

# Request for Proposals: Artificial Intelligence for Support Unit Systems

October 2024

## ABOUT THE NDC PARTNERSHIP

The NDC Partnership is a global coalition of countries and institutions working to mobilize support and achieve ambitious climate goals while enhancing sustainable development. Through the Partnership, country members leverage their resources and expertise to provide countries with the tools they need to implement their NDCs and combat climate change to build a better future. Hosted by WRI, the UNFCCC Secretariat, and the UN Office for Project Services, the NDC Partnership has members in all regions of the world, with staff in Washington DC and Bonn, Germany.

## BACKGROUND

Artificial Intelligence (AI) as technical and conceptual umbrella has evolved rapidly in recent years, especially following the popularization of large language models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT, artificial neural networks in machine learning which can be used in text generation. The potential of LLMs to produce extensive text-based and audio-visual content with minimal capacity requirements has further increased interest and investment in this technology, while research highlights the [potential for misleading interactions](#) and the [“black box” problem](#) concerning human ability to understand the discrete decision making of AI models. Additionally, other research raises concerns regarding [greenhouse gas emissions produced by AI usage](#), especially from large-scale generative models.

The potential of AI technology is being increasingly explored in the context of climate change and sustainable development. The NDC Partnership Support Unit (SU) has conducted initial scoping research throughout 2024, to better understand the landscape of AI usage among leading climate organizations, the technology’s potential of to improve SU systems, and preliminary options for potential investment. Furthermore, the scoping research highlights the need to ensure quality and environmental sustainability of AI applications, as well as compliance with the guidelines and regulations of NDC Partnership host organizations surrounding AI usage.

# SCOPE OF WORK AND ACTIVITIES

## Objective of the Assignment

The NDC Partnership is seeking services from a consultant to develop technical recommendations for implementing AI applications for SU systems. The recommendations should build on initial internal scoping research and provide a technical assessment on implementing different options. The consultant should bring technical expertise in AI technology and provide a practical feasibility analysis as part of the recommendations. Additionally, the consultant should provide estimates on costs and timelines for the options proposed, as well as additional considerations (e.g., environmental sustainability and compliance with institutional regulations).

Preliminary ideas for AI application are organized around different workstreams within the SU, including [Knowledge & Learning \(K&L\)](#), [Country Engagement \(CE\)](#), and Operations. Details on potential individual applications which should be explored as part of this scope of work are outlined below.

## Activities

In close coordination with the K&L team, the consultant should carry out the following activities.

- 1) Conduct additional scoping research on the practical potential to integrate the following potential AI applications into SU systems:

### For Knowledge & Learning:

- 1) Analyze the potential for AI models or natural-language processing (NLP) to increase data management efficiencies for the NDC Partnership's knowledge management system, the [kNook](#). This includes exploring the potential to automate initial data tagging, by matching the content of country request data in kNook with thematic tags used in the system and their definitions.
- 2) Investigate the capacity for AI models or NLP to serve as a matchmaking feature in kNook – effectively assisting in connecting country requests for support with relevant development partners.
- 3) Explore developing an automated “chatbot” using MS Co-Pilot Studio (or similar applications) for the NDC Partnership's resource-sharing platform, the [Knowledge Portal](#). The goal of this application would be to improve user experience by providing pre-written responses to frequently asked questions about the Knowledge Portal, such as an overview of content modules, how to use filters, and instructions for sharing additional resources.

### For Country Engagement:

- 4) Analyze the ability of AI models to improve quality assurance efficiencies for processing request for support letters (RSLs) from countries. This could range from automating spellchecking and correcting for grammatical errors, to supporting country engagement staff to improve the clarity and quality of written requests.
- 5) Explore the capacity for AI technology to extract qualitative information on country requests quickly and reliably, such as thematic topics not captured by existing data tags, beyond existing information available in the kNook system.

- 6) Work with the Communications Team to initiate a scoping exercise to identify appropriate use cases for AI to support the development and dissemination of communications products.

**For Operations:**

- 7) Explore the capacity for AI technology to automatically produce monthly managerial summary and data reports related to the Operations Hub processes.
  - 8) Explore the potential use of AI technology to facilitate the consolidation of different host information to support and streamline Humans Relations processes, including but not limited to the shortlisting of job applicants and reviewing applicant writing assessments.
  - 9) Explore the use of AI to make more efficient contract-related processes, in particular related to the reasonability of cost checks (for PAF or other Support Unit contracts).
- 2) Provide technical recommendations for which of the above potential AI applications, if any, can be feasibly implemented. In the case that no viable option exists from the above, offer alternative recommendations. Include high-level cost and time estimations for implementing recommended options.
  - 3) Develop a risk assessment for recommended options, with particular attention to accuracy and quality of AI use cases, capacity requirements for training staff to engage with AI models, environmental sustainability, and compliance with AI guidance and regulations of NDC Partnership host organizations.
  - 4) In close collaboration with the Knowledge & Learning team, complete a work plan for implementing recommended AI applications, including more detailed scope of work, cost and timeline estimations and staff capacity considerations.

## Key Deliverables

The consultant will develop and submit the following deliverables:

- 1) **AI technical feasibility analysis and recommendations report:** The consultant will develop a report comprising activities 1 and 2, analyzing the technical feasibility for implementing potential AI applications in SU systems and providing practical recommendations. As needed, provide additional recommendations for alternative applications based on technical assessment.
- 2) **Risk assessment supplement for AI options:** In conjunction with the primary report, the consultant will produce a supplemental document analyzing the risk factors involved with implementing recommended AI applications. This deliverable encompasses activity 3 and should address the priority areas outlined therein.
- 3) **Work plan for implementation:** For recommended AI applications, produce a work plan which outlines steps to implement these options for SU systems, including more detailed logistical considerations (as described in activity 4). This deliverable should be completed in close collaboration with the K&L team.

**Table 1. Deliverables timeline**

Deliverable	Description	Timeline
1	AI technical feasibility analysis and recommendations report	1 January 2025
2	Risk assessment supplement for AI options	15 January 2025
3	Work plan for implementation	15 February 2025

## Payment

One single invoice should be submitted after the completion of all deliverables.

## QUALIFICATIONS

The consultant should fit the following profile:

- 1) Advanced degree in Computer Science or similar.
- 2) Significant experience working with artificial intelligence technologies, including large language models (such as ChatGPT), natural language processing, as well as non-generative applications (such as MS Co-Pilot).
- 3) Significant experience working on projects related to climate change and sustainable development.
- 4) Experience working with non-profits in an international context.
- 5) Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to work and communicate effectively with teams from different countries.
- 6) Excellent writing, editing, and oral communication skills in English.

## CONTRACT TERMS

- Estimated start date: 15 November 2024
- Estimated end date: 15 February 2025

## PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Prospective consultants should submit:

- Resume or CV
- Examples of and references for similar previous work (with URLs and contact details)
- Description of the proposed approach for completing the deliverables
- A proposed budget and timeline with a breakdown of costs for the work

## EVALUATION AND SELECTION

### Evaluation Criteria

The following elements will be the primary considerations in evaluating all proposals submitted in response to this RFP:

- Completion of all required elements;
- Completeness & quality of the proposal in addressing all required elements described in the Request for Proposal;

- Experience with similar projects;
- Overall cost of the consultant's proposal;
- Debarment and sanctions – WRI will not consider proposals from consultants that are presently debarred by the U.S. government or named on any restricted parties lists;
- Sustainability – WRI values sustainability and all other factors being equal, will favor a proposal to more sustainably perform the work.
- **The bidder offering the best overall value will be selected. For this procurement, price and non-price aspects are considered to be of approximately equal importance.**

## Selection Process

No proposal development costs shall be charged to WRI / all expenses are to be borne by the bidders. WRI may award to the bidder offering best value without discussion. However, WRI reserves the right to seek bidder clarifications and to negotiate with those bidders deemed to be within a competitive range.

WRI may, at its discretion and without explanation to the prospective consultants, choose to discontinue this RFP without obligation to such prospective consultants or make multiple awards under this RFP. Contracts will not be awarded to consultants debarred by the US government or named on restricted parties lists.

## PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Please send your proposal documents to:

- Caroline Carr, Project Coordinator, NDC Partnership Support Unit:  
[Caroline.Carr@ndcpartnership.org](mailto:Caroline.Carr@ndcpartnership.org)
- Ryan O'Connor, Knowledge Tools Analyst, NDC Partnership Support Unit:  
[ryan.oconnor@ndcpartnership.org](mailto:ryan.oconnor@ndcpartnership.org)

All proposals must be received **by 5:00pm EDT on Friday, 18 October 2024** in electronic format to the contacts listed above.

WRI may, at its discretion and without explanation to the prospective vendors choose to discontinue this RFP without obligation to such prospective vendors or make multiple awards under this RFP.