective Firm}} \times 100 = \text{Financial Score} = sf$$

The Applicant getting maximum marks on 70-30 weightage (70% for technical and 30% for financial) will be selected as Consultants for the Client. The weights given to the Technical (T) and Financial Proposals (F) are T = 0.70 and F = 0.30

The Final Score (S) is calculated as follows: S = St\*T + Sf\*F

### **10. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL PROPOSALS**

All technical and financial proposals must be submitted in English

#### 1) **Mandatory Administrative Documents**

- Company Registration Certificates.
- Tax Clearance Certificates
- Social Security clearance where applicable.

#### 2) **Technical Requirements**

- Firms corporate profile/Executive summary.
- Detailed description of Methodology Approach, plan, and understanding of this assignment.
- Team composition and specific responsibilities per staff/experts.
- Consultancy services performed with references and contacts.
- Detailed updated Curriculum Vitae for the proposed staffs/experts.
- Recommendation letters or certificate of completion from previous assignments. *Letters should be provided with the letterhead of the recommending client and must be signed and stamped.*

### 3) Financial Requirements

- Summarized Total Cost VAT Inclusive (Value of tax indicated on final cost)
- Breakdown of a remuneration package
- Breakdown of reimbursable expenses

#### **Notes:**

- Indicate your preferred payment terms under financial proposal*
- A withholding tax of 15% will be deducted from payments for Firms not VAT-registered with Rwanda Tax Administration (RRA) and 18% VAT will be applicable for registered firms in Rwanda.*
- All Financial Proposals/ offers should be password protected and Smart Africa will request for it for bidders who have been qualified in the technical evaluation*
- All Financial Offers should be quoted and submitted in USD Currency.*

## 11. SUBMISSION PROCESS

Technical and financial proposals must be submitted via email in pdf format showing each the nature of the offer concerned (technical or financial offer); The proposals must be sent to the email: [procurement@smartafrica.org](mailto:procurement@smartafrica.org) not later than **26<sup>th</sup> January 2023** at, 05:00 pm local time (Kigali).

**Kindly note that late submissions will be automatically disqualified.**

## 12. RIGHTS RESERVED

- This RFP does not obligate the Smart Africa Secretariat (SAS) to complete the RFP process. SAS reserves the right to amend any segment of the RFP prior to the announcement of a selected firm.
- SAS also reserves the right to remove one or more of the services from consideration for this contract should the evaluation show that it is in SAS's best interest to do so.
- SAS also may, at its discretion, issue a separate contract for any service or groups of services included in this RFP. SAS may negotiate a compensation package and additional provisions to the contract awarded under this RFP.
- The Smart Africa reserves the right to debrief the applicants after the completion of the process due to expected high volume of applications and avoiding the compromise of the process.

## 13. ENQUIRIES

Any enquiries will only be received and addressed Five (5) days or more prior to the bid submission deadline. Prospective respondents who may have questions regarding this RFP may submit their enquiries to [tenderenquiries@smartafrica.org](mailto:tenderenquiries@smartafrica.org)

## 14. ANTI-CORRUPTION

Smart Africa is committed to preventing and not tolerating any act of corruption and other malpractices and expects that all bidders will adhere to the same ethical principles.