

IDB518-685(OO)

**REGIONAL
INTERNATIONAL YOUTH FOUNDATION ENTRA 21 PROGRAM
Sector: Consulting Services
FINAL EVALUATION
ATN/MH-7513-RG
Expressions of Interest (EOI)**

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More than half the population of Latin America and the Caribbean is under the age of 24, with youth unemployment rates on the rise in most of the countries of the region. Existing educational systems are failing to equip youth with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in a fast-changing marketplace. At the same time that more and more youth are unprepared for the workforce, businesses have an urgent need for workers equipped with the technical skills to contribute to the region's growing information-based economy. Demand for IT skills is expected to rise sharply in the region as more organizations migrate toward the Internet and automate their businesses with application software. Young people possess the creativity and adaptability to thrive in the IT area; yet more programs are needed to equip youth with the knowledge and skills to take advantage of growing opportunities. Greater investment in such programs will help narrow the growing gap between the supply of and demand for skilled workers, while helping to bridge the digital divide between developed and developing countries.

In response to the current situation, the Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) Donor's Committee approved in July 2001 the Youth Employment: Technologies in the Workplace Program (henceforth referred to as "Entra 21"), for a total of US\$ 23.75 million (see document MIF/AT-420 in Annexes). Entra 21 is a regional non-reimbursable technical cooperation managed by the International Youth Foundation (IYF) and will provide training in job and employability skills focusing on information technology skills to up to 40 non-profits in 26 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean for projects of up to three-year duration through grants ranging from US\$ 300,000 to US\$ 700,000.

The overall objective of the Program is to improve the employability of 12,000 disadvantaged youth ages 16-29, through information technology skills. The purpose of the Program is to support projects that establish partnerships between NGOs and IT training providers and businesses to prepare and place disadvantaged youth in jobs using IT skills and to disseminate lessons learned and promote best practices derived from the projects.

To fulfill the above-mentioned objectives, the program consists of two components: (i) Challenge grants to support projects that establish partnerships between NGOs and/or IT training providers, and businesses to prepare and place youth in jobs using IT skills; and (ii) Learning and dissemination to document lessons learned and promote best practices derived from the challenge grants.

As part of project performance monitoring, the technical cooperation program approved by the MIF's Donor's Committee contemplates a final evaluation to measure the fulfillment of the Program's specific objectives to be conducted by an external consultant. Since the success of the program is generating demand for these types of interventions from the region, and 20 out of the 35 projects approved will be terminated by the end of 2006, the final evaluation will also serve to inform the design of a new generation of projects in the area of youth employment. In order to carry out this final assessment, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) will contract consulting services to perform the required evaluation.

Consultancy firms with the required expertise are invited to participate by sending their expression of interest to the IDB. Based on the EOI received, a shortlist of a minimum of six possible candidates will be prepared, and subsequently the firms will be invited to present a technical and financial proposal.

Since there are many stakeholders in this evaluation, to facilitate the analysis, the evaluation should differentiate among three groups of stakeholders: the primary beneficiaries — disadvantaged youth (main goal), the local NGOs

(grantee) and its allied educational providers and business partners (goal B), and the Program's management and supervision by IYF the Bank/MIF, USAID and other donors (goal C). The final evaluation of Entra 21 will include an assessment of the following aspects:

Impact of the training on the youth

This section should evaluate the impact and likelihood of youth participating in the program of attaining and maintaining a job vis-a-vis other local, regional or national youth training programs and establish the value added of this type of intervention. The consultant will need to use the Labor Force Statistics for context and comparison. In addition, the consultant may develop and/or apply a follow-up survey to establish control groups. The consultant should evaluate the impact of the training on the youth served by a minimum of 15 approved grants. This sample will be critical in assessing program effectiveness and impact. For this reason, the consultant must develop a transparent methodology to ensure a diverse and representative sample.

Best practices in the design, implementation and evaluation of the training courses

This section should include a review of all the approved grants and generate a matrix that will facilitate the analysis of the different methodologies and characteristics of each project in order to distinguish and distill both general best practices and lessons that could be transferred and applied to future projects and specific best practices and lessons that are intrinsic to a particular context. The consultant should evaluate in detail the performance, to date, of up to a minimum of 15 grants. Since this sample will be crucial to capturing best practices of the training courses, the consultant must develop a transparent methodology to ensure a diverse and representative sample. In general terms, assessments shall be made as to (i) cost and general success factors; (ii) project partnerships between the grantee/NGO, the private sector, educational institutions and others, and (iii) project sustainability.

Program management and supervision by IYF the Bank/MIF, USAID and other donors

This section should assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the program model as it relates to (i) the executing agency's role and performance as both financial partner and administrator of the program, and (ii) the donor partnership and outsourcing mechanism devised to deliver technical assistance and address the persistent youth unemployment problem in the region.

By the time this evaluation starts, the IDB will have the results of several ex-post evaluations of youth training programs in Argentina, Mexico, Paraguay, Colombia, Peru, Dominican Republic, Panama and Chile. It is expected that some surveys developed under these evaluations could be of further use by the evaluators of the Entra 21.

The contract duration is estimated at approximately four months as of signature date. The contractual amount shall not exceed US\$ 80,000.

Consultancy firms interested in participating in this selection process may send their expressions of interest to the address below. The EOI should clearly demonstrate the following expertise, which will form the basis for the preparation of the shortlist:

- Extensive experience in Latin American and Caribbean development projects involving donors and NGOs, and experience with youth development programs
- Experience with NGO implementation/strengthening, public-private partnerships and private sector employment practices
- Fluency in Spanish and English
- Experience in IDB/MIF projects
- Citizen of member countries of the MIF

It is recommended that the EOI not exceed five pages. The period for presenting the EOI will end on 18 August 2006 at 1500 hours (local time, Washington, DC). Interested firms shall send three print copies to the address below.

Shortlisted firms will be notified by 31 August 2006 with the terms of reference for the request for proposals. The estimated date for delivery of proposals is 6 October 2006, with services to be initiated by the end of October 2006.

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