"Modernizing Uzbekistan National Innovation System (MUNIS)" Project

Terms of Reference

IMP Project title: Building Institutional Capacity for Sustainable Futures: A Pathway to Competitiveness in Central Asia and Beyond

Title of Assignment: Project Management Training

BACKGROUND

In 2024, the Institute for Advanced International Studies at the University of World Economy and Diplomacy was awarded a Public Research Institutes Modernization Program (PRIM) grant by the Project Implementation Unit of the "Modernizing Uzbekistan National Innovation System (MUNIS)" project under the Agency for Innovative Development. The awarded grant amount is $195,600 and its implementation period from December 2024 to December 2025. Within the given grant, the title of the IAIS institutional modernization plan is "Building Institutional Capacity for Sustainable Futures: A Pathway to Competitiveness in Central Asia and Beyond".

MUNIS PRIM grant program is envisaged under the Subcomponent 1.3 - Public Research Institutes Modernization of the MUNIS Project. The MUNIS Project Development Objective (PDO) aims to enable the development of a market-oriented national innovation system in Uzbekistan. Long-term priorities of national science and innovation sector transformation are defined in the Concept of Uzbekistan Science Development until 2030 (Presidential Decree PF-6097, 29.10.2020).

This strategic concept defined goals and targets for transformation of public management of science, improving science funding mechanisms, diversification of sources for financing, modernization of research infrastructure, and developing data and information systems. In particular, the Concept indicates a comprehensive approach to the transformation of PRIs and envisages scientific infrastructure update, as well as cooperation of institutions with enterprises in the real sector of economy, creation of innovative enterprises, cooperation between various actors of the national innovation infrastructure (institutes, foundations, laboratories, scientific and technical parks, etc.), improving management, planning and forecasting of PRIs, better community outreach of PRIs to increase awareness of society on societal and economic benefits of scientific programs.

Through this grant, IAIS seeks to strengthen its institutional capacity to tackle the interconnected challenges of sustainable development, water and climate diplomacy, energy diplomacy, international trade, and related areas. This project is aligned with IAIS's strategic vision to establish itself as a regional leader in research, policy dialogue, and practical solutions, enhancing its competitiveness while shaping global policy frameworks.

Central Asia faces pressing challenges at the nexus of environmental sustainability, international trade, and energy security. With Uzbekistan's ongoing efforts to join the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the region's struggles with climate change, water scarcity, and energy transition, there is a critical need for rigorous research and informed policy guidance. IAIS, leveraging its expanding centers and interdisciplinary expertise, is well-positioned to provide such leadership but requires further capacity building to achieve its full potential. This project aims to enhance IAIS's ability to deliver high-impact research and policy solutions that support sustainable development and regional growth.

The project has three core objectives:

1. **Upgrading Research Infrastructure and Data Exchange:** Modernize IAIS's digital platforms to support diverse research topics by developing an internal data management system and securing access to external databases.
2. **Promoting Strategic Collaboration:** Strengthen partnerships with industries, international organizations, and research institutions to foster joint research and knowledge exchange.
3. **Building Institutional Capacity:** Enhance IAIS's capabilities through staff training in research methods, resource mobilization, leadership development, and governance, ensuring long-term policy influence and research excellence.

ASSIGNMENT OBJECTIVE & BUDGET

IAIS seeks to enhance the project management capabilities of its researchers and administrative staff to improve the planning, execution, and monitoring of research projects. Effective project management is critical for timely and successful delivery of research outputs, especially in collaborative and funded projects. The institute requires an experienced consultant to design and deliver a comprehensive training program tailored to the unique needs of research projects in an academic or non-profit research environment. All activities outlined below will be conducted by the consultant on the premises of the Institute.

SCOPE AND CONTENT OF SERVICES

The Institute seeks to enhance organizational effectiveness and operational excellence by strengthening its capacity in project management. To achieve this, the Institute requires the services of an experienced consultant to design, deliver, and operationalize a comprehensive Project Management Training Program.

The primary objective of the consultant's engagement is to develop and institutionalize a robust project management framework, including detailed training materials, practical tools, and user-friendly templates. Additionally, the consultant will be responsible for building staff capacity to effectively plan, implement, monitor, and report on research projects, while fostering a culture of project management best practices across the Institute.

As part of the provision of services, the consultant will be responsible for the following key deliverables and actions:

Deliverables	Actions
A. Development of Training Curriculum and Materials	• Develop comprehensive training materials, including presentations, handouts, case studies, and toolkits focused on core project management concepts and methodologies. • Prepare detailed training manuals and guidelines that outline best practices in project initiation, planning, execution, monitoring, and closure, tailored for research projects. • Incorporate real-world examples and scenarios relevant to research institutes to facilitate practical understanding.

B. Delivery of Training Sessions	• Conduct interactive workshops or online training sessions covering key project management topics such as:
	  ○ Project lifecycle management: initiation, planning, execution, monitoring & controlling, and closing.
	  ○ Work breakdown structures, scheduling, and resource allocation.
	  ○ Budgeting, cost management, and financial tracking.
	  ○ Risk identification, assessment, and mitigation strategies.
	  ○ Stakeholder engagement and effective communication.
	  ○ Reporting, documentation, and project evaluation.
	• Facilitate practical exercises, group discussions, case studies, and role-play activities to reinforce learning and encourage the application of project management skills.

C. Development and Provision of Templates and Tools	• Designing and providing templates for project proposals, budgeting, resource tracking, and other relevant documents to support participants' work. • Offering access to project management tools such as Gantt charts and risk management frameworks to enhance project implementation and monitoring.

EXPECTED RESULTS

By the end of the training, participants will be able to:

- Understand core project management principles and methodologies, including the project lifecycle, project planning, execution, monitoring, and closure, with a focus on research projects.
- Develop and implement comprehensive project plans that clearly define objectives, deliverables, timelines, resources, and roles tailored to the needs of research initiatives.
- Prepare effective project proposals and progress reports that align with institutional goals and funder requirements, incorporating key project management processes and best practices.
- Utilize essential project management tools and templates such as project charters, work breakdown structures (WBS), Gantt charts, budgeting tools, risk registers, and project tracking sheets for efficient planning, execution, and monitoring of research projects.

CONSULTANT QUALIFICATIONS

- Consultant needs to be able to demonstrate experience and skills as follows:
- Advanced degree (Master's or higher) in Project Management, Business Administration, Social Sciences, or related fields.

- Minimum 10 years of professional experience in project management, preferably with a focus on research or academic projects.
- Proven experience in designing and delivering project management training, especially for researchers, scientists, or non-profit organizations.
- Familiarity with internationally recognized project management standards and frameworks.
- Strong facilitation, communication, and interpersonal skills.
- Ability to tailor training content to the specific context and needs of research institutions.
- Experience working with think tanks or research institutes is an advantage.

REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Consultant shall report to and coordinate activities with the IAIS Project Manager or a designated staff member appointed by the Project Manager. Upon completion of services, the Consultant will submit a comprehensive report and a duly executed Act of Work Performed to the Client.

DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The contract period is **two months, tentatively scheduled from June 20, 2025, to August 20, 2025.** Extension of the contract may be considered based on project outcomes and evolving business requirements. Training is anticipated to be delivered as a four-day, in-person workshop. The training schedule will be designed to include interactive sessions, regular breaks, and practical exercises to ensure maximum engagement and effective learning.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

№	Deliverable	Payment/% of the total contract amount
1	Development of Training Curriculum and Materials	20%
2	Delivery of Training Sessions	30%
3	Development and Provision of Templates and Tools	20%
4	Final Report	30%

Payments will be done based on approval of submitted reports (deliverables), signed Act of Execution (both sides) and Invoice.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested candidates should submit:

- CV
- Relevant work samples or references
- Methodology and draft work plan
- Financial proposal

Applications should be submitted via email for the attention of Mr Shakhboz Akhmedov via the following address: info@iais.uz by 23:59 (Tashkent time) June 9, 2025.