

# Expression of Interest: Terms of Reference

## Short Term Technical Adviser Pool 2026

### 1. Background

Founded in 2010, Development Pathways is a social policy and international development consultancy delivering projects throughout Asia, the Pacific, Africa, and the Middle East. We are specialists in social protection and inclusive programming. We engage in policy development, program design and implementation, research and evaluations, and training and capacity building across sectors. We are also a leading provider of custom-built management information systems (MIS) for social protection and development programs.

Development Pathways provides technical assistance on social protection and other international development priorities to the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) through its development assistance programs. Currently, technical assistance is delivered through three multi-year programs – Partnerships for Social Protection (P4SP), Social Protection Advice, Research and Capability Building (SPARC), and Social Protection, Inclusion and Gender Equality (SPRING) - that routinely engage technical experts for short-term assignments/services. To deliver services for these (and future) DFAT-funded programs managed by Development Pathways, Development Pathways maintains a *Short-Term Technical Adviser (STTA) Pool* of pre-vetted and qualified consultants.

Expressions of interest are invited from international development consultants with technical expertise in social protection and related sectors, such as cash and voucher assistance (CVA), poverty alleviation, and livelihoods, and cross-cutting issues prioritised by DFAT including Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI), localisation and climate change. Experience from Asia and/or the Pacific is desirable and candidates from the Asia Pacific region are encouraged to apply.

### 2. Programs

Currently the STTA Pool supports engagements delivered through three DFAT-funded programs: P4SP, SPARC and SPRING. The STTA Pool may also be engaged to support future DFAT-funded programs.

**P4SP** is an eight-year program that supports governments in Pacific nations to strengthen their national social protection systems. The program delivers both bilateral and regional activities to support partners to improve the quality and inclusiveness of social protection systems, and to build awareness of, and demand for, quality and inclusive social protection. P4SP is a highly adaptive and demand-driven program, which aims to contribute to greater coverage of quality, sustainable social protection systems, that reduce poverty and exclusion, address vulnerabilities through the life-course and stimulate economic growth.

**SPARC** is a five year program that provides access to high-quality technical assistance, to strengthen DFAT's international development program and policy engagements related to social protection, poverty, economic development, and community driven development. The focus is predominantly (but not exclusively) Asia. SPARC delivers a mix of on-demand support and longer-term activities which include: rapid advice through a helpdesk function, training design and delivery, longer-term research, knowledge product development, and horizon scanning.

**SPRING** is a five-year program, and is Australia's flagship investment of support to the Philippine Government on social protection, gender equality, disability, social inclusion and indigenous inclusion. The objective of SPRING is that Australia works in partnership with the Philippine Government to improve systems and structures that reduce poverty and inequality, and advance gender equality and the rights of people with disabilities. Development Pathways is a consortium partner and provides short-term technical assistance to support the delivery of program activities.

## 3. STTA Pool

The STTA Pool is a register of highly experienced consultants with deep subject matter expertise who have been vetted, and from which Development Pathways can rapidly engage technical experts for its DFAT-funded programs. The STTA Pool enables programs to respond effectively to emerging opportunities by drawing on exceptional external experts to deliver services.

Consultants appointed to the STTA Pool are able to demonstrate high levels of relevant technical expertise, as well as satisfy all due diligence and screening requirements in accordance with DFAT and Development Pathways' policies and guidance.

If appointed to the STTA Pool, consultants may be contracted on an ad-hoc basis to deliver short-term services which suit their skills, experience, qualifications, and availability.

Development Pathways is seeking Expressions of Interest from technical experts who wish to be considered for appointment to the STTA Pool, and who meet the requirements for skills, experience and qualifications as detailed in these Terms of Reference.

## 4. Services

### 4.1. Scope of services

The services that may be contracted through the STTA Pool are varied and demand-driven (DFAT and DFAT partner demands). There is a focus on countries in Asia and the Pacific, but services may be delivered remotely or in-country depending on the requirements of the assignment. In some instances (particularly helpdesk requests through SPARC) rapid turnaround may be requested (e.g. within 48 hours).

## 4.2. Selection from within the STTA Pool

Once appointed to the STTA Pool, consultants may be selected to deliver services based on their relevant skills, experience and qualifications. If selected, the consultant will be required to enter into a consultancy agreement with Development Pathways. The consultant will be required to agree to specific policies and procedures, see section 8 for further information. Consultants may also be required to undertake mandatory training and further screening checks, depending on the nature of the services.

**Please note** for those consultants appointed to the STTA Pool, there is no guarantee of being contracted to deliver services of any type or duration throughout the period of appointment to the STTA Pool.

## 5. Skills & experience

Development Pathways is seeking Expressions of Interest from consultants with the following skills and experience:

### 5.1. Subject matter expertise

Expertise in the design, development, implementation, and/or evaluation of social protection schemes, policies, operational systems, and strategies. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Social assistance schemes, including: old age benefits; disability benefits; child benefits; poverty-targeted benefits; unemployment benefits; cash and voucher transfers; cash plus approaches; cash-for-work schemes;
- Shock response (including anticipatory action);
- Social insurance / contributory social protection schemes;
- Active labour market policies and programs;
- Social care and services; and or
- Related programs, such as: school meals/feeding, graduation approach, livelihoods (employment and entrepreneurship) and CVA assistance more broadly.

In addition to social protection expertise, we are also seeking Expressions of Interest from consultants with expertise in cross-cutting issues prioritised by DFAT: climate change, disability, gender, social inclusion (including indigenous inclusion), and locally-led and community-driven development.

**Table 1. Priority Areas of Expertise**

Area of expertise	Indicative sub-themes
<b>Social Protection Policy and Strategy</b>	Sustainable social protection financing; system strengthening and reform; national social protection policies and strategy; program-level policy and strategy; nutrition sensitive social protection.
<b>Social Protection Operations and Delivery Systems</b>	Management information systems; payment systems; cash transfers; grievance and complaints and social accountability mechanisms; digital technologies and solutions for social protection.
<b>Shock-Responsive Social Protection and Humanitarian Response</b>	Humanitarian infrastructure and operational delivery; assistance in rapid onset disasters; safety nets and social assistance in crises; cash and voucher assistance; humanitarian cash transfers; climate responsive social protection; accountability to affected populations; shock-responsive social protection; adaptive social protection; anticipatory action.
<b>Gender Equality</b>	Gender-responsive social protection; gender inclusive social protection; women's economic empowerment; gender mainstreaming in policy and programming; gender-based violence; gender analysis.
<b>Disability Inclusion</b>	Disability inclusive social protection; disability-specific social protection schemes; disability access; engaging with organisations of people with disability (OPDs); accounting for disability-related costs; disability categorisation and disability assessment.
<b>Social Inclusion</b>	Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sex Characteristics (SOGIESC) inclusion; indigenous inclusion.
<b>Climate Change</b>	Policy development; climate financing; climate adaptation and mitigation; green jobs; just transitions; early warning systems; anticipatory action; climate-smart agriculture; disaster risk reduction / management.
<b>Locally-led and Community-Driven Development</b>	Participatory approaches for planning, decision-making and resource management by communities; community engagement; local governance and accountability; capacity building and leadership development; participatory monitoring and evaluation.

Area of expertise	Indicative sub-themes
Poverty Alleviation	Social policy; economic analysis; poverty and vulnerability assessment; graduation approach; women's economic empowerment; food security and hunger; financial inclusion.
Other	Political economy analysis, government engagement/relations; governance; public financial management; economics; econometrics and quantitative socio-economic analysis/research; qualitative analysis/research; capacity building; facilitation; civil society engagement; safeguarding; operations; marketing and communications; program support; administration; and other key priority areas.

## 5.2. Essential skills & experience

- At least 5 years' experience in a relevant field.
- Experience working with:
  - partner governments;
  - development stakeholders; or
  - DFAT.
- Demonstrated experience delivering high-quality technical products to schedule.
- Exceptional verbal and written communication skills (advanced English proficiency).
- Proven problem-solving capabilities.
- Demonstrated critical thinking skills.
- Demonstrated cross cultural competencies.

## 5.3. Desirable skills & experience

- Contextual expertise and experience working in Asia and/or the Pacific.
- Leadership experience (team, project and/or people leadership).
- Knowledge of other languages spoken in Asia and/or the Pacific.

## 6. Expression of Interest

Development Pathways is seeking Expressions of Interest from suitably experienced and qualified technical experts to be appointed to the STTA Pool, based on the skills, experience and qualifications detailed in section 5.

We are committed to workforce diversity and encourage Expressions of Interest from people with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, LGBTIQ+ people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and mature age people. We will work with applicants to meet their accessibility needs.

### 6.1. Submission of Expression of Interest

Applicants must complete and submit **Annex 1 - Expression of Interest STTA Pool 2026** and their CV via email to [admin@p4sp.org](mailto:admin@p4sp.org), with the subject line 'EOI STTA Pool 2026' by: **5:00pm AEDT on Friday, 20 February 2026**.

Applicants should ensure they understand these Terms of Reference and Annex 1 before submitting an Expression of Interest. Questions can be directed to [admin@p4sp.org](mailto:admin@p4sp.org).

## 7. STTA Pool selection process

### 7.1. Stage one – shortlisting

All Expressions of Interest received by the submission date will be reviewed, and those individuals who successfully demonstrate that they have the requisite skills, experience and qualifications, as outlined in section 5 and in Annex 1, will be shortlisted to progress to the stage two screening process. The selection process in stage one will be based on the quantity and quality of requisite skills and experience required for the STTA Pool.

Applicants will be notified via email by **5:00pm AEDT Monday, 30 March 2026** if they have been shortlisted for the STTA Pool. Those who are shortlisted will progress to stage two.

### 7.2. Stage two – additional information and documentation for screening

Applicants who progress to stage two of the STTA Pool selection process are required to provide the following information and documentation, and undertake initial screening:

- Additional personal information
- Business entity information (if relevant)

- Details of two professional references
- Insurances (public liability, professional indemnity, work cover or equivalent)
- Passport (electronic image of the bio page)
- Undertake a police check
- Undertake a working with children check (where relevant)
- Undertake a LSEG-World Check.

The information provided will be used for the purpose of conducting reference checks and undertaking initial due diligence checks. Development Pathways uses the LSEG World-Check platform to undertake due diligence screening on individuals and organisations. These checks are required to satisfy DFAT and Development Pathways' compliance requirements.

Candidates who are shortlisted will be provided with further details of the additional information required for screening, which must be submitted by the candidate within seven (7) days of Development Pathway's notification (no later than **5:00pm AEDT Monday, 6 April 2026**).

**Please note** that progression to stage two does not guarantee appointment to the STTA Pool.

### 7.3. Stage three – appointment to the STTA Pool

If there are no concerns after the due diligence process has been completed, and once all documentation has been received, consultants will be formally appointed to the STTA Pool and will be considered for future services based on the process outlined in this Terms of Reference.

We aim to advise consultants of their appointment to the STTA Pool by **Monday, 27 April 2026**.

## 8. Adherence to policies and guidance

Consultants who are contracted by Development Pathways will be required to adhere to relevant Development Pathways, DFAT and program policies. These policies include, among others, policies on the following topics:

### 8.1. Child protection

Development Pathways are committed to protecting the rights of children and ensuring a child-safe environment in all aspects of our work. We require consultants to provide a police check(s) and reserve the right to conduct other screening procedures, if required, to ensure a child-safe environment.

### 8.2. Gender equality, disability, and social inclusion

Development Pathways are committed to technical excellence in gender equality and our team will work closely with our partners to ensure a context-specific and consistent approach is applied to all our programs to improve the livelihoods of the world's most marginalised groups.

## 8.3. Protection from sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment

Development Pathways are committed to respectful workplaces and does not tolerate sexual exploitation, abuse or harassment of any kind.

## 9. Key dates

Expressions of Interest should be submitted by completing **Annex 1 - Expression of Interest STTA Pool 2026** in accordance with the following key dates:

Description	Timeline
Expression of Interest opens	Monday, 26 January 2026
Expression of Interest closes	Friday, 20 February 2026
<b>Stage one - shortlisting:</b> applicants are advised regarding progress to stage two	Monday, 30 March 2026
<b>Stage two - additional information and documentation for screening:</b> additional documentation due	Monday, 6 April 2026
<b>Stage three - appointment to the STTA Pool:</b> consultants are advised of their appointment to the STTA Pool	Monday, 27 April 2026

**Please note** if you have submitted an application in a previous STTA Pool tender round, you are not required to resubmit an application in this round.