

Accelerating Higher Education Expansion and Development Project, Ministry of Education

Terms of Reference

Individual Consultancy to provide expertise for the improvement of English language skills activities under the AHEAD Operation

BACKGROUND

The development of the higher education sector is of central importance to enable Sri Lanka to develop from a Lower-Middle Income Country (LMIC) to an Upper Middle-Income Country (UMIC). Recognizing this, the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) and the World Bank have agreed, as part of the Bank's Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) FY17-FY20, to support the higher education sector through a Bank-funded Accelerating Higher Education Expansion and Development (AHEAD) operation. The Bank funds allocated in the CPS for the AHEAD is USD 100 million.

THE AHEAD PROGRAM

The Accelerating Higher Education Expansion and Development (AHEAD) operation is organized into two components. The first is a Program Component that supports the national Higher Education Development Program (HEDP). The second is a systems strengthening, capacity building and technical assistance component that will assist GoSL to strengthen the higher education sector and achieve the objectives of the AHEAD program component. This second component will also cover monitoring and evaluation, policy analyses, program coordination and communication.

The implementing agency is the Ministry of Education (ME). The ME will be assisted at the national level by the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the Sri Lanka Institute for Advanced Technological Education (SLIATE). The Operations Monitoring and Support Unit (OMST) of the ME will coordinate and support all AHEAD activities between the ME, UGC, SLIATE, Universities and Advanced Technological Institutes (ATIs).

Under the English Language Skills Enhancement (ELSE) Results Area of the AHEAD program, there are ELSE grants to increase the English language skills of students to enable a maximum number of graduates to obtain employment in the formal private sector and, for those employed in the public sector, to perform well. These grants are competitively awarded and are linked to the Enhancing Learning Teaching and Assessment (ELTA) grants.

KEY TASKS OF THE CONSULTANT

The main duties and responsibilities of the consultant for English Language Skills Enhancement are to:

- Provide academic and operational leadership for the ELSE activities of the AHEAD.
- Coordinate, monitor and facilitate, through the university Operations Technical Secretariats (OTSs) and the grant coordinators, the implementation of the ELSE grants.
- Organize activities such as workshops and conferences, where necessary or relevant, to strengthen the implementation of the ELSE grants and enable grant winners to present findings and disseminate results.
- Identify areas where the overall policy environment for the achievement of the ELSE objectives can be further strengthened and, in consultation with the World Bank, collaborate with relevant

GoSL agencies and private sector institutions to develop the enabling environment for university teaching, learning and assessment that can produce graduates with good employment prospects in the private sector.

- Manage staff and consultants working on the ELSE activities in the OMST.
- Recruit and manage resource persons and technical assistants to support ELTA-ELSE activities in the OMST.
- Participate in regular discussions and monitoring meetings with the World Bank. Send and process the requests for no objection with the World Bank for the ELSE activities.
- Provide progress updates every quarter to the Director of the OMST and the World Bank.
- Provide progress reports and participate in the activities of the OMST for the bi-annual World Bank supervision and implementation support missions.
- Facilitate studies and surveys to monitor and evaluate the benefits of the ELSE Grants.
- Undertake research and/or promote innovation in his/her academic field.
- Collaborate with the World Bank on research and publications related to higher education in general and the ELSE Grants in particular.

SCHEDULE

The service is initially for a period of 12 months beginning March 15, 2022. Performance evaluation reviews will be organized by the Director OMST. The World Bank will provide feedback on performance to the Director OMST. The position is renewable, subject to satisfactory performance until project completion on June 30, 2023.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The prospective consultant should be currently serving as an academic in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) approved by the Ministry of Education. The upper age limit of the prospective consultant should not exceed 63 years on 01/03/2022.

He/she should be a Senior Lecturer or above with a specialization in the Teaching of English as a Second Language (TESL) and possess a PhD in Applied Linguistics, TESL, or a related field. He/she should have at least 10 years of experience in teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) in tertiary contexts of which at least 03 years should be after obtaining the PhD.

Preference will be given to the following:

- a Experience in foreign-funded projects of the government in a capacity of procurement specialist, consultant, or equivalent grade or above
- b Administrative experience in the academic field
- c Research and publications related to Teaching English as a Second Language and/or related fields
- d IT literacy

PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES

- Ability to interact with academics and administrative staff in the university system.
- Ability to interact with government officials.
- Ability to interact with development partners such as the World Bank.
- Ability to work with and be a partner of a team of diverse disciplinary backgrounds.
- Ability to work efficiently, and to meet deadlines.
- Strong communication and good interpersonal relations.
- Ability to speak, read and write fluent English, and produce project reports in English.

REMUNERATION

The selected consultant will receive the consolidated salary equivalent to his/her position in the HEI approved by the Ministry of Education and an allowance from AHEAD.

FACILITIES PROVIDED BY THE AHEAD

The holder of the position would be entitled to the following facilities:

- An office in the OMST with equipment including a computer/laptop and docking station, telecommunication services, and access to printing, photocopying, and scanning equipment.
- Transport facilities could be provided by the AHEAD subject to the project requirement and availability of vehicles from the place of residence to the OMST and back to the residence.