

## **Aus4Skills Request for Proposals (AM12162): Case Study on the Women in Leadership Journey Australia Awards Short Courses**

Dear prospective service provider,

Tetra Tech International Development Pty Ltd (Tetra Tech International Development), as the managing contractor of the Aus4Skills Program in Vietnam on behalf of Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, is seeking a local consultant with proven experience in monitoring and evaluation and familiarity with gender equity and equality issues (the "Consultant") to conduct a **case study on the Women in Leadership Journey Australia Awards Short Courses** (the "Case Study").

This Case Study will evaluate the effectiveness and sustainability of the Women in Leadership Journey (WILJ) Australia Awards Short Courses (AASCs) which have been designed to achieve the following learning outcomes:

- (i) Strengthened agency, i.e. skills, knowledge and confidence of women to lead for gender equity and gender equality;
- (ii) Strengthened relations, i.e. the networks, relationships and coalitions of women supportive of gender equity and gender equality; and
- (iii) Improvement of structural conditions for gender equity and gender equality - social and cultural norms, policies, political, economic and social institutions.

The Case Study will review the performance of six WILJ AASCs that have been delivered over Aus4Skills Phases 1 and 2, examining both individual and organisational change elements.

The Terms of Reference for the Case Study are attached at Annex 1.

Proposals and supporting documentation must be submitted by email to the following contact officer by **31 December 2024, 17:00 (Hanoi time)**:

Name: Andrea Wilson  
Title: Contracts and Services Director  
Tel: + 84 091 643 1148  
Email: [procurement@aus4skills.org](mailto:procurement@aus4skills.org)

Applicants must ensure their proposals reach the above email address above on or before the deadline. Proposals that are received by Aus4Skills after the deadline indicated above will not be considered for evaluation. Proposals will be deemed valid for 90 days from the date of submission. At any time during this period, no price variation due to escalation, inflation, fluctuation in exchange rates, or any other market factor will be considered by Aus4Skills.

Thank you and we look forward to receiving your proposal.

## **ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **1 CASE STUDY PURPOSE**

This Case Study will evaluate the effectiveness and sustainability of the WILJ AASCs which have been designed to achieve the following learning outcomes:

- (i) Strengthened agency, i.e. the skills, knowledge and confidence of women to lead for gender equity and gender equality;
- (ii) Strengthened relations – i.e. the networks, relationships and coalitions of women supportive of gender equity and gender equality; and
- (iii) Improvement of structural conditions for gender equity and gender equality - social and cultural norms, policies, political, economic and social institutions.

The Case Study will review the performance of six WILJ AASCs that have been delivered over Aus4Skills Phases 1 and 2, examining both individual and organisational change elements.

### **2 BACKGROUND**

AASCs have been an important delivery mechanism in achieving three Aus4Skills end-of-program outcomes over Phases 1 and 2 of the program.

Evidence on the effectiveness of AASCs has been gathered through end-of-course surveys, the Alumni Development Impact Survey (ADIS), relevant case studies, and reports from participating Vietnamese agencies and organisations. These information sources have provided important data on achievement of immediate and intermediate outcomes. However, they do not gather data on the long-term effectiveness of AASCs or the sustainability of change to which AASCs contribute.

Fostering women in leadership has been a central feature of Aus4Skills since its inception. Under Aus4Skills Phase I (2016 –2021), priority was placed on initiatives aimed at increasing women’s representation in and impact on decision-making in the public and private sectors. The flagship of these initiatives was the WILJ AASC delivered to four cohorts of female leaders in Vietnam from 2017 –2021.

Under Aus4Skills Phase 2 (2021 –2025), the WILJ came under the management of the Vietnam Australia Centre (VAC). The WILJ is a key leadership and training activity of VAC, while also supporting the Aus4Skills’ Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Strategy and DFAT’s Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Strategy. The WILJ significantly contributes to achieving Aus4Skills’ strategic GEDSI objectives.

The sixth WILJ will be completed in December 2024. Approximately 25 participants have been involved in each cohort of the WILJ and are mainly from key Government of Vietnam ministries and agencies, including the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics (HCMA) and the Office of the Government (OOG). Other female participants have come from Vietnamese universities in the North-West, Women’s Unions, non-government organisations (NGOs) and organisations of people with disabilities (OPD). Some WILJ alumni have been working in key Vietnamese institutions for more than five years since completing the WILJ AASC, making this an ideal short course to evaluate effectiveness and sustainability.

### 3 KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The key evaluation questions to be considered by the Case Study are as follows:

- (i) **Agency:** to what extent has the WILJ contributed to the conscientisation<sup>1</sup> of individual participants through the development of the skills, knowledge and confidence required to lead for gender equity and gender equality, and how much has this been sustained over time?
- (ii) **Relations:** to what extent has the WILJ contributed to strengthening the networks, relationships and coalitions supportive of gender equity and gender equality for Vietnamese alumni and organisations, families and communities, and how much has this been sustained over time?
- (iii) **Structural conditions for gender equity and equality:** to what extent have WILJ alumni contributed to strengthening the policies and practices in their workplaces, partner organisations, communities and families necessary to progress gender equity and gender equality, and how has this been sustained over time?
- (iv) What are **best practices** in GEDSI which can be scaled up?
- (v) What have been the **key strengths** of WILJ? In what ways could it be improved?

### 4 CASE STUDY DETAILS

#### 4.1 Approach

The Case Study will apply a mixed-method approach, using qualitative and quantitative data from primary and secondary sources and the following principles:

- the data gathering process will be GEDSI-sensitive and participatory;
- ethical research practices will be used, including gaining informed consent from people interviewed for the use of their information and photos; and
- efficient and effective utilisation of previous project studies and reviews.

The Case Study will have both formative and summative elements. It is intended to provide an evaluative judgement of the effectiveness and sustainability of the WILJ short course to this point and provide lessons, ideas and options for program design and delivery into the future.

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<sup>1</sup> Gender literature posits that women's underrepresentation and underparticipation in decision-making roles stems from systemic discrimination and harmful social and gender norms that give priority access, control and superiority to mostly men. To overcome these barriers and create long-lasting changes, women must gain a **critical awareness (conscientisation) that their lack of status and welfare, relative to men, is not due to their own lack of ability or effort**. It is only when women have this shared vision that they are motivated to come together for collective actions to remove discriminatory practices. *Conscientisation, therefore, goes beyond the ability or confidence of women, refers to a critical consciousness of the need for systematic change.*

Refer to the Women's Empowerment Framework by Longwe (1995) at <https://coffevids.egnyte.com/dl/h1tOPhOe6v>

## 4.2 Key Tasks

The Case Study will involve the following stages: stages:

### ***(i) Case Study Plan***

The Consultant will be expected to develop a Case Study Plan that respond to this Terms of Reference, including proposed methodology, approach to the survey and interviews, data analysis plan, and timeframe for completion of deliverables. The Case Study Plan will be presented to the Aus4Skills Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) and GEDSI teams for inputs and agreement prior to Case Study commencement. The Consultant will also be expected to develop a budget for the Case Study using the template provided by Aus4Skills.

### ***(ii) Desk Review***

Aus4Skills and data will provide the Consultant with key reports to inform the development of the survey, focus group and interview questions, including:

- WILJ-related ADIS data
- original design of the WILJ
- Aus4Skills Annual Reports – specifically Advancing Women in Leadership and VAC content
- plans and reports for each WILJ (including list of application projects and presentations of application projects if any)
- Aus4Skills Phase 1 Completion Report
- Aus4Skills Phase 2 Mid-term Review
- Case Study on Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) achievements, challenges and possible directions in the Aus4Skills program (2023)
- other Aus4Skills Program/project documents and reports as directed by the Aus4Skills MEL Manager.

### ***(iii) Alumni Survey***

Following the desk review the consultant will deliver an online survey targeting alumni all six cohorts of the WILJ. The Consultant will liaise with the Aus4Skills MEL team and the VAC team to arrange the distribution of the survey. The Consultant will demonstrate a clear understanding of the total sample size, and the response rate required to have confidence in the findings, and work with stakeholders to maximise alumni participation in the survey.

The survey will cover a range of areas including:

- alumni self-assessment of their personal growth as a result of participation in the WILJ
- relevance and usefulness of the WILJ course
- sustainability of the course's impact
- the extent to which alumni are part of networks, relationships and coalitions supportive of gender equity and gender equality
- the extent to which the course helps to strengthen GEDSI policies and/or practices in their organisations
- enabling and inhibiting factors when applying learned knowledge and skills obtained from the course
- potential areas for course improvement.

Survey respondents will be asked if they are willing to participate in an interview to enable more detailed data to be gathered for the Case Study.

#### ***(iv) Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews***

The survey will be followed by a combination of Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) to gather more detail about the areas covered in the survey. The proposed data gathering activities include:

- Two FGDs (six to eight participants in each group) with (1) one group of alumni from Vietnamese government organisations, (2) one group of alumni from public universities, NGOs and OPD to gather details examples of the impact of the course, explore sustainability and discuss opportunities to strengthen the WILJ model and deal with factors inhibiting change.
- Eight to ten individual interviews to be held with WILJ alumni from across the six courses delivered in Phases 1 and 2. The alumni to be interviewed will be selected from the survey respondents to enable detailed follow-up of examples they have raised such as (i) individual actions they have taken to strengthen gender equity and gender equality in their workplace and/or community (ii) relevant networks/coalitions they have established/become a part of, (iii) examples of sustainable changes in policy and/or practices they have contributed to/seen develop in their organisation, (iv) barriers/challenges inhibiting meaningful change, and (v) ideas to strengthen the WILJ model.
- Three to four KIIs with senior leaders from agencies that have had a significant cohort of staff participate in WILJ (e.g. Thai Nguyen University of Education, HCM, the Women's Union, MOLISA) to review the extent to which the participants in the course have had a collective impact on gender equity/equality practices and policies in their organisation.
- Two to three 3 KIIs with senior leaders from organisations with small number of alumni to review the extent to which the participants have contributed to gender equity/equality practices and policies in the organisations. These interviews are also aimed to explore whether the size of an alumni cohort is an important contributing factor to sustained change.
- Three KIIs with Flinders University, Curtin University and GeLEAD staff to review the impact of co-delivery of the WILJ course on collaboration between their institutions and any broader impacts of the professional partnership.
- Two to three KIIs with representatives of the Australian Embassy and Aus4Skills VAC component, particularly WILJ focal point.

#### ***(v) Data Analysis and Reporting***

The Consultant will analyse the data and summarise their findings from the desk review, surveys, FDGs and KIIs in a draft key finding(s) report in English (maximum two pages, not including annexures) for review by Aus4Skills. The report will clearly address the key evaluation questions and include draft recommendations.

Following submission of the draft report the consultant will hold a session with a small group of VAC and HCMA stakeholders to share and discuss key findings (if possible).

The final report will be written in English and submitted to Aus4Skills. The Consultant will revise and finalise the Case Study report after receiving feedback from Aus4Skills and the Australian Embassy.

## 5 DELIVERABLES AND TIMELINE

| Tasks/Key deliverables   | Responsibility   | Timeline            |
|--|--|---------------------|
| Appoint Consultant   | Aus4Skills   | 3-6 January 2025    |
| Finalise Case Study Plan including methodology, targeted sample, tentative KII/FGD schedule, analysis plan, quality control plan, timeframes and team member roles and responsibilities  | Consultant<br>Aus4Skills MEL and GEDSI team                        | 15 January 2025     |
| Complete desk review   | Consultant   | 18 January          |
| Develop and finalise online survey<br><i>Deliverables: Completed online surveys in Vietnamese</i>  | Consultant, liaising with Aus4Skills MEL, GEDSI team and VAC team  | 28 February         |
| Distribute the WILJ alumni survey, collect and analyse data<br><i>Deliverables: Dataset (both raw data and processed dataset); data tables finalised</i>   | Consultant, with Aus4Skills MEL, GEDSI teams and VAC team          | 21 March            |
| Coordinate with Aus4Skills team to develop interview plan and arrange interviews/FGD schedule (Aus4Skills will lead this process to send invitation letters/emails to target participants. Consultant(s) to follow up and confirm the final schedule).<br><i>Deliverables: Finalised interviews/FGD schedule</i> | Consultant, Aus4Skills VAC and MEL, GEDSI teams                    | 24 March – 11 April |
| Complete interviews and focus groups<br><i>Deliverables: Completed notes of interviews and FGDs in electronic formats – requires careful coding of participants for future Aus4Skills flyer/communications products</i>  | Consultant   | 14 April – 8 May    |
| Analyse data and submit draft key findings in English (max 10-page) to Aus4Skills<br><i>Deliverables: data result in tables, draft key findings</i>  | Consultant   | 19 May              |
| Hold dissemination workshop (to be confirmed based on its feasibility)<br><i>Deliverables: presentation of preliminary findings</i>  | Consultant, with Aus4Skills MEL, GEDSI and VAC teams               | 30 May              |
| Submit report in English<br><i>Deliverables: max 30-page report (not including annexures) in the prescribed format for review by Aus4Skills</i>  | Consultant<br>Aus4Skills Program Director, MEL, GEDSI and VAC team | 16 June 2025        |
| Finalise report based on Aus4Skills and Australian Embassy's feedback  | Consultant   | 1 July 2025         |

## 6 CONSULTANTY REQUIREMENTS

The Case Study will be implemented by the Consultant under the direction of the Aus4Skills MEL, GEDSI and VAC teams. The MEL and GEDSI teams will provide technical inputs during the process of designing the survey tools/methods, arranging the data gathering activities and monitoring the study quality,

The Consultant will provide a total of up to **45 days of intermittent inputs** from January to July 2025.

The Consultant will be remunerated in accordance with the National Consultants Rates, UN-EU Guidelines for Financing of Local Costs in Development Co-operation with Vietnam Version 2017 available at: [2022 UN-EU Cost Norms 9 MAR 2022 English.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#).

The Consultant will work online and from his/her own office in completing the desk review, in designing and administering the survey, and in designing the interview questions. The Consultant is expected to conduct the KIIs face-to-face in Hanoi and other locations. Logistics arrangements will be discussed and agreed with Aus4Skills, and associated costs will be covered by Aus4Skills. The Consultant will receive support in administering the survey and scheduling interviews from an Aus4Skills administrator.

The Consultant must demonstrate the following:

- at least five years of substantial monitoring, evaluation and research experience
- knowledge of gender equity and equality issues, and experience in working with government agencies in Vietnam
- excellent written and spoken Vietnamese and English skills
- demonstrated experience in conducting interviews, analysing, compiling and synthesising information and preparing reports and case studies
- experience in compiling good practice documents on development-related issues.

## 7 SUBMISSIONS

The Consultant's submission in response to this Request for Proposals must include the following:

- (i) CV outlining relevant experience (and the CV of relevant team member of the Consultant proposes to work in a team of two)
- (ii) Proposed Case Study Plan outlining how the Consultant will approach the Case Study
- (iii) an example of a similar case study or report prepared by the Consultant
- (iv) proposed daily rates (including applicable taxes).