



Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)

Plot 151/155 Garden Hill, Makerere University, Main Campus, P.O. Box 16811 Wandegaya, Kampala, Uganda

Call for expression of interest to provide External Audit services for the three financial years ending 30 June 2025, 2026, and 2027

1.0 Background

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), a consortium of 170 Universities in Africa, works with relevant stakeholders of agricultural tertiary education in Africa to build the innovative capacities of universities to engage with development processes through effective training, research and outreach.

RUFORUM prides itself as a knowledge-based, international Non-Governmental Organization with a commitment to enrich and sustain the lives and livelihoods of smallholder and rural-based poor farmers in Africa. To help achieve its vision and mission, RUFORUM's internal operations are guided by six core values of Equity and Fairness, Diversity, Voice and participation, Knowledge and Creativity, Humility and Respect, and Honesty and Integrity.

RUFORUM wishes to engage the services of an External Auditor of international reputation for the years 2024-2025, 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 in accordance with the statutory requirements, International Reporting Standards Guidelines and International Standards on Auditing (ISA).

2.0 Objective

The objective of External Audit is to provide an independent professional opinion whether the financial statements represent a true and fair view of the state of affairs of RUFORUM Secretariat as at 30th June 2025, 2026 and 2027, and are prepared in compliance with the relevant regulatory frameworks and administrative procedures.

3.0 Scope of the Assignment

The audit will be conducted in accordance with ISA as published by the International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), with special reference to ISA 800 (Auditor's Report on Special Purpose Audit Engagements) and relevant World Bank guidelines. The audit for financial years 2025, 2026 and 2027 will involve a visit to five member universities in each year to audit the projects funded by RUFORUM.

The selection of these five Universities each financial year will be based on External Auditor's risk assessment, funding partners, and RUFORUM requirements.

4.0 Duties and Responsibilities of the Auditor

1. Conducting independent audit of RUFORUM's operations in line with International Standards on Auditing

2. Expressing an opinion on whether the financial statements are prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the applicable financial reporting standards and frameworks, whether RUFORUM has maintained proper books of accounts, and whether the accompanying financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of the organisation
3. Reviewing and evaluating RUFORUM's internal control system and advising Management and the Board on adequacy/effectiveness of the system and proposals for its improvements
4. Assessing utilization of resources for effectiveness, efficiency and economy as well as identification of opportunities for improvement.
5. Ensuring the organization adheres to corporate governance requirements and legislation that govern the organization.
6. General review of implementation of programs to ascertain whether they are consistent with program objective as set in program designs

5.0 Special condition of Engagement

In conducting the project audit, special attention should be paid to the following:

- a) Funds have been used in accordance with the relevant general conditions, relevant financing agreements and disbursement letters, with due attention to economy and efficiency, and only for the purposes for which the financing was provided;
- b) Goods and services financed have been procured in accordance with the relevant general conditions, relevant financing agreements and disbursement letters;
- c) Necessary supporting documents, records, and accounts have been kept in respect of all Project ventures including expenditures reported via Summary Report (or Interim Un-audited Financial Reports (Interim Reports)) if used as the basis of disbursement, or Designated Accounts (DAs). Clear linkages should exist between the accounting records and the financial reports presented to the Bank.
- d) Where Designated Accounts have been used, they have been maintained in accordance with the provisions of the relevant general conditions, relevant financing agreements and disbursement letter.
- e) The accounting records have been prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and practices and relevant World Bank guidelines, and give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Project as at financial year-end and of the resources and expenditures for the fiscal year then ending.
- f) Review the compliance on each of the financial covenants as per the donor Agreements especially to ensure compliance for the conditions under which the funds were released.

6.0 Deliverables (Audit Reports)

The deliverables will include;

1. An Independent audit opinion on RUFORUM Secretariat's Financial Statements for the financial years ending 30th June 2025, 2026 and 2027.
2. Management letter," in which the auditor will:
 - a) Give comments and observations on the accounting records, systems, and controls that were examined during the course of the audit;
 - b) Identify specific deficiencies and areas of weakness in systems and controls and make recommendation for their improvement;
 - c) Report on the lack of compliance of each financial covenant in the relevant financing agreement;
 - d) Communicate matters that have come to their attention during the audit which might have a significant impact on the operations of the organization; and
 - e) Include management's comments in the final management letter.
3. Project verification reports including a management letter for each of the five member universities that will be visited in each year.

7.0 Deliverable and time schedule

The External Audit is expected to be conducted during August 2025, 2026 and 2027 and the final report presented to the RUFORUM Annual General Meeting in November 2025, 2026 and 2027. The firm shall submit Draft Final Report in hard copy and an electronic version within seven (7) days upon completion of assignment to the Executive Secretary

The Final Report, in five (5) hard copies and an electronic version shall be submitted to the Executive Secretary within seven (7) days on receipt of management's comments.

8.0 Period of Appointment

The Auditor will be appointed for a period of three years (F.Y 2024-2025, 2025-2026, and 2026-2027). However, assessment of the performance will be done each year of the audit.

9.0 Duration of Assignment

The contract will be for three years in accordance with the Uganda statutory regulations, and the audit exercise will be for a period of twenty (20) Man-Days with possibility of extension.

10.0 Location of Assignment

The assignment will be carried out at the RUFORUM Secretariat, Plot 151/155, Garden Hill, Makerere University, Main Campus, Kampala, Uganda;

Email: secretariat@rforum.org; Tel: +256-417-713-300

11.0 Requirements

The Lead Consultant should be an internationally qualified auditor (CPA, ACCA or its equivalent) with experience in donor accounting and financial management and should have a minimum of five years' experience in the field with experience in statutory and project auditing. The Firm should have strong knowledge and experience (minimum of 10 years) in donor account auditing. The firm should have Specific experience in World Bank, European Union, and USAID Accounts auditing.

NB: This document MUST be read together with Appendix 1: Terms of Reference

APPENDIX 1: INSTRUCTION TO BIDDERS

Eligibility Criteria

Eligible Audit firms should meet the following criteria:

1. Compliance with legal requirements of registration (Certificate of registration)
2. Company Form 20; which states the Directors
3. Beneficial Owners form
4. A valid practicing License for both firm and individual practicing partners.
5. Tax clearance Certificate from URA
6. Certificate of Clearance from NSSF
7. References obtained from five (05) clients for similar audits performed within the last five years (Copies attached)
8. No conflict of interest considerations clause

The above requirements are mandatory and failure to comply with one or more requirements shall make the bid Non-Responsive and hence shall not be eligible for technical evaluation.

S/No	Completeness and Responsiveness Criteria	Requirement
1	Compliance with legal requirements of registration (Certificate of registration and Certificate of Incorporation)	Certified Copy of Valid certificate
2	Company Form 20; which states the Directors	Certified Copy
3	Beneficial Owners form	Certified Copy
4	A valid practicing License for both firm and individual practicing partners.	Copy of valid certificates
5	Tax clearance Certificate from URA	Copy of valid tax compliance certificate
6	Certificate of Clearance from NSSF	Copy of valid tax compliance certificate
7	References obtained from five (05) clients for similar audits performed within the last five years (Copies attached)	Recommendation letter
8	No conflict of interest considerations clause	Signed and stamped

Technical proposal containing – (Experience and qualification)

1. Relevant experience of the audit firm with auditing of development project/programs, especially donor-funded operations
2. A team leader (Engagement Partner), professional accountant (ACCA, CPA, or its equivalent) - with minimum of 10 years post-qualification experience
3. The Engagement Manager should be professional accountant (CPA, ACCA or its equivalent) with experience in donor accounting and financial management and should have a minimum of five years of experience in the field with experience in statutory and project auditing

4. Engagement audit senior (Field lead) should be a professional accountant (CPA, ACCA or its equivalent) with experience in donor accounting and financial management and should have a minimum of three years' experience in the field with experience in statutory and project auditing
5. Audit Assistant (s) with 3 years field auditing experience including audit of multilateral donor-funded projects/programs
6. Curriculum Vitae for the partner, manager and key staff proposed for the audit team

S/No	Particular Requirements	Max Points
1	Relevant experience of the audit firm with auditing of development project/programs, especially donor-funded operations	5
2	A team leader (Engagement Partner), professional accountant (ACCA, CPA, or its equivalent) - with minimum of 10 years post-qualification experience	10
3	The Engagement Manager should be professional accountant (CPA, ACCA or its equivalent) with experience in donor accounting and financial management and should have a minimum of five years of experience in the field with experience in statutory and project auditing	5
4	Engagement audit senior (Field lead) should be a professional accountant (CPA, ACCA or its equivalent) with experience in donor accounting and financial management and should have a minimum of three years' experience in the field with experience in statutory and project auditing	5
5	Audit Assistant (s) with 3 years field auditing experience including audit of multilateral donor-funded projects/programs	5
6	Curriculum Vitae for the partner, manager and key staff proposed for the audit team	10
Total		40

Technical proposal containing – (Audit Methodology & Approach)

12. Propose a clear work-plan including time schedule within the assignment timeframe.
13. Audit firm should clearly demonstrate a methodology and approach for undertaking the audit assignment.

S/No	Particular Requirements	Max Points
1	Proposed work-plan including time schedule within the assignment timeframe	15
2	Audit firm has a clearly demonstrated methodology and approach for undertaking the task. - Provide Audit Methodology,	20
3	Well demonstrated reporting approach	5
Total		40

Each responsive proposal will be given a technical score. A proposal shall be rejected at this stage if it does not respond to important aspects of the Terms of Reference or if it fails to achieve the minimum technical score of 70%.

Tenders that are determined to be substantially responsive to the requirements of the Tender Document shall be subjected to price comparison.

Financial Proposal

1. The financial proposal should have a breakdown for professional audit fees and disbursements
2. The financial proposal MUST be quoted in United States Dollars (USD) Include all local statutory taxes

9.0 Submission Requirements:

Interested and qualified suppliers are requested to submit their proposals in two separate sealed envelopes, clearly marked as "Technical Proposal" and "Financial Proposal," to the RUFORUM Secretariat. Only hardcopy submissions are expected. No email submissions will be considered. The deadline for submission is **5th April 2024, 3:00 PM, (EAT).**

Submission Address:

Submit the Technical and Financial Proposal in separate sealed envelopes to;

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, RUFORUM Secretariat
Plot 151/155 Garden Hill Road, Makerere University Main Campus**

Enquiries:

For inquiries, please contact the RUFORUM Secretariat at secretariat@ruforum.org. All inquiries must be submitted by 22nd March 2024 at 2:30 pm EAT. RUFORUM has created a registration zoom link for the pre-bid meeting scheduled for 22nd March 2024 at 2:30 pm EAT for any further clarifications. The registration link is; <https://bit.ly/49FbReJ>

Important Dates:

- a. Release of Request for Proposals: 4th March 2024
- b. Deadline for Inquiries: 22nd March 2024
- c. Proposal Submission Deadline: 5th April 2024, 3:00 PM
- d. Evaluation Period: 15th to 19th April 2024
- e. Contract Award: 3rd May 2024

NOTE:

Only shortlisted firms shall be contacted.

Thank you for your interest in working with RUFORUM. We look forward to receiving your comprehensive proposals.

Sincerely,

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, RUFORUM Secretariat