

Expression of Interest (EoI)

Issuance Date: December 20, 2021

CATALYZE Project:

USAID CATALYZE is a global project designed to facilitate partnerships and craft solutions to mobilize \$2 billion in blended private sector and other financing to USAID partner countries. The program can work in any development sector or region, enabling USAID Bureaus and Missions around the world to efficiently facilitate investment solutions that respond to the needs of specific sectors, issues, and geographies and leverage private sector financing to achieve development objectives.

Engines of Growth (EoG) Activity:

The EoG Activity falls under the CATALYZE Project umbrella. The overall purpose of the EoG Activity is to facilitate Western Balkans small and medium enterprise (SME) resilience, growth, and job creation by improving their access to and utilization of appropriate finance. EoG will help mobilize capital in order to sustain viable SMEs and jobs in the wake of COVID 19 in the near term and will promote improved SME growth financing in the long term. Awards under this call, if any, will focus primarily on addressing those near-term, urgent needs, with a secondary focus on promoting systemic change. However, recognizing that the pandemic has only exacerbated pre-existing systemic access to finance challenges for SMEs, in a future phase EoG anticipates focusing primarily on facilitating long-term solutions.

I Background Information

EoG is seeking to identify a local pool of specialized technical consulting companies (i.e. Technical Business Advisory Service Providers (TBASPs)), which will offer technical assistance to adopt standard requirements, develop documentation and files to introduce a product or process standard/certificate and to obtain certification for women micro, small and medium companies.

This program will be implemented in six Western Balkan countries (Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia). The independent TBASPs will independently work with women and be reimbursed by the Engines of Growth activity for a fixed fee, regardless of the total cost of the implementation of the standard or the issuance of the standard/certificate.

The TBASPs will identify women- MSMEs (Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises), that are defined as follows: Enterprises that are owned, managed and controlled by one or more women.

The TBASPs will support Women MSMEs to attain certificates that will help the MSMEs to reach new or expand their markets. Standards can include GlobalGAP, HACCP, ISO, Halal, ISO22000, IFS, BRC, FSSC, HALAL, KOSHER, GlobalGap, as well as social compliance standards GRASP, BSCI etc.

TBASPs will be reimbursed based on evidence of a certificate or standard being issued to the women MSME through a pay for results (P4R) schedule which is an umbrella term for initiatives that pay upon the accomplishments of an agreed upon result.

Subject to strategic decision and/or availability of funds, EoG reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. Issuing this EOI does not constitute an award commitment on the part of EoG, nor does it commit EoG to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Further, EoG reserves the right to reject any or all applications received if such actions are in the best interest of USAID. Applications are submitted at the risk of the Applicant; should circumstances prevent making an award, all preparation and submission costs are at the Applicant's expense.

2 Application and Submission Information

Applicants can be individual consultants or consulting companies registered as a legal entity in one of the six Western Balkan countries. **Interested and qualified companies who have proven track records of at least 5 years of experience in the above spheres are encouraged to apply by submitting:**

- (1) Company profile and registration form not older than 6 months (only for companies);
- (2) CVs (companies should submit CVs for all key experts);
- (3) At least three references of previous work in the last 3 years with MSMEs; (elaborate the work performed, in addition to the company and contact person).

Applicants must comply with all applicable USAID and Palladium rules and regulations (including procurement regulations, if applicable, branding and marking requirements). Prior to the award under this EOI, successful Applicants will be assessed against Palladium's due diligence requirements and will have to sign a set of documents to confirm full compliance with USAID and Palladium internal procurement procedures.

Applicants should submit applications electronically, via email to: wbalkans.eog@thepalladiumgroup.com. In the subject line please include "EoG Technical BASP Application". Applications are due by January 31, 2022

Successful applicants will be invited to attend an info session during which EoG will introduce the TBASP, explain the success fee matrix, and EoG procedures.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing.