

To: Offerors
Date: August 17, 2022
RFP: ATI-013
From: Procurement and Partnerships Team, Africa Trade and Investment (ATI) Program; Implemented by DAI Global LLC
Subject: Request for Proposals (RFP) ATI-013 Digital Trade Services Activity
Due: 1:00PM East Africa Time (6:00AM EDT) on September 13, 2022

Dear Offerors:

Enclosed is a Request for Proposals (RFP) to support the implementation of DAI's ATI project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). DAI invites firms to submit a proposal to support work under the Digital Trade Services Activity

- I. RFP Process and deadlines:** This solicitation will result in the award of a Firm Fixed Price (FFP) type subcontract. We anticipate issuing one (or more) subcontract award(s) in the range of \$175,000 - \$300,000 resulting from the implementation of this agreement.
- a. **Submission of Questions** – Questions must be submitted no later than 1:00PM EAT (6:00AM EDT) on August 23, 2022, via email to ATI_Procurement@dai.com
 - b. **Submission of Proposal** – Proposal must be submitted no later than 1:00PM EAT (6:00AM EDT) on September 13, 2022, via email to ATI_Procurement@dai.com, copying Brian Wanyagi (Brian_Wanyagi@dai.com) And Edwin Muli (Edwin_Muli@dai.com).
 - c. The subject line of the email should be your organization name, followed by “Submission under ATI-013 Digital Trade Services Activity. Please certify in your submission email a validity period of 60 days for the pricing provided and include your organization’s **Unique Entity ID** (UEI via SAM.gov). Please limit file submissions to 10 megabytes or less.
- II. Composition of Proposal:** The proposal should comprise the following submission documents. The Technical Proposal and Cost Proposal should be prepared as separate files for independent evaluation, as follows below. Technical proposals should be submitted as a ten (10) slide presentation, using 12-point standard font size. Graphics may be included, so long as text is clearly legible. If text or graphics are of poor resolution, the information provided may be excluded from consideration. Submissions in PowerPoint or PDF are acceptable, although PDF is preferred along with an accompanying PowerPoint document. Please provide a copy of your cost proposal in Excel format. Offerors are free to use their own budget templates.

Part 1 – Technical Proposal

The technical proposal is composed of the following three (3) sections:

1. **Technical Approach** – Offerors will detail their approach to fulfilling the accompanying Statement of Objectives (SOO). The approach will clearly indicate how the proposed activities will result in the successful completion of all anticipated outputs of work.

2. **Institutional Capacity** – Offerors should provide details about the experience, expertise, and capacity of their firm (or firms if partners are proposed) to implement the proposed approach and complete the work as described. This should also include past performance information for similar activities.
3. **Management Plan/Staffing Structure** – Offerors should include details of personnel who will be assigned to activities as proposed in the technical approach, as well as a clear management plan in narrative form for the development, review, and submission of all associated deliverables, including a milestone schedule. Offerors are permitted to engage in partnering arrangements if it will aid in providing best value to USAID. If a partnering arrangement is being proposed, please describe the nature of the arrangement, the specific technical value being contributed by each member of the team, and the appropriate management controls to ensure successful delivery.

In addition to the above, please include the following inputs, which will not be counted as part of the 10-slide limit and format may be PDF or Word:

- Two (2) examples of past performance (i.e., case studies) relevant to this activity (Limited to two (2) pages per example). Examples should be within the last 5 years.
- CV(s) of any individuals proposed in the staffing plan to conduct this activity (Limited to two (2) pages per individual).

A cover page will be considered a non-counting page, should offerors choose to include one. No additional annexes or documentation are requested nor should be submitted.

Part 2 – Cost Proposal

The contract type for the presumptive work will be a Firm Fixed Price (FFP), awarded as a subcontract by DAI Global, LLC. Please include your total proposed price along with details for specific deliverable pricing. Offerors must also include a cost breakdown of the hourly rates for proposed personnel, any other direct costs, indirect costs, VAT, and fees if applicable, with a build-up to their total proposed price or include substantiating price reasonableness documentation/justification. Cost breakdowns included will be utilized to determine price reasonableness. The successful Offeror will need to demonstrate that the proposed rates, fees, etc. are reasonable and will be required to provide documentation during subcontract negotiations to substantiate costs, as needed. Offerors may use the attached cost/budget template but are not required to as long as the cost criteria is met; please limit file submissions to 10 megabytes or less

- III. Evaluation of Proposal:** DAI will use best value determination for the award of this Request for Proposals. A best value determination means that, in DAI's estimation, the selected offer will provide the greatest overall benefit to USAID in response to the requirements stated in this RFP. DAI may also exclude an offer from consideration if it determines that an Offeror is "not responsible," i.e., that it does not have the management and financial capabilities required to perform the work required. DAI reserves the right to check the past performance, references, and other pertinent offeror information in making award decisions. Proposals will be evaluated against a stated number of factors including: the overall proposed approach, past performance, specific qualifications in the identified approach and sectors, and other evidence substantiating the bidder's ability to deliver, including budget and time frame considerations.

- 1. Technical Proposal:** The Technical Proposal will be scored and evaluated separately from the cost proposal. Technical panel reviewers will evaluate offerors on the following factors, consistent with the offerors' technical proposal. The Technical Proposal will be evaluated against the following criteria:

 - a. Technical Approach (35 points):** Points for this section will be awarded based on the information presented in the technical approach. The offeror will be scored based on its presentation of a clear approach that reflects the requirements of this specific activity but also incorporates the offeror's competencies. The technical approach should clearly demonstrate the offeror's strategy to create high-level awareness of export market opportunities to lower the buyer discovery costs and promote significant exports (intra-Africa and the U.S. and U.S. to Africa) from African and U.S. export firms.
 - b. Institutional Capacity (35 points):** Points for this section will be based on information presented in the corresponding section and any submitted past performance case studies. The offeror should demonstrate their knowledge and experience in using digital platforms to support trade and enhance export opportunities for firms. Experience should at a minimum include number of registered buyers and export firms, sectors covered, number and value of export transactions recorded via the platform, etc. Access to and existing relationships with relevant buyers, export firms, and private sector stakeholders should also be included. Points for this section will be based on offerors' previous experience and demonstrated ability to address the requirements in the SOO in an efficient and results-focused manner.
 - c. Management Plan/Staffing Structure (30 points):** Points for this section will be awarded based on the qualifications of proposed staff, clear delineation of the roles and responsibilities of each proposed staff and each proposed firm (if firms are partnering), and the demonstrated efficacy and clarity of the management plan. Proposals should provide a clear management plan in narrative form for the development, review, and submission of all associated deliverables, including a proposed milestone schedule. If the offeror is submitting a proposal with partners, the proposal should describe the nature of the arrangement (i.e. added technical value), the division of labor among the partners, and the appropriate management controls to ensure successful delivery. The offeror should clearly demonstrate that they can work in or travel throughout Africa as needed. The Management Plan should clearly outline where staff are located and, if any portion of the team or consortium will be remote, offerors should demonstrate how they will effectively supplement the work on-the-ground and coordinate with national and international staff.
- 2. Cost Proposal:** Cost and associated cost build-up will be evaluated separately from the technical approach, with due consideration for realism, cost reasonableness, and allowability consistent with U.S. government cost principles. Evaluation for this section will be dependent upon all information presented by the Offeror in their

deliverable table and supporting cost information, as well as its alignment with the proposed technical approach.

- IV. Offeror's Agreement with Terms and Conditions:** The completion of all RFP requirements in accordance with the instructions in this RFP and submission to DAI of the technical and cost proposals will constitute an offer and indicate the Offeror's agreement to the terms and conditions in this RFP and any attachments hereto. DAI is not required to accept and/or evaluate proposals that do not conform to the instructions of the RFP, and additionally, DAI may reject all proposals and not award a subcontract for this RFP. DAI reserves the right to award a subcontract without discussion and/or negotiation; however, DAI also reserves the right to conduct discussions and/or negotiations, which among other things may require an Offeror(s) to revise its proposal (technical and/or cost). By submitting an offer, Offerors agree to comply with the general terms and conditions for an award, including [Representations and Certifications](#) compliance. Offerors must provide full, accurate, and complete information in response to this solicitation. By submitting an offer, Offerors certify that they have not/will not attempt to bribe or make any payment to DAI employees in return for preference. Issuance of this RFP in no way obligates DAI to award a subcontract, nor does it commit DAI to pay any costs incurred by the Offeror in preparing and submitting the proposal. DAI reserves the right to award a subcontract to one organization or to issue multiple awards to different organizations based on the results of our evaluation.

Thank you,
DAI ATI Procurement and Partnerships Team
ATI_Procurement@dai.com

Statement of Objectives under RFP ATI-013: Digital Trade Services Activity

Introduction

The USAID Africa Trade and Investment (ATI) program is designed to bolster the U.S. Government's ability to boost trade and investment to, from, and within the African continent. The continent-wide program is USAID's flagship effort in support of the Prosper Africa initiative and will expand and accelerate two-way trade and investment between African nations and the United States.

Driven by market demand, ATI embraces innovative approaches to achieve its goals. ATI is designed as a small, core set of centrally coordinated technical and institutional support activities, and a large, flexible performance-based subcontracting and grants under contract facility designed to support the needs and opportunities that USAID Missions and the private sector identify.

Purpose & Background

There are significant opportunities for increasing two-way trade between the U.S. and Africa and intra-Africa trade by addressing the concrete challenges facing the buyer and supplier sides of trade transactions through digital platforms. These opportunities exist across many industries and in many African countries, making them well suited for a continental digital trade approach. Additionally, many of these sectors involve large numbers of women as owners, managers, and employees, which elevates the possibilities for positive development impacts on social and gender issues. The widespread opportunities at a continental level make this area stand out as a priority for Prosper Africa support.

There is a need for credible and comprehensive digital trade platforms to enhance buyer-supplier linkages while crowding in other ecosystem players that offer value-added trade services such as logistics, trade finance, shipment, insurance, etc. ATI will focus on partnering with a set of e-commerce and digital trade platforms to deepen their role as sources of market intelligence and platforms for increasing intra-Africa exports and exports to the U.S. In line with the program's demand-driven approach and informed by the needs of U.S. and African firms, the program will work with both U.S. and African e-commerce and digital trade platforms to identify buyers' requirements of large and expanding U.S. and African brands and match those with export firm-level responses to meet the expected buyers' quality and quantity standards. ATI can play a catalytic role in unlocking the latent potential of digital trade and e-commerce platforms to increase trade by supporting a range of players in this space.

The utilization of e-commerce and digital trade platforms can leverage buyer-seller linkages and lower the cost threshold to mutual benefit while enhancing export opportunities for firms and lowering the sourcing costs for the U.S. and African buyers and exporters.

ATI's work in digital trade actively supports the Administration's digital priorities; for example, helping expand digital infrastructure, building capacity and skills in the digital economy, and improving the enabling environment to foster increased trade and investment and digital innovation.

Objectives and Activities

In advancing this digital trade services priority, ATI seeks to partner with six to ten credible e-commerce and digital trade platform service providers to create high-level awareness of export market opportunities to lower the buyer discovery costs and promote significant exports (intra-Africa and the U.S. and U.S. to Africa) from African and U.S. export firms. We anticipate issuing one (or more) subcontract award(s) ranging between USD \$175,000 and USD \$300,000 resulting from the implementation of this agreement.

The list below is indicative and not exhaustive to allow offerors to present innovative approaches in their proposals. ATI may onboard multiple partners in order to deliver results from multifaceted digital trade platforms.

Illustrative interventions include, but are not limited to:

1. Create high-level awareness of export market opportunities to lower the buyer discovery costs.
2. Identify buyers' requirements of large and expanding U.S. and African brands and match those with export firm-level responses to meet the expected buyers' quality and quantity standards.
3. Promote significant exports (intra-Africa and the U.S. and U.S. to Africa) from African and U.S. export firms.
4. Matching grants to support the further refinement of e-commerce and digital trade platforms.
5. Grants to support the operational costs of scaling e-commerce and digital trade platforms.
6. Technical assistance to export firms to utilize e-commerce and digital trade platforms.
7. Technical assistance to enhance digital merchant services or develop human capital as well as digital platform technologies.
8. Cost sharing for enhancement of payment solutions as well as development of exporter financing solutions.
9. Technical assistance to build the capacity of export firms to utilize e-commerce and digital trade platforms.

Offerors should include in their proposal the data they capture as part of their standard data reporting and any due diligence procedures that will be shared with ATI as part of this activity. Offerors should include their cost share arrangements with ATI and the number of buyers and sellers they will connect as well as the export values to be achieved at the end of a twelve-month period.

Technical Approach

The offerors should include the following information in their proposal:

1. Background on offeror
2. Relevant experience critical to the success of this work, including experience using digital platforms to support trade and enhance export opportunities for firms. Experience should at a minimum include number of registered buyers and export firms, sectors covered, number and value of export transactions recorded via the platform, etc. Access to and existing relationships with relevant buyers, export firms, and private sector stakeholders should also be included.
3. Proposed deliverables and the results associated with each activity. Offerors should clearly indicate the value add of ATI support with clear export targets (volume and value in USD, export firms, and buyers involved).
4. Management Plan indicating the team proposed for the activity, their expertise and the management arrangements for executing the project.

General Implementation Structure

Upon selection and award, ATI will work closely with the awardee(s) to determine the contract structure including final timelines, deliverables, and associated costs. Additionally, ATI and USAID will also work closely with the awardee(s) on the overall learning agenda, including the appropriate cadence for reporting, communications, and other general ongoing project management activities, as well as be a resource to help the awardee achieve overall objectives.

Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (ME&L)

DAI will work closely with the subcontractor to define appropriate indicators for the overall interventions based on applicable ME&L indicators as identified by ATI and the USAID stakeholders. ATI will work

with the subcontractor to develop the ME&L plan at the kick off, edit as needed during implementation (e.g. if additional transactions are added), and will collect and review data from the subcontractor for requisite reporting to USAID throughout the life of the activity. The subcontractor will be required to reasonably maintain and report on relevant data as part of the periodic check-in process. DAI will conduct data quality assessments as necessary. In many cases, the subcontractor must be willing to share results for at least a six-month period following the completion of their subcontract in order for ATI and USAID to accurately capture results (e.g. an investment that closes after the period of performance but was facilitated during the contracted support).

Place of Performance

The place of performance can be in Africa or in the U.S. ATI will seek to have a balance of service providers between Africa and the U.S. Key considerations will be the linkages to be established between U.S. and African firms (including the U.S. diaspora). Where offerors have U.S. presence, they should anticipate the need for frequent engagement with African export firms. Offerors should provide details on their approach to working in relevant countries as the activity requires. The selected firm(s) will report to the ATI Senior Technical Director- Africa and work closely with the ATI team based in Washington

Implementation Timeframe

The activities outlined above are estimated to take place over a twelve-month period starting around September 2022 and coming to completion by August 2023, although offerors should propose a timeline commensurate with their technical approach. In response to this solicitation, offerors may propose their own alternate timelines, work plans, and level of effort associated with the various components of the activity in line with their proposed approach.