**Request for Expressions of Interest**

**(INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING SERVICES)**

**Project Co-ordinator**

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| Project Name | Pacific Strengthening Correspondent Banking Relationships Project |
| Project Number | P502591  <https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P502591> |
| Activity and Reference Number (STEP) | Project co-ordinator (PC)  FJ-PIFS-457844-CS-INDV |
| Implementing Agency Names | Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat |
| Country | Fiji |

1. **The Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS)** and seven pacific island member countries (Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu) have received financing (grants and credits) from the World Bank (WB) Group’s International Development Association (IDA) towards the **“Pacific Strengthening Correspondent Banking Relationships Project” (the Project**) and will apply part of these proceeds to the contract below for Consulting Services. The PIFs will act as the Implementing Agency for the regional project.
2. The Consulting Services (“the Services”) require a Project Co-ordinator to be based in the Project Management Unit (PMU), to manage and coordinate the full range of project activities during the project cycle from effectiveness through implementation to completion. The PC will work closely with the PIFS Senior Economic Advisor (SEA) and Director for Programs and Initiatives, to undertake the Scope of Services. The PC will be required to adopt a flexible approach to deliver the required project management activities and achieve tangible outcomes in terms of project implementation progress. The assignment will comprise, amongst others 1) Assist with development of a Project website and Project information system (via Specialists), coupled with establishment of and leading the PMU team in implementing all project activities as described in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD) and the Project Operational Manual (POM), 2). Liaising with PICs Ministries of Finance and focal point persons on project related activities, including attendance at Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings and preparing meeting minutes, 3) Coordination with the country based focal point persons of participating member countries to monitor progress of activities, including those undertaken by various PICs, during the project implementation process and 4) Monitoring financial activities, promoting financial discipline and ensuring proper implementation of the financial management system and fulfilling audit requirements of the Credit agreement. The services will be required (initially for three (3) years with a possibility of a further three-year extension based upon satisfactory performance and project needs. The consultant will be based at the PIFS PMU Suva Office in Fiji.
3. PIFS seeks an experienced individual with the following qualifications: a) A post-graduate degree (master’s degree or higher) in economics, finance, management, business administration, or related field Or 15 years demonstrable experience in similar high level management roles in the sector. b) A minimum of 12 years of relevant work experience in international development, financial sector, and/or project management, including previous experience working with projects funded by multilateral development banks. c) Professional qualifications Chartered Institute of Management FMSs (CIMA), Association of Chartered Certified FMSs (ACCA) or a recognised professional accountancy or an equivalent qualification (or near completion). d) A strong background or experience in the financial/banking sector in either the public or private sector and e) Experience working in Pacific Islands Countries or small island developing countries.
4. **PIFS,** on behalf of the participating member countries, now invites eligible individuals (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services (attach curriculum vitae and a cover letter with description of experience in similar assignments, similar conditions, etc.).
5. Firms’ staff may express interest through the employing firm for the assignment and, under such situation, only the experience and qualifications of individuals shall be considered in the selection process.
6. The attention of interested Consultants (including firms) is drawn to paragraph 3.14, 3.16 and 3.17 of the World Bank’s Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, dated September 2023 (“the Regulations”), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest. A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the individual consultant selection method set out in the World Bank Consultant Guidelines, Pacific Focus September 2023.
7. The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment is attached below and provides details of the scope of the services required along with specific deliverables expected. Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours [insert office hours if applicable, i.e., 0900 to 1700 hours]. The TOR can also be found at [www.tenders.net/forumsec](http://www.tenders.net/forumsec)
8. Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by e-mail) no later than 17:00 hours (Fiji Time) on Monday 25th November 2024
9. Address for Enquiries and Submission of EOIs

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

Attn: Rodney Kirarock, Program Officer/Timaima Qeranatabua, Procurement Officer

Private Mail Bag, Suva

PO Box 856, Suva, Fiji.

Tel: 679-3312600

E-mail: <mailto:rodneyk@forumsec.org> /mailto: [timaimaq@forumsec.org](mailto:timaimaq@forumsec.org)

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**CONSULTING SERVICES – INDIVIDUAL SELECTION**

**PROJECT COORDINATOR**

1. Project Overview

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| **Project Overview** | |
| **Project Name** | Pacific Strengthening Correspondent Banking Relationships Project |
| **Activity Reference Number (STEP)** | FJ-PIFS-457844-CS-INDV |
| **Position Title** | Project Co-ordinator |
| **Location of role** | The position will be at the Project PMU Office in PIFS, Suva, Fiji with possible travel to participating countries. |
| **Implementing Agency** | Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS)  https://forumsec.org/ |
| **Duration of Assignment** | An initial three-year contract with a possible performance-based extension of a further three years |
| **Agency Description** | The Pacific Islands Forum was established to bring together the region to address pressing issues and challenges, and foster collaboration and cooperation in the pursuit of shared goals. PIF’s mandate is to strengthen cooperation and integration in the Pacific region through the pooling of regional governance, resources and the alignment of policies, furthering Forum members shared goals of economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and security. Founded in 1971, it comprises 18 members: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. The PIFS is a vital platform for Leaders to convene, engage in discussions and agree on policies that will benefit the people of the region. |
| **Participating Countries** | The Pacific Island Countries (PICs) participating in the regional project comprise Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu |
| **Overall Project Objective** | The Project development Objective is to enable continuous access to correspondent banking services in the participating Pacific Island Countries |
| **Project Length** | August 2024 to September 30 2030 |

1. Project Background

**The Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS)** and seven pacific island member countries (Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu) have received financing (grants and credits) from the World Bank (WB) Group’s International Development Association (IDA) towards the**“Pacific Strengthening Correspondent Banking Relationships Project” (the Project**) which will enable continuous access to correspondent banking services in Pacific Island Countries (PICs). The PICs covered by the regional project (Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu) include diverse island economies facing similar correspondent banking relationship (CBR) challenges. PICs range in size and topography **–** from small island states such as Samoa, with two principal inhabited volcanic islands, to large archipelagos such as the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), with 29 atolls spread over 2 million km2 of ocean. Population sizes vary from 11,300 people in Tuvalu to 930,000 people in Fiji.

The economic landscape of PICs is equally diverse, marked by different growth drivers, poverty rates, and growth trajectories. The average GDP growth across PICs decelerated to 3.5 percent in 2023 after a historically high of 7.9 percent in 2022, in a rebound from the COVID-19 crisis. However, medium-term growth prospects have worsened, with output growth expected to be significantly below the pre-pandemic trend of 4.7 percent between 2014 & 2019. Given low growth and limited employment opportunities in the island economies, labour migration to neighbouring countries and the resulting remittances are critical drivers of living standards.

The United States, New Zealand, and Australia account for 94 percent of the Pacific diaspora. Trade and tourism are vital for many PICs, providing revenue and employment opportunities. Remittances, equivalent to more than 40 percent of GDP in some PICs, are a buffer against income shocks and an important source of finance for essential household consumption and human capital investment.

Financial systems in PICs are characterized by low levels of financial access and an uneven development of national payment systems. Commercial Banks, both domestically owned and multinational, dominate the financial sector in all PICs. In several PICs, much of the population lacks access to basic transaction accounts, limiting households and businesses’ ability to send and receive payments, save, invest, and respond to climatic and economic shocks. The financial market infrastructure is underdeveloped, in part due to limited competition and the lack of low economies of scale. The level of national payment system development is uneven across PICs, and regional efforts to improve the efficiency of cross-border payments are limited in scale and scope.

PICs are uniquely vulnerable to the withdrawal of the correspondent banking relationships (CBR) that underpin international trade, tourism, remittances, and humanitarian financial flows. Correspondent banking is an arrangement under which one bank (correspondent) holds deposits owned by other banks (respondents) and provides payment and other services to those respondent banks. CBRs are an essential feature of the global payment system – they enable individuals, businesses, and governments to make and receive cross-border payment services related to remittances, e-commerce, trade, and official sector flows. The cross-border transactions enabled in PICs are in various currencies, primarily the US dollar, Euro, and Australian dollar.

The withdrawal of CBRs, a well-documented global phenomenon affecting many emerging markets and developing economies, has adverse consequences and negative externalities for Pacific Islanders, including seasonal labourers, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and vulnerable populations. Based on publicly available data, the number of active correspondents for Pacific banks has declined significantly since 2011 to unsustainably low levels that put the whole Pacific financial system at risk.

In order to mitigate the issues identified mentioned above, the WB World Bank is providing funding to the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) to implement the **“Pacific Strengthening Correspondent Banking Relationships Project”**.

The **project has two components**: (1) Temporary correspondent banking services, and (2) Enabling environment and regulatory harmonization. The Project will be implemented by a project management Unit (PMU) within the PIFS, with strategic project oversight provided by a Project Steering Committee (PSC) comprised of representatives of participating Pacific Finance Ministers**.**

While the PMU will be responsible for day-to-day project activities, it will need to ensure close collaboration and coordination with participating Ministries of Finance, which will be responsible for the oversight of project activities and the approval of work plans through the PSC.

Comprising of Secretaries of Finance or other officials from the participating PICs finance ministries and the PIFS Director, the PSC will meet on a quarterly basis and be responsible for the approval of key project activities as needed. The PSC will report to Pacific Finance Ministers annually at the Forum Economic Minister Meeting (FEMM) to ensure that strategic guidance and orientation are provided over the project activities.

At the technical level, each participating PIC will be required to nominate a competent official responsible for project coordination at the national level, who will be designated as the point of contact with the PMU and the World Bank team. A competent government official will serve as a project focal point in each PIC and will be complemented by a country-based PMU staff recruited through the PMU who is responsible for the coordination of service delivery at the individual country-level.

The PIFS is seeking a **qualified and experienced international consultant to be the co-ordinator of the PMU** to be based in Suva, Fiji. Selection of the position will be undertaken by PIFS in accordance with the World Bank’s ‘Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers’ (Procurement Regulations), fifth edition, September 2023, and as amended over time.

1. Objective of the Position

The main objective of the Project Coordinator (PC) would be to manage and coordinate the full range of project activities during the project cycle from effectiveness through implementation to completion. The PC will be funded by the project and will work closely with the PIFS Senior Economic Advisor (SEA) and Director for Programmes and Initiatives, to undertake the Scope of Services. The PC will be required to adopt a flexible approach to deliver the required project management activities and achieve tangible outcomes in terms of project implementation progress. In that respect, the PC will be required to work in a pro-active manner, and to functionally deliver in a timely manner.

1. Scope of Services

The selected PC will lead and coordinate the day-to-day implementation of the project activities, including the following:

1. Establish and lead the PMU team in implementing all project activities as described in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD) and the Project Operational Manual (POM);
2. Ensuring effective dialogue between PIFS/PICs and WB team on project implementation matters, including preparation of project implementation reports for the WB on a regular basis and upon request;
3. Liaising with PICs Ministries of Finance and focal point persons on project related activities, including scheduling of and attendance at the Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings, and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings and preparing meeting minutes. The PC will also be required to attend ad hoc and other regular meetings as directed by the Forum Secretariat;
4. Revision of the POM and PAD as may be required in consultation with PIFS/PICs and WB team;
5. Based on the revised POM (if required) and the PAD, prepare the annual work program based on the approved Procurement Plan, including disbursement projections for the entire project implementation period, identifying annual targets of project activities and any revisions to the responsibilities of the PMU staff;
6. Coordinate with the country based focal point persons (to be selected and funded by the PMU), to monitor progress of activities, including those undertaken by various PICs, during the project implementation process;
7. Identifying problems/impediments promptly as they arise during project implementation and take timely remedial actions and any revisions to the POM, in consultation with the participating PICs and WB task team, as required;
8. Monitoring financial activities, promoting financial discipline and ensuring proper implementation of the financial management system. Fulfilling audit requirements of the Credit agreement;
9. Reviewing and monitoring disbursement status of project funds and the preparation of interim financial reports;
10. Overseeing preparation of Withdrawal Approval Forms and obtaining necessary approval for disbursement of funds under the procurement activities;
11. Ensuring that procurement is carried out according to the applicable WB regulations.;
12. Overall supervision of the Systematic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement (STEP) of WB,~~;~~
13. Overseeing procurement related activities (ensuring that STEP is kep up to date, under the project, obtaining necessary approval for the procurement activities from the Forum Secretariat and in accordance with the POM;
14. Ensuring management of environmental and social risks of the Project in line with the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework;
15. Monitoring, with assistance of the project staff/M&E specialist, the progress of the project and its results indicators;
16. Closely coordinate with the PIFS Senior Economic Advisor assigned to the project on implementation related activities;
17. Supervising activities and evaluating the performance of project staff in the PMU;
18. At project closure, coordinate the preparation of overall project completion report and contribute to the World Bank’s Implementation Completion Report (ICR);
19. Oversee the establishment of a Project website and Project information system by a relevant IT or monitoring and evaluation (M&E) professional
20. Other project related duties as agreed with the Director Programs and Initiatives/Senior Economic Advisor
21. Specific Contract Deliverables

The Project Co-Ordinator will be on probation for the first six months of the assignment. A performance evaluation will be undertaken per the relevant deliverables listed below. Note that other deliverables may be discussed and agreed with the Director and the Forum Secretariat.

| **Key Deliverables** | **Timing** |
| --- | --- |
| Oversee the establishment of a Project website and Project information system by a relevant IT or monitoring and evaluation (M&E) professional | Within six months of contract effectiveness |
| Establishment/Recruitment of the technical specialists for the PMU including an AML/CFT, payment systems, and CBR experts | Within six months of Contract effectiveness |
| Oversight and management of PMU activities and deliverables | Ongoing |
| Management of Procurement related activities (in particular the Feasibility Study for the proposed PPM) | Within six months of Project Effectiveness |
| Liaison and open communication always with participating member country and Project Co-ordinators and other key stakeholders, | Ongoing (after establishment of the participating member country PMUs) |
| Preparation of and contribution to the Quarterly Project Reports and Monthly Progress Reports. | Quarterly and monthly |
| Preparation of the annual work program based on the approved Procurement Plan, including disbursement projections for the entire project implementation period, identifying annual targets of project activities and any revisions to the responsibilities of the PMU staff | Annually |
| At project closure, coordinate the preparation of overall project completion report and contribute to the World Bank’s Implementation Completion Report (ICR); | At Contract Completion |
| Revision of the POM and PAD as may be required in consultation with PIFS/PICs and WB team | Ongoing |

1. Reporting Obligations

The PC will work closely with the PIFS Advisor daily and work closely with other PIFS staff as relevant. The PC will report to the Director Programs and Initiatives, through the PIFS SEA Advisor, who will be designated by the PIFS management as described in the Operations Manual.

1. Institutional Arrangements

This is a full-time work assignment at PMU housed within the PIF office in Suva. In line with the project timeline, the engagement will initially be for three (3) years with an extension of a further three years (based on consultant’s performance evaluations and project needs). The services of a Project co-Ordinator are required for an initial three-year contract with a possible performance-based extension of a further three years, with possible extension if the project implementation period is extended. The PC’s services shall be subject to annual performance evaluation based on performance indicators specified below. Performance evaluation shall be the basis for the extension or termination of the services. Facilities such as office space, intercom telephone facilities, personal computers, printing facilities, Internet access and stationery will be provided.

Performance Indicators

The following performance indicators shall be used for performance assessment:

1. Positive progress and good performance of the entrusted project activities, as per the TOR;
2. Ensuring that WB processes and procedures are complied with in all activities and in accordance with the POM;
3. Provide and maintain strategic engagement, networking and collaboration with key stakeholders;
4. Ensure the utilization and management of project funds are in compliance with the Financing Agreement;
5. Ensure the collection of all data required to track project progress;
6. Ensure the project monitoring and reporting timeline is adhered to;
7. Prepare and compile periodic semi-annual and annual reports on project activities
8. Compile proposed annual workplan for the following year with budget and procurement plan;
9. Positive evaluation of performance by the PIFS and the WB team;
10. Effective management of other experts engaged by the PMU; and
11. Support in implementing any capacity building agendas related to the Project as required.
12. Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest

The PC undertakes to comply with PIF’s and WB’s policies and rules with regard to anti-corruption and prevention of fraudulent practices, conflict of interest and confidentiality. The PC shall maintain confidentiality on all sensitive information obtained during the assignment and shall not publish wholly or in part the findings or such information, without prior written consent by the PIF. Any draft reports and other documents produced by the consultant will be discussed and cleared with the PIF and the WB before their final issue. A non-disclosure agreement (NDA) will be signed between the PIFS and the selected candidate to be attached to the contract.

1. Evaluation Requirements

This section details the basis upon which selection of the successful candidate will be based.

**Mandatory Criteria –** These criteria **must** be met in order to be considered for this contract.

| **Mandatory Criteria** | **Description** | **Evaluation** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Education** | A post-graduate degree (Master’s degree or higher) in economics, finance, management, business administration, or related field;  Or  15 years’ demonstrable experience in similar high level management roles in the sector. | Pass or Fail |
| **Experience** | A minimum of 12 years of relevant work experience in international development, including previous experience in the financial or banking sector, and/or project management, with projects funded by multilateral development banks | Pass or Fail |

**Scoring Criteria –** These criteria are requirements or qualities that are not mandatory but would be considered beneficial if they are met and will be assigned scores during evaluation. Applicants must detail, in (their) CVs previous positions which support the criteria claimed the experience. Supporting documentation should be provided where necessary.

| **Criteria** | **Evaluated Criteria** |
| --- | --- |
| 1 | Professional qualifications Chartered Institute of Management FMSs (CIMA), Association of Chartered Certified FMSs (ACCA) or a recognised professional accountancy or an equivalent qualification (or near completion). |
| 2 | Previous experience at the same level and nature in a government or multilateral development bank-financed project and/or experience in managing a team of professionals and building consensus around common solutions |
| 3 | A strong background or experience in the financial/banking sector in either the public or private sector; |
| 4 | Experience working in Pacific Islands Countries or small island developing countries would be an advantage |
| 5 | Demonstrated ability of previous relationship development with senior members of government, Central Banks and the member countries |
| 6 | High degree of computer literacy, and intermediate to advanced knowledge of Microsoft Office Package (Excel, Word, and Power Point) |
| 7 | Excellent report writing and fluency of both spoken and written English is required |

Selection Process

Applicants will be assessed on their Resume as submitted and any supporting documentation.

Applicants who do not pass **Mandatory criteria** requirement will not be evaluated further.

Applicants passing mandatory criteria requirements will be assigned points on presented **scoring criteria**.

The Evaluation committee reserves the right to interview any candidates. A minimum of two professional references should be provided. The Project values individuality and celebrates difference with a strong commitment to diversity, equality, racial equity, gender, and disability inclusion and strongly encourages people from culturally and diverse communities to apply for this position.