RFP/025/2025

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR GRANTEE EXTERNAL AUDIT FOR DELTAS AFRICA II

OCTOBER 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.

2.0 Background

The DELTAS Africa Initiative, a long-term investment in Africa's scientific research capacity, was launched in 2015. Its first phase (2015–2020) applied a robust Theory of Change to generate high-quality research addressing the continent's pressing health challenges, while deliberately strengthening individual and institutional capacity.

Building on this strong foundation, the second phase (DELTAS Africa II) began in 2023. It comprises 14 consortia led from nine African countries—Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Senegal, South Africa, Tunisia, and Zimbabwe—each funded at approximately $4.4M.

To ensure strong programmatic and financial governance, DELTAS Africa II will conduct coordinated financial and programmatic audits of its grantees and sub-grantees (operating under a hub-and-spoke model). These audits are designed to:

- Provide assurance on program implementation and the appropriate use of funds
- Strengthen internal control systems, and
- Ensure full compliance with award terms and conditions.

3.0 Objectives of the Assignment

The mid-term audit has the following objectives:

1) Verify that DELTAS Africa II funds have been used for the intended purposes, consistent with the approved budgets and grant agreements.
2) Assess compliance with the grant's terms and conditions.
3) Review the adequacy and effectiveness of grantees internal controls including grantees' policies, controls, and reporting frameworks.
4) Verify the accuracy and completeness of the grantees' financial and programmatic records, ensuring reliability of financial and programmatic reporting submitted to the Science for Africa Foundation.
5) Assess financial and operational risks affecting programme delivery and sustainability.
6) Assess capacity gaps and provide recommendations to improve financial management practices and systems across grantees.
7) Check if there is any indication of fraud

4.0 Scope of Work

The consultant will be responsible for, but not limited to, the following tasks:

1) The audit will cover the period from the grant start to the current quarter across all selected grantees of the DELTAS Africa II awards. Specifically, the audit will:
2) Review financial records and transactions, including cashbooks, ledgers, bank statements, reconciliations, receipts, payroll, and other supporting documentation.
3) Evaluate the grantee's financial management systems, including procurement, disbursement, and reporting processes.
4) Assess expenditure against approved budgets and funding agreements.
5) Verify procurement processes and asset management to ensure transparency, eligibility, and value for money including physical verification of assets.
6) Test compliance with grant terms and conditions, as well as the DELTAS Africa II programme implementation schedules.
7) Evaluate adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management, and oversight arrangements implemented by the grantee at the sub-grantee level, including maintenance and use of risk registers, and mechanisms for ensuring accountability in programme delivery.
8) Evaluate the systems and practices in place for managing and providing strategic oversight of the programme and its partner institutions.
9) Review sub-grantee financial reports submitted to the lead grantee, the sub-grantee management processes and reconcile them with the underlying records.
10) Review fellow recruitment and selection processes, ensuring they are transparent, equitable, and aligned with programme objectives (e.g., gender balance, regional diversity).

5.0 Deliverables

The audit firm is expected to provide:

- Inception Report outlining methodology, sampling plan, and detailed audit workplan.
- Draft Audit Report highlighting key findings, compliance status, control gaps, and preliminary recommendations.
- Final Audit Report which should ideally show:

    - Executive Summary (key risks, compliance level, and overall opinion)
    - Detailed findings and recommendations.
    - Management letter outlining control weaknesses and corrective actions.
    - Annexes (financial tables, reconciliations, supporting evidence).

6.0 Audit Standards and preferred Methodology

The audit will be conducted in accordance with the grant terms and conditions and the International Standards on Auditing (ISA). The methodology should include risk-based sampling, physical visits where possible, substantive and compliance testing, document review, interviews, and all necessary verification procedures

7.0 Required Competencies

The assignment should be undertaken by an independent, qualified audit individuals and or firms with the following qualifications:

i. Demonstrated knowledge of international donor compliance

ii. Evidence of the past work demonstrated through letters of reference and letters of good standing

iii. Proven experience auditing research institutions, universities, non-profit organisations and multi-country grant-funded programmes.

iv. Regional experience in Africa, particularly in the countries where grantees are based with both French and English-speaking competencies.

v. Strong analytical, reporting, and communication skills.

vi. Professional certification (e.g. CPA, ACCA, CIA)

8.0 Confidentiality

All information obtained during the audit shall be treated with the highest level of confidentiality and used solely for this assignment.

8.0 RFP Timelines

Table 1: Mandatory Criteria

Action	Date
Circulation of RFP	24th October 2025
Deadline for receipt of questions relating to the RFP and confirmation of participation	28th October 2025
Response to Vendors' Queries	30th October 2025
Deadline for submission of the proposals	13th November 2025
Project start date	After issuance of the contract

9.0 Evaluation Criteria

Interested firms should submit:

i. Technical Proposal:

- Consultant profile and contact details
- Methodology and work plan.
- Team composition and CVs of key personnel.
- Examples of recent similar assignments in nature and complexity.

ii. Financial Proposal: Detailed cost breakdown (e.g., fees, daily rates, travel expenses etc).

iii. References: Contact details for at least three previous clients.

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
a) Tax compliance certificate and PIN Certificate (if Kenyan) where applicable. b) Evidence of having conducted similar assignments. (list and provide recommendation letters, stating the similar assignment done) 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**

Criteria	**Weighted Percentage**
Clear understanding of terms of reference with realistic methodology, Project Approach and workplan.	35%
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-10 mks -The project lead must demonstrate over 10 years' experience in Grant Audit (5mks)	15%
Value addition	5%
Total Scores out of 80	80%
Minimum Score (64/80)	

Bidders must attain a pass mark of 64% to be considered for the next steps.

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	**Score**
Cost and Value (20%) • 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 of work and expected deliverables.	20 marks

• Competitive pricing that aligns with industry standards for Grantee External Audit services.	

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 for the award.
The best bidders as outlined above may further be invited for presentation on their proposals for further decision making.

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.

Instructions on the Proposal Submission Process

1. Proposal to be sent by email to procurement@scienceforafrica.foundation on or before 13th November 2025 at 5.00 pm (EAT)
2. Protect your proposal with a password and share the password on 14th November 2025 by 8.00 am (EAT)
3. The proposal to be marked as follows on the subject line:

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR GRANTEE EXTERNAL AUDIT FOR DELTAS II- RFP/025/2025: