

Terms of reference (ToR) for the procurement of services

CONFIDENTIAL

Implementation of Industry Immersive Project Based Learning for Students and Faculty		Project number/ cost centre: 22.2023.4-003.00
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0. List of abbreviations

AG	Commissioning party
AN	Contractor
AVB	General Terms and Conditions of Contract for supplying services and work
FK	Expert
FKT	Expert days
KZFK	Short-term expert
ToRs	Terms of reference

1. Context

The *Digital Skills to Succeed in Asia (DS2S)* project, commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), aims to enhance digital skills among young university students—particularly women—in India, Vietnam, and Bangladesh. Implemented by GIZ, the project supports higher education systems to deliver globally benchmarked, industry-relevant learning opportunities that strengthen employability and foster inclusive participation in the digital economy.

A core component of the DS2S approach is the integration of **industry-immersive, project-based learning (PBL)** into university systems. These projects enable students to apply digital and domain-specific skills to real-world problems in collaboration with private sector partners. PBL is closely aligned with DS2S-supported micro-credentials and contributes directly to the acquisition of demonstrable, job-relevant competencies. Faculty members are key facilitators of this model and receive targeted support to design, implement, and evaluate projects in coordination with industry and institutional priorities.

This Terms of Reference outlines the engagement of a contractor to support the design and implementation of industry-immersive, project-based learning across selected higher education institutions in **India, Bangladesh and Vietnam**. The contractor will work closely with GIZ, Ministry of Education, and other relevant national and institutional stakeholders in each country to adapt models to local contexts while maintaining regional coherence.

The contractor is expected to coordinate closely with GIZ focal points, provide regular progress updates, and integrate technical feedback from project partners across the three countries to ensure consistency, quality, and relevance of delivery.

2. Tasks to be performed by the contractor

The contractor will be responsible for implementing the industry-immersive, project-based learning model across partner institutions in India, Vietnam, and Bangladesh, based on the framework and conceptual design already developed under DS2S. The implementation phase will include the following service packages:

Service Package 1: Detailed Experience Design and Implementation Planning

- Translate the finalized conceptual model into a detailed operational plan for rollout
- Design the overall learning experience, including theme selection, delivery format, timelines, and learning objectives for students and faculty
- Ensure strong alignment with DS2S objectives related to micro-credentials, industry relevance, gender inclusion, and digital skills
- Localize implementation strategy for each country in coordination with GIZ and institutional partners

Service Package 2: Industry Engagement and Project Brief Co-Design

- Facilitate structured engagement with national and regional industry partners to identify real-world challenges and co-design project briefs
- Define industry roles in mentoring, evaluation, and feedback loops
- Ensure that projects are scoped appropriately for students and are mapped to DS2S micro-credentials

Service Package 3: Outreach and Engagement of Students and Faculty

- Develop and roll out a targeted outreach plan to engage faculty and students across participating universities
- Design facilitation protocols and tools to guide project implementation at the institutional level
- Provide implementation support to faculty and university teams to ensure consistency and quality of delivery

Service Package 4: Faculty Development Programme (FDP) Implementation

- Deliver a practical **Faculty Development Programme (FDP) approximately for 15 faculty members each from India Bangladesh and Vietnam** focused on mentoring, facilitation, and project supervision skills in an in person/ hybrid format
- Equip faculty with strategies to guide interdisciplinary, collaborative, and problem-solving learning experiences
- Provide ongoing technical support to faculty throughout the project cycle

Service Package 5: Continuous Support, Monitoring, and Refinement

- Establish feedback and reporting mechanisms to monitor progress at each implementation site
- Conduct regular check-ins with GIZ, universities, and industry partners to identify bottlenecks and refine processes
- Contribute to learning documentation and cross-country synthesis for regional learning and scale-up

The agency is responsible for selecting, preparing, training and steering the international and national, short and long-term experts assigned to perform the advisory tasks.

The agency will be responsible for setting up a robust digital infrastructure to support project-based learning (PBL), with a focus on the AI/Data and Digital Entrepreneurship tracks. This includes enabling collaborative, mentor-guided project development by providing appropriate tools for team coordination, version control, content sharing, and progress tracking. The

agency must ensure access to relevant digital environments, platforms for prototyping and testing, and mechanisms for showcasing student work. Solutions must be user-friendly, interoperable with existing university systems, and adaptable to both technical and non-technical student cohorts. Particular emphasis should be placed on ensuring that the infrastructure facilitates real-world application, industry engagement, and effective documentation of learning outcomes.

The contractor manages costs and expenditures, accounting processes and invoicing in line with the requirements of GIZ.

The contractor reports regularly to GIZ in accordance with the current AVB of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

Milestones / Process Steps / Partial Services	Deadline	Place	Person Responsible
Onboarding of Implementation Agency and alignment with GIZ focal points and country teams	1 November 2025	Virtual / GIZ offices	GIZ Project Lead, Implementation Agency Lead
Finalization of country-specific implementation plans and adaptation of experience design	15 November 2025	India, Vietnam, Bangladesh	Implementation Agency Lead, GIZ Country Teams
Identification and onboarding of industry partners for project brief co-design	30 November 2025	Country level	Implementation Agency – Industry Liaison
Co-design and approval of project briefs with industry and academic leads	15 December 2025	Online	Implementation Agency, University, Industry Partners
Launch of outreach campaign for student and faculty engagement (communication collateral + orientations)	5 January 2026	All partner institutions	Implementation Agency – Communications Lead
Student registration, team formation, and briefing on project-based learning model	15 January 2026	HEIs (India, VN, BD)	University Implementation Agency
Rollout of Faculty Development Programme (FDP) – including ToT and institutional delivery	25–31 January 2026	Hybrid / Country hubs	FDP Lead Trainer, Implementation Agency
Project implementation: student groups working on industry-aligned problems with mentoring	1 February – 15 March 2026	Partner HEIs, Online Mentoring	Faculty Mentors, Industry Reps

Milestones / Process Steps / Partial Services	Deadline	Place	Person Responsible
Mid-point check-ins and review sessions with students, faculty, and industry mentors	28 February 2026	Online Institutional	Implementation Agency Support Teams
Hackathon-style project culmination events – showcasing, judging, and feedback	25 March 2026	Institutional Virtual	Implementation Agency, HEIs, Industry Jury
Documentation of outcomes, impact, and best practices	15 April 2026	Virtual	Implementation Agency – MEL Lead
Submission of final report and recommendations for institutionalization and scale-up	30 April 2026	Virtual / GIZ	Implementation Agency Lead

Period of assignment: from **1st November 2025** until **31st August 2026**.

3. Concept

In the tender, the tenderer is required to show *how* the objectives defined in Chapter 2 (Tasks to be performed) are to be achieved, if applicable under consideration of further method-related requirements (technical-methodological concept). In addition, the tenderer must describe the project management system for service provision.

Note: The numbers in parentheses correspond to the lines of the technical assessment grid.

Technical-methodological concept

Strategy (1.1): The tenderer is required to consider the tasks to be performed with reference to the objectives of the services put out to tender (see Chapter 1 Context) (1.1.1). Following this, the tenderer presents and justifies the explicit strategy with which it intends to provide the services for which it is responsible (see Chapter 2 Tasks to be performed) (1.1.2).

The tenderer is required to present the actors relevant for the services for which it is responsible and describe the **cooperation (1.2)** with them.

The tenderer is required to present and explain its approach to **steering** the measures with the project partners (1.3.1) and its contribution to the **results-based monitoring system** (1.3.2).

The tenderer is required to describe the key **processes** for the services for which it is responsible and create an **operational plan** or schedule (1.4.1) that describes how the services according to Chapter 2 (Tasks to be performed by the contractor) are to be provided. In particular, the tenderer is required to describe the necessary work steps and, if applicable,

take account of the milestones and **contributions** of other actors (partner contributions) in accordance with Chapter 2 (Tasks to be performed) (1.4.2).

The tenderer is required to describe its contribution to knowledge management for the partner (1.5.1) and GIZ and to promote scaling-up effects (1.5.2) under **learning and innovation**.

Project management of the contractor (1.6)

The tenderer is required to explain its approach for coordination with the GIZ project. In particular, the project management requirements specified in Chapter 2 (Tasks to be performed by the contractor) must be explained in detail.

The tenderer is required to draw up a **personnel assignment plan** with explanatory notes that list all the experts proposed in the tender; the plan includes information on assignment dates (duration and expert days) and locations of the individual members of the team complete with the allocation of work steps as set out in the schedule.

The tenderer is required to describe its backstopping concept. The following services are part of the standard backstopping package, which (like ancillary personnel costs) must be factored into the fee schedules of the staff listed in the tender:

- Service-delivery control
- Managing adaptations to changing conditions
- Ensuring the flow of information between the tenderer and GIZ
- Assuming personnel responsibility for the contractor's experts
- Process-oriented steering for implementation of the commission
- Securing the administrative conclusion of the project

4. Personnel concept

The tenderer is required to provide personnel who are suited to filling the positions described, on the basis of their CVs (see Chapter 7), the range of tasks involved and the required qualifications.

The below specified qualifications represent the requirements to reach the maximum number of points in the technical assessment.

Team leader

Tasks of the team leader

The **Team Leader of the Implementation Agency** will hold overall strategic and operational responsibility for the successful delivery of the advisory and implementation packages described in this ToR. Tasks include:

- **Overall responsibility** for the timely, high-quality delivery of all service packages related to the rollout of industry-immersive, project-based learning for students and faculty, as outlined in the implementation plan across India, Vietnam, and Bangladesh.
- **Coordination and communication** with GIZ focal points, national and institutional partners, and other stakeholders involved in the DS2S project to ensure effective alignment, information flow, and responsiveness throughout the implementation period.
- **Personnel and assignment management**, including:
 - Planning, mobilizing, and supervising international and local short-term experts
 - Identifying needs for short-term expertise in coordination with GIZ and within the available budget
 - Overseeing internal team coordination across countries to ensure smooth execution
- **Monitoring progress** of key milestones such as industry engagement, student and faculty onboarding, project implementation, FDP rollout, and hackathon events, ensuring all deadlines are met.
- **Regular reporting** to GIZ in line with contractual obligations and agreed timelines, including updates on risks, mitigation strategies, and recommendations for adjustment.
- **Quality assurance and troubleshooting** during implementation to ensure that project briefs, learning outputs, and institutional processes meet the standards expected by GIZ and project stakeholders.

Qualifications of the team leader

Education/training (2.1.1): University degree (master's or equivalent) in Education, Public Policy, Digital Technologies, Innovation Management, or another course of study relevant to higher education reform and digital skills development.

Language (2.1.2): Proficiency in English (C1) --(Mandatory requirement)

General professional experience (2.1.3):

10 years of professional experience in the higher education, digital skills, or innovation ecosystems sector.

Specific professional experience (2.1.4):

- 5 years in designing and implementing university-industry collaboration models, challenge-based learning, or micro-credentialing systems
- Proven experience in conceptualizing and managing large-scale hackathons or innovation challenges with industry or government partners
- Demonstrated ability to engage with private sector actors to co-design real-world learning experiences for students and faculty

Leadership/management experience (2.1.5):

5 years of management/leadership experience as a project team leader or senior manager in a consulting firm, educational institution, or international development project.

Regional experience (2.1.6):

5 years of experience in projects in South and Southeast Asia, of which 2 years in projects in at least one DS2S focus country (India, Vietnam, or Bangladesh).

Key expert 1Tasks of key expert 1

- Coordinate with industry partners to co-create project briefs and support real-world mentorship for student teams
- Provide technical inputs for the design and delivery of the student hackathon events, including quality assurance and judging frameworks
- Serve as liaison between academic institutions, industry partners and the Implementation Agency

Qualifications of key expert 1

Education/training (2.2.1): Master's degree (or equivalent) in Education, Engineering, Digital Technologies, Innovation Management, or a related field relevant to higher education and digital skills development.

Language (2.2.2): Proficiency in English (C1) according to the CEFR; -- **(Mandatory requirement)**

General professional experience (2.2.3): At least 8 years of professional experience in higher education, digital learning, innovation ecosystems, or skills development.

Specific professional experience (2.2.4): Proven experience in designing and facilitating hackathons or industry-aligned innovation challenges Experience engaging private sector partners in education or training programs.

Leadership/management experience (2.2.5): At least 2 years of experience in managing teams or workstreams within academic, consulting, or project-based environments.

Regional experience (2.2.6):

Experience working in South and/or Southeast Asia, with at least 1 year in India, Vietnam, or Bangladesh.

Soft skills of team members

In addition to their specialist qualifications, the following qualifications are required of team members:

- Team skills
- Initiative
- Communication skills
- Socio-cultural skills
- Efficient, partner- and client-focused working methods
- Interdisciplinary thinking

Key Expert 2- Faculty Development Program

Tasks of the Key Expert 2

The FDP Trainer will be responsible for delivering structured training sessions for university faculty across DS2S partner institutions in India, Vietnam, and Bangladesh. The trainer will work with content and materials already developed by the Implementation Agency and GIZ. Tasks include:

- Lead the rollout of the Faculty Development Programme (FDP) across India, Vietnam, and Bangladesh, equipping university faculty to mentor and facilitate project-based learning
- Delivering Faculty Development Programme (FDP) sessions based on pre-developed modules focused on industry-immersive, project-based learning
- Adapt and contextualize content to meet the need of participating universities and align with country-specific academic structures.
- Introduce faculty to advanced mentoring techniques, project facilitation strategies, and student evaluation frameworks aligned with DS2S goals.
- Provide strategic guidance to university faculty on embedding PBL into academic calendars, curricula, and institutional practices.
- Coordinating with the Implementation Agency and GIZ teams to ensure delivery aligns with the implementation plan and timeline

Qualifications of the Key Expert 2

Education/training (2.2.1): Master's degree (or equivalent) in Education, Instructional Design, Digital Pedagogy, Learning Sciences, or a related field.

Language (2.2.2): Proficiency in *English (C1)* according to CEFR—**(Mandatory requirement)**

General professional experience (2.2.3): Minimum 10 years of professional experience in higher education, teacher training, or faculty development.

Specific professional experience (2.2.4):

- At least 7 years of experience in delivering structured training or capacity building sessions for university faculty
- Experience facilitating sessions on project-based learning, mentorship, or student engagement is preferred

Leadership/management experience (2.2.5): NA

Regional experience (2.2.6): Experience working in South and/or Southeast Asia; preference for experience in India, Vietnam, or Bangladesh.

Other (2.2.8):

- Strong facilitation skills for engaging adult learners in diverse academic settings
- Comfortable delivering sessions in *hybrid or in-person formats* using existing content
- Ability to collaborate with faculty, institutional staff, and project teams in a structured training environment

Key Expert 3- Faculty Development ProgramTasks of the Key Expert 3

The FDP Trainer will be responsible for supporting the effective rollout of the Faculty Development Programme (FDP) by providing hands-on facilitation, participant engagement, and delivery support to faculty members across India, Vietnam, and Bangladesh. The trainer will work with content and materials already developed by the Implementation Agency and GIZ.

Tasks include:

- Support the delivery of FDP sessions by facilitating group activities, breakout discussions, and reflection exercises based on pre-developed DS2S modules.
- Assist faculty in understanding foundational concepts of project-based learning, teamwork, and real-world challenge scoping.
- Introducing faculty to basic mentoring practices and facilitation tools suitable for early-stage implementation of PBL.
- Coordinate session logistics, materials, and feedback mechanisms to ensure smooth delivery across institutions.
- Serve as the primary point of engagement for faculty participants, offering support and clarification during sessions.
- Document participant feedback and session outputs, contributing to monitoring, reporting, and learning synthesis in collaboration with the Senior Expert and the Implementation Agency.

Qualifications of the Key Expert 3

Education/training (2.2.1): Master's degree (or equivalent) in Education, Instructional Design, Digital Pedagogy, Learning Sciences, or a related field.

Language (2.2.2): Proficiency in English (C1) according to CEFR —(Mandatory requirement)

General professional experience (2.2.3): Minimum 7 years of professional experience in higher education, teacher training, or faculty development.

Specific professional experience (2.2.4):

- At least 5 years of experience in delivering structured training or capacity building sessions for university faculty
- Experience facilitating sessions on project-based learning, mentorship, or student engagement is preferred

Leadership/management experience (2.2.5): Not required.

Regional experience (2.2.6): Experience working in South and/or Southeast Asia; preference for experience in India, Vietnam, or Bangladesh.

Other (2.2.8):

- Strong facilitation skills for engaging adult learners in diverse academic settings
- Comfortable delivering *sessions in hybrid or in-person formats* using existing content
- Ability to collaborate with faculty, institutional staff, and project teams in a structured training environment

The tender must provide a clear overview of all proposed experts and their individual qualifications.

5. Criteria for Eligibility of firms

Note: Bidders have to submit the documentary evidence for the criteria's specified below.

I. Commercial Assessment

- Legally Incorporated Entity in India (Organisations or Limited Company/LLP OR a Foundation)
- A signed/stamped declaration on GWB clauses – refer Annex “Legal Inferences”.
- In case of bidding consortia: Declaration by consortium

The average annual turnover for the last three financial years (last-but-four financial years can be included in case of invitation to tender held within six months of end of last financial year) must be at least EUR 85,000.

- Average number of employees in past three calendar year must be at least 10.
Please refer [InforEuro, the exchange rate of the Euro currency](#) for Euro rate.

II. Technical Assessment

The tenderer should have undertaken similar project for a minimum value of EUR 20,000 with a proof of projects undertaken.

Minimum requirements

- At least 3 reference projects in the technical field of industry immersive project-based learning (including hackathons) and industry connect, out of these two references should have completed in India in the last three years.

III. Weighted Criteria

1. Technical Experience

- Three on-ground projects related to organizing project-based learning experiences for university students and faculty of non-technical background which may be in the field of training, mobilisation, hackathons, bootcamps, internships, industry linkages etc. The tenderer shall provide proof of successful projects.
- Two projects which proves that organization has good understanding of the sector and can do end to end implementation for industry (this should be different from the project mentioned above). The consultants shall provide proof of prior successful projects.
- Experience of conducting 2 Faculty Development Programs for university faculty in project countries
- Experience in outreach and engagement with universities, for faculty and students. The tenderer shall provide proof of successful projects.
- Demonstrated experience in developing and implementing monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks for at least one projects focused on project-based learning. These frameworks should include qualitative and quantitative methods and outcomes. Proof of one such project should be submitted

2. Experience of working in India and Asian countries like Vietnam and Bangladesh

6. Costing requirements

Assignment of personnel and travel expenses

Specification of inputs

Fee days	Number of experts	No of days Team Leader	No. of Days Key Expert 1	No. of Days for Expert 2 FDP	No. of Days for Expert 3 FDP	Total	Comments
Onboarding of Implementation Agency and alignment with	4	3	3	4	4	14	Team Leader leads onboarding with GIZ; Key Expert

GIZ and partners							supports adaptation of plans
Finalization of country-specific implementation plans and adaptation of experience design	4	3	5	5	5	18	Country-specific adaptation, engagement strategy, and implementation rollout designed
Identification and onboarding of industry partners for project brief co-design	2	2	10			12	Joint brief design sessions with industry, including validation
Co-design and approval of project briefs with industry and academic leads	2	2	10			12	
Launch of outreach campaign and orientations for student and faculty	3	4	8	8	8	28	
Student registration, team formation, and briefing on project-based learning	4	4	10	5	5	24	
Rollout of Faculty Development Programme (FDP)	4	8	12	16	16	52	

Hackathon-style project culmination events	4	6	12	8	8	34	
Documentation of outcomes, lessons, and best practices	4	6	6	6	6	24	
Total Days per expert	-	38	76	52	52	218	
<i>Travel expenses</i>	Quantity	Number per expert	No. Of days/ night per expert			Total	Comments
Per-diem allowance in country of assignment India		3	20			60	
Overnight allowance in country of assignment India		3	15			45	
Per-diem allowance in country of assignment Bangladesh and Vietnam		2	8			16	
Overnight allowance in country of assignment Bangladesh and Vietnam		2	6			12	

<i>Transport</i>	Quantity	Number per expert	Number of flights per expert			Total	Comments
International flights (per way) Bangladesh & Vietnam		2	4			8	Travel to the place of service delivery by FDP Experts
Domestic flights (one way trip) – Three experts flying to five locations		3	10			30	Flights within the country of assignment during service delivery Locations may include only Delhi, Mumbai, Bhubaneswar, Varanasi and Bangalore. Approval for any additional location should be taken prior.
CO₂ compensation for air travel (per way) -- Please refer document 1.1. for carbon offsetting details	38						A fixed budget of EUR 1900 is earmarked for settling carbon offsets against evidence. Domestic and international flight both calculated at 50 euro per trip for offsetting economy

Travel expenses (train, car) •							please share the quote
Other travel expenses							Please quote for visa costs for Bangladesh & Vietnam
Other costs	Number	Price				Total	Comments
Workshop	1						The agency will conduct 3 FDP workshops in India, Bangladesh and Vietnam for 15 participants each All logistics cost in Bangladesh and Vietnam (accommodation, travel of participants, food, venue) will be taken care by GIZ. Agency will only contribute FDP expert days, already accounted for above For the India workshop, this budget covers venue and food. Participants cost of travel and accommodation will be taken care by GIZ

Printing							Hard copy of Training Material for maximum of 45 faculty members
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All business travel must be agreed in advance by the officer responsible for the project

Workshops, events and trainings

The contractor implements the following workshops/study trips/training courses:

- a) Three Faculty Development workshop (2-3 days), i.e. one each in India, Vietnam and Bangladesh
- The proposed budget should cover the costs related to venue, logistics, moderation, and expert days of the contractor's personnel.
- All other necessary costs for organizing these events will be borne by the Client (i.e., GIZ).

Sustainability aspects for travel

GIZ has undertaken an obligation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂ emissions) caused by travel. When preparing your tender, please incorporate options for reducing emissions, such as selecting the lowest emission booking class (economy) and using means of transport, airlines and flight routes with higher CO₂ efficiency. For short distances, travel by train (second class) or e-mobility should be the preferred option.

CO₂ emissions caused by air travel must be offset. GIZ specifies a budget for this, through which the carbon offsets can be settled against evidence.

7. Inputs of GIZ or other actors

GIZ is expected to make the following available:

- Communication materials required at different stages of the assignment for events, workshops etc. such as flex for branding, information regarding collaborations
- Travel and stay arrangements of the university and other relevant partners

8. Requirements on the format of the tender

The structure of the tender must correspond to the structure of the ToR. In particular, the detailed structure of the concept (Chapter 3) should be organised in accordance with the positively weighted criteria in the assessment grid (not with zero). The tender must be legible (font size 11 or larger) and clearly formulated. It must be drawn up in English.

The Technical proposal must not exceed 10 pages (excluding CVs). If one of the maximum page lengths is exceeded, the content appearing after the cut-off point will not be included in the assessment. External content (e.g. links to websites) will also not be considered.

The CVs of the personnel proposed in accordance with Chapter 4 of the ToRs. The CVs shall not exceed 4 pages each. They must clearly show the position and job the proposed person held in the reference project and since how long.

Please calculate your financial tender based exactly on the parameters specified in Chapter 5 Quantitative requirements. The contractor is not contractually entitled to use up the days, trips, workshops or budgets in full. The number of days, trips and workshops and the budgets will be contractually agreed as maximum limits. The specifications for pricing are defined in the price schedule.

9. Environmental Sustainability

GIZ is committed to adopting and promoting sustainability practices in its projects and activities. Towards this, the contractor is expected to consider criteria and options for selecting sustainable alternatives when identifying suitable venues and event-related logistics, in consultation with the project team.

Further, GIZ would like to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂ emissions) caused by travel. When preparing your tender, please incorporate options for reducing emissions, such as selecting the lowest emission booking class (economy) and using means of transport, airlines and flight routes with a higher CO₂ efficiency. For short distances, travel by train (second class) or e-mobility should be the preferred option.

10. Outsourced processing of personal data

Personal data will be processed on behalf of the client. Therefore, an agreement on “Outsourcing of data processing (AuV)” will be concluded with the contractor in accordance with Art. 28 GDPR. For this purpose, the technical and organisational measures (TOM) for compliance with the data protection requirements must be outlined prior to conclusion of the contract. If the contractor has already been audited by GIZ in the past, an update in accordance with GDPR must nevertheless be sent. After a positive check, the contract is concluded with the AuV attachment.