

## **Supporting the AUC-AfricaNenda Joint Advocacy Program for the Implementation of the Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa (2020-2030)**

### **Request for Proposals**

**August 2025**

#### **1. Background**

Since 2023, the African Union Commission (AUC) and AfricaNenda Foundation have been working in partnership to advance financial inclusion across Africa by championing universal access to digital financial services (DFS). Together, they are implementing the Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa (2020–2030) and driving a continent-wide advocacy program to harmonize DFS policies and regulations — with a strong focus on inclusive instant payment systems (IIPS) that facilitate affordable, secure, and interoperable cross-border digital retail payments. Achieving this vision requires sustained, expert-driven advocacy that connects technical evidence to policymaking, mobilizes stakeholder buy-in, and builds consensus on regulatory and policy reforms that promote financial inclusion, innovation, and economic integration.

Through this Request for Proposals (RFP), the AfricaNenda Foundation seeks to engage an experienced Advocacy Consultant to provide strategic and technical support to the joint advocacy program. The consultant will play a central role in advancing the harmonization of DFS policy and regulatory frameworks across national, regional, and continental levels, with an emphasis on enabling inclusive, gender-responsive, and interoperable instant payment systems. The role calls for a dynamic firm with proven experience in interventions involving the African Union Commission, expertise in African policy advocacy, stakeholder engagement, and digital financial services, capable of ensuring that advocacy efforts are targeted, impactful, and aligned with the evolving policy landscape.

#### **2. Objectives of the Advocacy Consultancy**

##### **Strengthen policy advocacy**

To drive meaningful change in Africa's digital financial services (DFS) landscape, the consultant will prioritize robust policy advocacy at all levels - continental, regional, and national. This includes championing the harmonization of DFS policies and regulations to create an enabling environment for inclusive instant payment systems. Special emphasis will be placed on facilitating cross-border payments, which are vital for economic integration and trade across Africa. Furthermore, the advocacy agenda will be intentionally gender-responsive, promoting digital inclusion for women and other marginalized groups by addressing regulatory and systemic barriers that hinder their participation in the digital economy. Through evidence-based policy notes, thought leadership, and targeted campaigns, the interventions aim to influence policymakers and regulators to adopt forward-looking, inclusive frameworks that accelerate financial inclusion and economic empowerment.

##### **Facilitate high-level engagements**

Harnessing the Advocacy Consultant's deep experience and established networks within the African Union Commission (AUC) and related institutions, the consultancy will involve facilitating regular strategic meetings among AfricaNenda, AUC leadership, and other key stakeholders. These high-level engagements will be instrumental in aligning on shared priorities, reviewing progress against set milestones, and collaboratively addressing emerging challenges and bottlenecks. Such forums will also provide a platform for joint decision-making, fostering a sense of ownership and commitment among all partners, and enabling the rapid escalation and resolution of critical issues that may arise during program implementation.

##### **Promote inclusive dialogue**

The consultancy is committed to fostering open and inclusive dialogue between public and private sector actors, recognizing that sustainable DFS policy harmonization requires broad-based consensus and collaboration. Efforts will be made to create spaces for engagement, to shape policy discussions and program design actively. This will involve convening multi-stakeholder forums, technical working groups, and consultations that prioritize diversity and inclusiveness.

### **Support capacity building**

A cornerstone of the consultancy will be the co-design and delivery of targeted capacity-building activities for policymakers, regulators, and ecosystem actors. The interventions will empower stakeholders to navigate complex regulatory environments, implement best practices, and respond proactively to emerging trends in digital finance by strengthening institutional knowledge and technical skills. Capacity-building efforts will also foster cross-country learning and collaboration, enabling the sharing of successful models and lessons learned. This approach ensures that the gains from advocacy and policy reform are sustainable, scalable, and deeply rooted in the capabilities of Africa's financial sector leadership.

## **3. Scope of Consultancy**

### **Advocacy and engagement**

- Develop and disseminate advocacy materials and thought leadership pieces on DFS policies and regulations harmonization.
- Coordinate advocacy campaigns targeting AU Member States, regional economic communities, and relevant AUC departments.
- Support the translation of the AU Decade of Women's Financial and Economic Inclusion (WYFEI) mandate into actionable policies.
- Support the onboarding of DFS policy harmonization strategic champions across the continent.

### **Strategic convening and facilitation**

- Organize and facilitate quarterly and ad hoc meetings with AUC leadership, leveraging the understanding of political and protocol dynamics.
- Convene multi-stakeholder forums and technical working groups to build consensus and drive policy reform.
- Serve as a liaison for AfricaNenda with AUC organs, ensuring smooth navigation of institutional processes.

### **Capacity building and knowledge sharing**

- Design and deliver training sessions, workshops, and peer-learning events for policymakers, regulators, and advocacy champions.
- Develop and share toolkits, frameworks, and best practices on DFS policy harmonization and instant payment systems, leveraging the State of Inclusive Instant Payment Systems flagship research, and others.

### **Monitoring, reporting, and impact measurement**

- Participate in the development and implementation of the program's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework, leveraging AfricaNenda's M&E resource.
- Document and share lessons learned, success stories, and impact data to inform advocacy strategies and program adaptation and impact.
- Support the development and rollout of the WYFEI Scorecard and other monitoring tools.
- Reports in line with the advocacy program's M&E framework.

## **4. Project Outputs**

The consultant is expected to prepare and submit all the project deliverables to the highest standard as required, stating all actions taken during the project. The outputs of the project will be as follows:

- Advocacy strategy & workplan
- Policy & regulatory briefs
- Stakeholder engagement & coordination
- Capacity-building materials & delivery

- Advocacy events & campaigns
- Progress & final reports

## 5. Project Timelines

The project is expected to run for **12 months**.

## 6. Project Expertise and Technical Competencies Required

The consultancy firm or consortium should demonstrate:

### Proven policy advocacy expertise

- Minimum of 7–10 years' experience in high-level policy advocacy within the African policy/regulatory landscape, preferably in financial services, payments, or digital economy sectors.

### Deep understanding of DFS & IIPS

- Solid technical knowledge of digital financial services, instant payment systems, interoperability, cross-border payments, and related policy/regulatory frameworks.
- Familiarity with gender-responsive and inclusion-focused approaches in digital finance.

### Stakeholder engagement track record

- Demonstrated experience in convening and influencing diverse stakeholder groups, including continental institutions (e.g., AUC, AfCFTA Secretariat, RECs), policymakers, regulators, private sector actors, and civil society.
- Strong political economy and protocol sensitivity in pan-African contexts.

### Capacity-Building and knowledge management skills

- Proven ability to design and deliver high-impact capacity-building programmes, workshops, and technical assistance for policy and regulatory audiences.

### Strategic communication abilities

- Strong skills in developing advocacy content, tailoring messages, and preparing compelling materials for varied audiences.
- Ability to leverage both traditional media and digital platforms for advocacy outreach.

### Research and evidence-building capacity

- Ability to conduct rapid research, policy analysis, and synthesis of complex technical issues into actionable recommendations.

### Team composition and expertise

- A multidisciplinary team with relevant sector, advocacy, and communications experience, with designated leads for technical content, stakeholder engagement, and capacity-building.

### Regional footprint

- Demonstrated presence or partnerships in multiple African regions to facilitate on-the-ground engagement and pan-African reach.

## 7. Project Reporting

The consulting firm will work under the direct supervision of the AfricaNenda Foundation program representatives.

## 8. Proposal Content

Consulting firms should submit technical and financial proposals that address the objectives outlined above. While there is no minimum page limit for the proposal, the maximum page limit is 15 pages (including the CVs of the project team members). The proposal is expected to be clear, concise, and with no font smaller than size 11. The proposal should detail the firm's proposed approach to delivering the project. It must also focus on demonstrating how the consulting firm will ensure that high levels of quality will be maintained at all stages of the project.

## 9. Risk Management

The technical proposal should contain a comprehensive list of expected project risks and possible mitigation measures.

## 10. RFP Process

### Submissions

Proposals should be submitted electronically by **Friday, September 12, 2025**, to [info@africanenda.org](mailto:info@africanenda.org). The technical proposal and the financial proposal shall be provided in separate documents. Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered.

In addition to the proposals, the bidders are to share the following documentation:

1. A list of the Director(s) of the firm.
2. Copies of the Registration Certificates/Certificate of Incorporation.
3. Tax compliance certificate (where applicable)
4. At least three references from organizations/companies, including contact information for verification if needed.

### Queries

Queries relating to the preparation of the proposal should be submitted to AfricaNenda by email to the above-provided email by Friday, **August 29, 2025**.

### Notification And Contracting

All bidders will be notified of the outcome of their proposals **as soon as possible**. AfricaNenda will issue a contract once the selection process has been completed. **The contracted firm will be expected to start the project on Wednesday, October 1, 2025.**

## 11. Budget

The applicants are expected to submit competitive value-for-money financial proposals for this assignment.

## 12. Evaluation Criteria

All proposals will be evaluated based on the criteria listed in the table below. The technical bids will be reviewed by the AUC and AfricaNenda Foundation project representatives and scored according to the criteria below. Upon completion of the scoring of technical proposals, the financial proposals shall be opened. With an overall score calculated.

Technical Proposal Criteria	Weighting (%)
<b>Quality of proposal</b> - Demonstrates clear technical understanding of the RFP; proposes appropriate and effective methodologies for delivering the advocacy program; outlines robust mechanisms for quality assurance; incorporates innovative approaches to stakeholder engagement, data gathering, and advocacy campaign design; includes a solid assessment of potential risks with well-defined contingency plans.	<b>40%</b>
<b>Competence and experience of the consulting firm</b> - Demonstrated track record and reputation in high-level policy advocacy and strategic engagement in African contexts; proven ability to influence DFS policy and regulatory environments at continental, regional, and national levels.	<b>10%</b>
<b>Project resources and proposed team member CVs</b> - Strong alignment of proposed team expertise with required roles (e.g., advocacy lead, policy analyst, stakeholder engagement specialist, communications expert); clear evidence of prior relevant projects; CVs highlight depth of experience in advocacy, DFS policy, IIPS, and capacity-building activities.	<b>20%</b>

Technical Proposal Criteria	Weighting (%)
<b>Capability</b> - Demonstrated industry experience in digital financial services policy and regulation, instant payment systems, and stakeholder engagement; proven work on feasibility studies and regulatory harmonization in the financial services sector, preferably for policy formulation purposes.	<b>30%</b>
<b>Maximum score</b>	<b>100%</b>