

## Request for Proposal (RFP)

Subject RFP #:	RFP-CATALYZE-ETHIOPIA-2021-0517
RFP Issue Date:	October 19, 2021
Terms of Reference / Specifications:	Cloud Services Request
Project	CATALYZE Innovative Blended Finance
The Company	Palladium International, LLC
Country of Performance	Ethiopia
Closing Date and Time	October 31, 2021, 5 PM East Africa Time
Questions Deadline	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted at <a href="mailto:EthiopiaMS4G.procurement@thepalladiumgroup.com">EthiopiaMS4G.procurement@thepalladiumgroup.com</a> by October 25, 2021, 5PM East Africa Time <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Bidders' Conference	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
Details for Submission	Submissions will be accepted: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Electronically: email to <a href="mailto:EthiopiaMS4G.procurement@thepalladiumgroup.com">EthiopiaMS4G.procurement@thepalladiumgroup.com</a> <input type="checkbox"/> In hard copy (sealed bids) at
Offer Validity Period	60 Days

Thank you for your interest in the above procurement. As implementer for the CATALYZE Innovative Blended Finance Project funded by United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Palladium invites you to submit a proposal for the scope of work attached in Annex A. Your proposal must be valid for the Validity Period.

Please email your notice of intention to submit a proposal by the Questions Deadline. Answers to questions shall be distributed to all offerors that have indicated an intention to submit a proposal by the deadline.

Please submit your proposal in accordance with the Details for Submission above by the Closing Date and Time. This RFP in no way obligates Palladium to award a contract nor does it commit Palladium to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal. Palladium bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

Yours sincerely,

CATALYZE Procurement Team

## Terms and conditions

### 1. Proposal Conditions

By submitting a proposal, potential suppliers are bound by these terms and conditions. Potential suppliers must submit offers with all details provided in English and with prices quoted in a single currency.

### 2. Proposal Lodgement

The Company may grant extensions to the Closing Time at its discretion. The Company will not consider any quotes received after the Closing Time specified in the RFP unless the Company determines to do so otherwise at its sole discretion.

### 3. Evaluation

The Company may review all proposal to confirm compliance with this RFP and to determine the best proposal in the circumstances.

### 4. Alterations

The Company may decline to consider a proposal in which there are alterations, erasures, illegibility, ambiguity or incomplete details.

### 5. The Company's Rights

The Company may, at its discretion, discontinue the RFP; decline to accept any proposal; terminate, extend or vary its selection process; decline to issue any contract; seek information or negotiate with any potential supplier that has not been invited to submit a proposal; satisfy its requirement separately from the RFP process; terminate negotiations at any time and commence negotiations with any other potential supplier; evaluate proposals as the Company sees appropriate (including with reference to information provided by the prospective supplier or from a third party); and negotiate with any one or more potential suppliers.

### 6. Amendments and Queries

The Company may amend, or clarify any aspect of the RFP prior to the RFP Closing Time by issuing an amendment to the RFP in the same manner as the original RFP was distributed. Such amendments or clarifications will, as far as is practicable be issued simultaneously to all parties.

Any queries regarding this RFP should be directed to the Contact Person identified on the cover page of this RFP.

### 7. Clarification

The Company may, at any time prior to execution of a contract, seek clarification or additional information from, and enter into discussions and negotiations with, any or all potential suppliers in relation to their proposals. In doing so, the Company will not allow any potential supplier to substantially tailor or amend their proposal.

### 8. Confidentiality

In their proposal, potential suppliers must identify any aspects of their proposal that they consider should be kept confidential, with reasons. Potential suppliers should note that the Company will only agree to treat information as confidential in cases that it considers appropriate. In the absence of such an agreement, potential suppliers acknowledge that the Company has the right to disclose the information contained in their proposal.

The potential supplier acknowledges that in the course of this RFP, it may become acquainted with or have access to the Company's Confidential Information (including the existence and terms of this RFP and the TOR). It agrees to maintain the confidence of the Confidential Information and to prevent its unauthorised disclosure to any other person. If the potential supplier is required to disclose Confidential Information due to a relevant law or legal proceedings, it will provide reasonable notice of such disclosure to the Company. The parties agree that this obligation applies during the RFP and after the completion of the process.

### 9. Alternatives

Potential suppliers may submit proposals for alternative methods of addressing the Company's requirement described in the RFP where the option to do so was stated in the RFP or agreed in writing with the Company prior to the RFP Closing Time. Potential suppliers are responsible for providing a sufficient level of detail about the alternative solution to enable its evaluation.

### 10. Reference Material

If the RFP references any other materials including, but not limited to, reports, plans, drawings, samples or other reference material, the potential supplier is responsible for obtaining the referenced material and considering it in framing their proposal. And provide it to the Company upon request.

### 11. Price/Cost Basis

Prices or costs quoted must show the tax exclusive price, the tax component and the tax inclusive price.

The contract price, which must include any and all taxes, supplier charges and costs, will be the maximum price payable by the Company for the Goods and/or Services.

### 12. Financial information

If requested by the Company, potential suppliers must be able to demonstrate their financial stability and ability to remain viable as a provider of the Goods and/or Services over the term of any agreement.

If requested by the Company, the potential supplier must promptly provide the Company with such information or documentation as the Company reasonably requires in order to evaluate the potential supplier's financial stability.

### 13. Referees

The Company reserves the right to contact the potential supplier's referees, or any other person, directly and without notifying the potential supplier.

### 14. Conflict of interest

Potential suppliers must notify the Company immediately if any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest arises (a perceived conflict of interest is one in which a reasonable person would think that the person's judgement and/or actions are likely to be compromised, whether due to a financial or personal interest (including those of family members) in the procurement or the Company).

### 15. Inconsistencies

If there is inconsistency between any of the parts of the RFP the following order of precedence shall apply:

- (a) these Terms and Conditions;
- (b) the first page of this RFP; and
- (c) the Schedule

so that the provision in the higher ranked document will prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

### 16. Collusion and Unlawful Inducements

Potential suppliers and their officers, employees, agents and advisors must not engage in any collusive, anti-competitive conduct or any other similar conduct with any other potential supplier or person or quote any unlawful inducements in relation to their proposal or the RFP process.

Potential suppliers must disclose where proposals have been compiled with the assistance of current or former the Company employees (within the previous 9 months and who was substantially involved in the design, preparation, appraisal, review, and or daily management of this activity) and should note that this may exclude their proposal from consideration.

Potential suppliers warrant that they have not provided or offered any payment, gift, item, hospitality or any other benefit to the Company, its employees, consultants, agents, subcontractors (or any other person involved in the decision-making process relating to this RFP) which could give rise to a perception of bribery or corruption in relation to the RFP or any other dealings between the parties.

### 17. Jurisdiction

This RFP shall be subject to the laws of the District of Columbia, United States of America. The language of the arbitration will be English.

The Potential Supplier and the Company will use their best efforts to settle amicably any dispute, controversy, or claim arising out of, or relating to this RFP or the breach, termination, or invalidity thereof. If no agreeable settlement can be found, any dispute, controversy, or claim arising out of or relating to this RFP or the breach, termination, or invalidity thereof, shall be settled by mediation through the American Arbitration Association by filing a request for mediation with the AAA and the other party. The Parties will be bound by any arbitration award rendered as a result of such arbitration as the final adjudication of any such dispute.

## Company Information

Palladium is a global leader in the design, development and delivery of Positive Impact — the intentional creation of enduring social and economic value. We work with corporations, governments, foundations, investors, communities and civil society to formulate strategies and implement solutions that generate lasting social, environmental and financial benefits.

## Project Background

The CATALYZE Blended Finance Mechanism is a \$250 Million, 8-year contract (5-year base period, with a single 3 year option period) which uses a facilitated partnership model to craft solutions to crowd in \$2 Billion in blended finance (i.e. blended concessional and commercial finance) to USAID partner countries and initiatives. CATALYZE allows USAID Bureaus and Missions to efficiently deploy investment facilitation solutions that respond to the needs of specific sectors, issues, and geographies. Initial programs focus on education finance to implement sustainable education business models serving low-income communities, and achievement of the W-GDP objectives, but the mechanism can be applied to any development challenge or region.

## Purpose

One of MS4G's major mandates is to facilitate investments and mobilize capital for private enterprises in Ethiopia. One of the priority sectors for the program is the technology industry, and as such, MS4G's is interested to learn more about a sub-segment of the technology industry; more specifically the Cloud Computing services in the industry. The study is expected to provide a review of the current landscape of the industry, and determine the supply of services providers, the level of services demand, and nature of cloud computing in Ethiopia and focusing on the immediate market needs and its long-term prospects. A complete scope of work is attached as Annex A.

## Type of Contract

Palladium intends to issue a Firm Fixed Price subcontract to the selected offeror.

## Anticipated Contract Period of Performance

The anticipated period of performance is from November 15, 2021 to December 31, 2021.

## Place of Performance

The activities to be performed under this contract will take place in Ethiopia. See the Instructions for Submission of Cost Proposal for travel assumptions.

## Key Deliverables and Timeline

Deliverable #	Report and Deliverable	Deadline	Payment Amount
1	Inception report highlighting overall structure, approach, content, and framework for study	5 days from award date	10%
2	Undertake primary research via industry interviews, data collection, and survey	15 days from award date	10%
3	First Draft - Prepare initial draft, including key tables, estimates, projections, and preliminary conclusions	25 days from award date	20%
4	Second Draft - Incorporate comments/feedback from reviewers and revise as needed	30 days from award date	25%
5	Final Report - Finalize study and prepare final report	45 days from award date	35%

## Instructions to Offerors

Separate technical and cost proposals must be submitted by email no later than the time and date specified on the cover page.

### 1. Technical Proposal

For the technical proposal, the offeror must submit:

- (a) Cover letter with the following information:
  1. Firm contact info and address
  2. Type of company or organization
  3. DUNS Number (Company must have a DUNS number or obtain one within 5 days of being notified of selection)
  4. Signed by an authorized representative of the company
- (b) Background on the firm and relevant expertise (max 2 pages)
- (c) Past Experience Information/Capability Statement
- (d) Technical Proposal & Management Approach
- (e) Proposed work plan showing how the firm would execute this project including a timeline (max 2 pages)
- (f) Description of relevant projects previously performed by the firm, demonstrating expertise in the subject matter (max 4 pages)
- (g) Contact details for three referees (max 1 page)
- (h) All supporting documentation specified below in the pass/fail evaluation criteria.

### 2. Cost Proposal

Offers must submit a cost proposal. CATALYZE will provide a budget template upon request through EthiopiaMS4G.procurement@thepalladiumgroup.com. The cost proposal consists of:

- (a) Budget in Microsoft Excel with all formulas visible (unlocked)
- (b) Accompanying Word Document with all cost assumptions and explanations

#### Key assumptions

- Budget in USD (payable in ETB)
- All prices are to be inclusive of relevant taxes
- Separate unit cost and number of units
- Break down activity costs into as much detail as possible

The selected offeror will be required to complete the Due Diligence Questionnaire (attachment 1) and provide a DUNS number within 5 days of being notified of selection.

### Submission of Offers

Electronic proposals must be submitted by sending two separate emails, one for technical proposal and one for cost proposal with the RFP number in the subject lines. If submitting in hard copy, the technical proposal and cost proposal must be in separate sealed envelopes. Mark envelopes with the RFP number and offeror's name. Ensure all required documents are attached. The RFP number can be found on the cover page.

Offers received past the deadline stated on the cover page will be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered for award.

### Evaluation and Award Process

Proposals will be evaluated using a best value trade off methodology. This is a three-stage process.

- (1) The first set of criteria is graded on a pass/fail basis. Offerors must meet the following minimum eligibility qualification criteria and provide supporting documentation:

	<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Supporting Documentation</b>
(a)	For Firms: Must be a registered legal entity in Ethiopia for a minimum of one year.  For Individuals: must provide proof of citizenship or legal residency or a valid business visa which permits the individual to work in Ethiopia.	Firms: Copy of certificate or articles and memorandum of associate and Documentation of business registration  Individuals: Copy of passport or other government-issued ID with photo
(b)	For Firms Only: DUNS number	Provide the DUNS number or proof of applying for the DUNS number
(c)	Must not have any active exclusions from the working with the US government ( <a href="http://www.sam.gov">www.sam.gov</a> ), the UN (Sanctions List), or the US Department of the Treasury Office of Foreign Asset Control	N/A– Palladium will conduct a search of these databases as part of the due diligence process
(d)	Company cannot be a foreign government-controlled organization	Submit a certification signed by firm’s legal representative
(e)	Company must not have controlled interest held by a government, government agency, or agent thereof	Submit a certification signed by firm’s legal representative

(2) If these minimum criteria are met, the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage the offer’s technical proposal will be evaluated as follows:

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Documents Evaluated</b>	<b>Points</b>
Legally licensed or registered individual / entity	Copy of certificate or articles and memorandum of association, and or a Consulting License from the relevant authorities and or TIN number.	20%
Past experience in developing similar studies and reports including interviewing key industry informants	List of past projects and or studies performed with outcome	35%
Staff or personnel that exhibit research experience with knowledge in technology and cloud computing	CV of personnel or individual(s) that will develop the study with expertise in IT	35%
Strong ability to communicate effectively and professionally in English	Sample past reports	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100%</b>

(3) The offeror’s cost proposal will be evaluated for:

- Proposed total price, relative to other offers received
- Realism and reasonableness of the work to be performed
- Price reflects a clear understanding of the requirements
- Price is consistent with various elements of the technical proposal
- Compliance with USAID cost principles (select one: Non-profit entities – Cost Principles in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E or For profit entities – Cost Principles in FAR Part 31)

The consultant should present a financial proposal for the assignment which is expected not to exceed \$10,000 USD (inclusive of VAT and all applicable taxes).

Palladium reserves the right to award under this solicitation without further negotiations. The offerors are encouraged to offer their best terms and prices with the original submission.

## **PROCUREMENT INTEGRITY AND ETHICS**

It is Palladium's Policy that no gifts of any kind and of any value be exchanged between vendors/contractors and Palladium personnel. Discovery of the same will be grounds for disqualification of the vendor/contractor from participation in any Palladium's procurements and may result in disciplinary actions against Palladium personnel involved in such discovered transactions.

### **Resulting Award**

This RFP in no way obligates Palladium to award a contract. Palladium may opt to select multiple offers in response to this RFP.

Any contract/purchase order resulting from this solicitation must be signed by both parties in order to be considered valid and in force. All costs associated with, but not limited to, production, preparation and/or delivery of goods or services, including deliveries, accepted by Palladium staff, without a fully executed (signed by both parties) contract/purchase order, are at the vendor's risk only. Palladium shall not pay for any costs, without limitation, associated with production, preparation or delivery of goods and/or services under this or any other contract/purchase order, which has not been signed by both parties.

If your proposal is successful, you will be required to enter into the Company's standard contract for the types of goods or services being provided. In the provision of the Goods and Services, you will be required to comply with the Company's policies, including (without limitation) its Business Partner Code of Conduct and any relevant client terms and conditions. Potential suppliers must also comply with the Company's Business Partner Code of Conduct in the submission of any proposals pursuant to this RFP.

If you are bidding as part of a joint venture, partnership or similar, please make this clear in your submission. Likewise, if you propose to subcontract any part of the goods or services provision, then disclose this fact within your submission. The Company may require additional information from you and approval for subcontracting will not be automatic as subcontractors will be subject to Palladium's Due Diligence process.

### **Attachments**

Attachment 1- Due Diligence Questionnaire

Palladium Business Partner Code of Conduct and Child Protection Guidelines can be downloaded in full at: <http://www.thepalladiumgroup.com/policies> or request through email from [EthiopiaMS4G.procurment@thepalladiumgroup.com](mailto:EthiopiaMS4G.procurment@thepalladiumgroup.com)

## Annex A: Scope of Work

### 1 Scope of Work

#### 1.1.1 Study on Ethiopia's Cloud Computing Services Industry

October 2021

#### 1.1.2 Background

CATALYZE: Market Systems for Growth (MS4G) is a USAID-funded program that supports private enterprise expansion to help drive Ethiopia's future economic growth and prosperity. MS4G intends to foster enterprise-driven growth, especially among private enterprises that have high growth potential and the capacity to Catalyze job creation throughout market systems. In addition, MS4G also improves the business-enabling environment through technical assistance, institutional development, capacity building, and support for commercial, legal, and regulatory reform.

#### 1.1.3 Proposed Study on Ethiopia's Cloud Computing Services Industry

One of MS4G's major mandates is to facilitate investments and mobilize capital for private enterprises in Ethiopia. One of the priority sectors for the program is the technology industry, and as such, MS4G's is interested to learn more about a sub-segment of the technology industry; more specifically the Cloud Computing services in the industry. The study is expected to provide a review of the current landscape of the industry, and determine the supply of services providers, the level of services demand, and nature of cloud computing in Ethiopia and focusing on the immediate market needs and its long-term prospects. To this end, MS4G is interested to perform a research and study on the following related topics:

1. Organizations in the technology, government, NGO and service industry that are currently leveraging cloud computing resources by subscribing to services abroad
2. The nature and size of the current market and the related costs that these establishments are paying, as well as the terms and means of payment
3. The existence of other establishments that are interested in hosting their services in cloud for the first time
4. The factors the above groups are considering while subscribing for such service (availability, reliability, redundancy etc)
5. Factors that would influence these establishments to consider switching to a local service provider, including organizational SLAs and standards



6. The existence of unmet demand size for the target market
7. Analysis of potential cloud service providers or players with plans to enter the market in Ethiopia
8. The estimated market growth rate over the next five years
9. Changes in the regulatory environment that may affect investments in the sector

#### 1.1.4 Key Responsibilities

The consultant will be responsible for the planning and preparation of the report on Ethiopia’s Cloud Computing Services Industry. The assignment is expected to take up to 45 days and include primary research (data collection, survey work, interviews with sector players), and the conceptual framing of topics and issues for the drafting of the final report.

#### 1.1.5 Minimum Qualifications of Consultant

- Legally registered entity or individual that is licensed to do the assignment
- Experience in developing similar studies and in the analysis and research of industry reports and policy
- Experience and evidence of successfully implementing similar assessment studies including surveying and interviewing key industry informants and government officials
- Staff or personnel that exhibit research experience
- Strong ability to communicate effectively and professionally in English

#### 1.1.6 Scope of Work and Methodology

The consultant is expected to:

- Conduct primary research work—through direct interviews, data collection, and possible survey work—on various aspects and sub-segments of Ethiopia’s Cloud Service Industry
- Develop study based on the timeline provided and be able to deliver on time
- Provide updates and progress reports on the study on a weekly basis

#### 1.1.7 Deliverables

<b>Deliverable #</b>	<b>Report and Deliverable</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Payment Amount</b>
1	Inception report highlighting overall structure, approach, content, and framework for study	5 days from award date	10%
2	Undertake primary research via industry interviews, data collection, and survey	15 days from award date	10%
3	First Draft - Prepare initial draft, including key tables, estimates, projections, and preliminary conclusions	25 days from award date	20%
4	Second Draft - Incorporate comments/feedback from reviewers and revise as needed	30 days from award date	25%
5	Final Report - Finalize study and prepare final report	45 days from award date	35%



### 1.1.8 Timeline

The assignment will run from approximately from November 15, 2021 (the expected start date) to December 31, 2021. A 45-day period is anticipated, but this may be extended slightly if required to complete all study activities.

### 1.1.9 Reporting

The consultant will report to the relevant Directors at the CATALYZE –MS4G Ethiopia Office.