

CALL

for applications for selection of a senior expert to deliver training to the Customs Administration of North Macedonia on Assessing Financial Solvency of Companies Participating in Customs Procedures

USAID's Partnerships for Economic Growth Activity implemented by Palladium International works with resource partners to unlock the growth, productivity and employment potential of micro, small and medium enterprises in North Macedonia. Component 4 of the Activity supporting regional economic integration of the country is implemented by the Center for Development Policies IDEAS DePo.

IDEAS DePo is launching this call to request applications for design and delivery of a training on *Assessing Financial Solvency of Companies Participating in Customs Procedures for the Customs Administration of North Macedonia*.

1. Scope of the assignment

1.1 Context

Financial solvency of companies demonstrating their good financial standing and ability to cover future customs debts is one of the key prerequisites for multiple customs measures facilitating import, export and transit procedures under the Customs Law and the relevant subordinate legislation in North Macedonia. Customs procedures requiring assessment of the financial solvency of participants in customs operations include, but are not limited to the implementation of the Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) program and the issuing of authorizations for simplified customs procedures. Moreover, prudent assessment of companies' financial standing is key prerequisite for decisions authorizing reduction of guarantees securing the customs debt and the reduction percentages thereof.

Financial solvency of companies is evaluated by several departments and units at the Customs Administration of North Macedonia (CANM) and the scope of this process depends on the type of the customs procedure and the phase of the clearance process at which the controls are taking place. The number of customs employees engaged in the assessment of financial solvency is sizable; however, most of them do not have the education background, nor the experience and skills to perform the financial solvency assessments required by the Customs Law and the related regulations. Strengthening their capacity to understand the concept of financial solvency, as well as to use and interpret data available in public databases and companies' records would result in realistic financial solvency assessments that would ensure that companies with sound finances receive maximum benefits when participating in customs procedures while at the same time protecting public fiscal interests.

To address this assistance need, Partnerships for Economic Growth Activity and IDEAS DePo are organizing two one-day trainings for CANM on *Assessing Financial Solvency of Companies Participating in Customs Procedures*.

1.2 Training – objective, participants, language

The key objective of this activity is to strengthen the capacity of CANM employees to perform prudent assessment of the financial solvency of companies participating in customs procedures thus facilitating cross-border trade for trusted traders.

Partnerships for Economic Growth Activity and IDEAS DePo envisage organization of two identical one-day trainings for a maximum of 80 participants (40 per training) from different departments and units in CANM.

This call refers only to consultant services for designing the training program and delivering the content. Other organizational details, including identifying of and inviting participants, booking the venue and covering the cost of refreshments and technical equipment are responsibility of IDEAS DePo and CANM.

IDEAS DePo and CANM will also provide to the selected consultant all laws and regulations that contain provisions regulating the financial solvency requirements for companies participating in customs procedures and be available for consultations and advice related to the current capacity of the training participants and the respective needs for improvement.

Trainings content and materials should be prepared and delivered in Macedonian language.

1.3 Deliverables and level of effort

The anticipated level of effort for this assignment is 8 (eight) days.

The list of deliverables includes the following:

- Design the training agenda taking into consideration the current level of knowledge of participants and their capacity building needs based on the applicable legislation (2 days).
- Develop detailed presentations for the training that will be distributed to participants for future reference after the trainings (3 days).
- Deliver two one-day trainings on dates mutually agreed between the consultant, IDEAS DePo and CANM (2 days).
- Prepare brief report for the assignment (1 day).

1.4 Deadline for completion of the assignment

All deliverables listed under item 1.3 above should be completed in the period March – April 2024.

2. Eligibility and qualifications

- Master degree in Economics/Finance.
- At least 10 years of experience working on financial matters that include assessing and auditing financial records and operations of companies in North Macedonia.
- Strong expertise related to application of laws, regulations and standards governing financial solvency of companies in North Macedonia.
- Excellent knowledge of the institutional infrastructure and data sources relevant for assessing financial solvency of companies.
- Proven ability and experience in designing and delivering trainings in similar areas.
- Good communication and writing skills.

3. Application procedure

Applications under this call should include the following documents in English language:

- Cover letter with contact information.
- Curriculum Vitae.
- Proposed gross daily rate in USD inclusive of applicable taxes and other costs.
- List with at least two similar assignments, including contact information of references.

Please submit your application in electronic form to info@ideasdepo.mk, no later than March 11, 2024 at 16:00h.

Upon reviewing submitted applications, IDEAS DePo will shortlist candidates who will be invited for an interview.

Incomplete applications will not be considered for evaluation.