



## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF  
AN ENTERPRISE INTRANET AND DIGITAL WORKPLACE FIRM TO REVIEW,  
IMPROVE, DEVELOP, DEPLOY AND INSTALL A HIGHLY AVAILABLE ECOWAS  
INTRANET PLATFORM**

**Date: May 2026**

# **ECOWAS INTRANET PLATFORM INFRASTRUCTURE**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

ECOWAS seeks to engage a firm (Enterprise Intranet and Digital Workplace Specialist) to deliver a modern intranet platform that strengthens internal collaboration, institutional communication, knowledge sharing, file management and the digitization of administrative processes, while enabling controlled access for approved third parties where required. The consultancy will be implemented over 70 working days distributed across six (6) consecutive months. The firm will review the current situation, define requirements and architecture, configure/develop and deploy the solution, and hand over documentation and training to designated ECOWAS staff. The deployment shall be progressive, beginning with batch 1 covering part of the Commission and selected Organs/Bodies, before extension to the remaining entities. The target solution shall be highly available and built on a load-balanced, distributed architecture leveraging ECOWAS on-premises servers at the Commission Headquarters and cloud-based servers. It shall also provide offline file synchronization, embedded workflow automation and embedded AI capabilities to facilitate usage and exploitation of the intranet by ECOWAS staff and authorized third parties.

## **I. BACKGROUND**

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission and its Organs/Bodies require a modern enterprise intranet to support internal communication, collaboration, knowledge sharing, controlled file management and service delivery across multiple institutions and locations. As a regional public institution, ECOWAS manages a large volume of information, working documents and administrative interactions that require secure, accessible and well-governed digital workspaces.

ECOWAS seeks to move away from fragmented information silos, manual administrative procedures and limited cross-institutional visibility by implementing an integrated intranet platform. The future solution should support progressive onboarding, starting with batch 1 comprising part of the Commission and selected Organs/Bodies, and later scaling to the remaining entities. The solution should also provide users with offline access to synchronized files and continuity of service through a resilient hybrid deployment model.

To meet these needs, ECOWAS plans to implement a dedicated intranet and digital workplace platform embedding collaboration tools, file synchronization, workflow automation and AI-assisted services, and seeks specialized expertise to deliver the solution within a defined timeframe and level of effort.

## **II. OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

The objective of this consultancy is to review and strengthen ECOWAS intranet and digital workplace practices and to implement (develop/configure, deploy and install) a highly available enterprise intranet platform that supports phased deployment, secure collaboration, synchronized user file spaces, workflow-based digitization of administrative processes and embedded AI services for ECOWAS staff and authorized third parties.

### **III. EXPECTED PROJECT RESULTS**

- A validated assessment of the current intranet, collaboration, file-sharing and administrative-process environment, including readiness for batch 1 deployment across selected Commission entities and Organs/Bodies.
- A requirements and target architecture package covering information architecture, user roles, security, high-availability hybrid deployment, offline synchronization, workflow automation, AI use cases and rollout principles.
- A configured and operational intranet platform in staging and phase-1 production, with load balancing, distributed on-premises/cloud components, monitoring and documented operating procedures.
- A first-batch deployment completed for selected users and entities, including collaboration spaces, knowledge repositories, search, synchronized file areas and a validated support model for later rollout.
- Priority administrative processes digitized through an embedded workflow engine with electronic forms, approvals, notifications, escalation paths and audit trails.
- Embedded AI capabilities implemented and governed to improve search, navigation, content discovery and multilingual user assistance, together with training, handover and a roadmap for extension to remaining entities.

### **IV. SCOPE OF WORK, TYPE AND DURATION OF CONTRACT**

ECOWAS will offer a contract in accordance with its applicable rules and procedures. The contract duration is six (6) consecutive months, with a total level of effort of seventy (70) working days. Working days are not expected to be consecutive; the consultant will be mobilized according to an agreed work plan, with periods of higher intensity aligned to key milestones (assessment, architecture, configuration, workflow/AI build, batch 1 deployment and handover). The implementation shall follow a progressive rollout approach, with batch 1 deployed first and subsequent extension prepared for the remaining Commission entities and Organs/Bodies.

#### **A. Scope of Work (ECOWAS Intranet Platform)**

The Enterprise Intranet and Digital Workplace firm will perform the tasks below, strictly limited to the ECOWAS intranet platform review, design, configuration, phased deployment and handover.

- Conduct an inception phase (kick-off, stakeholder mapping across the Commission and Organs/Bodies, confirmation of batch 1 scope, deliverables and schedule).
- Review the existing intranet/collaboration environment, document and file-sharing practices, administrative processes, identity/access arrangements and connectivity/storage landscape, and identify gaps, constraints and readiness factors relevant to deployment.
- Define functional and technical requirements for the intranet platform, including user roles, information architecture, multilingual content, search, collaboration spaces, file management, offline synchronization, workflow automation, AI use cases, approved external access, audit and governance.
- Design the target solution architecture, including a load balancer front-end, distributed application components, data/storage services, security controls, backup/monitoring, and a

hybrid deployment leveraging ECOWAS on-premises servers at the Commission Headquarters together with cloud-based servers.

- Prepare the progressive rollout model and deployment plan, identifying batch 1 participants, cutover approach, support arrangements and the extension path to the remaining Commission entities and Organs/Bodies.
- Develop/configure the intranet platform, including departmental/organizational spaces, document libraries, news and communication features, enterprise search, permissions, templates, dashboards and reporting.
- Configure and test secure offline file support so that users' designated desktop folders automatically synchronize with their intranet-based spaces, with appropriate synchronization policies, conflict management and recovery procedures.
- Configure the embedded workflow engine and digitize prioritized administrative processes through electronic forms, routing, approvals, notifications, escalation rules, SLA tracking and audit trails.
- Implement and configure embedded AI capabilities - such as intelligent search, conversational assistance, summarization, content recommendations and multilingual guidance - in line with ECOWAS governance, privacy and access-control requirements.
- Deploy the solution in staging and then in phase-1 production; execute testing, user acceptance, performance and failover validation, documentation, training, handover and post-go-live support.

#### **B. Minimum Solution Requirements and Deployment Principles**

The ECOWAS intranet solution shall, at minimum, satisfy the following functional and technical requirements, subject to ECOWAS validation and available infrastructure constraints:

- Progressive deployment: the implementation shall start with batch 1 covering part of the Commission and selected Organs/Bodies, with a documented model and scalable design for rollout to the remaining entities.
- High availability and distributed hybrid architecture: the solution shall include a load balancer up-front, redundant application services and an architecture leveraging both ECOWAS on-premises servers at the Commission HQ and cloud-based servers, with appropriate failover, backup, monitoring and continuity mechanisms.
- Offline collaboration and file synchronization: users' designated desktop folders shall automatically synchronize with their intranet-based spaces, with offline access to synchronized content, resumable sync, quota/policy controls and conflict-resolution rules.
- Workflow digitization: a powerful and flexible workflow engine shall be embedded in the intranet to support administrative forms, routing, approvals, escalations, notifications, dashboards, audit logs and document attachments.
- Embedded AI services: the intranet shall provide a secure AI assistant and related AI-enabled capabilities to support search, navigation, knowledge discovery, summarization, FAQs and multilingual assistance for ECOWAS staff and authorized third parties, with clear governance and human-oversight controls.
- Security and access control alignment: the solution shall enforce role-based access control, directory/identity integration where available, audit logging, data classification and segregation of internal, restricted and authorized third-party spaces.

### C. Out of Scope (Role Boundaries)

To maintain clear role boundaries, the following are explicitly out of scope for this consultancy, except as needed for coordination and requirements definition:

- Procurement of additional hardware, network equipment, cloud subscriptions or end-user devices beyond the specifications, advisory inputs and deployment guidance required under this consultancy.
- Reengineering of all enterprise business systems or custom application development unrelated to the core intranet, workflow, file-synchronization and AI capabilities defined under this ToR.
- Enterprise-wide legacy content cleansing, mass document digitization or backfile migration beyond the agreed initial onboarding, templates and phase-1 content-loading activities.
- Broader organization-wide change management beyond the adoption support, user training and rollout assistance necessary for successful implementation of this assignment.

### D. Timeline and Work Schedule (70 Working Days Across 6 Months)

The 70 working days will be distributed across six consecutive months. The schedule below is indicative and will be finalized in the inception report. Mobilization may be non-consecutive, but the firm is expected to remain available for planned workshops, reviews, testing windows, deployment activities and milestone-based support for batch 1 implementation and scale-out planning.

| Month   | Estimated LOE (days) | Primary focus                                                           |
|---------|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Month 1 | 10                   | Kick-off, assessment, batch 1 scoping and inception report              |
| Month 2 | 12                   | Requirements, target architecture and phased rollout design             |
| Month 3 | 14                   | Platform configuration, hybrid HA setup and staging deployment          |
| Month 4 | 14                   | Workflow/AI/file sync configuration, integration and testing            |
| Month 5 | 10                   | UAT support, first-batch production deployment and training             |
| Month 6 | 10                   | Stabilization support, optimization, scale-out roadmap and final report |

### V. PROJECT SUPERVISION AND MONITORING

The Firm will work under the overall supervision of the ECOWAS Directorates of Communication and ITS designated as the business owner for the intranet and digital workplace initiative, with technical coordination from the ECOWAS Community Computer Centre and relevant ICT focal points from participating Commission Directorates and Organs/Bodies. The firm will provide progress updates at least monthly and at each milestone review meeting.

- Weekly coordination (as required) during active work periods to validate tasks, decisions and batch 1 deployment readiness, and remove blockers.
- Monthly progress reports (minimum one per month) summarizing work completed, risks/issues, decisions required and next steps.

- Formal acceptance of deliverables by the designated ECOWAS focal point(s) based on the criteria listed in Section VII.

## **VI. PROFILE AND QUALIFICATIONS OF THE TEAM**

Bidders are required to provide documentary evidence demonstrating full compliance with the mandatory minimum qualifications outlined below. Proposals failing to meet any single criterion will be considered non-responsive and will be disqualified from further evaluation.

### **A. Firm/Consortium Experience and Institutional Capacity (Mandatory Minimums)**

The bidding entity (whether a single firm or a consortium/JV) must furnish proof of the following institutional experience and capabilities. Where specified, experience may be demonstrated by the proposed Team Leader on behalf of the firm/consortium.

1. Experience with Regional Hosting and Operations:
  - Must provide evidence of at least two (2) distinct hosting service contracts handled by the firm/consortium and/or its proposed Team Leader for the ECOWAS Commission or one of its Specialized Agencies within the last three (3) years.
2. Expertise in ECOWAS-Compliant Digital Platforms:
  - Must demonstrate the successful production of at least three (3) corporate portals within the last four (4) years by the firm/consortium and/or its proposed Team Leader. Of these, a minimum of two (2) must have been for the ECOWAS Commission or an ECOWAS Specialized Agency, with verifiable, strict adherence to the official ECOWAS graphic charter.
3. Breadth of Experience with International Organizations:
  - The firm/consortium and/or its proposed Team Leader must demonstrate a cumulative total of at least fourteen (14) distinct ICT-based interventions carried out for similar organizations. "Similar organizations" are defined as Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Multilateral Development Banks, UN Agencies, or other international organizations comprising at least seven (7) member states.
4. Proven Capability in Delivering Integrated Digital Ecosystems:
  - Must provide evidence of having successfully designed and deployed at least two (2) full digital ecosystems for the ECOWAS Commission or any of its organs by the firm/consortium and/or its proposed Team Leader. A "digital ecosystem" is defined as a solution comprising at least three (3) distinct but interconnected functional components (e.g., a public portal, a restricted-access database, and an electronic workflow system). This experience must be attributable to the firm/consortium or its proposed Team Leader.
5. Experience with AU-REC Subsidiary Frameworks:
  - Must demonstrate experience with at least two (2) ICT systems developed at the continental level, by the firm/consortium and/or its proposed Team Leader, that explicitly follow the principle of subsidiarity between the African Union (AU) and its RECs. Crucially, at least one (1) of these interventions must have involved the full

localization and adaptation of a system from the AU level specifically to the ECOWAS context.

#### **B. Proposed Team Composition and Qualifications (Non-Negotiable)**

The proposal must feature a core team of named experts. The qualifications listed below are mandatory minimums for the specified roles. The demonstrated experience of the Team Leader is considered central to the evaluation of the bidder's overall capability.

| Role                                          | Mandatory Minimum Profile & Qualifications                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Team Leader / Senior Enterprise Architect     | A named individual with a minimum of 15 years of documented experience personally leading the architecture and delivery of systems for governmental and multilateral clients. Must provide proof of direct, hands-on expertise in REST/API integration, database management (PostgreSQL/MySQL), security hardening, and delivering structured user training for at least three (3) distinct African RECs or continental bodies. The Team Leader's profile must substantially overlap with the fulfillment of the requirements in Section 4.1. |
| Webmaster & Web Solutions Consultant          | Must have demonstrable, hands-on experience in the secure administration of multilingual CMS platforms and access-restricted document portals for at least two (2) major regional or continental institutions in Africa.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Web & eForms Developer / UX-UI Specialist     | Must provide a portfolio showcasing direct involvement in developing and deploying structured eForms and institutional workflow digitization projects for at least two (2) distinct multilateral or governmental clients.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Workspace, Messaging & IT Security Specialist | Must provide verifiable evidence of having configured and Workspace environments, including WAF and email security (SPF/DKIM/DMARC), for at least two (2) institutional clients (UN Agency, MDB, or REC).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

#### **VII. DELIVERABLES, LANGUAGE, FORMAT AND QUANTITY**

Deliverables must be concrete, measurable and verifiable. Unless otherwise specified, reports and key documentation shall be provided in English and French, in editable formats (Word/Excel/Visio or equivalent) and PDF for final versions. System artefacts (configuration files, scripts, workflow definitions, synchronization settings, AI configuration/governance artefacts and integration modules) shall be provided in reusable form and handed over to ECOWAS.

## A. Deliverables and Acceptance Criteria

| # | Deliverable                                                                                                                                               | Due (indicative) | Est. LOE (days) | Acceptance criteria (examples)                                                                               |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Inception report and detailed phase-based work plan (including batch 1 scope, risks and stakeholder map)                                                  | End of Month 1   | 4               | Approved by ECOWAS focal point; includes milestones, batch 1 scope, risk register and reporting plan         |
| 2 | Assessment report: current intranet/collaboration environment, admin-process baseline, gap analysis and batch 1 readiness                                 | End of Month 1   | 6               | Clear baseline and issues list; validated with stakeholders; prioritized recommendations                     |
| 3 | Requirements, target architecture and rollout strategy package (information architecture, security model, HA hybrid topology, batch 1 and scale-out plan) | End of Month 2   | 8               | Requirements are testable; architecture covers HA, sync, workflows, AI and phased rollout; approval recorded |
| 4 | Solution design and build specification (site structure, file-sync model, workflow and AI configuration, test strategy)                                   | End of Month 2   | 6               | Design approach validated; build/test specifications documented and usable by ECOWAS                         |
| 5 | Configured intranet platform in staging (spaces, roles, search, dashboards, templates and load-balanced components)                                       | End of Month 3   | 14              | Staging platform accessible; core capabilities demonstrable; configuration and test checklist executed       |
| 6 | Workflow and offline sync package (configured admin processes, forms, sync policies/clients and validation report)                                        | End of Month 4   | 10              | Selected workflows functional; desktop folder sync to intranet spaces validated; test results documented     |

| # | Deliverable                                                                                                                                    | Due (indicative) | Est. LOE (days) | Acceptance criteria (examples)                                                                                                                 |
|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7 | Embedded AI and knowledge assistance package (AI use cases, configuration, governance and test results)                                        | End of Month 4-5 | 6               | AI capabilities available to authorized users; guardrails documented; agreed scenarios passed                                                  |
| 8 | Phase-1 production deployment and handover package (go-live for batch 1, installation/configuration notes, guides, SOPs and training sessions) | End of Month 5   | 10              | Phase-1 production operational; at least two training sessions delivered; documentation accepted                                               |
| 9 | Post-deployment support, optimization and final rollout roadmap/report                                                                         | End of Month 6   | 6               | Stabilization support provided; scale-out roadmap for remaining entities delivered; final report submitted within 15 calendar days of end date |

#### **B. Performance Evaluation (During Implementation)**

- Timely delivery of agreed milestones and quality of deliverables as per acceptance criteria.
- Functional operation of the phase-1 intranet platform, including first-batch onboarding and high-availability/hybrid deployment requirements.
- Successful validation of offline file synchronization, workflow digitization and embedded AI capabilities against agreed use cases and test scenarios.
- Quality and completeness of documentation, security/governance approach and effectiveness of knowledge transfer/training.
- Responsiveness to feedback and issue resolution during staging/UAT, first-batch go-live and stabilization support.

### **VIII. CONFIDENTIALITY**

The consultant (firm) shall observe strict confidentiality regarding all information accessed or produced in the context of this assignment. No project information, datasets, credentials, documents, workflow definitions, AI configuration details or system details may be disclosed to third parties or reproduced/distributed without prior written authorization from ECOWAS. Failure to comply may result in immediate termination of the contract. This confidentiality obligation continues after completion of the assignment.

## **IX. OWNERSHIP AND RIGHTS**

All deliverables produced under this consultancy - including documentation, configurations, scripts, templates, workflows, AI configuration/governance artefacts, training materials and other implementation outputs - shall be the property of ECOWAS. The firm shall provide ECOWAS with the necessary materials to operate, extend and maintain the implemented solution within ECOWAS governance arrangements.

## **X. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL**

Interested firms or consortiums are invited to submit a complete proposal, structured precisely as described below. The proposal must be divided into two distinct, separately submitted components: a Technical Proposal and a Financial Proposal. Failure to adhere to this structure or to provide any of the mandatory documentation will result in the immediate disqualification of the proposal.

### **A. Technical Proposal**

The Technical Proposal must contain the following sections in the order specified. All claims made in response to the qualifications outlined in Section 4 must be substantiated with the required proof, compiled in a clearly labeled "Appendix of Verifiable Proof".

1. Cover Letter: A formal letter, signed by an authorized representative of the bidding entity, confirming the proposal's validity for a period of 120 days.
2. Bidder's Profile and Compliance Matrix:
  - A brief presentation of the bidding firm or consortium members.
  - A detailed compliance matrix that explicitly maps each requirement from Sections 4.1 and 4.2 to the specific evidence provided in the proposal and its appendix. Each claim must reference the corresponding appendix page number.
3. Detailed Technical Offer:
  - A comprehensive description of the proposed methodology and approach for delivering the intranet.
  - A detailed work plan and implementation schedule, aligned to the 70-day/6-month project timeline, clearly indicating a phased rollout approach.
  - A narrative describing how the bidder's experience with similar systems, particularly the integrated digital ecosystems mentioned in Section 4.1.4, informs the proposed solution.
4. Team Composition and Qualifications:
  - A section presenting the proposed core team, including an organizational chart for the project.

- For each named team member, a detailed and signed Curriculum Vitae (CV) must be provided. Each CV must highlight experience directly relevant to the mandatory qualifications specified in Section 4.2.
  - Copies of all relevant diplomas and professional certifications for each proposed team member.
5. Appendix of Verifiable Proof: This appendix is the sole source for substantiating all experience claims. It must be organized and clearly labeled to correspond with the requirements in Section 4. The only acceptable forms of proof are:
- (a) Scanned copies of the first and last pages of the relevant contracts, clearly showing the client, the contract title/subject, and the signature page; OR
  - (b) A formal letter of good execution or a certificate of completion from the client, issued on the client's letterhead; OR
  - (c) Signed minutes of contract negotiations or project kickoff meetings that irrefutably link the bidder/Team Leader to the specified project.

No other form of proof (e.g., simple lists of projects, web links without contracts, self-declarations) will be considered.

#### **B. Financial Proposal**

The Financial Proposal must be submitted as a separate, sealed document, entirely independent of the Technical Proposal. It must contain:

- A detailed financial offer presented as a lump-sum fee, inclusive of all taxes, professional fees, and operational costs.
- A breakdown of the lump sum, detailing the level of effort (in person-days) for each proposed team member and the corresponding daily rates. The financial proposal must be structured in accordance with official ECOWAS procurement instructions.

## **XI. SELECTION AND EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Selection will be based on an evaluation of technical quality and relevant experience, in accordance with ECOWAS procurement procedures. The criteria below may be applied.

| <b>Criterion</b>        | <b>Description</b>                                                                                                                  | <b>Indicative weighting</b> |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Relevant qualifications | Education and professional certifications in enterprise intranet/digital workplace, workflow automation, cloud/AI or related fields | 20%                         |
| Relevant experience     | Proven track record implementing intranet/collaboration platforms, phased                                                           | 35%                         |

|                                     |                                                                                                                        |     |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
|                                     | rollouts, HA hybrid architectures, workflow and AI integration                                                         |     |
| Methodology and work plan           | Quality and feasibility of the proposed approach, including batch 1 deployment, scale-out strategy and 70-day schedule | 30% |
| References and demonstrated results | Quality of references for similar assignments and evidence of delivered outcomes                                       | 15% |

ECOWAS may request an interview and/or demonstration of similar work. Only technically responsive proposals may proceed to financial evaluation, as applicable under ECOWAS procedures.