



Consultancy Services Partner Organisation Effectiveness using the GFGP Standard as framework – RFP/009/2026

May 2026

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 Research Management Capacity Strengthening (REMACS) Programme, implemented by the SFA Foundation, is designed to address critical gaps within the African research ecosystem and to cultivate a vibrant research culture and strong leadership across research institutions. The Programme aims to build the expertise required to establish and sustain robust research enterprises, strengthen institutional systems, and enhance the overall performance of research environments across the continent. REMACS focuses on overcoming systemic challenges that hinder the development of effective and sustainable research management systems. Its interventions are organized around three core pillars:

- 1) **Institutional Development** – Strengthening institutional systems, standards, governance frameworks, research impact mechanisms, and long-term sustainability.
- 2) **Professional Development** – Building the capacity of research managers through structured career pathways, training, mentorship, recognition programmes, and knowledge management platforms toward a professionalised research management ecosystem.
- 3) **Enabling Environment** – Supporting national research systems by engaging regulatory agencies, government departments, National Councils for Science and Technology, Science Granting Councils, and higher education networks to create a supportive ecosystem for research and innovation.

As part of its mandate, the REMACS Programme is implementing the Parter Organization Effectiveness initiative which aims at strengthening grant governance systems by enabling SFA grantees seamlessly integrate requirements of the first international standard for Good Financial Grant Practice (GFGP- ARS 1651:2018) within their organizations systems.

GFGP strengthen governance, financial management, procurement, human resources, and grants management processes within institutions receiving and managing grant funding.

To support its grantees and partners, the SFA Foundation seeks to provide structured technical assistance that helps them:

- [a]. Understand GFGP requirements
- [b]. Conduct a pre-certification assessment
- [c]. Identify and close gaps
- [d]. Attain formal GFGP certification through licensed Certification Bodies (CBs)

This consultancy will support selected SFA-funded institutions to strengthen their grant governance capacity and achieve GFGP Certification.

The GFGP standard (ARS 1651:2018) is currently undergoing a revision by ARSO based on feedback received from users with the new revised standard expected to be published mid-June 2026. The technical assistance under this RFP shall be based on the revised versions of GFGP standards.

3.0 Objectives

The objective of this assignment is to provide targeted technical assistance to SFA-funded partner organisations to strengthen their compliance with the Good Financial Grant Practice (GFGP) Standard and guide them through the full certification cycle. Specifically, the consultancy aims to meet the following objectives:

- [a]. **Objective 1: Strengthen Institutional Governance and Grant Management Systems Using the GFGP Framework.** Provide targeted technical assistance to help partner institutions assess, strengthen, and align their governance, financial management, procurement, HR, and grant management systems with the requirements of the revised GFGP Standard.
- [b]. **Objective 2: Build Institutional Capacity to Implement, Sustain, and Institutionalise Compliance Practices.** Enhance the capacity of partner institutions through training, coaching, policy development support, and change management to ensure effective adoption and long-term sustainability of improved systems.
- [c]. **Objective 3: Guide Institutions Through the Full GFGP Certification Pathway.** Support institutions from pre-certification assessment through readiness checks, engagement with certification bodies, and closure of nonconformities until successful achievement of GFGP certification.

4.0 Scope of Work:

The Consultant/Firm will provide comprehensive, hands-on technical assistance to help SFA Foundation-funded institutions strengthen their governance, financial management, procurement, HR, and grant management systems, using the GFGP Standard as the guiding framework. The work will include, but not be limited to:

1. **Institutional Assessments & Diagnostics**
 - Conduct GFGP-aligned assessments, including document reviews, onsite/virtual verification, and maturity mapping.
 - Analyse institutional policies, systems, processes, internal controls, and governance structures.
2. **Development of Gap-Closure Action Plans**
 - Provide institution-specific, practical gap-closure roadmaps that outline required policy, procedural, and system changes.
 - Identify risk areas and mitigation measures.
3. **Technical Assistance for Systems Strengthening**
 - Draft or revise policies, SOPs, manuals, and templates aligned to GFGP.
 - Support implementation and institutionalisation of recommended changes.
 - Provide hands-on coaching to finance, HR, procurement, and grants teams.
4. **Capacity Building & Change Management**
 - Design and deliver targeted training sessions.
 - Facilitate change management processes to ensure adoption of new practices.
 - Engage institutional leadership and staff to support GFGP-aligned governance improvements.
5. **Certification Readiness and Support**
 - Conduct mock audits and readiness checks for certification.
 - Support partners during the formal GFGP audit, including responses to nonconformities.
 - Liaise with accredited certification bodies.
6. **Monitoring, Learning, and Reporting**
 - Provide monthly progress updates, risk logs, and recommendations.
 - Document lessons learned and best practices to inform the Foundation's portfolio-wide learning.

Deliverables

The Consultant/Firm will provide the following deliverables:

Deliverable 1: Institutional Assessment Outputs

- Completed GFGP pre-certification assessment for each assigned institution.
- Assessment report detailing strengths, gaps, risks, and required areas of improvement.

Deliverable 2: GapClosure- Roadmap

- Institution-specific action plan outlining required policy changes, system improvements, staffing or process adjustments, and timelines.
- Risk mitigation plan where major vulnerabilities are identified.

Deliverable 3: Drafted or Updated Policies and SOPs

- Revised or newly drafted policies (finance, procurement, HR, grants) aligned to the GFGP Standard.
- Accompanying SOPs, templates, workflows, or tools needed for implementation.

Deliverable 4: Capacity Building & Change Management

- Training sessions delivered (virtual or onsite as agreed).
- Coaching support logs and evidence of improved capacity and system adoption.

Deliverable 5: Certification Readiness & Audit Support

- Certification readiness report summarising the institution's preparedness.
- Support during certification audits, including responses to nonconformities.
- Confirmation of certification or comprehensive audit followup- plan.

Deliverable 6: Monitoring & Reporting

- Monthly progress reports covering achievements, risks, constraints, and next steps.
- Final consolidated report summarising outcomes, lessons learned, and recommendations for the Foundation's broader ecosystem strengthening.

5.0 Duration of the Assignment

The consultancy assignment is expected to be completed over a period of **24 months**. Actual dates and times for key milestones and deliverables will be agreed upon during the inception phase. **Table 1 below** highlights key dates:

Action	Date
Circulation of RFP	21st May 2026
Deadline for receipt of questions relating to the RFP and confirmation of participation	25th May 2026
Response to Vendors' Queries	27th May 2026
Deadline for submission of the proposals	10th June 2026
Project start date	After issuance of the contract

6.0 Consultants/Firm Profile

The Consultant/Firm must demonstrate:

A. Core Technical Skills

- Proven experience in institutional system strengthening within African institutions.
- Demonstrated ability to draft organisational policies/procedures.
- Expertise in financial management systems, internal controls, procurement frameworks, HR management.
- Experience designing and delivering capacity-building programmes.
- Change management experience.

B. GFGP-Specific Skills

- Certification as a GFGP auditor (preferred).
- At least 3 completed GFGP assessments or certifications.
- Demonstrated ability to interpret GFGP requirements into practical institutional procedures.

C. Soft Skills

- Strong facilitation and coaching skills.
- Ability to navigate institutional politics.
- Excellent technical writing.
- Strong communication and relationship management.

Team composition that includes:

- Team Lead should have a minimum of 10 years' experience in institutional strengthening, governance, financial

management or grants management. Proven oversight of complex capacity building assignment in African institutions and strong project management skills.

- A GFGP auditor or specialist with demonstrable experience conducting multiple GFGP assessments. Deep knowledge of GFGP requirements, compliance interpretation and certification processes.
- Functional systems experts with demonstrated experience in quality management and compliance auditing, and holding relevant professional certifications such as CPA, ACCA, or CIA. These experts should bring deep proficiency in audit methodologies, internal control systems, and organisational assurance processes.
- Ability to draft and revise institutional policies, SOPs, manuals and compliance tools aligned to GFGP.
- Demonstrated experience designing and delivering institutional change management processes.

7.0 Proposal Submission Requirements

Technical Proposal (not more than 10 pages) containing

- [a]. Approach and Methodology:** Provide a clear description of the proposed methodology, project approach, and tools to be used in delivering the assignment. The section should also highlight relevant previous assignments of similar scope or complexity.
- [b]. Detailed Work Plan:** Present a comprehensive work plan that includes timelines, key activities, and milestones mapped to the required deliverables.
- [c]. Team Composition:** Provide the names and roles of all proposed team members, clearly outlining their qualifications, relevant experience, and specific competencies aligned to the scope of work. Each team member must demonstrate the capability to deliver their assigned responsibilities effectively. **Detailed CVs may be included as annexes.**
- [d]. References:** Include at least three references from clients, accompanied by evidence of successful delivery of similar assignments and confirmation of good standing.

Financial Proposal: With a detailed and itemised budget outlining professional fees, daily or hourly rates, and any anticipated reimbursable expenses required to **deliver the assignment for one organisation**. The budget should clearly indicate cost assumptions, unit rates, and the total projected cost for completing the scope of work.

8.0 Evaluation Criteria

8.1 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 and where applicable. b) Evidence of having conducted similar assignments. (provide recommendation letters stating the similar assignment done) c) Registration with relevant bodies (where applicable)

8.2 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

Approach, Methodology, and workplan: a) Clear understanding of the assignment (clear understanding of objectives, scope, risks, and expected outputs): 5 Marks . b) Technical approach (suitability of proposed approach to meeting the assignment objectives): 10 Marks . c)Methodology(Clear and practical methodology including relevant tools and techniques for conducting the assignment): 8 Marks d)Workplan and deliverables: Realistic activities,timelines and deliverables: 5 Marks e)Risk Management:(Identification of risks and mitigation measures): 2 Marks		30%
Previous similar assignments and at least three (3) letters of references/recommendations-		15%
i)Team Lead should have a minimum of 10 years' experience in institutional strengthening, governance, financial management or grants management- 5% . ii)Proven oversight of complex capacity building assignment in African institutions and strong project management skills- 5%		10%
Team Composition competence	Evidence of having conducted at least three GFGP assessments or certification audits	3%
	Evidence of ability to draft and revise institutional policies, SOPs, manuals and compliance tools aligned to GFGP	4%
	Demonstrate expertise in financial management systems, internal controls, procurement frameworks, HR management.	4%
	Demonstrated experience designing and delivering capacity-building programmes.	4%
	Demonstrated experience designing and delivering institutional change management processes.	3%
	Relevant professional certifications such as CPA, ACCA, or CIA	2%
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.

8.3 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
<p>Cost and Value (20%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost-effectiveness and value for money based on the proposed budget, with a clear breakdown of fees Justification of costs, ensuring alignment with the scope of work and expected deliverables. • Competitive pricing that aligns with industry standards <p>Financial Proposal: Detailed cost breakdown (e.g., fees, daily rates, travel expenses etc)</p>	20 marks

9.0 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.

15.0 Instructions on the Proposal Submission Process

1. Proposal to be sent by email to procurement@scienceforafrica.foundation on or before 10th June 2026 at 5.00 pm (EAT)
2. Protect your proposal with a password and share the password on 11th June 2026 by 8.00 am (EAT)
3. The proposal to be marked as follows on the subject line:

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