



ECOWAS COMMISSION  
COMMISSION DE LA CEDEAO  
COMISSÃO DA CEDEAO

## Terms of Reference

### **Engagement of a Consultant to Develop an Online Visa Application Platform for Migrants from Third Countries Entering the ECOWAS region**

#### **A. Background**

- 1) The ECOWAS Region is a vast territory with a large percentage of its citizens migrating mainly within the region. Mobility of citizens within the ECOWAS region also constitutes an essential component of regional construction, which itself is a prerequisite for a successful integration of the West African economy into globalization and the implementation of various international economic agreements. In tandem with the desire to create a borderless regional space, the liberation of mobility of persons within the region took effect officially with the adoption of the flagship three-phased Protocol of Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment in 1979, 1986 and 1990 respectively.
- 2) The adoption of a Schengen-type single visa system (ECOVISA) by the Authority of the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government in 2011 aims to boost the tourism drive and stimulate economic activities within the region. It is also geared towards alleviating the difficulties encountered by foreign visitors, tourists, investors when they plan to travel within the Community area.
- 3) In view of the need to accelerate the implementation process, the Authority of ECOWAS Heads of State and Government mandated the ECOWAS Commission to develop the modalities for the smooth implementation of the ECOVISA. In realization of this mandate, meetings were held with stakeholders and critical steps were taken towards this objective.
- 4) On the modalities for the implementation of the ECOVISA, the Sectoral Ministers endorsed the following:

- a. a cost of \$120 (one hundred and twenty dollars) for adults 18 years old and above, \$60 (sixty dollars) for minors within the ages of 6 – 17years, and No Cost for children 5years old and below. This cost applies to a Single-Entry Visa with a validity period of 90 days.
  - b. For Citizens of the African Union, the meeting recommended the cost of \$40 (forty dollars) for adults, \$20 (twenty dollars) for minors within the ages of 6-17 years, and No Cost for children 5 years old and below. This cost applies to a Single-Entry Visa with a validity period of 90 days.
  - c. The Meeting recommended the use of ECOBANK and its correspondence to manage transactions related to ECOVISA considering its operations is widespread in all fifteen (15) ECOWAS Countries.
  - d. With regards to the methods of payment, the meeting recommended online and onsite payment methods and the use of United States Dollars (US\$) as the standard currency for payment.
  - e. The validity of the ECOVISA should be for a renewable period of 90 days.
- 5) It is against this background that the Commission wishes to recruit the services of a Consultant to develop an Online ECOVISA Application Platform for Migrants from Third Countries (citizens of countries outside the ECOWAS Region) who wish to enter the ECOWAS region.

## **B. Objective of the Assignment**

- 6) The objective of the assignment is to develop an Online ECOVISA Application Platform for Migrants from Third Countries entering the ECOWAS region.
- 7) Specifically, this involves:
  - a. The design and implementation of a user-friendly online visa application platform (ECOVISA) for third-country migrants.
  - b. Ensuring the system aligns with international standards and ECOWAS policies.
  - c. Enhancing security, efficiency, and accessibility in the visa application process.

## **C. Scope of Work**

- 8) This assignment will cover the ECOWAS Member States.

- 9) This assignment will require (1) Analysis of existing visa application systems and identification of key features for ECOVISA; (2) Development of a comprehensive digital platform for visa application, processing, and issuance; (3) Integration of security features and data protection measures; and (4) Collaboration with ECOWAS Member States for system integration.

#### **D. Deliverables**

- 10) This assignment has the following deliverables:
  - a. A fully functional online visa application platform.
  - b. Detailed documentation and user guides for the platform.
  - c. Training modules for ECOWAS Immigration Officials.
  - d. A report on the implementation process and recommendations for future enhancements.
  - e. All documents are to be submitted in electronic editable format.

#### **E. Supervision Arrangement**

- 11) The Consultant will work under the supervision of the ECOWAS Director of Free Movement of Persons and Migration, who has oversight over the delivery of this assignment.

#### **F. Key Stages**

- 12) The Consultant is strongly advised to consider the following key stages timelines during the development for the ECOVISA online visa application platform:
  - a. Requirements Gathering and Analysis
  - b. System Design and Planning
  - c. Development Phase
  - d. Testing Phase
  - e. Deployment and Training
  - f. Post-Deployment Review and Maintenance

#### **G. The Consultancy Duration**

- 13) The consultancy is for a period of **4 months** from start to finish, from the date of the signing of the contract between the Consultant and the ECOWAS Commission.

## **H. Payment**

- 14) Payment shall be based on accomplishment of specific assignments;
- 15) All payments shall be made paid upon presentation of actual supporting documents.

## **I. Qualifications and Experience Requirement**

### 16) Technical Qualifications:

- A bachelor's or master's degree in computer science, information technology, software engineering, or a related field.
- Proficiency in relevant programming languages (such as Java, Python, .NET), database management (like SQL, Oracle), and web development technologies (HTML, CSS, JavaScript).
- Knowledge in designing scalable, secure, and efficient system architectures, including cloud-based solutions.
- Understanding of cybersecurity principles, data protection laws, and experience in implementing secure online platforms, especially those handling sensitive personal data.
- Skills in designing user-friendly interfaces, considering the diverse user base, including those with limited tech proficiency.

### 17) Professional Experience:

- At least five (5) years' experience or more in developing platforms for visa processing, immigration, or similar government-related systems.
- Proven ability to manage large-scale IT projects, including timelines, budgets, and cross-functional teams.
- Experience Working with Governments or International Bodies: Familiarity with bureaucratic processes, legal compliance, and working in a multi-stakeholder environment.
- Understanding of ECOWAS Regulations and Practices: Knowledge of ECOWAS policies, regional dynamics, and legal frameworks regarding immigration and data handling.

### 18) Additional Skills and Competencies:

- Proficiency in English and French.
- Ability to effectively communicate technical concepts to non-technical stakeholders and collaborate with various teams.

- Creative thinking and problem-solving abilities to address unique challenges in the project.
- Capability to adapt to changing project requirements and environments.
- Knowledge of ECOWAS and its Member States will be an added advantage.

## **J. Application and Selection Procedure**

- 19) Interested Consultants who meet the above-listed requirement are invited to address their expression of interest to the **ECOWAS Commission, Directorate of General Administration, Attention: Head of Procurement, Procurement Division, Plot 101, Yakubu Gowon Crescent, Asokoro District, Abuja, Nigeria**, using the subject line *“Engagement of a Consultant to Develop an Online Visa Application Platform for Migrants from Third Countries Entering the ECOWAS region”* and to send same to the email addresses: [ikkamara@ecowas.int](mailto:ikkamara@ecowas.int) with copy to [sbangoura@ecowas.int](mailto:sbangoura@ecowas.int), [procurement@ecowas.int](mailto:procurement@ecowas.int), [asiaw-boateng@ecowas.int](mailto:asiaw-boateng@ecowas.int), and [oajugwo@ecowas.int](mailto:oajugwo@ecowas.int).

**Please note that only applications that meet the requirement will be accepted and only those shortlisted will be contacted.**