



RFP/021/2025

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR DELTAS
AFRICA MID-TERM REVIEW.**

June 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

The DELTAS Africa Initiative, launched in 2015, is a long-term investment in strengthening Africa's scientific research capacity. Guided by a robust Theory of Change, the first phase (2015-2020) focused on generating high-quality scientific research that addresses pressing health challenges across the continent, while prioritising capacity development at both individual and institutional levels.

Building on the lessons and successes of the initial phase, the second phase (DELTAS Africa II) kicked off in 2023 with 14 consortia led from 9 African countries, namely Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Senegal, South Africa, Tunisia and Zimbabwe, with extensive partnerships across Africa and globally. The initiative aims to improve Africa's research ecosystem through:

- Production of quality science and a critical mass of world class science leaders;
- Addressing and linking country level challenges via Science Innovation, Translation and Entrepreneurship;
- Strengthening science ecosystems and infrastructure that is conducive to deliver targeted R&D outcomes for Africa.

DELTAS Africa II focuses more on balancing equity and inclusion across the continent by encouraging collaboration amongst networks of researchers that are relatively well-resourced and those who are poorly resourced; improved gender equity and diversity; and multidisciplinary and cross-disciplinary research including social science and humanities.

DELTAS Africa Guiding Principles:

- i. Long-term horizon: DELTAS Africa acknowledges and is committed to the realities that raising scientific productivity and quality and building a critical mass in leadership is inherently long term.
- ii. Hub-and-spoke model: All DELTAS Africa Initiatives are led by Initiative Directors based in an African institution, who construct multi-country research and training consortia, using a hub-and-spoke model of Initiative design and delivery which has enabled an increased R&D footprint on the African continent and strengthened south-to-south and intra-African collaborations. The DELTAS Africa model is best imagined as a hub and spoke arrangement in which a lead institution(hub) enters collaboration with other institutions in other countries (spokes) which may be partners or collaborators to jointly apply for large research grants and implement long-term scientific research Initiatives.

- iii. Research alignment to country and regional needs: DELTAS Africa Initiatives are aligned to country and regional needs, which have been identified through wide stakeholder and community engagement.
- iv. Diversity and inclusion in consortia leadership and recruitment of trainees: Recruitment of staff and students is tracked to assess gender parity and equity.
- v. Balancing excellence with equity in consortia formation and recruitment of trainees: Institutions that are generally recognised as strong or high performing research institutions partner with institutions across countries or regions that are generally perceived as not being strong in research to enable the building of capacity, institutional strengthening and improvement of research environment and productivity that will spread excellence across the continent.
- vi. Value for Money: DELTAS Africa grantees mainstream value for money principles throughout the Initiative life cycle to ensure effectiveness and efficiency

DELTAS Africa Strategic Areas

- i. Enhanced scientific quality: DELTAS Africa produces world-class scientific research that addresses African health and research priorities through scientific discourse and collaborative supervision by promoting collaborations with well-resourced universities, research institutions and think-tanks to strengthen capacity
- ii. Strengthened research leadership capacities: To strengthen scientific research training and build career pathways for scientific researchers, DELTAS Africa focuses on the tertiary and postgraduate training of science students and professionals along a defined career pathway. Training offered by DELTAS Africa Initiatives is designed to provide individuals at all career stages with the academic support and research facilities they need to develop into world-class researchers
- iii. Strengthened research management, culture and infrastructure: To cultivate professional environments to manage and support scientific research. This recognises that developing and supporting research requires that researchers have access to skilled administrative support and adequate resources to compete at a global level; and that creating supportive, sustainable environments is crucial to developing research capacity
- iv. Enhanced scientific citizenship/societal engagement: Foster mentorship, leadership and equitable collaboration in science, and engagement with public and policy stakeholders. DELTAS Africa recognises that for research to achieve real impact it needs to be communicated to policymakers and the public. Communicating research findings to policymakers will ensure that the findings inform policy. At the same time, public engagement is also key to raise public awareness and interest in science, increase the uptake of new health policies and treatments, and strengthen relationships with local communities.

These four strategic areas are recognised as necessary for strengthening, sustaining, attracting, and retaining talent and excellence in research on the continent.

3.0 Objectives of the Assignment

The primary objective of the Midterm evaluation (MTE) is to assess the progress of DELTAS Africa II programmes in achieving their Theory of Change objectives at the midpoint of implementation, providing actionable recommendations for course correction where necessary. It provides an opportunity to make modifications to ensure the achievement of these objectives within the lifetime of the funding round.

Specific objectives of the MTE:

- i. Performance assessment - Evaluate the extent to which the 14 consortia have achieved the objectives outlined in the DELTAS Africa II Theory of Change at the midpoint of programme implementation cycle;
- ii. Implementation analysis: Identify implementation challenges, delays, and contextual factors affecting programme delivery;
- iii. Strategic alignment - determine the continued relevance and coherence of interventions with DELTAS Africa's strategic goals;
- iv. Identify areas of improvements - highlight areas requiring course correction to enhance programme effectiveness and impact;
- v. Generate actionable insights - provide evidence-based, practical recommendations to inform programme adjustments;
- vi. Organisational learning - facilitate reflection and learning among stakeholders to strengthen implementation and future planning;
- vii. Learning and forward planning - provide evidence-based recommendations for optimising remaining programme implementation (2025-2027).

1.2 Benefits from Midterm Evaluation

Stakeholders involved in the DELTAS Africa programme stand to benefit in different ways from the MTE exercise:

- i. Informed decision-making: it will support critical "go/no-go" decisions on individual programmes.
- ii. Performance enhancement: it will enable adaptive management and improved programme delivery.
- iii. Strategic guidance: it will offer policy and operational insights for the funders and implementers.
- iv. Stakeholder engagement: it will encourage reflection and realignment of roles among partners.
- v. Evidence generation: it will contribute to the knowledge base on large-scale research capacity-building initiatives in Africa.

1.3 Catalysing Change through the MTE

It is expected that the MTE would, if need be and where necessary, catalyse change in the implementation of the DELTAS Africa programme. Such change could be achieved through the following mechanisms:

- i. Reviewing project design/assumptions considering changed circumstances and adjusting design accordingly
 - ii. Reviewing the continued relevance of the DELTAS Africa Theory of Change team and adjusting or making revisions thereof if required.
 - iii. Inspiring the project team and partners through recognition of the project's relevance
 - iv. Proposing concrete and actionable recommendations
- Outlining how those recommended changes have the potential to improve the project's results

4.0 Scope of Work

The following phases of work and deliverables will be expected:

- i. Methodology proposal

To ensure that all the stakeholders have a shared understanding of the evaluation, the consultant will submit a methodology proposal of 20-25 pages. This proposal will provide an account of the evaluation approach, including an outline of the scope of proposed work, the evaluation design, evaluation questions, sampling frame, data collection tool(s), data analysis approach, and the measures for each evaluation question. The evaluation proposal

will also include the final work plan and accompanying time frame with clear responsibilities for each task. This proposal will be discussed and agreed upon by all stakeholders.

ii. Interim MTE report

The interim evaluation report will be submitted to SFA Foundation for review. The report should be structured as outlined below, and must provide options for strategy, policy, and actionable recommendations.

- Executive summary
- Introduction
- Summary of evaluation methodology
- Key findings (per evaluation objective)
- Conclusion and lessons learned
- Recommendations

iii. Final MTE report

The final MTE report should be structured as follows:

- Executive summary
- Introduction
- Summary of evaluation methodology
- Key findings (per evaluation objective)
- Conclusion and lessons learned
- Recommendations
- Annexes

The report should as much as possible, clearly answer the objectives outlined in this ToR and it should also include a clear traffic light results presentation for all the 14 DELTAS Africa consortia:

- Green: fully on course to meet their objectives
- Amber: can meet the objectives by 2027 but need to accelerate delivery
- Red: unlikely to meet the programme objectives

5.0 Deliverables of the assignment

The following phases of work and deliverables will be expected:

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6.0 Proposal Submission Requirements

Bidders are requested to submit a proposal containing:

a) Mandatory/ Statutory requirements.

- I. Tax clearance certificate issued by KRA,
- II. Company Registration (e.g certificate of incorporation)
- III. Company profile and contact details
- IV. Other, Registration with relevant bodies if applicable

b) The Proposal that should include:

- I. A detailed project plan that provides an overview of the project approach, the methodology to be followed, timeline and deliverables.
- II. Detailed description of the role of team members – competencies, relevant skill sets and experience on the Midterm evaluation for DELTAS Africa II project
- III. Team Composition: Names and roles of the project team members, including their qualifications, experiences and demographic profile.
- IV. Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the project scope and requirements.
- V. References from previous clients where similar work was completed (at least 3 letters on company letterhead).

c) Detailed budget or costing of the project or price

- I. The financial proposal shall clearly indicate the total cost disaggregated to enable milestone-based payment, where applicable

- II. Prices shall be inclusive of all project costs such as delivery, insurance, licenses, support, reimbursements, etc
- III. The Prices quoted should be inclusive of all applicable taxes and shall remain valid for (120) days
- d) Bidders 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	9 June 2025
Deadline for receipt of questions relating to the RFP and confirmation of participation	12 June 2025
Response to Vendors' Queries	14 June 2025
Deadline for submission of the proposals	22 June 2025
Project start date	After issue of the contract

9.0 Evaluation Criteria

The proposal evaluation criteria shall be based on below Requirements:

- I. Mandatory requirements
- II. Technical Requirements
- III. Financial requirements

9.1 Mandatory Evaluation

The mandatory evaluation shall be conducted based on the below criteria. Any bidder who does not meet the mandatory requirements will be disqualified from proceeding to technical evaluation.

Table 2: Mandatory Criteria

Mandatory Requirements of the Bidder
<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) c) Registration with relevant bodies (where applicable)

9.2 Technical Evaluation * (Weight 80%)

Only bidders who meets all mandatory requirements will proceed to technical evaluation stage. The evaluation will be based on the below criteria.

Table 3: Technical Evaluation Criteria

<u>Criteria (indicative)</u>	<u>Weighted Percentage</u>	<u>Minimum Scores (80% per Section)</u>	<u>Bid Score</u>
<u>Understanding of the RFP</u> Clear understanding of terms of reference with: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Realistic Project approach Proposed methodology and project tools, Timelines and workplan Deliverables 	40%		
<u>Experience</u> Evidence of completion of similar assignments in last 10 years, provide at least 3 relevant references/recommendations letters	30%		
<u>Team Competencies/ Expertise</u> I. <u>Team lead qualifications:</u> 10 years' documented experience in formulation of evaluation of science programmes, implementation and documentation of evaluations and a deep understanding of best practice in Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEAL) II. <u>Technical expertise for the team:</u> A team with 5+ years extensive expertise, knowledge, and experience of the African research ecosystem.	25%		
<u>Value Addition</u>	5%		
<u>Total Score</u>	100%		
<u>Total Scores out of 80</u>	80		
<u>Minimum Score (64/80)</u>		64	

Bidders must meet 80% minimum scores for each category and must attain a pass mark of 64% to be considered for the next steps.

All bidders who attain the minimum scores as outlined above may further be invited for presentation on their technical proposal.

9.3 Financial Scores (Weight 20%)

Only bidders who will attain the minimum technical scores requirement will be considered for Financial Analysis.

Table 4: Financial Criteria

Criteria	Weighting
Cost and Value (20%) Cost-effectiveness value for money based on the proposed budget, with a clear	20 marks

Any quoted price above 10% of the budget estimates, will not be considered for financial analysis.

9.4 Determination of the winning bidder

The winning bidder shall be determined based on the combined scores for Technical and Financial scores as per the below formula:

Final Score (FS)= TS x T% + FS x F%,

where T% + F% shall always be equal to 100%.

- *Final Score (FS) is the total combined scores of Technical and Financial scores.*
- *T% is the weighting given to the technical proposal.*
- *F% is the weighting given to the financial proposal*

T% shall be 80% and F% shall be 20% respectively

The bidder with the highest combined scores shall be considered for negotiations on cost and scope of work for the award.

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 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 Non-Disclosure and Confidentiality

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

13.0 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 bidder 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 22 June 2025 at 5.00 pm (EAT)
2. Protect your proposal with a password and share the password on 23 June 2025 by 8.00 am (EAT)
3. The proposal to be marked as follows on the subject line:

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