

DIGITAL UZBEKISTAN PROJECT

TERMS OF REFERENCE

FINANCIAL MANAGER / ACCOUNTANT

I. Background

The Digital Central Asia and South Asia (Digital CASA) regional program focuses on regional aspects of the development of digital communications and digital infrastructure, data storage and processing centers, platforms and intelligent solutions, and competence centers.

«Digital CASA-Uzbekistan» (or Digital Uzbekistan) project (Project) is aimed at increasing access to more affordable internet, crowd-in private investment in the ICT sector, and improvement of participating government's capacity to deliver digital government services in Uzbekistan by contributing to the development of a regionally integrated digital infrastructure and enabling environment. This project provides a framework to engage with the Government on the complex telecom market reforms necessary for the long term, successful development of the country's digital infrastructure. In the short term, it also allows the opportunity to demonstrate how that infrastructure, coupled with resources to engage citizens and develop digital leadership and skills, can serve as the foundation for economic development more broadly.

The «Digital CASA - Uzbekistan » project will include the following structure: (i) Regional digital connectivity infrastructure: expanding the regional and domestic fiber optic backbones, increasing security, capacity and reach of the government virtual private network "G-Net" and bridging the rural connectivity gap through mobilization of private sector investment on the basis of competitive tenders; (ii) Datacenters, regional cloud services, digital platforms and smart solutions: developing regional digital platforms and shared services, including digital ID, cybersecurity, interoperability platforms, e-procurement, developing the data ecosystem for data driven solutions based on big data analytics, IoT and AI platforms, developing selected e-services and smart solutions in key sectors that build on and demonstrate the value of using shared digital government infrastructure and services; (iii) Enabling Environment for Digital transformation: strengthening the laws, regulations, institutional and human capacity and digital leadership and institutional building needed for effective change management of digital transformation, ICT infrastructure investment, market competitiveness, digital engagement, job creation and innovation through partnerships, including strategic partnerships and communications, and citizen engagement activities; and (iv) Digital innovations, entrepreneurship and skills: promoting digital entrepreneurship by providing support to startups, supporting human capital development and digital skills, including participation of women and supporting digital innovations through establishing a Regional Center of Excellence of Digital Economy in collaboration with existing local institutions; (v) Program Management: to support effective project and program management activities.

A project preparation grant from the ECA Region Capacity Development (ECAPDEV) Trust Fund (Grant) has been secured and will be managed by the Ministry for development of information technologies and communications (MITC), the implementing agency for the Project, to finance Digital CASA project preparation activities focused on increasing implementation readiness up to and right after project approval.

The Grant is structured along two components, both aimed at helping the implementing agency to establish good grounds for effective and speedy project implementation. The first component will

be aimed at supporting the establishment of a good system for effective project implementation (project manual, results framework, capacity building and project audit), whereas the second component will be aimed at increasing project implementation readiness through preparation of tender documentation

II. The Objectives

The main objective of this assignment is to assist the “Digital CASA – Uzbekistan” Project Preparation team (PPT) under the Ministry for Development of Information Technologies and Communications (MITC) and will be responsible for ensuring the readiness of the financial, accounting and other required arrangements for project start and subsequent implementation. The assignment will also assume the direct support to the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) in project financial management over the implementation of the Digital CASA - Uzbekistan Project by providing professional consulting services on accounting issues to ensure timely implementation of the Grant as well as the preparation and early project implementation and compliance with the Letter-Agreement for the Grant and the Financing Agreement for the Project, the Bank’s Disbursement Handbook and the legislation of Uzbekistan.

III. Scope of Work

The Consultant will have the following responsibilities and duties:

- Due delivery of Project Operations Manual in the content, format and timeline required by the World Bank
- Contribution to the preparation of the Feasibility Study of the project in fulfilment of the requirements of the President’s Resolution #3857 of July 16th, 2018, including recruitment rules, professional development plans, adequacy of equipment and information systems;
- Setting up the financial, accounting and reporting cycles (including installation of a functional accounting software) to ensure the readiness of the fiduciary financial, accounting and etc. arrangements by the Project effectiveness;
- Ensure subsequent compliance with the requirements of the Project Operations Manual that includes financial and accounting policies and procedures, project management guidelines, forms of financial reporting, budgeting and budgetary control, internal control, and audit requirements;
- Develop and approve the project expenditures budget, budget estimate, including the complete breakdown of expenditures according to the WB requirements;
- Manage project budgeting according to project implementation and procurement plans, approved budget ceilings (cost estimates, etc.);
- Organize and ensure budgetary control (execution of the budget, utilization of funds, bottlenecks for overall budget performance, etc), provision of timely payments including salaries and other administrative expenses of PPT/PIU;
- Prepare annual project financial statements, make annual project financial statements ready for audits. Provide auditors with supporting and other documents required in the course of audit and after audit (addressing audit recommendations, if any);
- Opening and managing Designated/Special and other accounts of the project, supervision of timely and duly reconciliation of the accounting, bank, and other records (financial obligations, performance of contractual obligations, etc.) with project counterparts;

- Ensuring accounting of projects expenditures in compliance with the procedures of the WB and legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan;
- Managing (verification, review, approval, etc.) of withdrawal applications (via eDisbursement) for Special account prior to submitting them to the donor (WB/IDA);
- Monitoring and reporting to ensure regular and timely submission of project financial reports (Unaudited Interim Financial Report - IFR) and submission of relevant reports to the financing organizations, Ministry of Finance, MITC, tax authorities and etc.;
- Analyzing deviations between planned and actual financial activities of the project by project components;
- Maintaining and updating the database of the computer system for project financial management;
- Controlling timely preparation of reconciliation statements for all bank accounts of the project and ensuring timely preparation and submission of necessary documents, reports and etc. required for stable flow of project funds;
- Managing financial aspects of the project, including review of:
 - - procurement orders, ensuring their compliance with the budget;
 - financial activities and payment terms on all contracts prior to their signing;
 - invoices for payment after receiving of acknowledging documents on the terms of a contract;
- Ensuring timely audit of project and project accounts as per requirements acceptable to the WB, following up with all audit recommendations and actions to resolve the issues raised in the Management Letter, ensuring timely submission of audit reports to the WB, and other stakeholders;
- Managing financial department personnel and participation in staff selection and appraisal process;
- Ensuring coordination between the PPT/PIU and the MITC, Ministry of Finance, MIFT, and other state agencies and local authorities involved in the project, as well as with the World Bank (IDA/IBRD) and other financing international governmental and non-governmental organizations on all the issues of project financial management in agreement with the PIU Management;
- Supervising the annual inventory of procured goods;
- Participation in the workshops, seminars, conferences arranged by the World Bank and/or other partners;
- Performance of other tasks required for project implementation, and required by the WB guidelines/procedures and etc.

In ensuring the delivery of the above-mentioned responsibilities and duties, the candidate will have the following rights:

- Introduction to project manager decisions, recommendations, assumptions, etc. regarding his / her activities.
- Presentation to the Project manager, Top management of the MITC the proposals for improvement, attributable to the duties under this job description for their consideration.

- Informing the Project Manager/Top Management of the MITC about all operational shortcomings of contractors (their divisions) identified during the performance of his / her official duties and making suggestions for their elimination.
- Request from Project manager required level of support and resources to ensure due performance of his/her tasks, responsibilities and duties.
- Where necessary, involve specialists of other structural units of the MITC to the tasks assigned to him / her (if provided by the provisions of subdivisions, otherwise, with the permission of administration).

IV. Outputs and Deliverables

The outputs of the Consultant will include:

- a. Project's financial plans (monthly, quarterly, annual);
- b. Project's financial reports (IFR)
- c. Project's expenditure transactions reports (SOE);
- d. Project's payment orders (financial acts);
- e. Project's financial-economic operations statements;
- f. Project accounting records, general and subsidiary ledges.
- g. All other necessary financial management and accounting outputs necessary to implement the Project and as may be requested by counterparts (GoU, The World Bank, external audit, etc.).

V. Timing, Deliverables and Reporting

This is a full-time assignment expected to commence in **June 2019**. The contract will be signed for a period of **12 months** with a probation period of **six** months, during which the contract can be terminated. The contract could be extended beyond the original term subject to the consultant's satisfactory performance. This position offers highly competitive salary commensurate with qualifications and expertise.

VI. Institutional arrangements

The Consultant will report to and work under the direct supervision of the Project Manager.

VII. Resources

The MITC will provide working space, office equipment and communication facilities (including access to the Internet), as well as any other necessary means and support for Consultant in order to carry out this assignment.

VIII. Qualification requirements and evaluation criteria

- University degree in in areas such as accounting and audit/finance.
- Demonstrated work experience in the budgetary system, disbursement, financial reporting and similar position of at least 3 years.

- Extensive experience in managing and administering projects financed by the World Bank (advantage) or other IFIs (EBRD, ADB, etc.);
- Practical experience in elaborating, analyzing and presenting reports and financial statements
- Experienced user in 1C accounting software.
- Experience in working with governmental bodies (ministries, departments, etc.)
- Experience in disbursement and audit procedures;
- Knowledge of local accounting standards and the tax regulation related to the IFIs' activity;
- Experience in project management is highly desirable.
- Excellent team work, communication skills.
- Fluent in Uzbek and/or Russian. Working knowledge of English is required.
- Computer proficiency (Windows, MS Office, Internet Explorer).