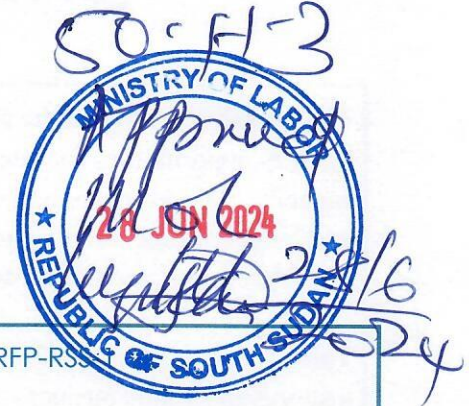


Request for Proposal (RFP) RFP No: RFP-RSS-1



1. Invitation to proposal

RFP Name: Provision of business advisory services and institutional strengthening for two implementing PARTNERS-Quality Declared Seed(s)		RFP No: RFP-RSS-1
Location: (the Republic of South Sudan)	Correspondence Language(s): English	
Brief Summary Description of Project / Spark: SPARK develops higher education and entrepreneurship to empower young, ambitious people to lead their fragile and conflict-affected societies into prosperity. SPARK is a dynamic and growing, international not-for-profit development organisation with 100+ staff members in 13 countries. SPARK supports entrepreneurs (Scale-Up & Start-Up) and youth (Skill-Up and Match-Up) by providing them with training and proximity coaching so they can build a sustainable economic future, including the development of local ecosystems and educational institutions via carefully selected local partners (localization). Project Title: SMAC Project SMAC, a 15-month Caritas Switzerland project, strengthens market actors and communities. SMAC will be implemented using Market System Development (MSD). In poor and fragile situations like South Sudan, vulnerable people typically cannot benefit from market systems because they lack market access, weak negotiation positions, or inability to enforce or influence regulations. Even if the poorest get market access, they may not escape poverty. SPARK, as the implementing organization, will modify the system by providing incentives and influencing market behaviour using the MSD strategy. The SMAC project will enable market actors (e.g. Input suppliers) to improve their services or products (e.g. Provide services) to address market system issues that negatively impact the project's target group. Supporting the private sector to address significant restrictions will promote inclusive market systems for the poor. The initiative will also work with market participants and South Sudanese line ministries to identify and encourage investment to alter and strengthen the market system. This will boost income and market involvement for Eastern and Central Equatorial women, youth, and marginalized groups. The project will help create and pilot novel business models to improve market access to private sector products and services. Thus, the project aims to directly provide solutions by facilitating key market players to continuously provide solutions to increase leverage, scale, and sustainability, such as working with supply chain services firms to advise input suppliers, input/output market actors to train retailers and build networks, retailers to advise farmers, or directly advising farmers		
1) Statement of Purpose		



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The overall objective of the assignment is to provide technical assistance to our Implementing PARTNERS to identify opportunities for internal systems and process improvement, strengthening and building their capacity. Based on gaps and diagnostic assessment for the company, the consultant is expected to design short and long term interventions to address the issue identified, putting in place appropriate mechanisms for the development of internal capacities of the PARTNERS.

This consultancy is therefore aimed at strengthening the internal operations and capacity of PARTNERS into a strong and viable business entity actively collaborating with small scale producers in Quality Declared Seeds.

The consultant will be working under the direction and supervision of the SMAC project Intervention Manager(s) and in cooperation with PARTNERS management.



RFP Available from: 28th of JUNE 2024	RFP Pickup Location: <div style="text-align: right; color: yellow; background-color: black; padding: 2px 5px;">online</div>
Deadline for Offer Submission: 15th of JULY 2024	Submit Offers to: smac_partnership@spark-online.org

Questions and Answers (Q&A)

If any, Submit Questions in writing to the following email account: smac_partnership@spark-online.org

Title of the email (Provision of business advisory services and institutional strengthening to our Implementing Partner(s))

Last Day for Questions:
03rd of July 2024

Questions will be answered by:
 If any, Submit Questions in writing to the following email account: smac_partnership@spark-online.org

will be answered through the same email account that questions are submitted If any, Submit Questions in writing to the following email account: smac_partnership@spark-online.org

Title of the email (Provision of business advisory services and institutional strengthening for PARTNERS-Quality Declared Seed(s))

Documentation Checklist

These documents are contained within this RFP	✓ ✓	General Conditions for RFP Criteria and Submittals
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Title of the email (Provision of business advisory services and institutional strengthening for PARTNERS-Quality Declared Seed(s))

Documentation Checklist

These documents are contained within this RFP

- ✓ General Conditions for RFP
- ✓ Criteria and Submittals



2. General Conditions for RFP

SPARK is inviting proposals for the goods, services, or works mentioned in the documents in adherence to the procedures, terms, and conditions outlined in the RFP Package. SPARK reserves the right to increase or decrease the quantity of work or materials specified in the package without altering the unit price or other terms and conditions. Additionally, SPARK reserves the right to accept or reject any or all of the submitted proposals.

2.1 SPARK Anti- fraud and corruption

SPARK strictly prohibits:

- We have a policy of zero tolerance of fraud and corruption, and we require staff and volunteers at all times to act honestly and with integrity, and to safeguard the assets for which they are responsible.
- Fraud and corruption are ever-present threats to our assets and reputation and so must be a concern of all members of staff and volunteers.
- We take the most serious view of any actual or attempted act of fraud or corruption by staff, volunteers, contractors or their employees, implementing or consortium partners and agents acting on our behalf.
- Staff and volunteers involved in actual or attempted fraud or corruption of any kind will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal (if legally bound), and, where practical, will normally be reported to law enforcement authorities for criminal prosecution.
- We will endeavour to recover, by any and all legal means, any funds lost through fraud from those responsible and will take robust action against involved third parties (including partners, contractors and agents).

SPARK complaints & compliments procedure

In order to ensure confidentiality and safety for those who report a (suspected or observed) critical misconduct case, SPARK has appointed a confidential adviser to whom such cases can be reported. Currently, the confidential adviser is Wiemer Renkema who serves as an external confidential adviser. Those who want to report a (suspected or observed) misconduct case to SPARK, can do so by sending a relevant email to the below address

- wrenkema@hotmail.com – external confidential adviser;

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For the purposes of the implementation of this Whistle-blower procedure, these email addresses should be used for only reporting (suspected or observed) critical misconduct cases.

Furthermore, the reporting of a (suspected, or observed) critical misconduct case in a fully anonymised manner can also be done by sending the relevant letter to the SPARK Headquarters, at the following address: SPARK Amsterdam Office, Haarlemmer Houttuinen 15h 1013 GL Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

SPARK Code of Conduct

Our Values

In SPARK, we work according to the following values, which are key in all our engagement with beneficiaries, partners, donors and each other.

TRUST is our belief to be reliable, fair and have integrity

CAN DO attitude is how we achieve our best results

CARE for what we do and who we work with

COURAGEOUS in who we are, what we do, and who we support

IGNITE innovative responses to the ever changing needs of the countries we work in



Transparency

SPARK highly values transparency throughout the entire organisation; from internal dynamics between staff towards the external communication towards partners, beneficiaries, donors, contributors and society as a whole. Our people do not pretend to act flawlessly. But in all circumstances, we intend to be as honest and transparent as possible about our results as well as our failures. We hold ourselves accountable to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources. All our dealings with donors and beneficiaries shall reflect an attitude of openness and transparency.

Non-discrimination

Our people will not discriminate based on race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, political convictions, religion, or for any other reason, in any way. Our people will do their utmost best to protect all vulnerable groups against harassment, exploitation, and sexual abuse or threat of abuse. We stay away from and strongly reject any abuse of power. We will not engage in any behaviour that affects the dignity of women and men, which is considered as unwanted, unacceptable, inappropriate and offensive to the recipient and/or create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

Integrity

Our people observe the highest standards of honesty and integrity by not abusing their position for personal gain. We are committed to conducting our activities with the highest degree of integrity and in full compliance with all applicable laws. This commitment includes a

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zero-tolerance approach towards all forms of fraud, bribery, corruption and theft. All staff should avoid situations in which their personal interest may conflict, or appear to conflict, with the interests of SPARK or our programme participants.

Data Confidentiality

Our people make responsible use of the information to which they have access and do not divulge any confidential information about beneficiaries and persons of concern to SPARK, colleagues and other work-related matters. Both while working for and after leaving SPARK, any confidential information our people have obtained will not be disclosed to others.

In SPARK we respect the privacy of our people. E-mail or other data can only be accessed by SPARK for retrieving on-going case files and in case of longer absence (> 1 week) of an employee. In such a case the employee will be informed. After ending a staff contract, information for on-going case files can be retrieved without informing the former employee.

Working in partnership

Our support should never be imposed upon the beneficiaries or partners. Our people will respect the autonomy of SPARK's (implementation) partners and support a relationship of mutual trust and confidence. Initiative for continuous improvement Our people have the responsibility to take initiative for continuous improvement and innovation and our senior management and BoD has the responsibility to create a conducive environment for this initiative to be taken and followed up upon.

Duty to report and act

Our people will report all breaches of the SPARK Code of Conduct or suspicions of non-compliance in SPARK or in the SPARK programs immediately and with the utmost discretion.

Management must ensure that all information about breaches of this Code is handled with the utmost discretion. Any concerns or suspicions about a suspected incident of exploitation, harassment or bullying of programme participants or colleagues, whether major or minor, should always be discussed with a line manager or other senior member of staff.

2.2 RFP Basis:

- All offers shall be made in accordance with these instructions, and all documents requested should be furnished, including any required (but not limited to) supplier-specific information, technical specifications, drawings, bill of quantities, and/or delivery schedule. If any requested document is not furnished, a reason should be given for its omission in an exception sheet.
- No respondent should add, omit or change any item, term or condition herein.
- If suppliers have any additional requests and conditions, these shall be stipulated in an exception sheet.
- Each offeror may make one response only.
- Each offer shall be valid for the period of [60 days] from its date of submission.
- All offers should indicate whether they include taxes, compulsory payments, levies

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and/or duties, including VAT, if applicable.

- To avoid disqualification, suppliers must ensure that their financial offers are free of any calculation errors. In case of any errors discovered during the evaluation process, the unit price will be given priority. However, if there is any uncertainty regarding the unit price, the Selection Committee holds the right to disqualify the offer.
- SPARK is inviting proposals for goods, services, and works in accordance with outlined procedures. Clarification questions regarding the project should be presented to SPARK in writing. SPARK will provide answers to questions raised in writing by any offeror, and may choose to issue clarifications to all offerors. It is important to note that no clarification shall be deemed to supersede, contradict, add to or detract from the conditions set forth in the RFP unless made in writing as an Addendum to RFP and signed by SPARK or its designated representative.
- This RFP does not obligate SPARK to execute a contract nor does it commit SPARK to pay any costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Furthermore, SPARK reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, if such action is considered to be in the best interest of SPARK.

2.3 Ineligible bidder

Suppliers may not apply, and will be rejected as ineligible, if they:

- Are not registered companies or / and entities in chamber of commerce / ministry of social development/syndicates etc or/and registration their registration is expired.
- Have not fulfilled obligations related to payment of social security and taxes.
- Are bankrupt or in the process of going bankrupt
- Have been convicted of illegal/corrupt activities, and/or unprofessional conduct
- Have been guilty of grave professional misconduct.
- Are guilty of serious misinterpretation in supplying information.
- Are in violation of the policies outlined in SPARK's Anti- fraud and corruption Statement
- Supplier (or supplier's principals) are on any list of sanctioned parties issued by; or are presently excluded or disqualified from participation in this transaction by: the United States Government or United Nations by the United States Government, the United Kingdom, the European Union, the United Nations, other national governments, or public international organisations.

Additional eligibility criteria, if applicable, are stated in section 3.2 of this RFP package.

2.4 Response Documents

The RFP offers two options for offerors to submit their offers. Firstly, they can use the response documents provided in the package. Alternatively, they can submit their offer in a different format, as long as it includes all the required information and documents specified by the RFP.

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2.5 Acceptance of Successful Response

Documentation submitted by offerors will be verified by SPARK. The winning offeror will be required to sign a contract for the stated, agreed upon amount.

3. Criteria & Submittals

3.1 Contract Terms

Spark plans to offer a Fixed Price agreement to one or multiple companies or organisations. The chosen bidder must comply with the terms and conditions of the contract and fulfil the statement of work.

3.2 Specific Eligibility Criteria

To be considered for evaluation, offerors must satisfy the **eligibility** criteria and provide the supporting documents specified under "RFP Submittals" along with their offers. Failing to submit these documents may lead to **disqualification** from any subsequent technical or financial evaluations.

Eligibility Criteria:

Country Minimum Standards for Suppliers are included in all RFPs.

1. Demonstration of being an eligible business under applicable laws and regulations.

- i. Certificate of incorporation
- ii. Membership of Chamber of Commerce
- ii. Letter of no objection
- iv. Memorandum and Article of Association (By Law)
- v. Tax clearance (fiscal year 2023 or 2022)

A team of individual consultants can also apply, the rules above only apply on firms/companies.

2. Demonstration of having a satisfactory record of performance and business ethics, by including documents of each of the following:

- **Signed contract** for similar work according to the attached ToR, within the last **five** years.
- **Reports and / or Delivery notes and/or recommendation** letters or any other form of documentation proving completion of previously undertaken work within the last **five** years in the business development support to agribusinesses and investment readiness support in South Sudan.
- **Three references** from previous work projects including contact information (organisational contact information).

3.3 RFP Submittals



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According to the RFP submission requirements, providing the necessary documents and information is crucial to support the eligibility criteria and technical evaluations of received offers. Failure to include these items does not necessarily result in disqualification; however, it can greatly and negatively impact the technical evaluation of the offer:

Documents required for eligibility and Due Diligence:

- Certificate of incorporation or Membership of Chamber of Commerce (must be valid);
- Tax Registration;
- Memorandum and Article of Association (By Law)
- Signed contract for similar work
- Reports and / or Delivery notes and/or recommendation letters or any other form of documentation proving completion of previously undertaken work;
- Company full profile (highlighting previous experience in developing and implementing awareness and outreach campaigns).

A team of individual consultants can also apply, the rules above only apply on firms/companies.

Documents required for Technical Evaluation and additional Due Diligence:

- Cover letter indicating: Brief description of why the individual/Firm considers Him/her/Itself as the most suitable for the assignment and Confirmation Availability.
- CVs for all experts and dedicated staff for all the activities related to this RFP, indicating all past experience from similar Assignments.
- Technical proposal with clear methodology and indicating the following:
 - ☒ Demonstrated experience with a mix of practical technical skills in financial management, organisational management, governance and necessary for strengthening local partner capacity
 - ☒ Experience in developing and implementing business growth strategies, market analysis, and competitive analysis.
 - ☒ Ability to identify, assess, and mitigate financial and business risks
 - ☒ Demonstrated Experience in providing capacity building assistance at individual and organisational levels.
 - ☒ Understanding of Agribusiness system(s) gaps and opportunities, and solid relationships at government agencies and with stakeholders.).
- Financial proposal including a clear cost breakdown of all relevant costs in PDF (including VAT) (SPARK will not cover logistical costs, such as costs for transport and accommodation, communication, meeting's logistics).
- Implementation plan including integration of Field Visit Workplan.
- Proof of Proficiency in written and spoken English.

The following minimum qualification applies to all the applicants:

- University degree(s) in Finance, Economics and Business Developmental Studies or related field(s).
- A minimum of 5 years of professional experience in Organisational Capacity Building and Investment Readiness Support Preferably in the Quality Declared Seeds
- Hands on Accounting and Bookkeeping Systems
- Proven knowledge and experience with using humanitarian and Business sectors frameworks for quality and accountability in evaluation assignments.
- Excellent report-writing, work planning and budgeting skills, preferably in English
- Experience working in the South Sudan context or at the least worked with a qualified national consultant during the execution of the tasks.

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Price Offer:

In order to determine the best value, offer and negotiate before awarding a contract, the Price offer is utilised. The contract is of the Fixed-Price variety, meaning that the price awarded is an all-inclusive fixed price. This can be in the form of a per-unit/deliverable fixed price or a total fixed price. No additional costs or taxes can be added after the contract is signed, and offerors must display unit prices, quantities, and total price tax inclusive in the Offer Sheet in Section 4. All items must be clearly labelled and included in the total offered price.

Price shall include tax and a daily rate.

3.4 Currency

Offers should be submitted in US Dollars (USD).

Payments will be made in Instalments per deliverables within 14 days 100% bank transfer, after receiving the deliverable, invoice, fully signed service completion report.

3.5 RFP Evaluation (Trade-Off Selection Method)

Based on the above submittals, a Spark RFP Committee will conduct a RFP evaluation process. Spark reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, and to accept the offer(s) deemed to be in the best interest of Spark, and it will not be responsible for or pay for any expenses or losses which may be incurred by any Offeror in the preparation of their RFP.

Evaluations will be conducted as described in the following subsections:

Financial

o Criteria weight is 25%

Technical

o Criteria weight is 60%

Corporate Capacity

o Criteria weight is 15%



Applicants whose proposal does not meet the minimum technical / Financial / Capacity assessment criteria (50%) will be disqualified.

3.5.1 Scoring Evaluation

Trade-Off Method

The Spark RFP Committee will evaluate technical proposals based on a weighted grading system, with each criteria given a percentage that adds up to 100% [1].

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To ensure a thorough evaluation, offerors must provide all required technical submittals [2]. The committee will assign points to each technical submission based on its strength [1]. The proposal with the highest score will be accepted as the winner, provided that the price is deemed fair and reasonable [2]. The evaluation process will consider the proposal's overall value for money, taking into account donor and internal requirements and regulations [3]. The importance of each criteria will be determined based on its assigned weight prior to the RFP's release [1]. During the Scoring Evaluation, the committee will use a point scale to assign points to each criteria [3].

Criterion will obtain between 0 and 10-point, 10 point being the maximum, 0 points the minimum and the points obtained will be multiplied by criterion weight.

SPARK expert evaluation committee will assign up to 10 points for the best quality of the sample, based on the following evaluation grid:

Point	Rationale
0	Response completely fails to address the criterion under consideration
1	A response where serious reservations exist - the may be because, for example, insufficient detail is provided and the response has fundamental flaws, or seriously lacks credibility with a high risk of non-delivery
2-4	A response where reservations exist - lacks full credibility/convincing detail, and there is a significant risk that the response will not deliver/be successful
5	A satisfactory response which demonstrates a reasonable understanding of the requirements and gives reasonable assurance of delivery of services to an adequate standard, but does not provide sufficiently convincing assurance to be able to award them a higher mark
6-9	A very response that demonstrates real understanding and fully meets the requirements - offers assurances that the service delivered will be of a high standard
10	Excellent response with no weaknesses shown and exceeds the requirement - also provides comprehensive, detailed, and convincing assurances that the services will be delivered to an excellent standard



Evaluation Criteria	Weight (%)	Possible Points (1 to 10)	Weighted Score
	(A)	(B)	(A*B)
Proposed technical proposal/approach (brief outline of proposed approach in line with SoW key questions and deliverables) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University degree in Business Administration, Management, Agribusiness, Agricultural Economics, Accounting and 	60%	10	60

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<p>Finance or related field(s) (Strategic Management, Operation, Logistic). CPA or CFA or relevant professional qualification(s)=05 (MBA is an added advantage)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of 5 years of professional experience in the related area, preferably in financial and business development support to Agribusiness and Investment Readiness Support=05 • Proven knowledge and experience supporting Private sector/ Business/SMEs and Company operational quality and accountability processes=05. • Excellent report-writing, work planning and budgeting skills, preferably in English=Pass/Fail • experience working in the South Sudan context or at the least work with a qualified national consultant during the execution of the tasks=05 • Demonstrated experience with a mix of practical technical skills in financial management (Eg. Computer Literate and hands On Accounting Systems) , organisational management, governance and necessary for strengthening local partner capacity especially SMEs/Private sector actors=15 • Experience in developing and implementing business growth strategies, market analysis, and competitive analysis and Ability to identify, assess, and mitigate financial and business risks=10 • Demonstrated Experience in providing capacity building assistance at individual and organisational levels=07 • Understanding of Agribusiness system(s) gaps and opportunities, and solid relationships at government agencies and with stakeholders=08 			
Financial offer	25%	10	25
Corporate Capacity (Evidence of capacity to undertake and accomplish the SoW, structure, track records)	15%	10	15
TOTAL POSSIBLE SCORE:	100%	10	100



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The financial/cost evaluation is based on the cost of services given in the application. With all technical evaluation criteria equal, lower price is a given advantage.

The formula for evaluating price is as follows:

$S = 10 \times LP/OP$, where "S" is the score, "LP" is the lowest price, and "OP" is the offered price under consideration.

3.5.2 Additional Due Diligence

Spark may opt to conduct further due diligence processes after carrying out technical and financial evaluations of a supplier or suppliers. These processes serve to guarantee that Spark only deals with upstanding, moral, and accountable suppliers who possess sound financials and can fulfil contractual obligations. Additional due diligence measures may take the form of reference checks, determining connections and affiliations between bids, or other suitable documented methods that will increase Spark's confidence in the supplier's capacity to deliver.



4. Offer Form

Prospective bidders are required to present their own distinct proposals, which should include a minimum of (but not restricted to):

- The documents specified in the "Eligibility Criteria" section.
- The documents specified in the "RFP Submittals" section.
- All information mentioned in the "Documents Comprising the Proposal" section below.

All offers must be duly signed (including position and full name of the signer) and stamped, with the date of completion.

Documents Comprising the Proposal

The following information must be included in the offer of any potential offeror:

- Cover Letter** explaining interest to be a contracted vendor or supplier, and the details of the Proposal. The content of the cover letter shall include the following information:
 - A detailed specification of the offered goods, services and/or works (Proposal)
 - Delivery time.
 - Price validity date (for this purpose and as stated on the advertisement, quote given shall remain unchanged for 60 working days).

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- ❑ A Financial Proposal detailing the unit price, using your own financial proposal.
- ❑ Other important documents offeror feels need to be attached to support their proposal

The person or persons authorised to enter into the contract on behalf of the offeror are required to sign the original proposal. Additionally, the financial offer pages of the proposal must be initialled by the same person or persons who signed the proposal and marked with the company seal.

5. Scope of Work "please fully sign, stamp & submit the following":

- 1- Annexure ToR.
- 2- Annexure Supplier information form



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