

TERMS OF REFERENCE

PROFESSIONAL TECHNICAL & CORPORATE WRITING SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAMME

1. Introduction

FSD Africa approved a new five-year strategy (2025-2030) in December 2024. The strategy envisages considerable organisational growth and change. To support this, FSD Africa seeks to engage a consultant(s) or a consulting firm (“the Consultant”) to design and deliver a modular learning programme on professional and technical writing. The programme will help staff communicate complex or data-driven information clearly, accurately, and in ways that are accessible to different audiences.

The aim is to establish a consistent and evolving standard of writing excellence across the organisation. Through practical, tailored training, staff will strengthen their clarity, precision, and audience awareness in a range of writing contexts, from technical reports and proposals to correspondence with partners, funders, and policymakers.

Approximately 70 staff members from different levels and departments will participate.

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

- Strengthen staff capacity to communicate complex ideas clearly, logically, and succinctly.
- Build a shared understanding of what good writing looks like within FSD Africa’s context.
- Equip staff with adaptable writing skills for different audiences and purposes (technical, grants/proposals, and corporate communications).
- Introduce practical tools and approaches, including AI-assisted tools, to support quality writing and editing.
- Provide recommendations on how FSD Africa can sustain and reinforce writing standards over time.

3.2 Scope of work

The Consultant will design and deliver a tailored, modular learning programme that includes the following components:

a. **Learning and needs assessment**

- Review a sample of recent FSD Africa documents and consult key staff to identify priority learning gaps and strengths.
- Produce a concise report summarizing findings and recommendations to guide the training design.

b. **Programme design and delivery**

Design or adapt a modular training programme around the following three streams of writing:

- **Technical and analytical writing:** research reports, case studies, financial and policy analyses, including when to use visual tools (i.e. charts, infographics) to enhance impact.
- **Grants and proposal writing:** funding proposals, concept notes, investment cases.
- **Corporate and stakeholder communication:** emails, letters, memos, reports for partners and donors.

c. **Application and coaching**

- The programme will be delivered through a **blended learning approach**, combining both virtual and in-person sessions.
- Each module will **draw on real FSD Africa content** and include **peer-review and practice sessions** that allow participants to apply new skills directly to their work.
- Sessions will incorporate **adult learning techniques** such as group exercises, role-plays, simulations, and scenario-based discussions to encourage active participation and practical learning.
- Participants will be introduced to **AI-assisted tools and digital writing aids**, with an emphasis on their responsible, critical, and ethical use to enhance clarity and efficiency.

d. **Tools and resources**

- **Develop complementary learning tools and resources** such as checklists, short guides, templates, self-paced videos, and reference sheets that reinforce the training modules and can be integrated into FSD Africa's Learning and Development curriculum and editorial processes.
- **Provide all training materials**, including manuals, slide decks, handouts, case studies, and toolkits used during the programme, packaged for FSD Africa's ongoing internal use and future adaptation.

e. **Evaluation and recommendations**

- Conduct light **pre- and post-training assessments** to gauge changes in participants' skills and confidence. This may involve reviewing a small sample of FSD Africa documents and holding short surveys or discussions before and after the training to capture progress and learning application. The training to gauge how participants have applied new skills and approaches.

- **Gather and synthesise participant feedback** on the content, delivery methods, and overall learning experience, highlighting what worked well and areas for improvement.
- **Analyse findings** from both assessments and feedback to identify key learning outcomes and trends in writing competencies across staff groups.
- Provide **clear, actionable recommendations** based on insights from the training on how FSD Africa can sustain and reinforce improved writing standards (i.e. through mentoring systems, editorial quality checks, or internal communities of practice).

3.3 Learning outcomes

By the end of the programme, participants will gain a deeper understanding of the principles and practices of effective writing and how these can be applied and reinforced through ongoing use. The learning outcomes below describe the knowledge and skills that participants will be able to draw upon in their day-to-day work:

- Acquire an appreciation of how clear, thoughtful writing strengthens communication and organisational credibility.
- Develop a stronger understanding of how to write with clarity and purpose for different audiences and contexts.
- Apply principles of structure, tone, and formatting that make written materials more coherent and reader friendly.
- Use plain language and logical flow to make technical content accessible and engaging.
- Explore the ethical and effective use of AI-assisted writing tools to support clarity and productivity.
- Practise giving and receiving constructive feedback to continually refine and improve writing.

4. Timing and deliverables

No.	Deliverable	Deadline
1	Learning Needs Assessment	Two weeks after signing
2	Learning design and customisation	Two weeks after signing
3	Learning delivery and learning tools	Two months after signing
4	Assessment and Evaluation	Upon above and completion of contract
5	Reporting	Upon above and completion of contract

5. Invitation to bid

FSD Africa is inviting proposals from suitably qualified consulting firms/individuals. The proposal should contain:

- 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 specific examples of similar work (design and delivery of technical writing programmes). Include 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 itemised budget for both professional fees and reimbursable expenses, including fee rates, number of days, and a breakdown of costs in the format set out under annex 1.
- The fees should be broken down with 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 on or before **12 PM EAT 08 December 2025**.

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	
Organisations or individuals must demonstrate experience in similar assignments, accompanied by relevant expertise that supports their technical professional writing skills.	
Firm/Individuals 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 in these Terms of Reference (evidenced by previous similar assignments, client references, etc.).	30%
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)	25%
Supplier's demonstration of sustainability value add: Bidders that demonstrate localisation, gender, environmental and ethical considerations will be assigned merit points/scored favourably compared to their competitors.	15%
• Localisation: demonstrated use of African-based consultants/team members - 5% • Gender – prioritisation of women & underrepresented groups -5% • Environmental safeguards and ethical considerations (a commitment to sustainability through eco-friendly practices, products/services, as well as ethical practices such as fair treatment of employees)-5%	

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%
Total Weighting	100%

7. Contact

Questions or comments in respect of these terms of reference should be directed by email to: bids@fsdafrica.org or on before **12PM EAT 02 December 2025** and responses will be circulated by **12PM EAT 04 December 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%
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			