TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF INDUSTRY EXPERTS AND MARKETING AGENCIES TO HANDLE INDUSTRY POSITIONING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR THE NATIONAL IT/BPM EXPORT GROWTH INITIATIVES

BACKGROUND

ICT/BPM industry growth program of Sri Lanka – IT Initiative program is a culmination of multiple initiatives toward growing national export revenues for the IT/BPM industry. The areas of focus stem from the National Export Strategy (NES), ICTA and SLASSCOM recommendations and the 2018 National Budget. The industry goal for the IT/BPM industry exports is to reach USD 5 billion by 2022. The Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) has made a provision of LKR 3 billion over the next five years towards this goal. The initial allocation of LKR 300 million is already approved for 2018 within the purview of the Export Development Board (EDB), and the effective utilization of this budget and the outcomes generated would determine the next steps.

ICT/BPM exports counted as the 5th largest export revenue earner of the country and had an upward growth over the past ten years though we had some export drops in other product sectors. The industry's Vision 2022 aims it to become the number one foreign exchange earner of the country, with $5 billion in revenue, creating 200,000 direct jobs and 1,000 start-ups. The ICT/BPM sector has been identified as the key focus sector in the National Export Strategy (NES) and the Harvard PDIA project operating at present through the Ministry of Development Strategies and International Trade (MODSIT).

Sri Lanka, with the existing limited resources must focus of high value-added product and services, where we could utilize the skills and capabilities of the workforce. We also need to build on the global recognition as a preferred destination for outsourcing services.

On this background EDB with the recommendations and suggestions of the ICT/BPM industry experts has identified, three focused initiatives in order to accelerate the journey towards $ 5 billion revenue by 2022.

Initiative 01: The Champion Builder Initiative

Objective: Define framework to select and enable accelerated growth of high potential companies.

About the Program: The purpose of this initiative is to enable qualified product and services companies to grow exponentially (I.e. over 40% YoY) through a series of financial and non-financial interventions. The US$ 5 billion target becomes realistic only if a sufficient number of companies have an exponential growth trajectory.

Initiative 02: Sri Lanka ICT/BPM Country Branding Execution (Digital Component)

Objective: Execute "Island of Ingenuity" digital brand positioning and create framework to enable in-bound lead conversion.

About the Program: This initiative would focus on developing a strategy to implement a well-structured digital marketing campaign (social media, search engine optimization and management) to reinforce Sri Lanka as a preferred destination for ICT/BPM services. With the recent unveil of the national brand of the Sri Lanka ICT/BPM sector, now the focus is to create awareness and convince specific international markets with the ingenuity of Sri Lankan ICT/BPM sector.

Budget Provision for all Digital Activities including Marketing Spend: LKR 35 million

Initiative 02: Sri Lanka ICT/BPM Country Branding Execution (Non-Digital Component)

Objective: Architect and execute "Island of Ingenuity" non-digital brand positioning.

About the Program: Key objective of the initiative is to increase the awareness of the Sri Lanka ICT/BPM capabilities in foreign entities. This objective will be achieved through working with identified global country positioning authorities to place Sri Lanka in appropriate rankings and get published, evaluating and selecting outbound missions that will help position the country most effectively conducting country specific studies/bench marking reports and B2B missions. Research, marketing and PR firms to build and reinforce the country brand in the geographical regions and audiences identified. The other would be to drive marketing activities (PR, trade missions, and roadshows) as required.

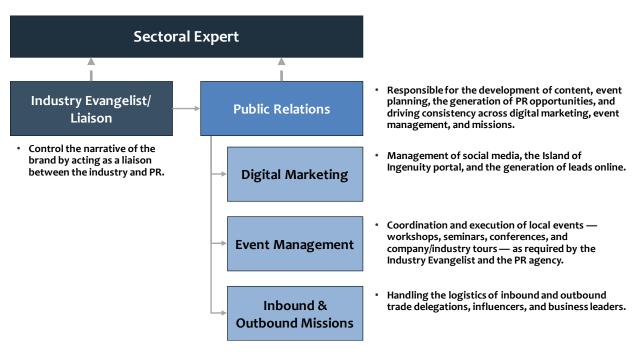**Budget Provision for all Activities including Marketing Spend:** LKR 224 million

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Sri Lanka Export Development Board is seeking to contract credible and professional industry experts and marketing/advertising agencies (hereafter referred to as "experts and agencies") who will handle the industry liaising and positioning, content creation, branding, advertising, event management, and public relations of this program throughout the next 5 years. From a contracting perspective, it will be a one-year initial engagement, subject to renewal for up to the next four years based on meeting agreed performance measures.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICES REQUIRED

The experts and agencies shall be required to coordinate with the Sectoral Expert, the program's project management consultants, to facilitate the execution of the project.

The responsibilities of the experts and agencies will be structured as follows and have been described in detail below under specific initiatives. Experts and agencies are welcome to apply for one or more of the following initiatives:

Structure of Agency/Expert Integrated Marketing Initiatives

Sectoral Expert

Industry Evangelist/Liaison

- Control the narrative of the brand by acting as a liaison between the industry and PR.

Public Relations

- Responsible for the development of content, event planning, the generation of PR opportunities, and driving consistency across digital marketing, event management, and missions.

Digital Marketing

- Management of social media, the Island of Ingenuity portal, and the generation of leads online.

Event Management

- Coordination and execution of local events — workshops, seminars, conferences, and company/industry tours — as required by the Industry Evangelist and the PR agency.

Inbound & Outbound Missions

- Handling the logistics of inbound and outbound trade delegations, influencers, and business leaders.

Industry Evangelist / Liaison

- Liaise with associations, business leaders, and companies in the ICT/BPM sector and attend industry events and networking sessions to keep abreast of industry developments and identify stories worthy of global exposure.
- Liaise with associations, business leaders, and companies in the ICT/BPM sector to ensure their promotional material and assets (including those of events) carry the Island of Ingenuity brand.
- Encourage local companies to create and contribute content (especially case studies) for the IOI website and social media channels.
- Maintain overall authority of content published on the portal by reviewing and approving case studies—providing feedback for improvement (if necessary).

- Continuously work with and provide the public relations agency stories (industry leader interviews, company features, industry highlights, industry events, and other stories of interest) that highlight industry potential and capabilities.

Public Relations

- Develop a comprehensive understanding of the ICT/BPM initiatives and submit an operational plan to the Sectoral Expert for validation.
- Identify PR opportunities (e.g. coverage on publications, sponsored content placements, etc.) both online and offline in target countries.
- Coordination with influencer networks for influencer marketing in target countries.
- Creation of written, visual, and audio content for awareness and lead generation, and adaption for all channels and formats required by the campaign.
- Coverage of industry events and stories of interest on the directive of the Industry Evangelist.

Digital Marketing

- Management and execution of awareness and lead generation campaigns (creative development included).
- Management of social media channels i.e., content scheduling, inquiry and engagement handling, regular updates to page branding, third-party content sharing, issue escalation, development of chat bots, etc.
- Management of the IOI portal i.e., addition of functionality required by the campaign, creation of case study pages, creation of landing pages for lead generation, rectification of technical issues, search engine optimization, etc.
- Configuration of analytics and user behavior tracking tools on the portal.
- Facilitate the testing of various types of messaging amongst channels, geographies and audiences.
- Continuous monitoring of the online campaign and behavior on the website for optimization purposes.

Event Management

- Organization of events necessary for Inbound Missions, and Outbound Missions initiatives including (but not limited to) face-to-face meetings, company/industry tours, workshops, seminars, networking sessions, and conferences.
- Promotion of local events to ensure industry-wide participation.
- Creation of physical event branding and event promotion material (e.g. invitations, backdrops, banners, brochures, media dockets, presentation design, etc.).

Inbound and Outbound Missions

- Provide feedback on and contribute to the list of individuals and organizations of interest identified by the Sectoral Expert for inbound missions.
- Conduct reach-outs to foreign influencers, industry associations, investors and business leaders (identified by the Sectoral Expert) and facilitate their trips to Sri Lanka.
- Facilitate the necessary logistics of outbound missions i.e., itineraries, travel, accommodation, meals, etc., for Sri Lankan trade delegations.

Responsibilities applicable to all experts and agencies are as follows:

- Participate in strategy sessions to review existing strategies and learnings from the pilot phase to provide recommendations for improvement and ensure alignment of campaign initiatives.
- Coordinate with the sectoral expert, other agencies, experts, and stakeholders involved to ensure transparency of campaign initiatives at all times.
- Ensure compliance of all content, creatives, and website updates with the established IOI content and brand guidelines.
- Set up monitoring dashboards (wherever applicable) and provide monthly progress updates.
- Continuously monitor progress against the established KPIs and suggest and implement recommendations to improve the performance of the campaign.

AUTHORITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The EDB will be accountable for this program and will be working together with the Sectoral Expert to implement, whereas the task force will advise and guide EDB and the Sectoral Expert and in turn the Sectoral Expert will advise and guide the experts and agencies to ensure the goals of each initiative are achieved.

A monthly project progress review will be conducted with all stakeholders involved to address any blocks or obstacles towards the achievement of the project's goals.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

As stated previously, agencies and experts are expected to provide the following reports on progress:

1. Real-time monitoring dashboards (wherever applicable)
2. Progress reports describing achievements, disbursements and blocking issues — delivered every 2 weeks
3. Recommendations for improvement of content creation and campaign performance
4. Monthly financial statement (including ad spend) for approval

DURATION

The contract will initially be for one year with an option to renew for next four years. The overall strategy, performance and the quality of work will be a Proof of Concept (PoC) for the extension of the contract.

QUALIFICATIONS

1. A company registered in Sri Lanka.
2. Minimum three (3) years' experience in similar capacity (national or international). Information on past similar projects conducted by the company and work success/results achieved should be submitted.
3. Have undertaken similar assignments in value of over Rs. 5 million.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

The proposal submission should be structured as per the submission form on https://islandofingenuity.com/submit-rfp and include the following:

1. Business registration.
2. Proof of ability providing details of similar assignments undertaken and delivered at national or sectoral level with sufficient details.
3. Profiles of proposed team members with required qualification and experience.
4. Details of proposed approach (including key work stages and timelines).

EVALUATION CRITERIA

- Experts and agencies will be evaluated based on their past track record, relevant experience of the company, level of experience of the team, and capability to provide a world class solution to the tasks and proposed approach based on the following scoring method:

Criteria	Score
Depth of experience in conducting similar initiatives	20
Clarity of proposal for implementing the assignment (including key work stages and timelines); experts and agencies can also suggest suitable case examples (if any)	20
Proposed approach for the assignment, demonstrating understanding of the specific requirements for the respective initiatives.	20
Experience of the proposed team for the assignment	20
Financial attractiveness	20
TOTAL	**100**

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