

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

(INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING SERVICES)

Country: Federated States of Micronesia

FSM Skills and Employability Enhancement Project

Grant No.: D-9870

Assignment Title: Tracer Study & Employer Survey Design and Pilot for FSM High Schools

Reference No. (*as per Procurement Plan*): FM-NDOE-526575-CS-INDV

The National Department of Education (NDOE) received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the FSM Skills and Employability Enhancement Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services (“the Services”) include providing technical assistance to design and pilot a high school graduate tracer study and employer survey framework and tools for the SEE Project under the National Department of Education (NDOE).

The National Department of Education now invites eligible individuals (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services.

Under the direct supervision of the SEE Project Manager, the Consultant will be responsible for the following areas of work:

- Conduct a situational assessment of current graduate tracking, employer engagement, career guidance practices, and available labor market data.
- Design a high school graduate tracer study framework, including survey methodology, indicators, sampling approach, and data management tools suitable for the FSM context.
- Develop an employer survey framework, survey instruments, and sampling methodology aligned with the tracer study indicators.
- Build the capacity of NDOE, State Departments of Education, and school focal points through training and technical support on survey implementation, data analysis, and reporting.
- Support the pilot implementation of the tracer study in all four states, and employer survey in (a) selected state(s), analyze the findings, and recommend improvements for long-term sustainability.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment is annexed to this REOI *and* can be found at the FSM Department of Finance and Administration (DOFA) website’s Career Opportunities page and NDOE’s website, respectively at <https://dofa.gov.fm/opportunity/> and <https://www.national.doe.fm>.

Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services by submitting:

- **Cover letter**
- **Latest curriculum vitae/Resume** with description of experience in similar assignments, similar conditions, etc.)

Firms' staff may express interest through the employing firm for the assignment and, under such situation, only the experience and qualifications of individuals shall be considered in the selection process. The criteria for selecting the Consultant are:

Mandatory Requirements

- Master's degree in business administration, labor economics, human resources development/management, social science, or related fields. A Bachelor's degree in a relevant field, combined with at least 10 years of exceptional work experience related to the assignment, may be considered in lieu of a Master's degree.
- Minimum 7 years of experience in different types of labor market research (e.g., tracer study, employer surveys)
- Minimum 5 years of experience in facilitation and capacity-building training workshops on data collection, analysis and interpretation

Desirable Requirements

- Trained on data science
- Demonstrated experience working in Pacific Island Countries or other Small Island Developing States (SIDS).
- Good understanding of the FSM job market and skills development landscape

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraph 3.14, 3.16 and 3.17 of the World Bank's *Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers* Seventh Edition, September 2025 ("the Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours 8am to 5pm (local time). Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form with the latest CV/resume and work sample(s) to the address below by e-mail) **by 3pm on Monday, August 24, 2026 Pohnpei time.**

FSM National Department of Education
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TERMS OF REFERENCES

CONSULTING SERVICES

Tracer Study & Employer Survey Design and Pilot for FSM High Schools

Project Name	FSM Skills and Employability Enhancement Project
Grant Number	D-9870
Implementing Agency	FSM National Department of Education
Contract Name	Tracer Study & Employer Survey Design and Pilot for FSM High Schools
Contract Reference Number	FM-NDOE-526575-CS-INDV
Intended Start Date	September 2026

1. Background

The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) is committed to enhancing its vocational education offerings in high schools, particularly in response to the growing demand for skilled professionals in various industries. To support this effort, the National Department of Education (NDOE) is implementing the Skills and Employability Enhancement (SEE) Project, which focuses on developing occupational profiles, curricula, and apprenticeship programs aligned with industry needs. The project also seeks to build the capacity of educators, strengthen school-industry partnerships, and equip students with market-relevant skills to enhance their employability. Specifically, the SEE Project consists of the following three main components:

- **Component 1: Improving equitable access to vocational education and training.** The objective of this component is to ensure TVET access to all eligible youth, especially the poor and vulnerable youth, women, persons with disabilities, and geographically disadvantaged groups such as students or trainees from outer islands. The component aims to achieve this by expanding the availability of quality skills training while providing information, incentives, and support to increase participation of under-represented and disadvantaged groups in TVET.
- **Component 2: Improving the relevance and quality of TVET.** The objective of this component is to enhance the relevance and quality of training offered by TVET institutions by upgrading the training curricula and its standards; improving the quality of trainers; and making provisions for independent testing and certification of skills.
- **Component 3: Improving labor market information and employment services.** This component aims to establish capacity within the Government to provide labor market information and employment support services with a view to improve labor market outcomes among potential workers—including TVET graduates—in FSM. To this end, the activity will support schools and relevant Government units, and the SDOEs, in their efforts to match jobseekers with appropriate vacancies through comprehensive job search assistance.

Despite growing investment in career and technical education (CTE) courses, teacher training, job search assistance, and work-based learning placements, FSM currently has no formal system for tracking graduates' pathways or gathering employer feedback.

High schools and State Departments of Education (SDOEs) rely heavily on anecdotal evidence, making it difficult to measure:

- What proportion of students enter employment or further training
- Whether skills learned are relevant to the labor market
- How employers perceive the work readiness of graduates
- Which CTE programs are leading to stronger outcomes
- Gaps in employability and job search support

To support successful implementation of Project Component 3 (Improving labor market information and employment services), generating credible evidence is critical.

This consultancy focuses on designing a high school graduate tracer study, providing training, and piloting in a selected state(s). It will also develop a coordinated employer survey framework and sampling methodology, which NDOE and SDOEs can implement once the tracer study system and in-house capacity are established. Together, these tools will enable NDOE, SDOEs and schools to combine evidence from graduate, employer and school data to assess the outcomes of the new CTE programs introduced by the NDOE through the SEE Project. As the new programs are gradually rolled out from Grade 9 in SY 2026/27 to Grade 12 over the following four school year, the system will provide evidence to support continuous improvement of the curricula and program delivery. It will also contribute to establishing a sustainable graduate tracking and employer feedback system beyond the SEE Project.

2. Objective

The objective of this consultancy is to:

1. Design a high school graduate tracer study framework suitable for the FSM high context
2. Design an employer survey framework, survey instrument, and sampling methodology that are coordinated with and comparable to the tracer study indicators
3. Review and map school-level career guidance practices to identify how tracer findings can feed into existing or new career guidance and coaching programs
4. Develop tools, procedures, and data management systems that schools, SDOEs, relevant departments, and NDOE can implement annually, primarily to inform continuous improvements to CTE curricula and program delivery, and secondarily to strengthen career guidance and coaching programs
5. Build capacity of NDOE to administer and analyze tracer study data, while enabling SDOEs, schools and relevant departments to independently implement, supervise, analyze and sustain the tracer and employer surveys over time.
6. Assist in piloting the tracer study in all Performance Grant schools, and employer survey in selected states and high schools
7. Generate evidence to inform improvements to CTE programs, job search assistance, and employer engagement

3. Scope

The Consultant will carry out the following tasks:

Scope	Key Activities
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3.1 Situational assessment	• Review current practices for follow-up with graduates and engagement with employers • Map available data sources and gaps ○ Map school-level career guidance practices to identify how tracer findings can feed into existing or new career counseling and coaching programs ○ Review post-secondary education pathways available to FSM graduates (e.g., COM-FSM, overseas tertiary education, scholarships, and other training opportunities) ○ Review existing employer databases with relevant state agencies or associations to understand employer sampling frames • Identify existing employer networks created through work-based training, teacher training, and school partnerships • Assess key graduate destinations and migration flows (e.g., Guam, Hawaii, US mainland, military service) to identify challenges in tracking graduates who leave FSM • Review international tracer study and employer survey models relevant to island contexts
3.2 Tracer study framework development	• Define graduate cohorts to be traced (e.g., CTE completers, on-the-job participants, all school leavers) • Define a standardized core questionnaire and optional modules to ensure consistency across a core set of indicators • Propose sampling, frequency, timelines, and follow-up approaches • Create indicators related to employment, job search outcomes, further study, skills use, and satisfaction • Recommend mechanisms to update contact lists annually (e.g., schools, counselors, parent networks, and youth groups, scholarship programs, tertiary education institution, where feasible)
3.3 Employer survey framework development	• Identify employer groups relevant to FSM • Develop an employer feedback questionnaire aligned with tracer study indicators • Incorporate feedback on on-the-job or in-school youth apprenticeship programs (e.g., satisfaction, training quality, readiness of students, employer willingness to continue/expand placements) • Include measures on skills relevance, job performance, work readiness, training needs, and employer satisfaction • Establish procedures for administering surveys to employer partners • Propose employer recruitment strategies, including Chambers of Commerce, business groups, and public sector HR offices • Recommend incentives or recognition approaches to encourage employers to participate
3.4 Integration of Career Counseling SOP	• Review the Career Counseling SOP developed by NDOE • Align tracer study and employer survey indicators with the SOP, ensuring coherence between career guidance activities, student outcomes, and employer needs • Recommend adjustments to the Career Guidance SOP based on evidence generated from the pilot surveys
3.5 Tool development & small-scale testing	• Prepare survey instruments for both tracer and employer surveys • Develop data entry templates, coding guidelines, and analytic frameworks

	• Design mobile-friendly digital survey formats as an option • Develop a data governance and protection framework, including consent scripts, anonymization procedures, secure data storage protocols, among others • Conduct small-scale testing of the survey instruments and data collection procedures and refine the tools based on the results (prior to training) • Prepare a user-friendly operations manual for schools and SDOEs
3.6 Capacity Building	• Conduct training workshops for focal points on: ○ Tracer study template and methodology ○ Employer survey administration ○ Interviewing techniques ○ Data cleaning and analysis ○ Survey data interpretation ○ Report writing and visualization ○ Ethics and confidentiality
3.7 Pilot implementation	• Support all 4 states in piloting the tracer surveys and pilot the employer survey in at least one selected state • Provide remote and on-site troubleshooting during data collection • Analyze pilot data and prepare findings
3.8 Recommendations for national rollout	• Summarize pilot results, including challenges, response rates, and system readiness • Recommend improvements to methodology, tools and workflows • Provide a sustainability plan for annual implementation beyond the SEE Project

NOTE: A tracer study ideally tracks graduates 6 -12 months after graduation. However, since the SEE Project ends June 2027, the project will use a shorter (“early tracer”) follow-up window for the last cohort.

Therefore, proposed practical tracer schedule for FSM is as follows:

Cohort	Graduation	When to Trace
SY 23/24 graduates	May/June 2024	November 2026 – March 2027
SY 24/25 graduates	May/June 2025	November 2026 – March 2027
SY 25/26 graduates	May/June 2026	November 2026 – March 2027 (“early tracer”)

4. Deliverable and Tentative Timeline

No.	Deliverable	Travel to the FSM	Tentative Timeline	Payment Schedule
1	Inception report, including: • Workplan • Methodology • Stakeholder mapping • Proposed timeline	Not Required	Within 2 weeks after contract signing.	30%
2	Situational Analysis with recommendations for on trainee selection	Required	September - October 2026	15%
3	Tracer study framework tailored to FSM	Not Required	October - November 2026	30%

4	Employer survey framework aligned with tracer tools	Not Required	October - November 2026	
5	Survey instruments and manuals (e.g., questionnaires, protocols, templates)	Not Required	October - November 2026	
6	Training materials	Required	October - November 2026	5%
7	Delivery of workshops	Required	November 2026-March 2027	5%
8	Assist in piloting tracer study and employer survey report, including: • Graduate outcomes • Employer feedback • Triangulated analysis • Lessons learned	Required	November 2026-March 2027	5%
9	National rollout and Sustainability plan	Required	April 2027	5%
10	Final report with refined tools for long-term use	Not Required	April 2027	5%

5. Qualifications

5.1 Mandatory Requirements

- Master's degree in business administration, labor economics, human resources development/management, social science, or related fields. A Bachelor's degree in a relevant field, combined with at least 10 years of exceptional work experience related to the assignment, may be considered in lieu of a Master's degree.
- Minimum 7 years of experience in different types of labor market research (e.g., tracer study, employer surveys)
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5.2 Desirable Requirements

- Trained on data science
- Demonstrated experience working in Pacific Island Countries or other Small Island Developing States (SIDS).
- Good understanding of the FSM job market and skills development landscape

6. Reporting and Coordination

The consultant will work under the supervision of the SEE Project Manager and coordinate closely with:

- NDOE
- SDOEs
- High School focal points
- Other relevant department(s)

7. Duration and Level of Effort

This consultancy is expected to take 9 months, including data collection pilots in selected states

8. Location and Office Supplies

This position does not require the consultant to be based at the PIU. However, it will require regular face-to-face update meetings with the PIU and the NDOE.

For remote work, the consultant will be responsible for providing her/his own office space, computer, internet connection, and communication tools. The NDOE will provide access to training venues and field facilities necessary for activities undertaken in the field, but will not provide personal work devices.