



**ORGANISATION OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES**

**INVITATION FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

***CONSULTANCY SERVICES***

***FOR***

***CERTIFICATE COURSE IN SPECIALIZED READING INSTRUCTION***

The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission invites interested qualified Institutions/Consulting Firms to submit Expressions of Interest for the provision of consultancy services for a **CERTIFICATE COURSE IN SPECIALIZED READING INSTRUCTION**.

The Terms of Reference and Guidelines for the Submission of Expressions of Interest for this consultancy are provided below.



**THE ORGANISATION OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES COMMISSION  
EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT UNIT  
EARLY LEARNERS' PROGRAMME**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**CONSULTANCY SERVICES  
FOR**

**CERTIFICATE COURSE IN SPECIALIZED READING INSTRUCTION**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) has received funding from the U.S Agency for International Development (USAID) towards support for the OECS Early Learners Programme (ELP). The funding is to assist the OECS Ministries of Education (MOEs) to improve reading among early grade learners. This is consistent with the USAID Education Strategy 2011-2015, and specifically with Goal #1 which is to improve the reading skills of 100 million students. The ELP aims to contribute to the overall improvement in student learning at the end of the primary education cycle and the objective is to improve the reading achievement levels of all learners at the early primary level (Grade K to Grade 3) in the six (6) independent Member States of the OECS.

**BACKGROUND**

The OECS Education Sector Strategy (OESS) which was endorsed by the Council of Ministers of Education in May 2011 was accepted as the framework for educational development in Member States. With a vision of "Every Learner Succeeds," the main purpose of the OESS is to guide the educational directions and priorities of Member States. One of the development themes of the Strategy relates to the need to improve the levels of literacy, numeracy and technology among all learners. Analyses of student performance in various national and regional examinations revealed poor performance in English and Mathematics with a declining trend in the latter. The analyses also highlighted the gender disparities in performance at all levels with male students at greater risk of lower achievement.

Poor performance in English Language and Mathematics continues to be an area of major challenge for educators and policy makers in the OECS. Concern about the low performances in the two subjects relates to the belief that the ability to read, write and count is critical for academic achievement and success on the job. Of further concern is the large and growing number of students transitioning to secondary education without the prerequisite skills to succeed at that level. The ELP therefore seeks to address low performances and improve reading performance among early grade learners in the beneficiary states.

## **PURPOSE OF THE CONSULTANCY**

Research in the field continues to underscore the value of the teacher and quality of instruction as a major factor impacting student performance. The Early Learners Programme puts much emphasis on teacher professional development and training with the overall goal of improving student's reading ability at the early grades of primary education. This is in harmony with the following USAID performance indicator: *Proportion of students, who at the end of two years of primary schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand Grade level texts with direct United States Government support.* In recognition of the role of the teacher in the intervention that the ELP provides, the OECS Commission is seeking to engage an accredited post-secondary institution (Consulting Firm) to deliver a programme leading to a Certificate in Reading Instruction. The programme would be open to aspiring Reading Specialists in the following six beneficiary countries: Antigua & Barbuda, the Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

## **SCOPE OF SERVICES AND DELIVERABLES**

In close collaboration with the OECS Commission, the Project Implementation Consultancy Team and MOEs, the post-secondary institution (Consulting Firm) will design a modular accredited certificate programme that will allow teachers to build specific competencies related to reading instruction. The main goal is to develop a cadre of teachers who have high level reading instruction competencies that will translate into improved student reading competencies.

The targeted group for training will be selected based on the following prequalification:

- Possession of a teaching certification;
- Record of outstanding teaching for a minimum of five years;
- Demonstrated understanding of best practices in teaching;
- A Bachelor's Degree in Education will be considered an asset for the certificate course;
- Candidates will be nominated for participation by their respective Ministries of Education' with an indication of the role envisioned for them when the certificate course is completed. A nominee verification will be implemented by the Programme Management Team.

Specifically, this assignment will entail:

1. Close consideration of:
  - a) the OECS Education system;
  - b) the OECS Education Sector Strategy (OESS);
  - c) the ELP Report on Reading;
  - d) the ELP Report on Teacher Education;
  - e) the OECS Harmonized Language Arts Curriculum (K-3); and
  - f) the latest available programme descriptions of reading instruction courses offered by the Eastern Caribbean Joint Board of Teacher Education (ECJBTE).

2. A concept paper that reflects close consideration of all of the documents above, clearly articulating the nature, structure and implementation plan for a certificate course in reading instruction with details of the philosophy and evidence base for the development of the course. This paper should also illustrate how the course is intended to develop teacher competencies in reading instruction that will lead to improved reading performance by students of the OECS.
3. A course outline that contains modules focused on key areas of reading instruction to include:
  - a) Best practices for effective reading instruction with a clear understanding of what reading is, how children learn to read, the role of the brain and the main variables that impact reading instruction such as environment, family and teacher qualities
  - b) The art of reading instruction that encompasses the best approaches for teaching children to read, the alternative approaches when students do not master reading competencies, evidence-based models for effective reading instruction and making critical judgments based on these approaches and alternatives to meet individual student needs.
  - c) Other important methodologies such as advanced developmental reading, content area literacy instruction, prescriptive reading and children's literature
  - d) Assessment of reading – diagnostic and formative
  - e) Evidence-based intervention models for supporting students who experience difficulty in reading to accelerate their progress
  - f) Action planning and intervention design
  - g) A capstone course which includes an action research component that allows teachers to experiment with new learning and aims to address difficulties students in their classrooms experience with reading
4. Course materials/ modules designed for instruction of participants during the programme
5. A mechanism for sustaining the professional development of participating teachers
6. A mechanism for the Member State Ministries of Education to accommodate new teachers in a similar certificate programme
7. Prepare progress reports identifying the following:
  - a. Teacher attendance
  - b. Degree of teacher involvement
  - c. Teacher performance in meeting standards and requirements of the course
  - d. Degree of impact on teaching practice, with evidence
  - e. Recommendations for continued professional development of teachers
8. Participate in an inception meeting to discuss draft course outline and associated materials, and progress meetings to discuss contents of the report, implications and recommendations.
9. Provide a certificate that serves as credit toward future formal study at the graduate level.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The assignment will involve an in-service programme with a blended approach (face-to-face and online) that is practical and does not cause undue interruptions to the school programme and instructional time.

Specifically, the post-secondary institution will seek to undertake the work through the following proposed methodology:

1. Asynchronous learning for a pre-determined percentage of course time
2. Synchronous learning for a pre-determined percentage of course time
3. Regular real-time application of strategies/ models/ new learning, and reporting on findings/ experiences based on said implementation
4. Observations of true-to-life teaching experiences and teacher-student interactions to assimilate key reading instruction methodologies and content through actual experience or video recordings
5. Reflections and critical thinking based on the above-mentioned experiences towards the development of independent evidence-based decision making regarding students' needs and reading instruction
6. Specific attention to the role of the participant in contributing to Professional Learning Communities at their school
7. An action research component that allows the teacher to experiment with approaches aimed at addressing students' difficulties with reading and reading instruction.
8. An assessment mechanism for determining successful completion of the course.

## **DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

The Assignment is expected to be undertaken within seven (7) to nine (9) months and is expected to commence in April 2018. Participating teachers will be based in the participating Member States of the OECS/USAID ELP as indicated earlier.

**Table 1** below provides an indicative time table for undertaking key activities described under tasks to be accomplished.

**Table 1 Indicative Time Table**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>	<b>No. of Days</b>
<p><b>Phase One 1: Inception stage</b></p> <p>Description of the approaches and timelines proposed to prepare and deliver the scope of services outlined, prior to the commencement of the consultancy.</p> <p>Consensus building meeting</p>	<p>Detailed methodology, work plan and schedule along with detailed course outline and associated materials/ documents.</p>	
<p><b>Phase 2: Course Commencement</b></p> <p>Getting ready for implementation and preparing participants for engagement</p>	<p>Final draft of course outline</p> <p>Course materials for teacher use</p> <p>Guidelines to participants on the requirements for successful completion</p>	
<p><b>Phase 3: Course Implementation</b></p> <p>Providing instruction to participants and monitoring participation through the terms of reference (TOR) and final decisions based on inception meeting.</p>	<p>Quarterly Reports</p>	
<p><b>Phase 4: Submission of Final Reports</b></p> <p>Providing draft final and final report to the Education Development Management Unit (EDMU) OECS Commission</p>	<p>Final report on teacher performance and general course implementation with decisions regarding certification and the way forward.</p>	
<b>TOTAL</b>		

**The Institution/Consulting Firm**

- a. Shall take all the necessary steps to ensure that the entrusted task is executed properly and on schedule in accordance with the established terms of reference;
- b. Undertake to perform the task in accordance with the terms of reference and according to internationally accepted standards;

**QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

Consultants should possess a range of skills, experience, qualifications and demonstrated knowledge in the areas described in the scope of services above. The below will be required for the Consultancy:

**The Institution/Consulting Firm shall have experts with the qualifications, or equivalent, and experience outlined below.**

## 1. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The team should comprise key personnel who possess a range of skills and qualifications in order to successfully provide the services identified. As such, the team will comprise the following:

1. Team Leader
2. Reading Specialists [*minimum of three (3)*]

### 1. Team Leader

#### *Qualification and Skills:*

- At least a post graduate degree in Educational Administration with certification and/or training in Project Management, or
- A post-graduate degree in one of the related programme components (listed below) with certification and/or training in Project Management, or
- A post-graduate degree in Project Management with certification
- A degree in any of the project components will be an asset

#### **Related Project Components:**

- Reading/ Literacy Instruction
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Reading/ Educational Assessment
- Teacher Education and Professional Development

#### *Experience:*

- At least seven years' experience in team management and operational planning
- At least seven years' experience at a senior management position in education management or planning, particularly at a post-secondary institution.

### 2. Reading Specialist

#### *Qualification and Skill:*

- A post-graduate degree in Reading or Literacy with specific training in reading assessment, to include diagnostic and formative assessment related to reading as well as designing interventions for students who experience difficulty with reading and reading instruction.

#### *Experience:*

- At least seven years' experience in the development/ design, adaptation, administration and evaluation of reading programmes
- At least seven years' experience working with early grade reading programmes
- At least seven years' experience training teachers in effective reading instruction
- Knowledge of trends and developments in Reading Instruction in the early primary grades, particularly in relation to literacy assessment tools, procedures and intervention design

**a. Each team member is expected to demonstrate the following competencies:**

- Strong interpersonal, excellent presentation, oral and written communication skills.
- Ability to establish good working relationships with stakeholders in a sensitive environment.
- Problem solving, data analytical skills and interpretation.
- Computer literacy on database software, quantitative analysis packages such as SPSS or equivalent and Microsoft packages (MS Word, MS PowerPoint, MS Excel MS Project) is an asset.

**The Institution/Consulting Firm in General:**

- Should demonstrate experience working with principals, teachers and education administrators
- Should demonstrate experience in the implementation of best practices in early childhood development.
- Experience in the Caribbean region and particularly the OECS will be considered an advantage.

**Resource Requirements**

Personnel needed

- a. One (1) team member who provides oversight and makes critical decisions about the administration of the course and takes responsibility for the presentation of the course materials and reports with the results.
- b. Minimum of three (3) highly qualified Reading Specialists (meeting the outlined requirements) to provide instruction during course administration on-line and face-to-face during the term of the engagement.

**REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

The Consultant will be required to report to and be supervised by the Project Coordinator of the OECS EDMU ELP, who will be responsible for ensuring timely and quality deliverables. Deliverables will be monitored by the Education Specialist, Head, EDMU, and ELP Reading Specialist, and reviewed by the Project Management Team of the ELP. The Consultant is expected to attend in person the meetings agreed with the EDMU and undertake any field visits necessary to achieve the deliverables of the consultancy. The ELP Programme Management Team (PMT) will facilitate the Consultant's acquisition of the required information and documents for completion of activities described in the Scope of Services.

Reports to be delivered should reflect progress made against the scope of services, agreed work plan and deliverables, as well as any matters to be resolved and recommendations for improvement. All reports are to be presented to the Head of the OECS EDMU. All documentary deliverables should be presented in draft for review before final submission. One (1) hard copy plus an electronic copy of reports and documentation.

## **GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION OF EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

### **Eligibility of Consultants**

For the purposes of this procurement, Consultants in the “Authorized Geographic Code” 937 are eligible for this assignment. Geographic Code 937 is defined as the United States, the cooperating/recipient countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines), and developing countries **other than** advanced developing countries, and excluding prohibited sources (USAID ADS, Chapter 310). Please see Annex A attached herewith for the list of Developing Countries-low income/lower middle income countries included in Code 937.

Geographic Code 937 has been expanded for this programme to include Barbados, Jamaica, Suriname and Trinidad & Tobago.

Also refer to <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/310> web site for full information on Source and Nationality requirements for the procurement of commodities and services financed by USAID.

Eligible Consulting Firms/Institutions are invited to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested Consultants must provide information on their capability and suitability to undertake the assignment. **Consultants may associate to enhance their qualifications.**

Consulting Firms/Institutions interested in undertaking the prescribed Services are to email an Expression of Interest to include:

1. Information on the Consultants’ qualifications to perform the services, experience and competence relevant to the assignment (including brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among proposed personnel/staff, etc.).
2. A concept note on the planned framework for undertaking the assignment and a breakdown of the number of days required for each task (*as per Table 1*).

Expressions of Interests submitted should not exceed 30 pages.

Consultants shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of their Expressions of Interest.

The OECS is not bound to accept any Expression of Interest, and reserves the right to annul the selection process at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the Consultants.

An electronic copy of the Expressions of Interest should be submitted by **30<sup>th</sup> March, 2018**, addressed to:

OECS/USAID Early Learners Programme  
Attn: Head, Education Development Management Unit (EDMU)  
OECS Commission  
Frank Johnson Avenue, Morne Fortune  
P.O. Box 179, Castries, SAINT LUCIA  
Telephone: (758) 453-0669/456-0572 Fax: (758) 458-5079

**At the following email address:**

[oeccusaidelp@oeccs.int](mailto:oeccusaidelp@oeccs.int)

[copied to: procurement@oeccs.int](mailto:procurement@oeccs.int)

The email submissions should include the name and address of the Consultant and shall be clearly marked in the subject line as “Expression of Interest – **Certificate Course in Specialized Reading Instruction**”.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Quality and Cost-Based Selection (QCBS) Method as detailed in the procedures set out in the Procurement Manual of the OECS, dated November 2013 revised June 2017.

The criteria to evaluate the Expressions of Interest received in relation to this assignment will include:

- Specific experience of the Consultant relevant to the assignment;
- Appropriate staff composition;
- Experience in similar assignments;
- Experience in the region.

The Expressions of Interest will be evaluated and a shortlist of Consultants will be selected and requested to submit proposals.

It is expected that the services will be conducted within seven (7) to nine (9) months, commencing in April 2018, in keeping with the terms outlined in the Reporting Requirements above.

**ANNEX A**  
**AUTHORIZED PRINCIPAL USAID GEOGRAPHIC CODE**

**Code 937** (the United States, the cooperating/recipient country, and developing countries other than advanced developing countries, but excluding any country that is a prohibited source) is the authorized USAID Principal Geographic Code for the procurement of commodities and services.

**List of Developing Countries in Code 937 per ADS 310 - Low income/lower middle income**

Afghanistan	Gambia, The	Myanmar
Bangladesh	Guinea	Nepal
Benin	Guinea-Bissau	Niger
Burkina Faso	Haiti	Rwanda
Burundi	Kenya	Sierra Leone
Cambodia	Korea, Dem Rep.	Somalia
Central African Republic	Kyrgyz Republic	Tajikistan
Chad	Liberia	Tanzania
Comoros	Madagascar	Togo
Congo, Dem. Rep	Malawi	Uganda
Eritrea	Mali	Zimbabwe
Ethiopia	Mozambique	São Tomé and Príncipe
Angola	India	Senegal
Armenia	Iraq	Solomon Islands
Belize	Kiribati	Sri Lanka
Bhutan	Kosovo	Sudan
Bolivia	Lao PDR	Swaziland
Cameroon	Lesotho	Syrian Arab Republic
Cape Verde	Marshall Islands	Timor-Leste
Congo, Rep.	Mauritania	Tonga
Côte d'Ivoire	Micronesia, Fed. Sts.	Turkmenistan
Djibouti	Moldova	Tuvalu
Egypt, Arab Rep.	Mongolia	Ukraine
El Salvador	Morocco	Uzbekistan
Fiji	Nicaragua	Vanuatu
Georgia	Nigeria	Vietnam
Ghana	Pakistan	West Bank and Gaza
Guatemala	Papua New Guinea	Yemen, Rep.
Guyana	Paraguay	Zambia
Honduras	Philippines	
Indonesia	Samoa	

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