



CALL FOR PROPOSALS: CONSORTIUM TO ESTABLISH AND RUN A GREEN DIGITAL INNOVATION HUB (gDIH) IN KENYA

I. SKIIVE Project Background

The GIZ Digital Transformation Centre (DTC) Kenya is an initiative of German Development Cooperation co-financed by the European Union (EU) established to support the country's digital transition towards a sustainable and human-centred digital economy and society.

The goal of the DTC, on the one hand, is to strengthen the country's digital economy. It does so by strengthening the local digital innovation ecosystem, (up)skilling a tech savvy workforce, assisting SMEs in their digital transformation, fostering data-sharing for value creation, and working towards decent job creation in the gig economy.

On the other hand, the DTC seeks to strengthen an open and inclusive digital society. In this realm, it explores how emerging technologies like AI can be used for socioeconomic benefit, it builds capacities on data privacy and security to increase consumer trust in digital products and services and works on digitalizing public service delivery in a user-centric way.

Across all its activities, the DTC focuses on bridging digital divides so that young and old, women and men, rural and urban populations, persons with and without disabilities, etc. can equally benefit from the Internet. Likewise, it strives to catalyse the twin green & digital transition to help decarbonise the Kenyan economy and adopt a more circular development model.

Against this backdrop, the DTC's work can be structured into 2 components and 8 action areas:

Digital Economy Component:

1. Digital Innovation Ecosystem
2. Digitalisation of SMEs
3. Data-Driven Economy
4. Gig Work

Digital Society Component:

5. Data Protection
6. AI and Open Data
7. Digital Government
8. ICT Policies

Strengthening intermediaries of the Kenyan digital innovation ecosystem (SKIIVE) Project seeks to improve the structural capacities of intermediaries of the digital and innovation ecosystem to strengthen digital and entrepreneurial skills of SMEs and start-ups. Intermediaries are hereby defined as technology and innovation hubs, entrepreneurship, and SME support organisations (ESO), support institutions of universities, research and technology organisations, as well as start-up and SME associations. The impact hypothesis is that the establishment and provision of tailor-made digital and entrepreneurial skills training and solutions through these intermediaries acting as catalysts within the tech ecosystem will



help start-ups and SMEs leverage the digital transformation. It is assumed that intermediaries are willing to offer new / expand existing training approaches in the field of digitalisation and innovation to that end.

II. Application Process

- All applications must be submitted online through email to skiive@gfa-group.de
- The applicants must complete the application by submitting a filled in proposal and budget in line with the templates provided with the subject '**gDIH Call for Proposal Submission**'.
- Proposals should be submitted in English, PDF format and should not exceed 20 pages.
- Personal information provided in the application form such as names, addresses and business registration details should be verifiable, and the applicant is solely responsible for informing GFA of changes in current contact methods indicated in their application.
- The applicant must provide current correspondence address, email and telephone numbers and inform of any changes during the review and onboarding process.
- Upon submission of the application form, an email will be sent to the applicant or via the preferred contact method indicated in their application.
- Once submitted, applications cannot be altered or amended.
- Review and evaluation of applications will commence immediately after applications have been received in our system.
- Shortlisting of applicants will take place following the close of the application window.
- The consortium is responsible for all costs associated with preparing and submitting a proposal.

III. Green Digital Innovation Hub Background

The digital revolution and the rise of green technology are transforming the world. In Kenya, there is a need to harness these developments to drive sustainable development, create jobs, and spur economic growth. To this end, we are seeking proposals from consortia to establish and operate a green digital innovation hub in Kenya.

The Green Digital Innovation Hub (gDIH) is designed to help micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in Kenya to access technology and innovation resources. The gDIH aims to foster a culture of digital innovation and entrepreneurship by providing MSMEs with the tools, skills, and networks they need to succeed in the digital economy. It will act as a platform to collaborate, learn, and grow, while promoting environmentally sustainable business practices.

The hub's vision is to be a **one stop shop** that will contribute to the digital transformation of Kenyan enterprises while promoting **sustainable development, circular economy, environmental protection and tackling climate change**.



IMPORTANT NOTICE:

The gDIH will operate as non-profit legal entity in Kenya and will be fully Kenyan-owned.

Also, to note is that any funding for the gDIH will ONLY go to it once it is registered as a non-profit entity or if need be, only through the non-commercial entities that are part of the consortium that will operate it.

IV. Green Digital Innovation Hub Objectives

The overall objective of the consortium is to establish and run a green digital innovation hub in Kenya that will support the following key four pillars:

1. Access to Finance
2. Innovation & Ecosystem Building
3. Test Before Invest/Testing Facilities
4. Skills & Training

The gDIH must ensure its services are accessible to all MSMEs in Kenya, regardless of their location.

V. Green Digital Innovation Hub Scope

The consortium will be responsible for the establishment and operation of the green digital innovation hub. The Kenyan gDIH will offer a range of proposed 18 services to MSMEs, including:

1. **Test Before Invest:** The gDIH will facilitate the **development of digital and green maturity tools to help MSMEs assess their needs and challenges throughout their value chain.** It will provide **access to technology resources, testing, experimentation, piloting, and demonstration facilities.** The gDIH will promote **knowledge sharing and technology transfer** via collaborations with test centres/facilities and ensure **regulatory compliance.**
2. **Skills Development and Training:** The gDIH will **offer skilling in green and digital-enabling technologies,** as well as **promote the use of digital technologies to support Agriculture, ICT, and Energy.** It will provide **ESG leadership trainings, executive trainings, and trainings on certifications and standards,** among others.
3. **Access to Finance and Investment Opportunities:** The gDIH will **provide support in finding and securing adequate financing options** for the implementation of digital and green technologies. It will **organize curated matchmaking events** with financial service providers, investors, and other funding opportunities, as well as provide access to **carbon credits, government incentives, and subsidies.**
4. **Innovation and Ecosystem Development:** The gDIH will **organize events and workshops to facilitate networking and collaboration** among its stakeholders and



members. It will perform **stakeholder and services mapping**, **establish linkages with other hubs, labs, and research centres for open sustainable innovation**, conduct **hackathons/makerthons**, and **provide acceleration and incubation support**. Additionally, it will provide **advocacy and policy support**, as well as promote **knowledge sharing and technology transfer** through potential partners and collaborators such as AEDIBNET, Consortium, ENRICH, STEINBEIS, among others.

The gDIH will be located in Nairobi but accessible to all MSMEs in Kenya, regardless of their location. The hub will leverage digital technologies to ensure that MSMEs can access its services anywhere in the country. The gDIH will also partner with other organisations, including intermediaries, universities, incubators, accelerators, and other ecosystem stakeholders, to expand its reach and impact. Moreover, it will collaborate with stakeholders beyond its borders, including the European DIHs as well as the African DIH funded under the AEDIB|NET initiative.

Sectors and technologies with high impact on the green and digital transformation (twin transition) and, simultaneously, high importance to the Kenyan economy have been selected as a focus for the gDIH. The sectors include **Agriculture, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Energy**, while the technology focus has been set to **Automation (AI, IoT/Sensor Networks), Cyber/IT Security and Cloud Computing. Knowledge of Smart Cities is also required.**

VI. Submission Requirements

Interested consortia are required to submit a proposal that includes the following information:

1. A detailed description of the proposed Green Digital Innovation Hub, including its governance structure, objectives, services, target beneficiaries, and expected outcomes.
2. A description of the consortium's composition, roles and responsibilities of each partner, their relevant experience, and expertise in the green tech sector that can be leveraged to establish and operate the Hub.
3. A work plan and timeline for the establishment and operation of the hub.
4. A list of key stakeholders that the consortium plans to engage with, including government agencies, industry partners, and academic institutions.
5. A description of the consortium's approach to addressing the selection criteria listed below in section IX.
6. A detailed budget for the establishment and operation of the Green Digital Innovation Hub, including funding sources and a sustainability plan.
7. A description of the expected impact of the Hub on the development of the green digital economy in Kenya.

8. A monitoring and evaluation plan to measure the impact and effectiveness of the Green Digital Innovation Hub.
9. Any additional information that the consortium believes is relevant to the proposal.

VII. Eligibility

Applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. Applicants must be registered entities under the laws of Kenya and be Kenyan-owned.
2. Applicants must demonstrate their ability to address the four key pillars: Skills & Training; Innovation & Ecosystem Building; Test Before Invest; and Access to Finance.
3. Applicants must demonstrate their experience and ability to address the gDIH's focus sectors: Agriculture, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), and Energy.
4. Applicants must demonstrate their experience and ability to handle the gDIH's focus technological sectors: Automation (AI, IoT/Sensor Networks), Cyber/IT Security, and Cloud Computing. Smart cities are also of importance.
5. Eligible consortia should be composed of at least three organizations, including:
 - i. A lead organization that will be responsible for the overall management and coordination of the Green Digital Innovation Hub.
 - ii. A technology partner that will provide expertise in digital technologies and innovation.
 - iii. An environmental, green, or sustainability partner that will provide expertise in green innovation and entrepreneurship.

At least one of the three organizations must be a non-profit / non-commercial entity.

6. The applicants must demonstrate how they will ensure the accessibility of gDIH services to MSMEs across the entire country.
7. The applicants should demonstrate the impact and traction of their activities relevant to running a gDIH successfully.
8. The applicants should prove scalability and sustainability of their activities in supporting start-ups and MSMEs in their innovation cycle.
9. Applicants supporting youth, women start-ups, and MSMEs are encouraged to apply.



10. Applicants **must not be GIZ Staff, GFA Staff, or named SKIIVE Project Partners.**

VIII. Application Selection

- The call for proposals (CfP) for the Green Digital Innovation Hub (gDIH) will be open from 19th May 2023 to 16th June 2023. Applications submitted after the deadline will not be evaluated.
- Information sessions regarding the CfP will be conducted in May and June 2023.
- Evaluation and shortlisting of proposals will be conducted between 17th June to the 23rd of June 2023.
- Shortlisted applicants will be notified by 23rd June 2023. The final selection and announcement of the winning consortium will be made by 26th June 2023.
- The winning consortium will be supported to go on a DIH Study Trip in Europe from the 10th-21st July 2023 (ensure that the 3 representatives have valid passports at time of application)
- Thereafter, GFA will further support the successful consortium in developing a full business plan, registering a non-profit operating vehicle and undergoing capacity building activities.
- The establishment and operation of the Green Digital Innovation Hub will commence in December 2023.
- The applicants will be contacted solely via email regarding their application throughout the entire process via official GFA email, skiive@gfa-group.de.
- **Administrative Review:** All proposals will be reviewed to determine their eligibility and ensure that they meet the submission requirements and are complete.
- Applications that do not meet all or some of the eligibility criteria will not be accepted.
- **Evaluation of Proposals:** All proposals will be evaluated by an independent jury composed of experts from relevant fields. The jury will review the proposals based on the selection criteria outlined under Section IX and assign scores to each proposal.
- **Shortlisting:** The top three proposals will be shortlisted based on their total scores.
- **Due Diligence:** The shortlisted consortia will be subject to due diligence, which may include interviews with key personnel, verification of financial information, and other checks as necessary.
- **Final Selection:** The consortium with the highest score after due diligence will be selected to establish and operate the gDIH.

- **Notification:** All consortia that submit proposals will be notified of the outcome of the evaluation process by 26th June 2023. The successful consortium will be notified in writing and invited to commence negotiations with the relevant parties.

Applicants will receive an official response from GFA Consulting Group via email (skiive@gfa-group.de) regarding the status of their application. Successful applicants will receive an email outlining the next steps, while unsuccessful applications will receive a regret email.

- The decision of the jury will be final, and no correspondence will be entered into regarding the outcome of the evaluation process.

IX. Selection Criteria

To ensure that we select the most qualified consortium, we have developed a scoring criterion based on the recommendations provided. The following criteria will be used to evaluate proposals:

- **Track Record:** The consortium should have a convincing track record regarding green digital innovation and strong partnerships with key stakeholders from industry, government, and academia. (20 points)
- **Infrastructure and Networks:** The consortium should build on existing infrastructures and networks, connect with related stakeholders, find synergies and complementarities, and avoid duplication of efforts. (20 points)
- **Alignment with Government Strategies:** The consortium should align with government strategies and link up with innovation agencies and intermediaries to ensure broad reach. (10 points)
- **Diversity of Expertise:** The consortium should include complementary partnerships. It should have a diverse set of experts with relevant skills and experience in areas such as green technology, digital innovation, and sustainable business practices. (20 points)
- **Sectoral Focus:** Experience in these sectors: Agriculture, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Energy (10 points)
- **Technological Focus:** The consortium should have experience/interest in Automation (AI, IoT/Sensor Networks), Cyber/IT Security and Cloud Computing. Smart cities are also of importance. (10 points)
- **Financial Capacity:** The consortium should have a solid financial foundation and the ability to secure funding for the project. (10 points)
- **Vision and Goals:** The consortium should have a clear and shared vision and goals for the green digital innovation hub that align with the overall strategy of the project. (10 points)
- **Geographical Presence:** A diverse geographical presence of the partners in the consortium can provide a wider perspective and increase the chances of success. This includes its potential impact on local communities, regional economies, and global markets. (10 points)
- **Kenyan Ownership:** The consortium should be Kenyan-owned, bearing in mind the face of Kenya (e.g ethnic diversity, regional balance). (20 points)
- **Future Scalability and Sustainability:** The consortium should have a plan for future scalability and sustainability of the gDIH. This includes considerations such as cost-effectiveness, resource efficiency, and social impact. (10 points)



- **Traction** refers to the level of customer adoption and engagement with the project, as well as the degree to which it has achieved its goals and objectives. This can be measured by metrics such as revenue, customer acquisition, and user engagement. (10 points).
- **Conflict of Interest:** Conflict of Interest will be avoided by excluding GIZ Staff, GFA Staff, Named SKIIVE Project Partners from bidding. Jury Members must not be from bidding organizations/entities. (10 points)

X. Privacy Policy

GFA Consulting Group will use the personal information provided solely for the purpose of this call for proposal application and will not use it for any other purposes without the applicant's explicit consent.

XI. Additional Information

Termination: GIZ reserves the right to terminate the agreement with the selected consortium at any time, subject to agreed-upon termination clauses.

GFA Consulting Group reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received, and to terminate or modify the selection process at any stage without incurring any liability to the applicants.

Conflict Resolution: Any disputes arising from this call for proposal or the establishment and operation of the gDIH will be resolved through mediation or arbitration.

XII. Contact Details

For further information and clarifications, interested consortia can contact:

Sylvia Mukasa

Digital Innovation Hub Expert,

GIZ-DTC-SKIIVE Project,

Email: Sylvia.Mukasa@gfa-group.de

XIII. Annexes

Two annexes included:



1. Call for Proposal Form to be completed by the applicants.
2. Budget Template to be completed by the applicants.