**Terms of reference   
and technical Specifications**

1. **General information**

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| Assignment name | **Technical Assistance to the AU Commission’s SME Unit - Long-term Junior Expert** |
| Beneficiary | **AU Commission** |
| Country | **Ethiopia** |
| Total estimated number of days | **1-year implementation period** |

1. **Context and justification of the need**

Expertise France is a French public international cooperation agency. It designs and implements projects which aim to contribute to the balanced development of partner countries, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda and the priorities of France’s external action. Expertise France’s mission is to meet the demand of partner countries seeking to enhance the quality of their public policies in order to address the environmental, social, economic and security challenges they are facing. The agency achieves this goal by implementing projects in the main areas of public action:

- Democratic, economic and financial governance;

- Stability, international security and peace Stability, international security and peace

- Sustainable development, climate and agriculture

- Health and human development

In order to give substance to this dialogue and to enshrine it in the long term and with a specific focus on the second theme of his declaration of intent, a total of EUR 2.75 Million in funding have been granted by the French Development Agency (AFD) to Expertise France in the form of a technical assistance and capacity-building facility to support the AU on issues within its area of expertise.

Based on a request from different departments from the AU Commission, the French Facility for Technical Assistance to the African Union facilitated the conduct of a number of studies, strategy and policy papers aimed at supporting the African Union Commission on topics related to economy and commerce.

**Africa Union SME strategy**

The African Union, established as a unique Pan African continental body, is charged with spearheading Africa’s rapid integration and sustainable development by promoting unity, solidarity, cohesion, and cooperation among the peoples of Africa and African States as well as developing a new partnership worldwide. As part of the efforts to inspire economic growth and transformation on the continent, the AU has developed the SME Strategy for Africa in line with its 2063 agenda ‘’Africa we Want’’. The vision of the AU SME Strategy is to “develop competitive, diversified and sustainable economies underpinned by dynamic, entrepreneurial and industrial sectors that generate employment, reduce poverty and foster social inclusion”.

Considering the AU’s comparative advantage in engaging RECs and Member States and recognizing that Africa’s private sector has not been an important source of competitive, diversified, and sustainable job growth, the strategy identifies how the AU can leverage its convening power to engage RECs as well as Member States in re-examining how to strengthen and reinvigorate the private sector engagement in SMEs to achieve the set goal. To making significant stride towards the realization of AU vision, the strategy hinges on seven pillars that are presented below:

1. ***Create an enabling business environment and ensure energy access and infrastructure***
2. ***Facilitate innovation and technology and promote start-ups, knowledge-based sectors, and growth enterprises***
3. ***Promote access to innovative financing***
4. ***Ensure access to markets, export competitiveness and regional integration***
5. ***Promote business development services and institutional capacity building***
6. ***Promote learning practices and knowledge management***
7. ***Promote inclusive entrepreneurship (youth, women) and livelihood development***

The implementation of AU SME strategy is essential to make SMEs competitive in export markets, especially under the AfCFTA, which aims to boost intra-continental trade through agreements on rules of origin, preferential tariffs, trade procedures and regulations. Thanks to these agreements, African SMEs will find favorable condition for growing their business on the continent.

The AU SME strategy is implemented by the Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals Department (ETTIM), in close collaboration with RECs, Member States and the private sector and in partnership with international and bilateral development agencies and Development Finance Institutions.

Recognizing that Africa’s private sector had not been an important source of growth and had limited impact on employment creation, the SME strategy clearly outlines the AU's roadmap to be followed by RECs, Member States, International and Bilateral Development agencies and Development Finance Institutions for bringing SMEs to be more competitive in the continental and international markets and for placing them at the center of Africa's development in the crucial years ahead. This is particularly true in this difficult period of COVID-19 which resulted in shocks with multiple effects in Africa, in particular the disruption of supply chains, which has led to a resurgence of food insecurity threats. The SME strategy is therefore part of a post-COVID-19 economic recovery phase.

While the negotiations on the regulations and procedures to facilitate trade under AFCTA are progressing well, the success of this historic initiative will depend on a strong African private sector and competitive SMEs. This calls for appropriate and effective support for enhancing entrepreneurship and industrialization through creating conducive business environment and upgrading their performances for accessing the regional and continental markets. A greater involvement in regional and global value chains, Public and Private Partnership (PPP), subcontracting and outsourcing activities from large companies will sustain SMEs businesses. Sectors with high growth potential, such as manufacturing, agro-processing, green-renewable energy, ICT, services and creative industry are fertile ground for the development of SMEs. But to accompany these companies in the transformation of the economy, adequate financing systems must be implemented.

In seeking to achieve the objectives of the AU SME Strategy, the AUC invites applicants who are citizens of Member States for the long-term Junior Project Officer of Department of Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals of the African Union Commission. This junior officer position is financed by the French Facility for Technical Assistance to the African Union.

1. **Objectives and desired results**
   1. **General objective**

In the framework of AU SME strategy and the follow-up of the AU First SME Forum (Cairo, June 2022), the main objective of the assignment is to recruit a long-term Junior Project Officer, who, under the supervision of the Head of the Industry Division will support the implementation of the African Union SME Strategy and Master Plan 2016-2020 and activities related to Women and Youth Entrepreneurship. The Project Officer will specifically be expected to undertake the duties specified under the Specific objectives section hereunder.

* 1. **Specific objectives**

In this context, the scope of the work will focus on the following:

* + - Assist in the management of the day-to-day operations of the SME Coordination Unit under the Department of Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals, Industry Division, complying with AUC rules and regulations;
    - Working proactively with the Head of the Industry Division to ensure successful delivery of the programmatic activities for the implementation of the Action Plans;
    - Assist the SME Coordination Unit in developing a knowledge management system: performing benchmarking, statistical research, qualitative interviews, research, newsletters related to SME development in Africa;
    - Assist in project development and implementation;
    - Assist in designing annual and quarterly calendar/work plan, to guide the activities of the SME Coordination Unit;
    - Assist with resource mobilization for the SME Coordination Unit: Research and find information on prospective sources of resources (i.e., diverse providers of financial & non-financial services);
    - Assist in coordinating / organizing resource mobilization meetings;
    - Attend and document (i.e. prepare reports) the relevant meetings related to the AU SME Strategy;
    - Assist in organizing training/sessions of various stakeholders within the SME Development Strategy framework;
    - Undertake other related duties and special assignments as directed by the Head of Industry Division.
  1. **Outcome**
     + Support provided to ensure successful delivery of the programmatic activities for the implementation of the Action Plans;
     + Research on SME Development in Africa conducted;
     + SME Development Projects designed and implemented successfully;
     + Annual and quarterly calendars/work plans developed consistently to guide the work of the SME Coordination Unit;
     + Information and data on prospective sources of financial and non-financial resources identified to support the realization of the Action Plans;
     + Well-organized / coordinated resource mobilization meetings;
     + Elaboration of insightful reports about various meetings, which are relevant for the functions of the SME Coordination Unit;
     + Well-run capacity building/ counselling sessions to the benefit of various stakeholders;
     + Other duties undertaken, as directed by the Head of the Industry Division.

1. **Description of the assignment**
   1. **Anticipated deliverables**

The Project officer will report to the Head of Industry, Innovation and Minerals Division and copy the Coordinator of the AU Facility.

* 1. **Submission and approval of reports**

The Project officer will deliver monthly reports to the Coordinator of the AU Facility.

* 1. **Language requirement**

Proficiency in one of the African Union working languages, proficiency of two or more other working language(s) would be an added value. The ability to communicate in both English and French (oral and written) will be an asset.

* 1. **Evaluation criteria**

Interested candidates must provide information demonstrating that she/he has the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services. Consulting firms may propose individual consultant/s, but only the experience and qualifications of individuals shall be used in the selection process, and that his or her corporate experience shall not be considered, and the contract would be signed with the proposed individual.

Interested candidates are requested to submit their CV together with the copies of their diploma, employment certificates and possibly the references.

* 1. **Coordination**

M. Kervin Kumapley, Project Coordinator of the AU Facility will be the Junior officer contact person.

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1. **Place, duration and terms of performance**
   1. **Implementation period**: From the date the contract is awarded to latest **31/03/2024**
   2. **Start date:** From the date the contract is awarded (estimation March-April 2023)
   3. **Latest end date: 31/03/2024**

**Mission location:** The mission is based at the **AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**.

The duration of the assignment is **one (1) year**, starting from the date of contract signing.

1. **Required expertise and profile**
   1. **Number of experts per assignment:** 1
   2. **Profile of the designated expert(s) responsible for contract execution**

**Junior Project Officer**

***Qualifications and skills:***

• Master’s Degree in Business Sciences, Marketing, Economics, Development Studies or Business Administration.

***General professional experience:***

• At least 3-year relevant work experience of which 2 years must be at international level;

• High ICT literacy, proficient in MS Office package;

• Good Drafting and reporting skills;

• Good Analytical skills;

• Good planning and organizational skills;

• Language: Proficiency in English and French is Mandatory, other AU languages will be an added advantage.

***Specific professional experience:***

• Experience in promotion and coordination of enterprise / industrial development projects and programmes;

• Experience in Strategic Marketing for promoting the AU SME Strategy;

• Experience in facilitating and providing liaison services to public and private sector stakeholders for implementing development projects and programmes.