UGANDA
COMMUNICATIONS
COMMISSION

CALL FOR BUSSINESS PLAN PROPOSALS FOR THE UCC/UCUSAF GRANT FOR "ENHANCING KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT, ICT ADAPTION, DIGITAL SKILLS AND ACCESS TO E- SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

STATEMENT OF REQUIREMENTS

1.0   Introduction

Uganda Communications Commission (UCC), through The Uganda Communications Universal Service and Access Fund (UCUSAF), which is a Universal Service Fund (USF) for communications in Uganda, has launched a call for business plan proposals to establish a collaboration on the implementation of key activities under a general thematic area of addressing digital inclusiveness of Persons with Disabilities (PWD) ICT.

Therefore, the UCUSAF III programme sets aside resources to be utilized under a collaborative grant framework between UCC/UCUSAF and a suitable partner, some of these funds are available within the operational budget of the financial year 2021/2022 to implement activities related to addressing digital inclusiveness of Persons with Disabilities, by Enhancing Knowledge Management, ICT Adaption, Digital Skills And Access To E-Services For Persons With Disabilities.

2.0   Background

The term persons with disabilities is used to apply to all persons with disabilities, including those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various attitudinal and environmental barriers, hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. According to the Ugandan Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Act 2006, it defines disability as "a substantial functional limitation of daily life activities caused by physical, mental or sensory impairment and environmental barriers resulting in limited participation".

At the global level, around 15 percent of the world's population, or 1 billion people, live with disabilities, and these are the world's largest minority group. This figure continues to increase through population growth, medical advances and the ageing process, as stated by the World Health

Organisation (WHO). Furthermore, the World Health Organization notes that 80% of persons with disabilities live in developing countries.

Section 5 (L) of the Act mandates UCC to "Promote research into the development and use of new communications techniques and technologies, including those which promote accessibility of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and other members of society to communications services". At a national level, article 21(1) of Uganda's Constitution upholds Uganda's commitment to safeguarding equality and freedom from discrimination for all, including PWDs. Under the article, discrimination was defined in clause (3) to mean 'give different treatment to different persons attributable only or mainly to their respective descriptions by sex, race, colour, ethnic origin, tribe, birth, creed or religion, or social or economic standings, political opinion or disability. The Uganda Bureau of Statistics Census Report (UBOS 2016) indicated that 12.4% of the Ugandan population lives with some form of disability, implying that approximately 4.5 million Ugandans are persons with disability hence a development concern, currently estimated at about 6 million.

Despite the available evidence from renowned scholars and publishers like the Economist (2009), an extra 10 phones per 100 people in a typical developing country boosts GDP growth by 0.8 percentage points, uptake of ICTs by People with Disabilities (PWDs) in Uganda is still low. Thus, to leverage the benefits that accrue from access and usage of ICTs, such as boosting production, improving household incomes, reducing inequalities and widening market options, among others, the Uganda Vision 2040 highlights the use of ICTs as one of the Pillars in the attainment of this Vision

UCC notes that ICTs can significantly increase the socio-economic livelihoods of communities in Uganda, including Persons with Disabilities (PWDs). However, there is a growing outcry from the public and key stakeholders that the PWDs are increasingly becoming isolated from accessing and using ICTs despite the available evidence of the impact of ICTs. It is thus imperative that ICTs inclusiveness programmes be implemented with key ecosystem partners to cater for the needs of the PWDs. It is against this background that UCC has over the years developed and implemented various initiatives aimed at ensuring universal access and usage of ICTs, not only in rural and underserved areas but also some ICT interventions targeting this special interest group development.

Based on the above facts, UCC/UCUSAF is seeking to collaborate with a suitably qualified applicant (partner or consortium of partners) with the requisite qualifications, resources, competencies, and experience as per

the eligibility criterion and statement of requirements as presented in this call.

The applicant shall address the challenges identified by various studies and other emerging challenges, especially those highlighted by COVID19, in developing an effective strategy to contribute to the accelerated uptake of ICTs by Persons with Disabilities. This multi-year effort will see UCUSAF offer financial support to the applicant subject to, availability of funds.

The project activities are broadly phased into three main phases. This year the focus shall be on the development and operationalization of an inclusive National PWD digital observatory to improve PWD data management as a means of promoting evidence-based policy and programme design. This will also focus on establishing baseline ICT indicators as far as digital inclusiveness is concerned for various categories of PWD. The partner unit or co-applicant, whichever case may be with demonstrated ICT and research competencies, shall be expected to take the lead during the execution of this phase.

3.0   Project Key Actions

1. Establish a baseline of PWD digital inclusiveness in e-services access, technology, content, and information needs for various categories of PWD across the country.
2. Develop and operationalize a National digital observatory (database) for PWD
3. Mobilize and create awareness of ICT access and potential among various categories of PWD.

4.0   Target Group

This initiative targets persons with disabilities as primary beneficiaries, especially those; physically challenged, the blind, deaf and dumb.

5.0   Eligibility of Applicants

5.1   General Criteria

1. The lead applicant is a legally established entity in Uganda. **However, in order to address the diverse needs of the programme, it is likely that a solution will be delivered through consortia of providers.** Therefore, the applicant organization (in the case of consortia, both lead and Co-applicant organization) will assume overall responsibility and

sign a memorandum of understanding with the UCC to enforce joint accountability of action.

2. The applicant organization must be in satisfactory financial health and have adequate structures and systems to manage the programme and report to the UCUSAF as shall be required.
3. The lead applicant or associate must demonstrate active presence and operation in areas of PWD in more than 70% of Uganda's Districts and presence in all administrative regions of the country.
4. Lead applicant must have over 10 Years of experience working with all categories of PWDs
5. The applicant has documented experience in mobilizing, coordinating and delivering similar initiatives at a national scale, especially working in rural areas.
6. Lead applicant has a clear strategic Plan incorporating such Projects
7. The applicant has the capacity to network and mobilize complementary resources to sustain the initiative.
8. The lead applicant and co-applicant must have an existing working relationship spanning at least one year.
9. Co-applicants must demonstrate complementary competencies to the applicant.

5.2 Preference

The Fund will give preference to applicants whose Business Plan proposals highlight the following:-

1. Demonstrate clear understanding and experience in dealing with the capacity enhancement of persons with disabilities
2. Entities that have qualified human resources in house or working in an established and proven consortium to implement the proposed project within the proposed timeframe
3. Proposals that provide for greater innovations in addressing digital inclusiveness for PWDs in a sustainable manner and demonstrating logical thought processes of the results framework in line with the national development agenda.
4. Also, proposals that provide innovation in executing the project actions in the remote and challenging environments. (e.g. lack of access or remoteness to the power grid, among others)
5. Clear Financial and material contribution from the applicants over and above the grant amount
6. Proposals that demonstrate higher value for money.

6.0 Assessment Criterion

The grant applications will be assessed based on a 3-stage process (Administrative, Technical and Financial) process but also incorporating the four equally-weighted, all-encompassing criteria:-

1. Administrative- will focus on assessment of the eligibility
2. Technical – will focus on clarity of the motivation, smartness of goals, appropriateness of methodology and project management framework, the feasibility of work plans, innovativeness and potential impact of the project, Ability to meet project priorities, addressing of crosscutting issues, and project sustainability capacity to deliver.
3. Financial – will focus on Value for money, sustainability, and mobilising more resources to scale the initiative.

7.0 Risk Assessment

The UCUSAF Assessment team will carry out a Risk assessment of the indicated and non-indicated risks. Based on the risks assessed, the assessment will consider the totality of an applicant's submission in assessing whether a potential engagement would involve low, medium, high, or extreme risk to UCC/UCUSAF.

8.0 Required Applicant's Legal Documents

1. Certificate of incorporation or registration for the lead applicant providing a legal name – the name that identifies the applicant for legal, administrative and other official purposes;
2. Memorandum and Articles of Association for the lead applicant
3. Applicant address (physical, postal, email, template and website)
4. Contact person details – the name, position, phone and email contact for an authorized representative of the Applicant and co-applicants (if any)
5. Letters of support from affiliated entities or proposed implementing partners, if any (co-applicants)
6. Applicant Audited Financial statements for last 2 years
7. Signed Code of Ethical Conduct in Business for Grant applicants and Providers- Template provided by UCC/UCUSAF

9.0 Business Plan Requirements

1. Project motivation, objectives and outcomes
2. Project linkage to UCC/UCUSAF strategy and the National Development Agenda

3. Experience managing similar projects
4. Project implementation methodology
5. Project management framework
6. Project work plans and associated milestones, with a clear description of responsibilities for each partner
7. Project implementation budget with clear allocation of resources to implementing partners
8. Sustainability approach
9. Monitoring and evaluation approach
10. Risk management framework
11. Integration of cross-cutting issues of; gender, youth, digital divide, among other

10.0 Application Timeline

The grant application is open effective **19th November to 2nd December 2021.**

A Pre – grant Application online meeting will be held on 26th November 2021 at 10.00 am. Meeting registration and login details will be shared on the UCC website and all other UCC social media platforms.

For any required clarification or guidance on the grant application process, please contact telephone +256414339099 or email registry@ucc.co.ug /ewannyana@ucc.co.ug

Final Applications will be submitted both in hard copy (3 copies) and soft copy to: -

The Executive Director
Uganda Communications Commission
Plot 42-44, Spring Road Bugolobi
P.O.Box 7376, Kampala
Uganda
By email to registry@ucc.co.ug and ewannyana@ucc.co.ug

Disclaimer

Personal information supplied in an application will be used by Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) in accordance with the Laws of Uganda.