

Request for Proposal (RFP)

Subject RFP #:	RFP-CATALYZE-Ethiopia-2022-0264
RFP Issue Date:	March 10th, 2022
Terms of Reference / Specifications:	Food security Value Chain Startup Companies Accelerator Program
Project	Market Systems for Growth (MS4G)
The Company	Palladium International, LLC
Country of Performance	Ethiopia
Closing Date and Time	April 08, 2022 at 11:59PM, Nairobi time (UTC +3)
Question Deadline	March 21, 2022 at 11:59PM, Nairobi time (UTC +3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted at EthiopiaMS4G.procurement@thepalladiumgroup.com To submit question/s please write <u>QUESTION-RFP-CATALYZE-Ethiopia-2022-0264</u> in the email subject line.
Bidders' Conference	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Virtual Bidders' Conference on March 24, 2022, at 11:00AM, Nairobi time (UTC +3) . Register by sending an email to EthiopiaMS4G.procurement@thepalladiumgroup.com To be registered for Bidders' virtual conference please write <u>VBC- RFP-CATALYZE-Ethiopia-2022-0264</u> in the email subject line.
Detail of Submission	Submissions will be accepted: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Electronically: email to EthiopiaMS4G.procurement@thepalladiumgroup.com <input type="checkbox"/> In hard copy (sealed bids)
Offer Validity Period	90 Days

Thank you for your interest in the above procurement. As implementer for the Work Force Development 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.

If you are an incubation/Acceleration centre operating in Ethiopia and have core capabilities in supporting start-up companies especially (but not limited to) Food security sectors, you are hereby invited to submit an application for consideration under the terms and conditions of this Tender as described herein.

Please email your notice of intention to participate in bidders conference prior to the conference date stated above. 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,

MS4G 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.

USAID CATALYZE Ethiopia: Market Systems for Growth (MS4G) is a four-year buy-in to benefit the Ethiopian population, build community resilience, and strengthen rural-urban linkages in the areas of food security, WASH, and COVID-19 economic recovery. MS4G focuses on facilitating access to jobs and sustainable opportunities for women and youth and enterprise resiliency, leading to better employment and food security for individuals and communities. MS4G is designed to provide support to agriculture and WASH enterprises by strengthening the enterprises' support ecosystem not just in Addis Ababa but also in select secondary cities. MS4G invests in developing relationships with private sector players, co-investing in inclusive business models, advisory services, digital solutions, and market-based initiatives that increase the resilience and sustainability of Ethiopian enterprises and employment for women and youth.

Project Background

MS4G developed this concept on the "Accelerator Program" where selected early-stage companies will be provided intensive training, coaching, and follow-up for a period of ten months through a selected accelerator/incubator company. MS4G and the selected implementing partner will set the companies selection criterion with a focus on scalability, innovation, expansion to secondary cities, women empowerment, sectors priority and job creation. At the end of the program, MS4G expects qualified companies to develop the capacity to pitch their business to a potential investor.

The objective of the 'Accelerator Program' is to provide technical support to early-stage companies with innovative and scalable business plans that contribute to workforce development and enterprise growth in Ethiopia. In addition, the program will support the companies in utilizing digital platforms to advance their businesses while contributing to the overall advancement of Ethiopia's digital economy. To this end, MS4G will support a local implementing partner to capacitate startup companies that have the potential to create youth jobs and foster innovation. These innovative solutions will help bridge the mismatch between the demand for high quality jobs and the supply of skilled labor in Addis Ababa and secondary cities. MS4G will select an accelerator for this program to accelerate 50 growth-oriented early-stage companies in ten months period of time. The accelerator program will be focused on growth oriented early-stage businesses engaged in the Food security value chain sector.

Purpose

The purpose of the RFP is to select an accelerator to support growth-oriented startup companies in Ethiopia to increase their performance and value in the market.

A complete scope of work is attached as Annex A.

Type of Contract

Palladium intends to issue pay-for-performance (P4P) subcontracts to the selected offeror.

Anticipated Contract Period of Performance

Contracts will be offered to winning bidders for a period of **10 months**.

Place of Performance

The activities to be performed under this contract will take place in Ethiopia.

Key Deliverable and Payment Schedule

Please refer to the complete Scop of Work in Annex A.

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 X, Y, and Z (max 4 pages)

(g) Contact details for three referees (max 1 page)

(h) Executive summary of project reports for reports from other incubation/Accelerator programs (max 2 pages each)

(i) All supporting documentation specified below in the pass/fail evaluation criteria.

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.

2. Cost Proposal

MS4G does not fully fund programs. Accordingly, MS4G intends to contribute 75% of the total project budget based on the alignment of the accelerator program with MS4Gs objectives. The Accelerator/Incubator and startup companies are required to contribute 25% of the total proposed budget.

The 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 Accelerator should present a Total Project budget proposal for the assignment which is expected not to exceed \$150,000 USD (inclusive of VAT and all applicable taxes). MS4G intends to contribute 75% of the total project budget.

3. Submission of Offers

CATALYZE will provide a budget template upon request through EthiopiaMS4G.procurement@thepalladiumgroup.com or download on CATALYZE website

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

Electronic proposals must be submitted by sending **two separate emails, one for technical proposal and one for cost proposal** as follows:

Technical Proposal submission

ARBP PC01 GL01 TL02 Request for Proposal

Bidders should write **TECHNICAL BID SUBMISSION-RFP-CATALYZE-Ethiopia-2022-0264** in the email subject lines.

Financial Proposal submission

Bidders should write **FINANCIAL BID SUBMISSION-RFP-CATALYZE-Ethiopia-2022-0264** in the email subject line.

The RFP number can also 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.

	Requirements	Supporting Documents
a.	Must be a registered legal entity in Ethiopia for a minimum of one year	Copy of certificate or articles and memorandum of associate
b.	Must not have any active exclusions from the working with the US government (www.sam.gov), the UN (Sanctions List), or the US Department of the Treasury Office of Foreign Asset Control	N/A

- (2) If these minimum criteria are met, the offer’s technical proposal will be evaluated as follows:

Summary of Technical Proposal Evaluation		Score Weight
1	Expertise of Firm/Organization	45%
2	Proposed Methodology, Approach and Implementation Plan	30%
3	Management Structure and Key Personnel (Adequate Technical Experts with the capacity to manage 50 incubates efficiently)	25%
Total		100%

	Evaluation Criteria	Documents Evaluated	Points
1	Expertise of the Firm	Reference	45
a.	Demonstrated experience in helping growth-oriented Startup firms increase their performance including evidence and description of these assignments.	List companies, service and performance and reference	15
b.	Co-working space with internet access	Rent agreement documents and updated utility bills	15
c.	While MS4G is sector agnostic, experience on Food security value chain is preferred;	Reference to the service provided	15
2	Proposed Methodology, Approach and Implementation Plan		30
a.	Approach and tools to diagnose selected startup firms	Check-list and tools to diagnose the companies	20

d.	Workplan	Workplan in Gantt chart	10
3	Key Personnel		25
a.	Proposed team-lead CVs demonstrating at least five years' experience supporting startup firms and related activities	List companies, service and performance and reference	15
b.	CVs of key personnel demonstrating ability to support and carry out the SoW (Project Manager/Team Leader, Senior Expert(s)/Lead Consultant(s) & project staff)	CVs	10
	TOTAL		100

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.

Attachment

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.procurements@thepalladiumgroup.com

ANNEX A: Scope of Work

1. Objective

The objective of the 'Accelerator Program' is to provide technical support to early-stage companies and other businesses engaged on Food security value chain with innovative and scalable business plans that contribute to workforce development enterprise growth and digital economy in Ethiopia. Early stage growth oriented startups are those that have been in operation for at least three years and have a traction record.

At the end of the program the desired outcome of the accelerated startup companies are as follows

- Jobs created
- Digital presence
- Brand developed
- Increase in sales (Minimum 5%)
- Raised investment (optional)
- Gain extensive network with major industry players
- Connected with mentor for continues support
- Number of jobs opportunities created as a result of the acceleration

In addition to the above outcomes MS4G will facilitate technical support to make the business bankable.

Activities: Selected Incubation center will be responsible for the four activities described below.

The Acceleration Program will involve a 10-day structured curriculum and 10--month technical support. The accelerator program center shall have a vast experience in accelerating companies within the Food security value chain. Accordingly, the centers are expected to accelerate 50 growth-oriented companies with at least three years of practical experience and one-year traction record. In addition, the companies must be scaled up to create new youth job opportunities.

A detailed description of the activities and strategies the implementing partner will follow is provided below:

A. Needs assessment

One of the primary activities of the implementing partners is to have a deep understanding of the business ideas of the companies. The partner will use various methods to evaluate and assess the business and technical needs of each company.

- **Pitching session:** The pitching session would enable each business to introduce its business ideas to the implementing partner. This will give the partner an opportunity to assess the confidence of the teams in the chosen business idea/solution and assess their pitching skills.
- **A baseline survey:** Each of the companies will fill out a structured baseline survey to collect data on their respective business ideas and key business progresses. The data collected from the survey will be used to compare with end-line survey to assess progress in business performance at the end of the program.
- **Scheduled one-on-one gap assessment:** The teams will conduct one-on-one meetings with the implementing partner experts to discuss progress in more detail. The objective of these discussions would be to assess how each team has progressed with their respective business ideas (i.e., in terms of prototype development, market traction, business registration, fundraising, and other items). These meetings will support the startups identify their key hurdles in developing their businesses and identify possible support and solution.

The selected companies shall have:

- Knowledge of relevant market and trends
- At least three years of practical experience and one-year traction record
- Engaged in variety of sectors most specifically in Food security.
- Capability to deploy strong analytical aptitude, communication and presentation expertise
- Proof of legally registered documents of formation and establishment

B. Business development training

The startup teams will be trained on the basics of entrepreneurship in a group setting as well as through one-on-one consultations with the selected implementing partner. The topics covered in each session are discussed below in more detail.

Group-based training

- **Business development modules:** The selected implementing partner will deliver a 10-day training based on a well-designed business development curriculum. The modules in the curriculum will cover topics on
 1. Customer Identification and Definition of Customer Pain Points
 2. Market Research
 3. Value Proposition
 4. Prototype Development
 5. Branding Strategy
 6. Logo Building and Website Development
 7. Go-to-Market Strategy
 8. Customer Value and Acquisition Costs
 9. Pricing
 10. Operational Plan
 11. Financial Modeling
 12. Business Plan Development
- **Master Classes:** Experts from different industries will be invited to give classes on relevant business topics such Business revolution enabled by technology, Business strategy and leadership, Effective and Authentic communication, Digital Economy, Building your Brand, and Operational Excellence, etc. These Master Classes are instrumental to build the soft skills of the teams in addition to giving them a real-world perspective on doing business.
- **Workshops:** These include practical sessions where startup teams are provided with the opportunity to work on various aspects of their business including their team roles, prototypes, financial modeling, business plans, and branding guided by the team. These will provide the opportunity to discuss in a group setting individual businesses and therefore to get constructive feedback from peers.
- **Seminars:** These are informative lectures provided on general topics that are outside of the contents of the curriculum, such as emerging technologies and applications.
- **Startup bootcamp:** Provide network and connect startups with every investor in their specific industry. Get them access to the most relevant connections in their industry. These can be by facilitating direct access to international and local investors and major players in their sector to help them scale.

One-on-one support

In addition to the group training described above, the teams will conduct one-on-one consultations with the implementing partner, based on the team's areas of expertise. The aim is for companies to have an in-depth discussion about their business ideas and progresses. The one-on-one technical consultations will cover four key areas:

- **Business plan development:** The companies will be guided in business plan development. This is an ongoing consultation that will commence at an early stage of the acceleration program and will go on until the end of the program.
- **Validated Financial modeling:** This consultation session where the team will learn the basics of their financial projections will start in the middle of the program and will continue until the end.
- **Prototype development:** The support in the development and improvement of their prototypes will take place throughout the program implementation period.
- **Pitch training:** Pitch training will be conducted on a one-on-one basis at the later stage of the program. Prior to the one-on-one support, the startups will be provided with a pitch canvas to guide the preparation of their respective pitch decks. The implementing partner will go through each element of the pitch canvas on one-on-one basis to prepare them for the pitch event that will take place at the end of the incubation program.

C. Mentor Mash: The startup teams are matched with mentors from industries willing to voluntarily mentor the teams in their startup journeys.

MS4G Accelerator program concludes with final pitch challenge event attended by an exclusive list of mentors, investors major industry players and partners. All startups must be ready to pitch their launched product or service to the audience.

Acceptance of Deliverable

Deliverable will be reviewed by the Technical Manager (or his/her design) for completeness before being accepted and approved for payment.

No.	Deliverable	Acceptance Criteria
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of Work plan, inception report and content of the program. 	The report must include implementation plan, timeline and level of effort planned by the incubation center. This is 15-25 pages recommendation and implementation strategies based on a need assessment conducted
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of a Diagnostics report of the startup companies. 	This is detailed diagnostic report of each startup based on the need assessment conducted.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of program final report Achievement of each start up desired result. 	<p>Final performance report should summarize progress against each business' implementation plan, data on revenue, sales, volume, branding and employment for each firm, as well as key learning from implementation.</p> <p>Desired Result: At least two of the following results, of the accelerated startup companies, must be met in order to achieve the desired result.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Minimum 5% Increase of sales, 2. increased export, 3.Jobs created 4.Digitize business and 5.Raised Investment

Payment Period	Deliverable	Percentage of Payment
1 st Installment	Upon Submission of Work plan, inception report and content of the program.	20%
2 nd Installment	Upon submission of a Diagnostics report of the startup companies.	20%
3 rd Installment	<p>Upon approval of the accelerated companies' desired achievement. At least two of the following results, of the accelerated startup companies, must be met in order to achieve the desired result.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.5% Increase of sales, 2. increased export, 3.Jobs created 4.Digitized business and 5.Access to finance <p>Upon approval of the program's final report</p>	60%