



DIGITAL MALAWI ACCELERATION PROJECT

PROJECT NUMBER: P505095

GRANT NUMBER: IDA-E338-MW

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND SCOPE OF SERVICES FOR A DIGITAL INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP (TECH HUBS) MANAGER

1 Background

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is now globally recognized as an essential tool in promoting competitiveness, job creation, sustainable development, and overall poverty reduction. A combination of widespread access to broadband and a robust ICT services ecosystem can offer a powerful platform for reducing poverty, improving human development and increasing government transparency and efficiency. ICTs have the potential to transform business and government - driving entrepreneurship, innovation and economic growth and breaking down barriers of distance and cost in the delivery of services.

In recognition of the critical role that ICTs plays in fostering socio-economic development and empowering the poor, the Government of Malawi secured a loan from the World Bank to implement an ICT Project, the Digital Malawi Acceleration Project (DMAP). The line Ministry and owner of the Project is the Ministry of Information and Digitalization (MoID) whereas the lead implementation agency for the project is the Public Private Partnership Commission (PPPC). Other stakeholders include Ministry of Education, MAREN, the National Registration Bureau. Ministry of Lands, and the Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA) and others.

2. The Digital Malawi Acceleration Project

The Project comprises the following components:

1. Component 1: Affordable broadband and secure data hosting.
2. Component 2: Interoperable and secure data platforms.
3. Component 3: High impact digital services and productive digital usage.
4. Component 4: Project management.

2.1 Digital Skills and Innovations under DMAP - US \$10 Million (US \$5 Million each for Phase I and II)

The Digital Malawi Foundations Project, the preceding project to DMAP, provided funding to 10 tech hubs across the country and trained over 19,000 women, youths, and the vulnerable in digital literacy, advanced digital skills (such as AI and Drones), digital entrepreneurship, and supported internships and other activities.

Under DMAP, Government will expand support to the tech hubs through a further round of competitively awarded performance-based grants, disbursed in tranches with agreed targets for offering higher-level ICT skills, digital entrepreneurship, and development of digitally enabled solutions that contribute to climate mitigation and adaptation; financial and social inclusion; and other areas.

The objective of the Digital Skills and Innovation subcomponent 3.1 under component 3 is to help address Malawi's digital literacy and advanced ICT skills gaps, strengthen the digital innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem, and encourage job creation, entrepreneurship, and creativity, particularly for youth and women. By raising the level of basic digital literacy in Malawi encouraging the development of a larger pool of advanced ICT professionals and supporting digital entrepreneurship and innovation, this subcomponent aims to empower citizens and small businesses to utilize ICTs to access online services and increase their economic opportunities, encourage growth of the digital economy and help launch new digital startups and investment by leading tech/IT firms.

The sub-component will seek to establish partnerships to leverage the resources and expertise of global and regional tech companies, foundations, and innovation networks to attract new skills development and entrepreneurship programs in Malawi. To achieve the above objectives, a series of activities are planned to include support to hubs through competitive grant awards which can be utilized to scale up operations to serve more digital entrepreneurs and expand service offerings.

One of the key objectives of this activity is to leverage partnerships and other support for skills development and innovation to promote digital inclusion- targeting youth and disadvantaged or disconnected populations, particularly women. In this regard, private

capital mobilization (PCM) through angel investors, financial institutions loans, and other private sources of capital will play a critical role in the Digital Skills and Innovations sub-component especially.

2.2 Sub-grants

DMAP will also initiate a sub-grants program (matching grants) for digital entrepreneurs of up to US\$100,000 for around 20 grants to digitally enabled startups and high-growth firms, including those that work in addressing climate change-induced disasters. The program will be administered by the Public Private Partnership Commission (PPPC) in collaboration with the tech hubs under the overall supervision of the World Bank and will ensure continuity with other aspects of DMAP. Those firms and entrepreneurs receiving grants will be tracked over time to identify what factors contribute to their success, so that these learnings can be built into future phases, and the number of jobs created will be closely monitored.

3. Aim of the Assignment

The Public Private Partnership Commission is responsible for procurement and financial management of the Project, and it would like to ensure that sub-component 3.1: Digital Skills and Digital Literacy is implemented according to the applicable rules, regulations and directives. This requirement also includes best international practice in terms of digital skills and innovations investment programs.

To strengthen the capacity for DMAP PIU, the Public Private Partnership Commission wishes to recruit a Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship development (Tech Hubs) Manager.

This position will be tenable in Blantyre.

4. Scope of Work

The Tech Hubs Manager will lead the development and implementation of the project grants manual which is the lead document for the administration of grants to the innovation and entrepreneurship sector. Working through tech hubs, the project will provide entrepreneurship grants, subgrants, to youth and women entrepreneurs engaged in digital innovation. The project will also provide grants for tech hubs and other players against specific activities or requests such as holding innovation and entrepreneurship sector events, proof of concept activities, implementing digitisation activities for public sector repositories, and carrying out small system implementation/application development under DMAP. In a nutshell, the Tech Hubs

Manager will be responsible for managing all aspects of the digital skills development sub-component of DMAP, specifically pertaining to the selection of innovation grant beneficiaries, approval of applications and proposals for grants from various players, approval of work plans and budgets submitted by grant activity implementers, monitoring implementation of the approved activities, receiving reports from grant recipients and other implementers, and overseeing financial and procurement audits carried out by the project implementation unit, PPPC internal auditors and PPPC external auditors for project-funded activities.

The specific functions of the Digital Innovations and Entrepreneurship development Manager are as follows:

1. **Operational leadership of Subcomponent on digital skills, innovation and entrepreneurship support:** Under the direction of the DMAP Project Manager, take leadership and accountability of the implementation of project funded activities in support of digital skills, innovation, and entrepreneurship, in collaboration with stakeholders. This will include, inter alia:
 - a. **Grants Manual:** Develop, regularly update as necessary, and submit for comments and approval the DMAP grants manual, which will outline clear policies, operational procedures (selection and prioritization criteria, scoring, including gender and environmental sustainability aspects), monitoring & evaluation (including on jobs and with gender disaggregation), fiduciary, procurement aspects, etc. as well as all the relevant documentation and templates for the implementation of the digital skills and innovation component;
 - b. **Operations Documentation:** Develop and finalize all operational and contractual documentation for execution of the sub-component and supervise contracting management and implementation. This documentation will include, among others, annual work plans and budgets for the subcomponent, other documents such as requests for expressions of interest, calls for proposals, terms of reference, etc. to ensure smooth execution of the subcomponent, as well as supervision of implementation including reviewing submissions and milestones,

and proactively resolving issues encountered. The Manager will ensure all operational documentation will be clearly captured and stored for access, communication and audits. The Manager will participate in all supervision missions preparing clear documentation of progress and issues to be resolved for the subcomponent including the latest indicators.

- c. **Grant coordination and oversight:** Initiate development and management of a monthly coordination mechanism (such as monthly meetings) in the administration of Tech Hub/innovation grants and matching grants as defined in the DMAP's Grants Manual. Track the amount of funds contracted and disbursed against budget/work plan projections.
- d. **Grants Committee:** Serve as a secretary of the Grants Committee in line with the Grants Manual, ensuring equitable and transparent attribution of funds, recording of committee minutes, and communication of relevant documentation to the World Bank for No Objections. This role will also entail ensuring that audit recommendations are enforced.
- e. **Audits and tracking of the subcomponent:** Ensure fiduciary audits of grant beneficiaries are carried out, with appropriate follow ups, verifying that fund usage aligns with World Bank and DMAP guidelines. Conduct close tracking of subcomponent indicators of digital skills programs, tracking job creation, startup growth, and gender inclusion. Provide inputs for related project indicators, such as: people enrolled in digital skills training programs supported by the project (number) and Graduates of advanced digital skills training programs (number).
- f. Oversee **e-waste recycling initiatives** in partnership with tech hubs and relevant safeguards officers, promoting environmental sustainability and job creation

2. **Strategic partnership building, communications and liaison on the subcomponent.** This will include:

- a. **Stakeholder communication:** Establish and maintain structured, transparent, and timely communication channels with grant beneficiaries and all relevant stakeholders: Government, regional and global organizations, the World Bank

and other sectoral stakeholders. Developing “success stories” and case studies based on the experience on individual entrepreneurs and how they benefit from the program.

- b. **Community of Practice:** Develop a community of practice database based on a network of existing grant beneficiaries and members of the Tech Hub community in the country and across the borders. Ensure the database is dynamic, updated regularly, and integrated with digital collaboration platforms. Facilitate tech hub coordination and collaboration through hosting of common events, such as meetings, training courses conferences and workshops. Include hybrid/virtual collaboration opportunities to maximize participation from remote locations, as well as international speakers and connections.
- c. **Partnerships:** Establishing Partnerships with a variety of development partners, private sector players (local and international), NGOs and academia. This will require follow up with possible partners and prepare funding and partnership proposals as needed, including raising additional funds from donors, private sector and development partners interested in supporting the innovators in Malawi. Research and identify key partnership opportunities in support of DMAP project implementation and its ICT skills component. Prepare and ensure signature of necessary documentation (such as MoUs, as an example) needed to establish formal and informal partnerships. Brief management on partnership opportunities and prepare talking points and communication materials for management as needed. Maintaining key relationships, develop outreach campaign and build various partnerships for the DMAP amongst its various stakeholders including Government Agencies, Parliament, donors (e.g. bilateral, multi-lateral and Silicon Valley), etc.;
- d. **Representation:** Regularly present at local and international fora, articulating the value proposition for the project, promoting its early successes and developing partnership opportunities in connection with activities funded under DMAP.

5. Qualification Requirements

The Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development (Tech Hubs) Manager shall have a very strong project management profile, and the demonstrated ability to effectively advance complex development projects with various stakeholders and counterparts. The Manager will also have the demonstrated ability to develop and manage partnerships with high profile stakeholders, a strong understanding of the field of ICT and Innovation/Entrepreneurship ecosystem in Malawi and ability to communicate using various channels (print, electronic and social media).

- Academically, the candidate shall be qualified to at least a Bachelor's Degree level in any relevant field in ICT such as computer science, information technology, telecommunication, information systems, business, etc. A relevant Master's Degree in areas such as ICT, Management, Business will be an added advantage.
- A minimum of 3 years in project management.
- A minimum of 3 years of relevant experience in the areas of innovation, skills development and entrepreneurship support.
- The candidate shall have excellent communication skills in both written and spoken English, ability to clearly articulate the value proposition of the Digital Malawi Acceleration project and key messages.
- Good interpersonal and strategic management skills are a must.
- The candidate must be able to demonstrate impeccable integrity.

6. Duration of Contract and Level of Effort

The Digital Innovations (Tech Hubs) Manager will be recruited for a period of one year, with a possibility of extensions, based on satisfactory performance, for up to 4 years. This is a full-time position tenable at the Public Private Partnership Commission in Blantyre.

7. Reporting

The Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship development (Tech Hubs) Manager will work under the supervision of the Project Manager of DMAP who reports to the Chief

Executive Officer. The Manager will be required to submit at least a monthly report covering his/her activities which will go into a common Project Report. The incumbent will work closely with the following heads of section/specialists; the Financial Management Specialist for all matters pertaining to financial management of grant funds; the Senior Procurement Specialist to ensure that all grant procurement and disbursements involving Project funds are aligned with the relevant procurement regulations of the World Bank; the Social Safeguards Specialist to ensure that all funded activities are aligned to environmental and social standards of the World Bank and that adequate social risk mitigation measures are taken and enforced; the Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist in order to develop, monitor and review independent performance criteria of the subcomponent including digital dashboards; and other PIU team members.

8. Deliverables

The Digital Innovations (Tech Hubs) Manager will be responsible for:

- **Grant manual:** the finalizing the Grant Manual, which will be first deliverable, and thereafter updating it, as required.
- **Operational documentation:** In addition, he/she will be responsible for finalizing Calls for proposal and preparation of all relevant operational documentation for advancement of the subcomponent;
- **Monthly progress reports:** He/she will be required to submit a monthly report covering his/her activities within the project. Deliverables must be accompanied by data, visual summaries (infographics, charts), and policy recommendations where applicable.
- **Supervision documentation:** The Manager will be responsible for the quality and timely preparation of all subcomponent documentation for supervision of the subcomponent (World Bank supervision missions) including advanced submission, and recommendations for improvement;
- **Dashboard:** the establishment of an online dashboard to provide tracking of key project indicators (jobs created, the number and progress of grants and beneficiaries,

as well as the number of people receiving training) accessible to PPPC management and the World Bank. The dashboard will be developed by the ICT section of the PPPC.

9. Performance Criteria

The performance assessment of the Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship (Tech Hubs) Manager will be based on the current terms of reference and the Grant manual. The following performance criteria will be used to assess the performance of the Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship (Tech Hubs) Manager annually:

- Completion and continuous updating of the Grant Manual in line with prevailing requirements at any one time.
- The number of Grant Agreements concluded with tech hubs and other sub-sector players, and matching grants awarded to digital entrepreneurs.
- The timely and compliant disbursement of sub-grants, ensuring gender inclusion and support for marginalized groups. Compliance of sub-grant disbursement to the Grant Manual stipulations and requirements.
- The number of clean audits, supporting the disbursements/expenditures above. In terms of this provision, clean audit means an audit carried by the PPPC or other lawful parties such as internal or external auditors of the PPPC, which finds that the internal control environment, the procurement and financial management procedures at the tech hub or other sub-sector players was compliant with applicable requirements set in the Grant contract and other PPPC and World Bank regulations. Demonstrated responsiveness to audit recommendations within specified timelines will also form part of the criteria.
- Achievement of the sub-component targets set by DMAP.

10. Remuneration and other Benefits

A competitive salary package will be negotiated based on qualifications, knowledge and experience.

11. Contractual Provisions

The Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship (Tech Hubs) Manager will work under conditions as stipulated in his/her Contract which will be guided by the Laws of Malawi in line with World Bank Regulations and Statutes and other applicable PPPC conditions of service.

12. Selection

The applicant will be selected on the basis of the approved methods of selecting individual consultants in accordance with the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" (Procurement Regulations) dated September 2025, and the "Guidelines on Preventing and Combating Fraud and Corruption in Projects Financed by IBRD Loans and IDA Credits and Grants", dated October 15, 2006 and revised in January 2011 and as of July 1, 2016, and other provisions stipulated in the Financing Agreements.