



**ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area (AANZFTA)  
Economic Cooperation Support Programme (AECSP)**

**Request for Proposal**

**Consulting Opportunity for  
ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework Phase V –  
Capacity Building for National Qualifications Frameworks and Referencing  
[AANZ-0091-SER-15]**

**“PROJECT OFFICER”**

**PROPOSAL MUST BE RECEIVED BY  
7 January 2021**

**EMAIL PROPOSAL TO:**

AANZFTA Support Unit  
External Economic Relations Division  
ASEAN Economic Community Department  
The ASEAN Secretariat  
Jakarta 12110, Indonesia  
Email: [ecwp@asean.org](mailto:ecwp@asean.org)

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Prepared by: AANZFTA Support Unit / SID / MID  
Time: 11/2020

## **1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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1. ASEAN, Australia and New Zealand have worked in partnership over the last decade, investing significantly to transform the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRF), endorsed by ASEAN Ministers from 2015, into the first functional regional qualifications framework in Asia. The AQRF has provided the impetus for substantial reforms within ASEAN Member States' (AMS) education and training systems. These reforms have progressed at different rates given the variability of education and training systems and priorities across the ASEAN subregion. Despite this, the AQRF has clearly brought valuable benefits to ASEAN.
2. Following completion of AECSP Project on Referencing National Qualifications Framework (NQF) to the ASEAN Qualification Reference Framework (AQRF) [Education and Training Governance: Capacity Building for NQF Phase IV (AQRF Phase IV Project) in June 2019, the AQRF is now at a critical juncture to maintain the positive momentum gained to date to instil international trust and recognition in the AQRF, the referencing process and referencing reports, and importantly, AMS NQFs and qualifications. The AQRF Phase IV Project supported the start of solid foundation established for a shared understanding of referencing concepts and principles, with some AMS demonstrating policy leadership capability and capacity in this technical field. Referencing NQFs to the AQRF is a significant step for regional integration, helping to improve the standard of education and encouraging greater student and worker mobility.
3. AQRF Phase V seeks to build within ASEAN the capacity and capabilities required for the future sustainability of the AQRF and the referencing process. In parallel, AQRF Phase V also seeks to continue to build the technical capability of AMS seeking to develop/implement NQFs by providing tailored, practical, and technical support.

## **2 SCOPE OF WORK**

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### **2.1 THE ASSIGNMENT**

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#### **I. BACKGROUND**

4. The concept of referencing and its processes are still in the early stages of development in South East Asia. Referencing is highly complex and requires significant time to understand and apply the fundamental concepts associated with it. This view is reinforced from discussions and lessons learned from AMS through the AQRF project to-date, the Australian and New Zealand experience with referencing, as well as from the European experience<sup>1</sup>.
5. Despite the complexities of referencing, progress achieved under the AQRF project has been considerable. Implementation of Phases I-IV over almost a decade has delivered major results, including:
  - **Phase 1** (2010 -2011) developed a policy concept paper on a regional qualifications framework, a regional forum and national consultation workshops.
  - **Phase II** (2012 - 2015) established a Task Force of AMS and representatives from Australia and New Zealand to develop the AQRF and agree on its implementation.
  - **Phase III** (2013 - 2015) provided tailored and practical technical support to AMS for respective NQF development and implementation, through in-depth exchanges of officials and technical experts. The AQRF Referencing Guidelines were endorsed.
  - **Phase IV** (September 2016 - June 2019) started the AQRF implementation phase with the AQRF Committee commencing in their role to review referencing reports. Two AMS (Malaysia and the Philippines) received endorsement of their referencing reports by the AQRF Committee. Four other AMS commenced referencing (Indonesia, Laos, Thailand, and Viet Nam).
6. The development and now implementation of the AQRF has been transformative. It has required AMS to assess their education and training system level design, with a view to improving quality, transparency and integration of systems. Despite the significant achievements made to date, much work still needs to be done to fully benefit from the potential that the AQRF offers the region. Continued capability and capacity building assistance is required for individual AMS and collectively as a subregion. This will cement a shared understanding of referencing and associated NQF concepts such as NQF governance, quality assurance, qualification standards, learning outcomes, pathways and credit systems.

#### **II. PURPOSE OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

7. AANZFTA is seeking the services of a project officer to assist the international expert consultant to provide technical assistance, policy advice and support to Phase V of the AQRF project, in consultation with technical experts from Australia and New Zealand and ASEAN.

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<sup>1</sup> For reference, the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) commenced in 2008 and the process of referencing continues in the region.

### **III. CONSULTANT'S SCOPE OF WORK AND ACTIVITIES**

9. The Project Officer will support the Project Consultant in undertaking deliverables to support the implementation of AQRF Phase V<sup>2</sup>. This will include undertaking research and analysis, stakeholder consultation, preparing reports, documentation and other materials, and facilitating effective communications between project stakeholders, including the Australian and New Zealand technical experts, AQRF Committee, individual AMS, and the ASEAN Secretariat. The Project Officer will support the Project Consultant by undertaking the following tasks.

#### **Component 1: Needs Analysis**

- Support Project Consultant conducting a needs analysis:
  - a. To undertake research, information gathering and analysis, and stakeholder engagement activities to identify the specific immediate and future needs of AMS and the AQRF Committee for referencing of NQF (or national qualification systems) to AQRF and development/ implementation of NQF (or national qualifications systems) of AMS.
  - b. To support evaluation of the needs analysis results and prepare input into a report that presents the findings including how the results will inform the project components and deliverables going forward.
  - c. To support the Project Consultant to facilitate a virtual discussion on the key findings and recommendations to the AQRF Committee including Australia and New Zealand.

#### **Component 2: Capability and capacity building workshops for AQRF referencing**

- Support Project Consultant in designing and developing two one-day tailored technical AQRF referencing capacity and capability building workshops:
  - a. To support the development and design of two one-day tailored technical AQRF referencing capacity and capability building workshops based on the needs analysis findings and recommendations, preparation of meeting materials e.g. input to the policy focus of the workshop agendas, research and analysis, managing stakeholder communications, and liaising with the ASEAN Secretariat on meeting logistics where required.
  - b. To support the drafting of a written report following each workshop summarising the outcomes, including key activities, successes, challenges, lessons learned, and key recommendations going forward.
  - c. To support the drafting of the roles and responsibilities for two senior advisors from two different AMS who will support and add value to referencing workshops.
  - d. To support technical capacity assistance to four AMS commencing or progressing the referencing of their respective NQFs to the AQRF including providing feedback and recommendations to strengthen their referencing reports (partial or full submission).

#### **Component 3: Tailored capacity building workshop to support NQF development/implementation**

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<sup>2</sup> Please refer to the following link for information on the expected deliverables of Project Consultant: [Consulting Opportunity - Project Consultant for ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework Phase V.](#)

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- Support Project Consultant to design and develop capacity building workshop based on the needs analysis findings:
  - a. To support the preparation of a three-day NQF capacity building workshop based on the needs analysis findings, including the preparation of meeting materials, research and analysis, managing stakeholder communications, and liaising with the ASEAN Secretariat on meeting logistics where required.
  - b. To support the drafting of a written report following the workshop summarising the outcomes, including key activities, successes, challenges, lessons learned, and key recommendations going forward.

10. The Project Officer will also undertake other tasks as required by the Project Consultant for successful delivery of the four project components.

11. The Project Officer will not be required to travel for face-to-face workshops. This support would be delivered through virtual communications.

12. The following are activity milestones and indicative time frames of this project:

Activity Milestone	Indicative Timeframe
Project commences	January 2021
Component 1: Needs analysis support	January to February 2021
Component 2: Referencing capacity and capability workshop 1	March/April 2021
Component 3: Regional NQF capacity building workshop	June/July 2021
Component 2: Referencing capacity and capability workshop 2	September/October 2021
Project ends	November 2021

13. The Project Officer is expected to complete the scope of work and activities approximately within 85 input days.

#### **IV. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES**

14. The Project Officer will support the Project Consultant to deliver the following output documents:

- **Component 1 – Needs Analysis:**
  - Consultant report on Needs Analysis
  - Consultant-led virtual discussion to present on the key findings of the needs analysis and result of review for the revised templates for AQRF Referencing Report Review and AQRF Referencing Report with the AQRF Committee, including Australia and New Zealand.
- **Component 2 – Capability and capacity building workshops for AQRF referencing:**
  - Delivery of two one-day tailored technical AQRF referencing capacity and capability workshops;

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- Roles and responsibilities of senior advisors from two different AMS supporting and adding value to the technical AQRF referencing workshops.
  - Agenda, documents/materials and written report following each workshop.
  - At least four AMS commencing or progressing the referencing of their respective NQF to the AQRF.
- **Component 3 - Tailored capacity building workshop to support NQF development/implementation:**
- Agenda, documents/materials and workshop report, following the workshop, prepared by consultant and supported by the Project Officer

## **2.2 QUALIFICATIONS**

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### **PROJECT OFFICER’S KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE**

<b>#</b>	<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Weight</b>
1	Must have extensive demonstrated experience in policy analysis and project coordination, preferably in education and/or international initiatives.	25%
2	Must have experience in capacity building, research, information gathering and analysis, identifying stakeholder needs, and developing reports is desired.	25%
3	Must possess strong written and oral communication skills, with the ability to engage effectively with a wide range of stakeholders, and be well organised, proactive, and flexible.	25%
4	Must also be able to quickly acquire a strong understanding of complex and technical education and qualifications framework/system policy.	25%

### **3 RFP REQUIREMENTS**

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#### **3.1 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS AND FORMAT OF RESPONSE**

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In conformance to the ASEAN Secretariat's Financial Rules and Administrative Procedures (AFARP), the Consultant shall submit the applications in **two** separate documents: Technical Proposal and Financial Proposal.

- a) Interested applicants are invited to respond to this advertisement electronically and must include the following details:
- i. The technical proposal must include the following details:
    - o A brief discussion indicating the prospective -Project Officer's understanding of the project's purpose;
    - o Brief discussion on the prospective Project Officer's qualifications, knowledge and expertise, including past experience in undertaking similar work, brief summary of projects undertaken and knowledge and experience in policy analysis and project coordination;
    - o Completed Appendix 1 and 1a - Company General Information and List of Clients; and
    - o Other information to substantiate the capacity of applicants to undertake the project in line with the criteria at section 2.2.
  - ii. A financial proposal for the Project Officer must be submitted and shall include detailed cost estimates including a summary sheet indicating unit prices; payments schedule, following Appendix 2 to this RfP. The financial proposal must also include the following details:
    - o The project officer professional services fees for completing all deliverables in unit cost and the number of hours/days for each deliverable.
    - o Miscellaneous charges, if applicable. Note that the project officer is not required to travel.
- b) Project Officer must ensure that both Technical & Financial Proposals are received via email at the following address before the tender closing date **7 January 2021**

AANZFTA Support Unit  
External Economic Relations Division  
ASEAN Economic Community Department  
The ASEAN Secretariat  
Jakarta 12110, Indonesia  
Email: [ecwp@asean.org](mailto:ecwp@asean.org)

- c) All proposals must be submitted in English.
- d) Consultant should indicate the Title of the Tender at the subject of the email.
- e) The Technical and Finance Proposals must be submitted in two separate documents.
- f) Consultant must not include any financial/cost data in the Technical Proposal, but only in the Financial Proposal.
- g) The proposal should be concisely presented and structured, and should explain in detail the Consultant's availability, experience and resources to provide the requested services.
- h) Proposals that are incomplete or do not address the required criteria may not be considered in the review process.

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- i) Applicants are welcome to submit an application for this opportunity only or a combined application with the Project Consultant position: [Consulting Opportunity - Project Consultant for ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework Phase V.](#)

## **3.2 RFP TERMS & CONDITIONS**

### **3.2.1 3.3.1 Bid Expiration Date**

Received proposals shall be valid until **28 February 2021**

### **3.2.2 Implementation/Delivery Schedule**

- a. Contract award will be decided by the Selection Committee comprised of representatives of ASEAN Qualification Reference Framework Committee (AQRFC) and Principle Technical Experts from Australia and New Zealand, in consultation and coordination with Co-Chairs of the AANZFTA Committee on Trade in Services (CTS).
- b. Terms and reference of the contract will be negotiated by the ASEAN Secretariat.
- c. In carrying out his/her assignment, the Project Officer will work closely with and would be reporting to the Project Consultant, ASEAN Secretariat, Technical Experts from Australia and New Zealand, representatives of AQRFC Committee and Committee on Trade in Services (CTS) through the ASEAN Secretariat.
- d. The timeline for hiring and initial activities of the project will be as follows:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>	<b>Indicative Timeline</b>
Contracting		January 2021
Submission of draft output:		
<b>Project Commencement</b>	Inception report	January 2021
<b>Component 1 – AMS participate in needs analysis</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct the desk-based research</li> <li>• Prepare the draft Needs Analysis Report (Consultant Report)</li> <li>• Submit the draft Needs Analysis Report for consideration by relevant ASEAN and AANZFTA bodies, and Principle Technical Experts from Australia and New Zealand</li> </ul>	Draft Needs Analysis Report	January - February 2021
<b>Component 1 – Completion of needs analysis report and virtual discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare workshop documents, including draft agenda, materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda for the workshop;</li> <li>• Workshop materials or presentations;</li> <li>• Workshop facilitation;</li> <li>• Workshop report;</li> </ul>	February/March 2021



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Activity	Deliverables	Indicative Timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the facilitation of the virtual discussion</li> <li>• After completion of the workshop:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Prepare and submit draft workshop report</li> <li>○ Finalise the Needs Analysis Report</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final Needs Analysis Report</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Component 2 - Workshop 1 (held together with AQRFC meeting)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the design and development of the 1-day workshop, including developing materials (agenda, discussion papers, presentations), and designing roles and responsibilities of Senior Advisors from two AMS.</li> <li>• Submission of the workshop report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop materials (including agenda, discussion papers, presentations)</li> <li>• Workshop Report</li> </ul>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> Workshop: March/April 2021</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Workshop: September/October 2021</p>
<p><b>Component 3 – Workshop 3 (Regional Workshop)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submission and consultation on the draft agenda for the regional workshop</li> <li>• Prepare the workshop documents/materials</li> <li>• Support the design and development of the regional workshop</li> <li>• Submission of the workshop report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop materials (including agenda, discussion papers, presentations)</li> <li>• Workshop Report</li> </ul>	<p>June/July 2021</p>
<p><b>Project End</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion Report</li> </ul>	<p>November 2021</p>

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**Appendix 1**

Company General Information

*(Only required for consulting firms, to be submitted as part of the **Technical Proposal**)*

Company's Legal Name:			
Division or Subsidiary (if applicable):			
Company Address:			
City:			
Province / State:			
Country:			
Postal Code:			
Telephone:			
Business Name Registration:			
Tax Registration Number:			
Valid Business Permit:			
Company Contact:		Telephone no.:	
Title / Position:		Fax no.:	
E-Mail:			
Indicate number of years involved in similar business			
Are you a subsidiary of a financial institution? *If Yes, Please indicate your Holding Company			

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**Appendix 1a.  
Customer Reference**

*To be submitted as part of the Technical Proposal*

Customer Details	
Company Name	
Company Address	
Telephone Number	
Fax Number	
Contact Name	
Project Title	

Customer Details	
Company Name	
Company Address	
Telephone Number	
Fax Number	
Contact Name	
Project Title	

Customer Details	
Company Name	
Company Address	
Telephone Number	
Fax Number	
Contact Name	
Project Title	

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**APPENDIX 2**

**Price and Payment Schedule**

*To be submitted as part of the Financial Proposal*

**A. PRICE**

Unit: USD or AUD

No.	Description	Unit	Price (Total estimated cost)
1	<b>Professional Services</b>		
	- Input days for each expected output	(# of days)	
2	<b>Other expenses</b>		
	- Item 1		
	- Item 2		
<b>TOTAL</b>			

**B. PROPOSED PAYMENT SCHEDULE**