

## **CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

*For the drafting of a research paper on:*

“Sustainable Public Procurement and the Small and Medium Enterprise (SMEs)”:

**This call for expression of interest is one of the activities that are being executed around the scope of our project: “Sustainable Public Procurement: a tool for the green economy.” The project is an initiative carried out within the framework of Inter-American Network on Government Procurement (INGP) by the Organization of American States (OAS), the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), and the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD).**

### **A. The project for “ Sustainable Public Procurement: a tool for a green economy”**

There is a generalized consensus regarding the power of public procurement as a vehicle for the establishment of public policy. Public procurement represents about 15% to 20% of a country’s GDP; its magnitude renders the process extremely influential in the formulation of public policy. That being said, it is not surprising that either it being from the momentum or support that these initiatives have given towards generating transparency and efficiency in the public administration, government procurement has undeniably gained significant relevance throughout the region’s political agenda.

The Inter-American Network on Government Procurement (INGP) is an initiative led by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the Organization of American States (OAS), and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). These organizations are both catalysts and beneficiaries in the consolidation of the regional agenda on public procurement, which has also provided a working space for senior managers of government procurement in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The INGP has provided a space for collaboration, construction of good management, training, and generation of knowledge on topic of public procurement. The network’s expertise has enabled countries to fully engage their resources and efforts towards the modernization of their national systems on procurement. Progress has been made in the modernization of legislative frameworks and in the introduction of information and communication technologies, which have both brought transparency to the process and access to a wider range of businesses. Other modern tools have been introduced, such as framework agreements or inverse auctions that along with adequate

public policy have been able to increase the presence of the region's small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in public procurement.

Throughout the modernization process, there has been a growing acceptance of the potential of public procurement in the promotion of sustainable development. As a tool that generates demand on a large scale, government procurement can foment the migration towards green growth models that cover economical, social, environmental, and innovative aspects. Nevertheless, in most countries in the region, "green" procurement is found to be at a very early stage and needing much support for its development. Moreover, the consolidation of sustainable public procurement (SPP) is unalienable from access to information and knowledge that is open to the creation and implementation of effective and equitable policies around this emerging topic.

This new focus acknowledges the state as a major consumer and as a strategic tool for the construction of effective public policy that goes beyond good management. SPP aims to transform other social, environmental, and economical factors required to generate a different behavior in this sector of the market.

#### *Sustainable Public Procurement and SMEs*

The emergence "green" public procurement is influenced by the growing interest in SMEs as key actors in sustainable and equitable development. Some of the problems faced by SMEs' in most countries in the region are: difficulties in subsisting and growing, low levels of innovation in their products and processes, lack of access to financing, low levels of training, lack of knowledge of the markets, and among other barriers.

The majority of countries in the region have therefore developed and implemented public policy in favor of SMEs, including the creation of supporting agencies and institutions that allow SMEs to compete in the markets that are gradually more complex and demanding.

#### *Sustainable Public Procurement as a Motor for SMEs*

Given this new challenge that the region faces, the IDRC in collaboration with the OAS and the IISD, have carried out a project dedicated to the promotion of sustainable government procurement as a tool in the expansion of a green economy.

The demand for standards of sustainability - economical, social, environmental, and innovation standards - in public procurement can become an important tool for stimulating the growth and sophistication of SMEs, as well as in strengthening of their competitiveness and capabilities of job creation. The adoption of sustainability will allow SMEs to adapt to international tendencies by allowing them to subsist in markets that require higher environmental standards. By going "green" in their processes of production and consumption, businesses will also be able to enter new and emerging "green" markets.

#### *Overcoming the Obstacles of Sustainable Public Procurement for SMEs*

The same adoption of standards for sustainability in public procurement can exclude a big portion of SMEs that do not meet the requirements. From this perspective, SPP can constitute a barrier from the participation and benefit of the majority of SMEs in the market, thus further excluding them from their subsistence and growth.

For reasons stated earlier, the project will emphasize on how SPP can provide support to the region's SMEs. The project also aims to generate empirical knowledge that supports the design of public policy in sustainable government procurement, such as the training of human resources capable in leading and implementing policy in the subject.

### ***Purpose of the Call for Paper***

**This call aims to identify a researcher or research institution located in Latin America or the Caribbean to develop a document on "Sustainable Public Procurement and the Small and Medium Enterprise." The document will serve as a base for the construction of a working group dedicated to the promotion of policymaking for the adoption of an inclusive sustainable public procurement.**

### **B, Conditions to the Call for paper**

This is a regional and public call established to select an individual or institution. Those interested in participating must draft an innovative proposal that does not exceed five pages and demonstrates proficiency and knowledge of the topics to be discussed.

We will give preference to those institutions or researchers that present their proposal in collaboration with other institutions or researchers of other countries in the region, and, likewise, to those proposals that present an innovative and farsighted perspective on the topics of this call, and that propose creative ideas on how to embed these topics in the region's political agenda.

Aside from the development of the study, the researcher will be in charge of the working group (WG), which will be put together by the INGP. The working group will serve in the development of indicator proposals and measurement tools for the progress and impact of SPP. The coordination of the WG will be in motion throughout a period three months, beginning with the submission of the first draft.

### ***Terms of Reference for the Moderation of the WG***

The working group will be moderated by the institution or researcher that drafts the document to achieve the following ends:

- 1 . Generation of knowledge and skills for the agencies of public procurement of the INGP for the implementation of policy on sustainable procurement and promotion of SMEs
- 2 . Dialogue, sharing of experiences, and cooperation among the region's leaders of public procurement and specialists on this topic.

The moderator must carry out the following activities:

- 1 . Lead the working group that will comprised of countries in the region.
- 2 . Present the research and promote discussion among the participants of the working group with the goal of building a final draft that incorporates recommendations and solutions to the challenges, perspectives, and needs of those responsible for public procurement in the region.

3. Draft a final report on the meetings, discussions, conclusions, and recommendations of the working group. This report must be presented to INGP, OAS, and the IDRC for its revision and approval. The document will be then forwarded to the members of the INGP and disseminated on the Network's webpage.
4. Presentation of the document at a discussion workshop with the conclusions and recommendations of the working group. All expenses will be covered by the Technical Secretariat of INGP.

### **C. Deadlines**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>
May 14	Deadline for proposals will close at 11.00 AM (GMT -4)
May 15-19	Selection of candidates. Selection committee: President and Technical Secretariat of the INGP of the INGP-OAS, IDRC and IISD (International Institute for Sustainable Development)
May 20	Announcement of the researcher or institution
July 11	Submission of the first draft
August 15	Final draft is presented before the working group INGP
September 1st to November 15	Coordination and moderation of the working group
November 28	Presentation of the final version of the document.

***The selected researcher or institution will receive USD 13,000 for the completion of the document and coordination of the activities of the working group.***

### **D. Applicant Requirements**

Throughout the selection process we will consider the following criteria:

- The research institution must be located in Latin America or the Caribbean. In case the applicant is an individual, he or she must be a citizen of a country in the region. The individual or institution must be able to commit to a consulting contract for the OAS. If the applicant is currently working with the government, a letter must be submitted by his or her employer expressing that there is no conflict of interest in completing the assigned work.
- Applicants must show evidence of their professional experience, background, and/or research in the following areas: Public Procurement, SMEs and related policies, Sustainable Development, Public Management, Economics (Green), and academic research on the topic of interest.
- The document can be written either in English or Spanish.
- The researcher or institution must adhere to the deadlines established by the OAS and the IDRC.

- The INGP, the OAS, and the IDRC will maintain all exclusive rights to the document; nevertheless, the document will give credit to the author’s respective work.

### **E. Information Needed to Apply**

In order to be considered, the applicant must submit the following information:

#### **Requirements for the proposal (max. 5 pages)**

- Background and experience of the person responsible in drafting the document.
- Structure of the documents and identification of central topics that will be included.
- Methodology that will be used in drafting the document.
- **Note:** The research paper is expected to contain the following:
  - 25-30 length
  - Executive summary.
  - Policy brief.
  - Multimedia product on the subject matter. (Include innovate proposals)

#### **Accompanying Documents**

- In the case of an applicant institution, an institutional profile must be submitted (the document is separate to the proposal and is not included in the word count). Likewise, the person in charge of developing the document must submit a summary of their CV.
- If the applicant is an individual, he or she must submit a complete version of their CV

**All documents must be submitted in order to be taken into consideration.**

<b>IMPORTANT:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal can be written in either Spanish or English.</li> <li>• Any documents submitted after the deadline will not be considered.</li> <li>• All documentation must be submitted electronically through the following link: <i>Application “Sustainable Public Procurement and the Small and Medium Enterprise”</i></li> <li>• For inquiries contact: <a href="mailto:maguero@oas.org">maguero@oas.org</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Deadline: May 14, 2014 at 11:00 AM (GMT – 4)</b></p>

**Note:**

**Under the section for Applicant Requirements on page 4:**

- Elimination of the requirement: “... [institution] must be of a nonprofit nature.”