



UNIVERSITIES SOUTH AFRICA

Call for Proposals and Terms of Reference for An Environmental Scan for 4IR, Training and the World of Work

1. Introduction

The World of Work Strategy Group (WSG) of Universities South Africa (USAf) has identified the need for a research project to understand the impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) on Higher Education and the world of work. Thus, the purpose of this research project is to conduct an environmental scan to identify gaps, trends, and opportunities for preparing graduates for the changing world of work and bridging the gap between industry and universities.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the research project are as follows:

- 2.1 To identify gaps in current studies and research to ensure that graduates are future-ready in various professional fields within the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution;
- 2.2 To understand the areas of strength of various universities that are leading the way in terms of 4IR, artificial intelligence (AI), and other technological advances within the world of work;
- 2.3 To investigate initiatives between industry and universities where students are exposed to enriching environments, businesses, training, venture capital, and labs; and
- 2.4 To identify organisations that could support the understanding of 4IR-imposed shifts in the workplace and corresponding higher education responses.

3. Scope

The research project will focus on the interface between Higher Education and the workplace, specifically addressing the gaps and opportunities for collaboration. The scope will include:

- 3.1 Levels of training provided by institutions, including undergraduate and postgraduate

- programs;
- 3.2 Regional initiatives and entities involved in preparing graduates for the world of work, with a focus on the Fourth Industrial Revolution;
 - 3.3 Best practices from universities that are successfully integrating 4IR, AI, and other technological advances into their curriculum;
 - 3.4 Initiatives on industry and university collaboration (or partnerships) where students are exposed to enriching work environments and lessons learned from such initiatives;
 - 3.5 Internationalisation opportunities for technology studies and collaborations; and
 - 3.6 Best practices of intersection between 4IR and work-integrated learning initiatives pursued by institutions.

4. Methodology

The research project would adopt a mixed-methods approach combining document reviews; qualitative and quantitative data gathering and analysis. The following research methods might be employed as environmental scanning techniques to identify trends, patterns, and gaps in the Higher Education landscape concerning 4IR, training, and the world of work:

- 4.1 Primary data collection through interviews with key stakeholders, surveys, and focus group discussions; and
- 4.2 Secondary data collection through literature reviews, policy documents, and reports.

5. Expected Outcomes

The expected outcome of the project is a report that contains the following:

- 5.1. Identification of gaps in current studies, initiatives, practices and research to ensure that graduates are future-ready in various professional fields within the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution;
- 5.2. Highlight the areas of strength in universities that are leading the way in terms of 4IR, AI, and other technological advances within the world of work;
- 5.3. Identification of initiatives between industry and universities that provide enriching environments, businesses, training, venture capital, and labs for students;
- 5.4. Identification of organisations that can support the understanding of 4IR-imposed shifts in the workplace and corresponding higher education responses;
- 5.5. Identification of internationalisation opportunities for technology studies and collaborations; and
- 5.6. Identification and reporting on best practices where there is an intersection between 4IR and work-integrated learning initiatives pursued by institutions or within institution-industry relationships.

6. Duration of the Study

- 6.1. The project will commence on **Monday 27 November 2023**.
- 6.2. The appointed Service Provider must submit and present an inception report on or by **Thursday 30 November 2023**.
- 6.3. The project will be completed with the presentation of a final report to the Director:

Sector Support and Operations on or by **Friday 1 March 2024**.

- 6.4. The review will take place over a maximum of 90 workdays and be regarded as completed when the Director: Sector Support and Operations agrees that all planned actions in response to the review report have been addressed.

7. Project Budget

- 7.1. The Service Provider must provide a comprehensive plan, activity schedule and budget, including professional fees and any other assignment-related costs, including travel and accommodation as required, based on the timeline of a maximum of 30 workdays for this project.
- 7.2. The total cost of the project shall not exceed R300 000.00 (incl. VAT if applicable).

8. Confidentiality and Copyright

- 8.1. The Service Provider must maintain confidentiality throughout the design, development, delivery and after the process of this project.
- 8.2. The ownership of the copyright in the project deliverables outlined in section 5 shall vest solely in USAf.

9. Reporting

The Service Provider will report to the Director: Operations and Sector Support and provide regular feedback on the status of the project and any assistance required.

10. Submission of Proposals

Experts are invited to submit proposals detailing the following:

- 10.1. A detailed project plan and comprehensive research methodology demonstrating:
 - How the Service Provider will ensure that the proposal requirements are met; and
 - The implementation plan and timeline of the proposed tasks.
- 10.2. Cost proposal including expenses, VAT (if applicable), and a payment schedule;
- 10.3. At least two references from clients where the Service Provider has undertaken similar work. At least one reference must be of work that was conducted within the past 36 months. Universities South Africa reserves the right to verify the authenticity of the references.
- 10.4. Proposals must be addressed and submitted to the Director: Entrepreneurship, Dr Norah Clarke, at email address norah@usaf.ac.za **by 16:00 on Friday 17 November 2023** with the following information on the Service Provider:
 - Name of Service Provider;
 - Contact details of the Service Provider; and
 - CV/s of the relevant researcher/s.
- 10.5. The successful Service Provider will be notified by **Wednesday 22 November 2023**.
- 10.6. During the evaluation of submissions received, factors such as price, experience, functionality, planning and implementation, methodology and tax compliance status will be considered.

on Friday 17 November 2023

11. Disclaimers

- 11.1. USAf has produced this ToR in good faith. However, USAf, its employees and its associates do not warrant its accuracy or completeness. USAf will not be liable for any claim whatsoever and howsoever arising (including, without limitation, any claim in contract, negligence or otherwise) for any incorrect or misleading information contained in this ToR due to any misinterpretation of this ToR.
- 11.2. This ToR must not be interpreted as acceptance of an offer or imply the existence of a contract between USAf and any Service Provider.

12. Terms of Engagement

USAf's engagement with the Service Provider will be documented in a contract between USAf and the selected Service Provider.

13. Conflict of Interest

In terms of good corporate governance, the Service Provider will not be appointed if there is an existing real or perceived conflict of interest.

14. Contracting Authority

The Contracting Authority of the Service Provider is Universities South Africa. Under this assignment, the Service Provider is accountable to the Director: Entrepreneurship.

Responsible Contact Person:

Dr Norah Clarke

Director: Entrepreneurship

Universities South Africa (USAf)

norah@usaf.ac.za