

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Expression of Interest – Professional Technical Writing

1. Introduction

FSD Africa approved a new five-year strategy (2025-2030) in December 2024. The strategy envisages considerable organisational growth and change. FSD Africa seeks to identify a consultant (s) or a consulting firm (the Consultant) to provide a modular learning programme on technical writing skills to communicate complex, specialized, or data-driven information clearly, concisely, accurately, and tailored to the needs of specific audiences.

2. Project Background

2.1 About FSD Africa

FSD Africa is a specialist development agency working to reduce poverty by strengthening financial markets across sub-Saharan Africa. Based in Nairobi, FSD Africa's financial sector experts work alongside governments, business leaders, regulators, and policymakers to design and build ambitious programmes that make financial markets work better for everyone. Established in 2012, FSD Africa is incorporated as a non-profit company limited by guarantee in Kenya. It is funded by the UK government and is part of the UK International Development effort.

Its investment arm, FSD Africa Investments (FSDAi), invests risk-bearing concessional capital to make financial markets more innovative, competitive, and efficient. FSDAi invests in ways that support the broader goals of the FSD Africa programme.

For more information on FSD Africa, please visit our website at www.fsdafrica.org.

3. Project Scope

3.1 Objectives

The objective of this consultancy is to enhance the ability of FSD Africa staff to prepare and present technical papers in a clear, concise, accurate, and impactful manner. Specifically, the learning will build staff capacity to achieve brevity and clarity without compromising technical rigor, while also equipping them with skills to break down complex or highly technical content into simple, actionable insights that different audiences can understand.

3.2 Scope of work

The consultant will be expected to design and deliver a learning program that equips FSD Africa staff with practical technical writing skills relevant to the organization's mandate and outputs. The learning should be innovative, practice-based, and tailored to the needs of staff who prepare research reports, proposals, investment cases, and other technical papers, adopting appropriate professional grammar.

The learning should be drawn from real FSD Africa documents. It should adopt guided exercises that include rewriting complex material into concise executive summaries and presenting insights for different stakeholder groups. The consultant will be required to introduce participants to AI-enabled tools and demonstrate how they can be used ethically to improve clarity, consistency, and efficiency.

The scope of work will cover the following dimensions, but not limited to:

a. Clarity and Brevity

Training staff how to present financial/technical concepts in plain and precise language, eliminating unnecessary jargon and redundancy while preserving accuracy, ensuring professional writing approaches through concise executive summaries, key findings, and recommendations.

b. Structuring, Formatting, and Proposal Writing for ICs

Introducing best practices for organizing documents logically, with appropriate use of headings, subheadings, and flow. The learning should provide standard formats for research reports and technical notes, as well as developing persuasive proposals and investment cases (ICs). The teaching should provide practice in structuring proposals and ICs, framing them in ways that effectively communicate the business case for funding or support. Adopting visual tools such as charts, infographics, and executive summaries will also be applied to strengthen impact.

c. Professional Standards and Grammar

Strengthening staff's command of professional grammar, syntax, and language conventions to ensure documents meet professional standards. The learning should include proofreading, editing, and refining technical papers and proposals for accuracy, readability, and stylistic consistency.

d. Use of Tools and Innovation

Demonstrating the use of AI-assisted writing and editing tools, as well as modern technical writing platforms and templates, to enhance efficiency, consistency, and clarity. The training will also cover the responsible and ethical use of AI in drafting and reviewing documents.

e. Learning Needs Assessment:

The consultant will conduct a learning needs assessment by engaging with key staff and reviewing document submissions to identify the knowledge gaps and priority areas. Findings from this assessment will be summarized in a brief report to inform the design of the training.

f. Learning design and customization: Based on this assessment, the consultant will then design and customize the learning program. This will involve developing a comprehensive agenda and preparing appropriate learning materials, including manuals, slide decks, handouts, case studies, and toolkits for the learning

g. Learning Delivery: The consultant will be tasked to deliver the learning to FSD Africa staff across the organisation's Pillars. The delivery should incorporate innovative, adaptive, and experiential learning tools, as well as interactive AI solutions for adaptive

professional writing. This approach utilizes adult learning techniques, including group exercises, role-plays, simulations, and scenario-based discussions.

It should include, but not be limited to:

- Blended approach to learning- Virtual/physical sessions to cover conceptual modules, AI tool demonstrations, and peer-sharing across teams.
 - Self-paced online component (e.g., short videos, toolkits, reading materials) for continuous reinforcement after the formal training.
 - Practical coaching to apply the writing concepts and skills through experiential learning.
- It should include the following interactive training methods but not be limited to:

- Case studies, utilizing authentic FSD Africa research papers and investment cases, to practice rewriting and simplifying.
- Simulations: Participants reframe technical outputs for different audiences
- Peer Review: Staff critique and edit each other's drafts to learn collaboratively
- Role Plays: Simulate board presentations to demonstrate brevity and clarity.
- Coaching: Provide a review of written papers post learning implementation to provide experiential learning and critique.

h. **Assessment and Evaluation:** The consultant will also be responsible for conducting pre- and post-training assessments to measure the knowledge and skills gained by participants, and for collecting participant feedback on the relevance and effectiveness of the sessions. Impact reporting will be a key component to demonstrate that the learning has led to behavioural change, with key indicators for evaluating written communication post-learning implementation.

i. **Reporting:** The consultant will prepare a comprehensive learning report that summarizes the learning process, participant engagement, assessment results, and recommendations for strengthening professional technical skills at FSD Africa. This report will be accompanied by electronic copies of all learning materials, tools, and resources used during the sessions, along with suggestions for ongoing learning and institutionalization of professional technical writing, including a technical writing toolkit, including templates, checklists, and style guides, will be provided to ensure sustainability beyond the training.

4. Timing and deliverables

No.	Deliverable	Deadline
1	Learning Needs Assessment	2 weeks after signing
2	Learning design and customization	2 weeks after signing
3	Learning delivery and learning tools	3 weeks after signing
4	Assessment and Evaluation	One month after signing
5	Reporting	Upon learning completion per Pillar

5. Invitation to bid

The proposal is to be received within the indicated timeline, and a decision will be made within two weeks following the proposal receipt deadline.

Your proposal should have:

- CVs (maximum one side of A4 paper each) of key individuals, tailored to the assignment, with strong evidence of following competencies:
 - Superior facilitation skills
 - Ability to think on one's feet and quickly respond to queries on issues of managerial judgement
 - Ethical behavior and integrity
 - Empathy
 - Strategic thinking
- Outline of team structure, including roles and responsibilities of team members.
- A summary of your relevant experience for the assignment, including a minimum of three (3) client reference statements as a testament to the appropriate work experience.
- A brief description of your understanding of the role of the Consultant and the approach to be used as outlined in these Terms of Reference.
- An itemized budget for both professional fees and reimbursable expenses, including fee rates, number of days, and a breakdown of costs in the format set out in the annex.
- The fees should be reduced by the costs for each phase/part of the assignment. Your proposal, which should not exceed six pages (excluding annexures), should be sent by email to bids@fsdafrica.org by **Monday 14th October 2025** with subject line **“Expression of Interest- Technical Writing”**

6. Basis of award

FSD Africa will award a contract to the Consultant based on the following criteria, using the most economically advantageous tender approach:

Mandatory requirements	
Firms or individuals must demonstrate at least 10 years of experience in similar assignments, accompanied by relevant expertise that supports their technical professional writing skills.	
Firm/individuals must be able to demonstrate at least 10 years' experience leading a communications firm in Kenya and/or other international countries.	
Firm to provide three client reference statements as a testament to the relevant work experience	
Assessment criteria	Weighting (%)
Demonstrated ability and experience to deliver in the assignment outlined	40%

in these Terms of Reference (evidenced by previous similar assignments, client references, etc.).	
Quality of proposal based on understanding/interpretation of the task set out in the TORs, including likely challenges and risks, clarity of implementation approach, creative thinking and value-add, and capacity (i.e., ability to deliver within stipulated timelines)	30%
Fee basis and total costs $FS = 30\% \times LB/BP$, where: FS = is the financial score LB = is the lowest bid quoted BP = is the bid of the proposal under consideration. The lowest bid quoted will be allocated the maximum score of 30%. The fee quoted must be inclusive of taxes and expenses where applicable	30%

7. Contact

Questions or comments in respect of these terms of reference should be directed by email to: bids@fsdafrica.org by **Tuesday 5pm EAT, 7th October** and a response provided by, **5pm EAT, 8th October 2025**.

8. Applicable Taxes

As per Kenya's tax law, FSD Africa will pay the Consultant after withholding the appropriate taxes at the applicable rate between Kenya and the Consultant's country of tax residence, considering any tax treaties in force. It is the responsibility of the Consultant to keep themselves apprised of these applicable taxes. The table below, however, guides the applicable rates as per tax regimes.

Country	WHT Rate
Kenya	5%
United Kingdom	12.5%
Canada	15%
Germany	15%
Zambia	15%
India	10%
Non-resident rate for citizens of EAC member countries	15%
All other countries	20%

Annex 1: Proposed Fee Schedule

Costs should be shown separately in the format set out below. Fees proposed by tenderers should be inclusive of all taxes.

Consultancy fees*	Days	Fee USD/GBP	Total USD/GBP
xx			
xx			
Total remuneration			0.00
Reimbursement costs**	Unit	Cost USD/GBP	Total USD/GBP
xx			
xx			
Total reimbursement cost			0.00
Total proposed costs			0.00
*Fees incl of all taxes			
**Expenses to be reimbursed on actual costs as per FSD Africa's travel policy			