

Request for Proposal (RFP)

Subject RFP #:	RFP-CATALYZE-Edu-2024-0118
RFP Issue Date:	June 5, 2024
Terms of Reference / Specifications:	Lead Exposure Assessment and Mitigation Strategies for Early Childhood Development Centers in Gauteng Province, South Africa
Project	CATALYZE Innovative Blended Finance
The Company	Palladium International, LLC
Country of Performance	South Africa
Closing Date and Time	June 28, 2024 at 5:00pm EST
Questions Deadline	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted at catalyze.procurements@thepalladiumgroup.com by June 14, 2024 at 5:00pm EST <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Bidders' Conference	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Details for Submission	Submissions will be accepted: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Electronically: email to catalyze.procurements@thepalladiumgroup.com <input type="checkbox"/> In hard copy (sealed bids): N/A
Offer Validity Period	90 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 arise 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.

I. COMPANY OVERVIEW

Palladium International LLC is a leading global consulting firm that manages nearly \$2 billion in donor-funded projects in more than 90 countries while simultaneously providing management consulting advice to private sector firms and local and national governments throughout the world. It is well-known for its work in private sector development, market systems, innovative/inclusive finance, and the formation of public-private alliances. Palladium adds value by aligning business interests with development objectives, leveraging donor resources with commercial assets and vice versa. This market-driven approach ensures interventions are impactful, inclusive, and address the root causes of today's biggest development challenges while also being sustainable beyond the life of a particular donor-funded program.

II. PROJECT AND BUY-IN OVERVIEW

The USAID CATALYZE EduFinance Activity develops private sector partnerships to facilitate innovations in financing and service delivery that increase access to low-cost, quality education. CATALYZE EduFinance Africa mobilizes a blended finance approach through the strategic use of USAID funds to improve and sustain learning outcomes for children and youth across sub-Saharan Africa, particularly those most vulnerable, and address the substantial global funding gap in education.

The Lead-Safe Early Childhood Care and Education South Africa Activity ('Lead-Safe ECCE South Africa Activity') is part of the USAID CATALYZE EduFinance Early Childhood Care and Education Family of Investments, which aims to enhance learning and development outcomes for children aged 0 to 6 and improve the livelihoods of women. This specific Activity concentrates on reducing lead exposure in early childhood development (ECD) centers across South Africa. By aligning with the broader CATALYZE objectives, it seeks to enhance learning outcomes for vulnerable children by mitigating lead exposure, a known hazard to children's health and cognitive development.

The approach involves partnering with South African research organizations to develop and implement lead exposure assessment protocols for ECD centers. Through these partnerships, awareness programs will be conducted to educate ECD leaders on lead exposure risks and improve cleaning practices. Additionally, private partners will be engaged to provide lead-safe materials for ECD centers, potentially supported by affordable financing options to ensure long-term sustainability.

Overall, the Lead-Safe ECCE South Africa Activity aims to offer scalable solutions for lead exposure mitigation in South African ECD centers, with a focus on developing testing protocols, training resources, and study results in collaboration with government partners. The mobilization of private capital ensures the financial sustainability of the project, reducing dependence on government subsidies. Lessons learned from this endeavor will inform USAID's broader lead mitigation efforts and shape future initiatives in sub-Saharan Africa.

III. Purpose

The purpose of this RFP is to engage a research partner for the Lead-Safe ECCE South Africa Activity, aimed at addressing lead exposure in ECD centers in Gauteng Province, South Africa. The selected partner will undertake comprehensive lead exposure assessments within 10-30 ECD centers, encompassing testing of various sources such as dust, dirt, paint, cookware, and toys. These assessments will be conducted at two points in time to ensure thorough evaluation. Subsequently, the partner will produce scientifically rigorous reports presenting the assessment findings and develop concise briefs tailored for ECD center managers and community members. Furthermore, the partner will collaborate closely with Activity partners and government stakeholders to devise effective strategies for mitigating lead exposure based on the study results and recommendations. Through these concerted efforts, this initiative aims to safeguard the health and well-being of children attending ECD centers in South Africa from the harmful effects of lead exposure.

A complete scope of work is attached as Annex 1.

IV. Type of Contract

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

V. Anticipated Contract Period of Performance

The subcontract will be for a period of 14 months and is expected to start in August 2024.

VI. Place of Performance

The activities to be performed under this contract will take place in Gauteng Province, South Africa.

VII. Key Deliverables and Timeline

The Subcontractor will deliver the following deliverables:

Deliverable #	Deliverable	Due Date	Payment Percentage
1	Implementation Workplan: Develop a detailed implementation workplan outlining the tasks, timeline, and responsibilities for executing the project. This plan will serve as a roadmap for the entire project duration.	2 weeks after award	10% of the total subcontract amount
2	Assessment Protocol Finalized: Develop the assessment protocol detailing the methodology, procedures, and tools for conducting lead exposure assessments at ECD centers and submit to local IRB.	At least 1 month before pre-test assessment	20% of the total subcontract amount
3	Lead Exposure Assessment at ECD Centers (#1): Conduct lead exposure assessments at ECD centers according to the finalized protocol.	October 31, 2024	20% of the total subcontract amount
4	Field Work Debrief Presentation: Hold a debrief session with the Lead-Safe ECCE South Africa Activity team within 1 month after finalizing data collection. Present key findings, challenges encountered, and any adjustments needed for the subsequent phases of the project. Submit a final PowerPoint presentation incorporating any feedback or recommendations discussed during the session.	Within 1 month after data collection finalization	2.5% of the total subcontract amount
5	Results Briefs: Prepare brief reports summarizing the key findings and recommendations from the lead exposure assessments conducted.	Within 1 month after data collection	10% of the total subcontract amount
6	Community Engagement: For each ECD center in the sample, host one event where families are invited to bring dirt/soil and a commonly used item to ECD centers to be tested.	July 31, 2025	7.5% of the total subcontract amount

7	Lead Exposure Assessment at ECD Centers (#2): Conduct a second round of lead exposure assessments at ECD centers	July 31, 2025	20% of the total subcontract amount
8	Final Comprehensive Report with Findings and Recommendations: Compile all findings, insights, and recommendations into a comprehensive final report. This report should provide a detailed analysis of both phases of lead exposure assessments and offer actionable recommendations. In addition to a full report, a brief should be prepared to summarize the findings.	Within 1 month after data collection	10% of the total subcontract amount

VIII. 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

The presentation of the proposal must be carried out taking into account the format attached as Attachment 1 of this RFP: Technical Proposal Format. The information provided in this form must be truthful and will be considered as a sworn statement for CATALYZE to evaluate the offeror's capacity to be a creditor of the subcontract. The content of this format is structured as follows:

1. Institutional information
2. Technical capabilities and qualifications
 - 2.1 Key Personnel
 - 2.2 Experience
 - 2.3 Methodological approach
- 3 Local (Non-U.S.) Company Data Sheet
- 4 Palladium Business Partner Code of Conduct
- 5 Certifications: (1) Certification Regarding Debarment and Suspension, (2) Certification Regarding Lobbying, (3) Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing, (4) Certification of Compliance with Laws and the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act.

2. Cost Proposal

Offerors must submit a detailed cost proposal. CATALYZE will provide a budget template posted with this RFP or the offeror can request it through catalyze.procurements@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
- 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
- Offeror should budget for:
 - Defense Base Act (DBA) insurance in accordance with FAR 52.228-3, as applicable.

The selected offeror will be required to complete the Due Diligence Questionnaire (attachment 3) and provide a UEI number within 5 days of being notified of selection.

IX. Submission of Offers

Electronic proposals must be sent to the emails indicated on the cover and include the RFP number in the subject lines: RFP-CATALYZE-Edu-2024-0118. Please ensure all required documents are attached.

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

X. 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:

	Requirement	Supporting Documentation
(a)	Must be a registered legal entity in South Africa for a minimum of three years	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
I	They must have the Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) issued through the System for Awards Management (SAM.gov), official website of the United States Government, or a commitment to request it within a period of no more than 5 days to obtain this UEI, if selected (it is free and easy to obtain).(*)	UEI number or letter with the commitment to request it within a period of no more than 5 days if selected

(*) Note: GSA has developed a useful interactive PDF tool that guides through the most common scenarios about UEI (https://www.fsd.gov/sys_attachment.do?sys_id=af05f8fb1b44851006b09796bc4bcb6d).

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

Evaluation Criteria	Documents Evaluated	Points
Key personnel (20 points): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The offeror must designate key personnel, including a team leader, with relevant experience performing tasks similar to that required in this SOW. The CV of key personnel, including the team leader, must be included. The key personnel will be graded based on the amount and quality of relevant experience to this SOW. 	Section 2.1 Key Personnel of the Technical Proposal Format (Attachment 1 of the RFP)	20
Past experience (40 points), reflected through:	Section 2.2 Past Experience of the Technical Proposal Format (Attachment 1 of the RFP)	40

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience conducting rigorous testing in the environment using reliable and valid methods • Experience writing reports for both scientific and general audiences. • Experience liaising or advising government stakeholders. • Experience in lead exposure assessment applicable to the South African context. 		
<p>Methodological Approach (40 points):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In response to the RFP, the offeror must demonstrate a clear understanding of the scope of work, indicate the methodology for conducting lead exposure assessment including quality control processes, indicate how they will leverage results to develop reports for both scientific and general audiences, and describe how they will apply the findings to liaise or advise government stakeholders. • Indicate access to equipment required for environmental lead testing, both in the field and laboratory including processes for calibration / quality control 	Section 2.3 Methodological Approach of the Technical Proposal Format (Attachment 1 of the RFP)	40
TOTAL		100

(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)

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.

XI. 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.

XII. 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.

XIII. Attachments

Please review the additional documentation and proposed contracts terms and conditions which should be given consideration when preparing your proposal. By submitting your bid, you will certify that that you are in agreement with the contract terms and conditions as included in this solicitation and that all prices include all aspects of the required compliance with the terms and conditions of the proposed contract.

Attachment 1- Technical Proposal Format

Attachment 2- Budget Template

Attachment 3- Due Diligence Questionnaire

Attachment 4- FFATA Form (will be required only for successful offeror, where applicable – included for awareness only)

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 Catalyze.procurements@thepalladiumgroup.com

Annex 1: Scope of Work

SCOPE OF WORK

Lead Exposure Assessment and Mitigation Strategies for Early Childhood Development Centers in Gauteng Province, South Africa

A. COMPANY OVERVIEW

Palladium International LLC is a leading global consulting firm that manages nearly \$2 billion in donor-funded projects in more than 90 countries while simultaneously providing management consulting advice to private sector firms and local and national governments throughout the world. It is well-known for its work in private sector development, market systems, innovative/inclusive finance, and the formation of public-private alliances. Palladium adds value by aligning business interests with development objectives, leveraging donor resources with commercial assets and vice versa. This market-driven approach ensures interventions are impactful, inclusive, and address the root causes of today's biggest development challenges while also being sustainable beyond the life of a particular donor-funded program.

B. PROJECT AND BUY-IN OVERVIEW

The USAID CATALYZE EduFinance Activity develops private sector partnerships to facilitate innovations in financing and service delivery that increase access to low-cost, quality education. CATALYZE EduFinance Africa mobilizes a blended finance approach through the strategic use of USAID funds to improve and sustain learning outcomes for children and youth across sub-Saharan Africa, particularly those most vulnerable, and address the substantial global funding gap in education.

The Lead-Safe Early Childhood Care and Education South Africa Activity ('Lead-Safe ECCE South Africa Activity') is part of the USAID CATALYZE EduFinance Early Childhood Care and Education Family of Investments, which aims to enhance learning and development outcomes for children aged 0 to 6 and improve the livelihoods of women. This specific Activity concentrates on reducing lead exposure in Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers across South Africa. By aligning with the broader CATALYZE objectives, it seeks to enhance learning outcomes for vulnerable children by mitigating lead exposure, a known hazard to children's health and cognitive development.

The approach involves partnering with South African research organizations to develop and implement lead exposure assessment protocols for ECD centers. Through these partnerships, awareness programs will be conducted to educate ECD leaders on lead exposure risks and improve cleaning practices. Additionally, private partners will be engaged to provide lead-safe materials for ECD centers, potentially supported by affordable financing options to ensure long-term sustainability.

Overall, the Lead-Safe ECCE South Africa Activity aims to offer scalable solutions for lead exposure mitigation in South African ECD centers, with a focus on developing testing protocols, training resources, and study results in collaboration with government partners. The mobilization of private capital ensures the financial sustainability of the project, reducing dependence on government subsidies. Lessons learned from this endeavor will inform USAID's broader lead mitigation efforts and shape future initiatives in sub-Saharan Africa.

C. BACKGROUND

The Lead-Safe ECCE South Africa Activity aims to assess sources of lead exposure in ECD centers in Gauteng Province, South Africa. Lead exposure is a complex issue in South Africa, with multiple sources of exposure present in communities. Although the acceptable concentration of lead in paint has been reduced in recent years, many commercial and residential buildings still contain lead paint, so it remains a common source of exposure. In addition, many items specifically relevant to children such as playground equipment, toys (e.g., wooden building blocks), and school equipment (e.g., crayons) have been identified as containing paint with very elevated lead

levels (up to 145,000 µg/g).^{1,2} Lead exposure also comes through environmental sources such as cottage industry activity (e.g., spray painting cars or furniture), subsistence fishing, battery recycling, mining, cookware, and other sources such as cosmetics and medicines. The specific sources of lead exposure differ by community, but research has clearly identified that poorer communities and those associated with apartheid segregation policies carry a heavier burden.³

Previous research has demonstrated that there are high concentrations of blood lead levels among children in the Gauteng area, but specifics about the prevalence of different sources of lead exposure for children attending ECD centres is unknown. Without a detailed understanding of how children are being exposed to lead in their ECD environments, caretakers and regulators cannot take concrete steps to reduce exposure and improve the safety of children's care and educational environments. This scope of work aims to identify the most common sources of lead exposure for children aged 0 – 6 attending community ECD centers.

This Activity will leverage existing CATALYZE EduFinance activities implemented with Kaizenvest in Gauteng Province, which are working to improve access to finance for ECD centers and deliver new innovations to improve teaching and learning in ECD centers. Lead-Safe ECD South Africa will connect successful offerors with a pre-selected group of ECD centres that are willing to participate in the study. Leveraging the results of the first ECD center assessment, Lead Safe ECCE South Africa will be engaging a partner to develop training and guidance materials to share with ECD center workers to support reductions in lead exposure for young children. Lead-Safe ECCE South Africa will also be coordinating with private partners to access and distribute lead-safe cleaning kits and replacement materials to support removal and replacement of hazardous materials from ECD centers.

D. OBJECTIVE

In line with the above-mentioned background, Lead-Safe ECCE South Africa Activity seeks to contract a research partner to conduct lead exposure assessment and develop exposure mitigation strategies for ECD centers in Gauteng Province, South Africa.

E. TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Subcontractor's work will be divided into three domains. The Subcontractor must complete the following tasks.

I. Testing of Lead Sources in ECD Centers

- **Scope of Testing:** Conduct a thorough examination of potential lead sources within ECD centers. This includes but is not limited to assessing lead levels present in dust, soil, paint, cookware, playground equipment, and toys used within these centers. In addition to direct testing, some questionnaires on proximity of the centers to potential lead pollution sources such as autobody workshops, battery recycling, or other hazards and cleaning practices within the centers should be included.
- **Sampling:** Select 10-30 ECD centers for testing. Offerors should propose an appropriate sample size considering factors such as geographic distribution, demographic diversity, and statistical significance. Testing will occur at two points in time, around October 2024 and July 2025, to capture any temporal variations in lead exposure.

¹ Mathee, Singh, Mogotsi, et al. (2009). Lead-based paint on playground equipment in public children's parks in Johannesburg, Tshwane and Ekurhuleni. *South African Medical Journal*, 99(11): 819-821.

² Mathee, Röllin, Levin, Naik (2006). Lead in paint: Three decades later and still a hazard for African children? *Environmental Health Perspectives*, 115(3):321-322.

³ Mathee, Naicker & Schirnding (2019). The role of the South African Medical Research Council in reducing lead exposure and preventing lead poisoning in South Africa. *South African Medical Journal*, 109(S25-S29).

- **Community Engagement:** For each sampled ECD center, offerors would host a community engagement activity where families are invited to bring dirt/soil and a commonly used item (e.g., cookware or a favorite toy) to be tested. These events are focused on awareness raising around lead exposure risks for children.

II. Communicating Study Results

- **Scientific Reports:** Create one final comprehensive scientific report detailing the findings from the assessments conducted in at the two timepoints. The report will provide in-depth analysis, including quantitative data on lead levels in the environment, potential sources of contamination, and any associated risks to children’s health.
- **Results Briefs:** Develop concise and accessible briefs summarizing the key findings from the first environmental assessment at baseline as well as endline findings. These briefs will be tailored for ECD center managers and community members, providing feasible, actionable insights and recommendations in an easily understandable format.
- **Dissemination Meetings:** Conduct meetings with ECD center managers and community members to explain and discuss study findings.

III. Collaborate with Partners and Government Stakeholders

- **Partnership Engagement:** Engage with other Lead Safe ECD South Africa partners, specifically those leading on social and behavior change interventions related to lead exposure risk reduction and private partners supporting the replacement or modification of ECD centers, to formulate effective strategies for mitigating lead exposure in ECD centers. This collaboration will involve sharing insights from the assessments and soliciting input on best practices and interventions.
- **Government Liaison:** Interface with government stakeholders to communicate the study results and recommendations. This interaction aims to facilitate policy discussions and actions aimed at addressing lead exposure in ECD centers at a systemic level. It involves presenting evidence-based findings and advocating for policy changes or interventions to safeguard children’s health and development.
- **ECD Stakeholder Engagement:** Interface with other ECD stakeholders, including NGOs, relevant research groups (e.g., DataDrive2030) and academic institutions to formulate effective strategies for mitigating lead exposure in ECD centers. Engage with relevant stakeholders, including activity partners, NGOs, and academic institutions, to formulate effective strategies for mitigating lead exposure in ECD centers. This collaboration will involve sharing insights from the assessments and collective advocacy activities.

F. DELIVERABLES

The subcontractor will deliver the following deliverables:

Deliverable #	Deliverable	Due Date	Payment Percentage
1	Implementation Workplan: Develop a detailed implementation workplan outlining the tasks, timeline, and responsibilities for executing the project. This plan will serve as a roadmap for the entire project duration.	2 weeks after award	10% of the total subcontract amount
2	Assessment Protocol Finalized: Develop the assessment protocol detailing the methodology, procedures, and tools for conducting lead exposure assessments at ECD centers and submit to local IRB.	At least 1 month before pre-test assessment	20% of the total subcontract amount
3	Lead Exposure Assessment at ECD Centers (#1): Conduct lead exposure	October 31, 2024	20% of the total subcontract amount

	assessments at ECD centers according to the finalized protocol.		
4	Field Work Debrief Presentation: Hold a debrief session with the Lead-Safe ECCE South Africa Activity team within 1 month after finalizing data collection. Present key findings, challenges encountered, and any adjustments needed for the subsequent phases of the project. Submit a final PowerPoint presentation incorporating any feedback or recommendations discussed during the session.	Within 1 month after data collection finalization	2.5% of the total subcontract amount
5	Results Briefs: Prepare brief reports summarizing the key findings and recommendations from the lead exposure assessments conducted.	Within 1 month after data collection	10% of the total subcontract amount
6	Community Engagement: For each ECD center in the sample, host one event where families are invited to bring dirt/soil and a commonly used item to ECD centers to be tested.	July 31, 2025	7.5% of the total subcontract amount
7	Lead Exposure Assessment at ECD Centers (#2): Conduct a second round of lead exposure assessments at ECD centers	July 31, 2025	20% of the total subcontract amount
8	Final Comprehensive Report with Findings and Recommendations: Compile all findings, insights, and recommendations into a comprehensive final report. This report should provide a detailed analysis of both phases of lead exposure assessments and offer actionable recommendations. In addition to a full report, a brief should be prepared to summarize the findings.	Within 1 month after data collection	10% of the total subcontract amount

G. REQUIREMENTS

- Be legally registered in South Africa for at least three years.
- Experience conducting rigorous testing of lead in the environment using reliable and valid methods
- Experience writing reports for both scientific and general audiences.
- Experience communicating results and feasible, effective recommended interventions to general audiences.
- Experience liaising, advising or lobbying government stakeholders.
- Access to equipment required for environmental lead testing, both in the field and laboratory.

H. MONITORING

The Subcontractor will be overseen by the Washington, D.C.-based Lead-Safe ECCE South Africa Activity Lead or her designee.

I. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE AND DELIVERY TIMING

The work will have a maximum duration of 14 months from the signing of the subcontract. The subcontract will be signed between Palladium International, LLC and the selected firm.

J. PLACE OF PERFORMANCE

The work will occur in Gauteng Province, South Africa. The subcontractor must be available for, at a minimum, monthly calls with the Washington, D.C. based Lead-Safe ECCE South Africa Activity team.

K. COPYRIGHT AND PROPERTY RIGHTS

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