



RFP/018/2025

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR GRANT
MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT**

MAY 2025

1.0 Introduction

The Science for Africa Foundation (SFA Foundation) is a pan-African, non-profit, and public charity organisation that supports, strengthens, and promotes science and innovation in Africa. The SFA Foundation is committed to improving African people's quality of life and promoting research uptake in communities, industry, and the public sector. We serve the African research ecosystem by designing, funding, and managing programmes that support excellent science and innovation; and that build and reinforce environments that are conducive for scientists to thrive and produce quality research that impacts development. SFA Foundation is distinctive in that it focuses on the ecosystem surrounding research and the production of research itself. It also supports initiatives that directly influence the quantity, quality, and impact of research. SFA Foundation operations are hosted within the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (icipe) as a programme in the Republic of Kenya.

2.0 Overview

One of our core mandates is to provide grants to support scientific research, innovation, and capacity-building initiatives. SFA's grant management process must be robust, adaptable, and effective to manage a diverse grant portfolio. To enhance our grant management strategy, policies, and operational processes, SFA seeks a highly qualified Consultant with extensive experience in the research funding ecosystem. The specialist will provide strategic insights, conduct in-depth analysis of grant-making trends, and recommend improvements to SFA's grant structures, processes, and policies.

3.0 Objectives of the Assignment

- I. The primary objective of this assignment is to strengthen SFA's grant-making and management framework to ensure alignment with best practices in research funding. The specialist will:
- II. Review and refine SFA Foundation grant policies, develop standard operating procedures (SOPs), and workflows.
- III. Assess and recommend improvements in the grant-making process, ensuring efficiency, compliance, and impact-driven funding.
- IV. Benchmark SFA Foundation grant model against global best practices in research grant funding.
- V. Ensure SFA Foundation grant framework is suitable for managing both small (\$4,000) and large (\$5M) grants to downstream partners.
- VI. Identify key risks and propose mitigation strategies in the grant cycle.
- VII. Develop guidelines for structuring and monitoring research grants effectively.

4.0 Scope of Work

The Consultant will undertake the following tasks:

1. Grant Policy and SOP Review

- I. Review existing grant policies, procedures, and workflows.
- II. Identify gaps and propose refinements to enhance efficiency and compliance.
- III. Ensure policies cater to both small and large-scale grants.
- IV. Provide recommendations for integrating research-focused best practices.

2. Grant Management Strategy and Benchmarking

- I. Assess and benchmark SFA Foundation grant-making processes against international research funding bodies.

- II. Identify best practices for managing research grants, particularly for Africa-based research institutions and downstream partners.
- III. Recommend improvements in grant administration, including selection, disbursement, and reporting.

3. Due Diligence – Financial and Non-Financial

The specialist will develop and refine SFA's due diligence framework, ensuring compliance in both financial and non-financial areas:

a. Financial Due Diligence:

- i. Ensure grantees meet financial requirements for grant eligibility.
- ii. Assess the financial health and governance structures of potential partners.
- iii. Identify financial risks and propose mitigation measures.
- iv. Strengthen financial reporting requirements for grants.

b. Non-Financial Due Diligence:

- i. Research Integrity & Ethics: Ensure grantees follow ethical research guidelines and international research integrity standards.
- ii. Governance & Organizational Capacity: Assess the governance structures and operational capacity of research institutions.
- iii. Safeguarding & Risk Management: Evaluate safeguarding policies for vulnerable populations involved in research.
- iv. Legal & Compliance Requirements: Ensure alignment with intellectual property rights, data sharing policies, and human subject protection regulations.
- v. Project Execution Readiness: Assess whether grantees have the necessary institutional resources, staffing, and partnerships for successful project implementation.
- vi. The consultant will develop tools and checklists to standardize non-financial due diligence procedures.

4. Risk Assessment and Compliance

- I. Identify risks in the current grant-making cycle and propose mitigation strategies.
- II. Ensure compliance with international donor requirements and financial regulations.
- III. Develop guidelines for ensuring research integrity and ethical grant management.

5. Capacity Strengthening and Knowledge Transfer

- I. Provide training sessions for SFA Foundation staff on research grant management best practices.
- II. Develop toolkits, checklists, and templates for streamlined grant management.
- III. Advice on monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) frameworks for research grants.

5.0 Deliverables of the assignment

The consultant is expected to deliver:

- I. Inception Report—Detailing the methodology, work plan, and timeline for the assignment.
- II. Grant Policy Review Report—An assessment of existing policies with recommendations for improvements.
- III. Benchmarking Report—Insights from global best practices and lessons for SFA.

- IV. Risk Assessment & Compliance Report—Identifying key risks and compliance measures.
 - V. Grant SOPs and Templates—Updated procedures and documentation.
 - VI. Capacity-Building Training Materials—Toolkits and training sessions for staff.
 - VII. Final Comprehensive Report—Summarizing findings, recommendations, and implementation guidelines.
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- V. Proven track record in developing grant policies and managing multimillion-dollar research grants.
 - VI. Expertise in financial oversight, compliance, and risk management in grant administration.
 - VII. Strong analytical, writing, and communication skills.

6.0 Proposal Submission Requirements

Consultants are requested to submit a proposal containing:

- a) Mandatory/ Statutory requirements/ Company Profile.
- b) A one-page cover letter with contact details.
- c) The proposal should not be more than five (5) pages (including the budget.)
- d) A project plan that demonstrates a clear understanding of the assignment.
- e) An executive summary providing an overview of your methodology, project approach, tools and detailed **work plan**: timeline and deliverables .
- f) References of similar clients i.e. (submit at least three (3) reference letters or recommendations from similar clients)
- g) Detailed description of the role of team members – competencies, relevant skill sets and experience on the (subject of the RFP)
 - a. **Team Composition**: Names and roles of the project team members, including their qualifications and diversity in past projects. Experience working with diverse organisations, including non-profits, public sector entities, and private corporations.
 - b. The lead consultant should have the following qualifications:
 - i. Education Background: Advanced degree in Research Administration, Finance or a related field.
 - ii. Experience: At least 10 years of progressive experience in research grant management within the Africa context
 - c. Technical Expertise
 - i. Comprehensive understanding of the full grant lifecycle, including proposal review, due diligence, fund disbursement, and financial and Technical reporting.
 - ii. Demonstrated experience working with international research funders and alignment with global compliance standards.
- h) Cost projections- The financial proposal shall clearly indicate the total cost disaggregated to enable partial payments and/or scaling of services. The Prices quoted should be inclusive of all taxes and delivery costs, must be in US Dollars (\$) and shall remain valid for (120) days .
- i) Companies are encouraged to include any additional information they believe demonstrates added value within the scope of this assignment.

7.0 Duration of the Assignment

The consultancy assignment is expected to be completed over a period of **3 months**. Key milestones and deliverable due dates will be agreed upon during the inception phase.

8.0 RFP Timelines

Action	Date
Circulation of RFP	20/05/2025
Deadline for receipt of questions relating to the RFP and confirmation of participation	26/05/2025
Response to Vendors' Queries	29/05/2025
Deadline for submission of the proposals	10/06/2025
Project start date	After contracting

9.0 Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria :

Mandatory Requirements of the Consultant
<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Tax compliance certificate and PIN Certificate (if Kenyan) where applicable.b) Evidence of having conducted similar assignments. (Provide recommendation letters among others)

Only Bidders who meet the mandatory requirements will proceed to Technical Evaluation and will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

9.1 Technical Score* (Weight 80%)

Criteria	Score
Clear understanding of terms of reference with realistic methodology and workplan.	40%
Evidence of similar assignments in last five (5) years (15mks) and at least three (3) references/recommendations (10 mks)	25%
Composition and verifiable competencies of the proposed project team for the assignment (10mks) (The project lead must demonstrate over 10 years' experience in Grant Management) (5mks)	15%

* Minimum score of 80% is required per category

9.2 Financial Scores (Weight 20%)

Criteria	Score
Cost and Value (20%) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cost-effectiveness and value for money based on the proposed budget, with a clear breakdown of fees by project phase.• Justification of costs, ensuring alignment with the scope	20 marks

10.0 Terms and Conditions

This document contains proprietary and confidential information. Bidders may use or reproduce the information detailed within this document and any other supporting information only to provide a response to this request for proposal. No commitment will be made to any bidder unless a contract has been awarded and signed by both parties.

SFA Foundation reserves the right to cease this exercise at any time. During the period of this activity, no contact should occur between any members of the bidder's staff and SFA Foundation staff in relation to this exercise other than through the designated contact points as detailed within this request for proposal. It is however recognised that pre-existing relationships if any, will be respected.

11.0 12.1 Ethics

Bidders are required to observe our procurement ethical code of conduct which includes but is not limited to observing the highest standard of ethics regarding corruption, collusion, conflict of interest, and fraud. If the bidder does not observe confidentiality or ethical practices, they shall be disqualified from any future work.

12.0 12.2 Non-Disclosure and Confidentiality

The information contained within this document or subsequently made available to the consultant is deemed confidential and must not be disclosed without prior written consent unless required by law.

13.0 12.3 Independent Proposal

By submitting a proposal, the bidder warrants that the fees in the proposal have been arrived at independently, without consultation, communication, agreement or understanding for the purpose of restricting competition as to any matter relating to such fees, with any other potential consultant or with any competitor.

14.0 Proposal Submission Process

It should be noted that this document relates to a request for proposal only and not a commitment to enter into a contractual agreement. In addition, SFA Foundation will not be held responsible for any costs associated with the production of a response to this request for proposal.

14.1 Instructions on the Proposal Submission Process

1. Proposal to be sent by email to:
procurement@scienceforafrica.foundation on or before 10th June 2025 at 5.00 pm (EAT)
2. Protect your proposal with a password and share the password on 11th June 2025 by 8.00 am (EAT)
3. The proposal to be marked as follows on the subject line:

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