

Tender #83451508: Develop an AI Maturity Assessment Framework – Public Q&A

Thursday, 16 November 2023

Documentation (for public sharing)

Can you give some context as to the need of this activity in South Africa, and whether similar assessments have been done in other (Southern) African countries?

- FAIR Forward operates with five African partner countries (Ghana, Uganda, Rwanda, South Africa, Kenya). Each of these countries has adopted a different approach towards developing respective national AI policies. For instance, Rwanda and Ghana have adopted more of a top-down approach of first developing a national AI policy and then a framework plus indicators to operationalise its implementation. Kenya, on the other hand, adopted a bottom-up approach with industry and academia coming together to develop an AI practitioners guide which will inform the development of a national AI policy.
- In South Africa, FAIR Forward, C4IR and SAICA are adapting lessons from these different countries and implement a blended approach. We collaborate towards a community- and industry-driven approach to create the AI maturity assessment framework, and then use the outcomes to derive policy recommendations which policymakers can take up for a national AI strategy for South Africa,

What is the envisaged project timeline?

- Based on the ToR, we plan to contract the service provider by the end of 2023 and start implementation in early January 2024 with a running time until October/November 2024.

Should the tender form be added to the technical proposal, and would it count as part of the 10 pages limit? Or can it be annexed to the technical proposal?

- The tender form can be provided as an annex to the technical proposal, so that it doesn't count as part of the 10-page limitation.

What is the envisaged budget range for the project?

- As this is a public tender, we cannot disclose the budget range earmarked for this activity. Please submit your financial proposal based on the specifications provided in the ToR. Kindly ensure that the financial proposal is separate from the technical proposal.

Can non-profit organisations or research organisations participate in this tender?

- GIZ only works with entities that are registered in South Africa. You need to provide your registration documents and tax clearance. As a non-profit in South Africa, you would also have these documents, and would need to provide them as part of your bid.

How would GIZ note the extent of readiness within the AI sector? Is there a standard? Or would this be determined as part of this project?

- FAIR Forward, C4IR and SAICA, jointly together with service provider, as well as industry partners, workshop participants and key government sectors [ministries] will determine what indicators are deemed suitable and important to measure. Part of this, as laid out in the ToR are multi-stakeholder workshops to solicit feedback and buy-in from industry, academia, civil society, public sector.

This tender was first published in August 2023. What did you find lacking from the first round?

- The initial tender was open for 2 weeks, after which we did not receive sufficient bids that qualified technically (i.e. after evaluating the technical proposals). Therefore, the tender went into a second round. Importantly, the tender documents are exactly the same, only the dates for the envisaged project timeline have changed. In terms of the tendering process, the tendering time was increased to 3 weeks, and the public Q&A was added, with the intention to invite more high-quality bids.

What is the “secret sauce” to make a good bid?

- We would encourage companies with varying expertise to form consortia so that all required expertise is represented by the companies and the proposed expert team. Apart from this, we encourage diverse teams to apply and expect to see that bidding companies and/or consortia fully understand the objectives and tasks set-out in the ToR, as well as suggest a compelling approach to conduct the assignment.

Can you provide more information on the envisaged workshops? How many are planned, where would they take place, and how many attendees would participate?

- Currently, two workshops are envisaged to take place – one in Johannesburg, as well as in Cape Town or in KwaZulu-Natal [depending on certain factors to be considered closer to the workshop time].
- The location of the second workshop is to be determined based on biggest industry uptake and will be determined jointly with the appointed service provider. Importantly, this does not mean that participants from other locations cannot participate – the workshops will be hybrid (i.e. semi-virtual). The number of attendees is yet to be determined, based on budget. It is expected to draw in a diverse group of stakeholders from academia, civil society and industry.

What do you expect in terms of policy insights for informing the activity? This is a pertinent question given the little existing policies in this field.

- Service providers are expected to understand the global standard and guides regarding AI policies, including the OECD and UNESCO principles, as well as know existing AI policies from other African countries. These insights will inform the development of the AI maturity assessment framework.
- While we don't expect one company to have all the knowledge, we invite people to form consortia and then to apply, which cover different expertise required to conduct this assignment.

Can the service provider be based in another African country?

- No, the service provider has to be based in and be registered and paying tax in South Africa. The reason is that we consider South African companies to have a better understanding of the South African AI ecosystem and policy context.
- Where the potential bidders are forming consortia, please ensure that the main partner who details are on the bid, is an entity registered and operating in South Africa.

How does this assignment relate to other GIZ projects in South Africa, or beyond?

- The assignment is aligned with the AU and Smart Africa in terms of its vision. The service provider is expected to understand the related AU policies and guidelines, such as the Smart Africa Blueprint.
- FAIR Forward is a different project but an activity like this ensures giving effect to the Smart Africa blueprint, in which human centered AI/ policy design is at the heart of AI made in Africa. This ensures alignment with the African agenda and gives Africa a united voice on the global stage when addressing such matters.

What is the role of SAICA in this assignment?

- SAICA had approached the C4IR with interest to understand how the advancement of AI will impact their sector – as accounting, auditing and good financial governance cuts across sectors in society – industry, academia, civil society, etc. Upon understanding their interest, combined with the proposed project from GIZ, SAICA – all parties interest has aligned on understanding the impact and advancement of AI in South Africa – therefore SAICA has agreed to participate in this initiative as a body of interest.
- SAICA's involvement in this project does not make the activity / tender sector specific. GIZ and C4IR welcome SAICA's forward thinking stance on this and encourage other oversight and regulatory bodies to do the same.

What is the format of the proposal?

- Please see the ToR for details on the expected format and structure for the technical and financial proposal. We recommend submitting all documents as one ZIP file. Importantly, the technical proposal and financial proposal need to be provided in separate files! In case you submit your proposal as a consortium, please ensure that the leading party fills in the tender form and provides all necessary legal documents (e.g. registration, tax clearance in South Africa).

Is this bid directed to research companies?

- No it is not directed to or aimed at research companies. There will be elements of research involved, however it also requires knowledge of the SA landscape, skills and competencies in community building and engagement, as well as data collection, analysis and visualisation.
- The appointed partner will work both with GIZ as well as our government partners, which would include engagements with DCDT and DSI – therefore they should possess the necessary competencies to engage at community, industry and political level. We

strongly suggest that bidders form a consortium and bid, to ensure that the competencies required can be fulfilled by different experts.

As part of Work package 1 (paragraph c), where data should be purchased as a subscription, will GIZ be open to subscribe to such data sources? Or shall data to be used in the research be of public and free nature?

- We would not purchase data as a subscription option, the data acquired for the basis of testing the framework and for feeding the dashboard should be open or by arrangement with the data provider. Ultimately the dashboard will be open access to the public and research institutions.

As part of Work package 2 (paragraph h) should the participants of the validation workshops be identified by the service provider or will these be a mix of already existing Partnerships with Fair Forward and new possible participants identified in the research?

- Participants will be identified by both the contractor and FF. We want a representative mix of people attending – both in ecosystem and personnel. This will be determined closer to the time of the workshop and is not necessary for the bid stage.

As part of the data collection strategy, will the contractor be allowed to use their own digital questionnaires or our portals available to conduct assessments digitally?

- Yes, that can be allowed. Where a contractor uses their own platforms or portals for this, there will be strict digital privacy engagement on the data use, storage and collection. This is an option, although if C4IR may have other options available too that we can explore. If the bidder wishes, they can quote on this, if they feel their platform or systems are very advanced and will yield an accurate and efficient process.

As part of the first draft report, will the contractor's logo or name be part of the publication?

- Yes.

As part of Work package 4 (paragraph q), will Fair Forward be willing to utilise the contractor's digital platform or portal for publishing the evaluation of the maturity. The digital platform will be white labelled.

- This platform will be developed for the C4IR which will ultimately be housed and managed by them [C4IR]. The intent here is sustainability of the activity, and having the dashboard managed by a quasi-government agency means that they can fund this going forward, manage it, train staff on it, and it will become a digital public good [asset] for the benefit of society.

We do take note that there is an ask to position backstopping - will Fair Forward be open for a larger team structure, where the expert requirements be adjusted to make the engagement more cost effective, thereby allowing for specific tasks to be covered by more junior staff with the experts supporting through an expert panel engagement model?

- Backstopping is an important component of the work – the intent here is to ensure that there is (1) continuity of the project in the event of a “key-man” disruption, (2) there are no bottlenecks with the project lead or key people taking on everything / all and sundry leading to delays of activities that can be delegated to others and (3) should critical

people / sub-contractors / experts leave or be unable to continue mid-project, suitably qualified experts can be appointed and take over without disruption to timelines or quality of the work.

For Information about the Tender:

Please see this link: [Linked In](#)

To download the tender documents:

Please see this link: <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/134905.html>

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