REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

SELECTION OF AGENCIES TO BE THE TECHNICAL ROLLOUT PARTNER FOR CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR CLIMATE-RESILIENT AGRICULTURE (CoECRA)

Client:

Agriculture Skill Council of India

Unit No. 101, First Floor, Greenwoods Plaza, Block 'B' Greenwoods City, Sector - 45, Gurgaon Haryana-122009, India

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Letter of Invitation

RFP……

1. Agriculture Skill Council of India (ASCI) has proposed to set up a Centre of excellence (CoE) for Climate-Resilient Agriculture (CoECRA). ASCI (Client) has planned to engage an agency for rollout / operationalization of the CoE to build the programmatic and revenue stream leading to as the national reference institution for climate-resilience skilling at large scale, leveraging climate related employment opportunities for rural youth, women and agriculture graduates, taking up pilot initiative to generate scientific evidences to strengthen farmers resilience, farmer producer organizations and field-based institutions to manage climate risks.

2. The Client now invites proposals for engagement as rollout partner and provide the following consulting services (hereinafter called "Services"): for rollout / operationalization of the CoE to build the programmatic and revenue stream leading to as the national reference institution. More details on the Services are provided in the Terms of Reference.

3. This Request for Proposals (RFP) is open for all firms / agencies that possess the requisite qualifications and experience, including start-ups and young organisations whose proposed Key Experts bring the required depth of experience. Consortia of up to three entities may also apply (see Point 7 of the General Instructions).

4. A firm /agency will be selected through Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS), with technical and financial scores weighted 70:30 as set out in Section 5, and would be required to submit a Full Technical Proposal in a format as described in this RFP.

The RFP includes

Section 1 – About ASCI
Section 2 – Terms of Reference
Section 3 – CoE in Climate-Resilient Agriculture
Section 4 – Scope of Work
Section 5- Evaluation Criteria
Section 6 – Consultant Expertise
Section 7 – General Information

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Satender Arya,
Chief Executive Officer,
Agriculture Skill Council of India (ASCI)
Gurgaon

1) About the Organization - ASCI

Agriculture Skill Council of India (ASCI) is a Sector Skill Council for Agriculture and allied sector working under the aegis of Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and is an awarding body recognized by National Council of Vocational Education & Training (NCVET). ASCI is working towards capacity building by bridging gaps and upgrading skills of farmers, wage workers, self-employed agribusiness professional, extension workers etc. engaged in organized and unorganized segments of Agriculture & Allied sectors.

ASCI is actively working with different stakeholders in agriculture ecosystem for their capacity building and skill upgradation. Our key activities are Development on National Occupational Standards (NOS) and Labor Market Information System (LMIS), curriculum development, training of trainers and assessors, setting global best practices. ASCI has trained more than 1.5 million people Pan India in Agriculture & related segments through various government skilling schemes under various Ministries i.e. Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship; Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare; Ministry of Fisheries, Dairy and Animal Husbandry; Ministry of Rural Development; Ministry of Education and Ministry of Minority Affairs etc.

Indian agriculture is gradually evolving, changing its focus from subsistence agriculture to a profit-making enterprise wherein Agriculture and allied sector plays a crucial role as profit making, aids in value addition. The rapidly changing demand for more trained manpower for operation, management and maintenance which requires an institutional structure to support the rapidly evolving need for the industry, especially the skilling of human resources to effectively manage technological advances across the area within the sector to support the changing system. At the same time there are emerging challenges with respect to Climate Changes and related risks & shocks such as GHG emissions, heat-waves, cyclones, pest proliferation, sectoral impacts due to extreme climate events.

India's agri-food system already loses ≈ ₹ 1.5 lakh crore a year to climate shocks. Projections for 2025-30 indicate a further 40% escalation without decisive adaptation. Smallholders (86% of land holdings) remain underserved: fewer than one-third receive actionable advisories, and fewer than one in ten skilling initiatives integrate climate risk.

Considering the need ASCI has envisioned to setup a **Centre of Excellence for Climate Resilient Agriculture** (**CoECRA**) will act as a catalytic platform that will accelerate the transition to a climate-smart, inclusive, and financially viable agricultural sector which converts climate science into investable skills, services and solutions.

CoECRA will function under the umbrella of **Centres of Excellence for Agriculture Skills in India** (CEASI) an autonomous organization promoted by Agriculture Skill Council of India (ASCI) dedicated towards strengthening the agriculture and allied sector through skilling, capacity building, and the technical upgradation of farmers, youths, extension functionaries, wage workers, self-employed entrepreneurs, professionals.

CEASI is committed to Agriculture and allied sector Skill Development in India and aims to ensure Sustainability and Profitability in the Agriculture and allied sector through skilling and capacity building, policy advocacy, knowledge management and research.

2) Terms of Reference

Engagement of an agency for rollout / operationalization of the CoE to build the programmatic and revenue stream leading to as the national reference institution for climate-resilience skilling at large

scale, leveraging climate related employment opportunities for rural youth, women and agriculture graduates, taking up pilot initiative to generate scientific evidences to strengthen farmers resilience, farmer producer organizations and field-based institutions to manage climate risks.

Background

The Agricultural Landscape in India:

Structural Characteristics -

- **Smallholder dominance:** 86 % of holdings < 2 ha; average farm size 1.08 ha (Agricultural Census 2021).
- **Cropping intensity:** 143 %, with wheat–rice and cotton–soybean rotations dominating northern and central belts.
- **Water dependence:** Irrigated area ≈ 48 % of net sown land, heavily groundwater-reliant in Punjab, Haryana, and western UP.
- **Livestock integration:** 20 % of agricultural GDP; critical for nutrient cycling and household cash-flow smoothing.

India's agri-food system - including **crops, horticulture, livestock, fisheries, beekeeping, and allied rural enterprises** - faces a multi-layered climate-risk complex. Average temperatures have risen by 0.86°C, extreme rainfall events have tripled, and sea-surface temperatures along both coasts have warmed by 0.6°C since the 1960s.

Physical hazards such as heat waves or cyclones cascade into physical damage, cascading technological breakdowns, financial shocks, and reputational damage.

Major challenges due to climate changes (for reference purpose only) -

a) Heat wave driven evapotranspiration surge in cereals
b) Monsoon volatility fuelling pest range expansion
c) Flash floods & water logging triggering aflatoxin in stored grain
d) Cyclone landfalls wrecking coastal horticulture & shrimp belts
e) Prolonged drought causing fodder scarcity & livestock stress
f) Rising night-time temperatures altering flowering & pollination in plantations
g) Unseasonal hail & heavy winds lodging standing crops
h) Market price crashes from climate-induced gluts or deficits
i) Marine heatwaves causing pelagic fish migration & stock collapse
j) Salinity ingress in brackish water aquaculture ponds
k) Heat stress in dairy cattle lowering conception & milk yield
l) Erratic flowering phenology reducing nectar flow for apiculture
m) Cold-wave & frost damage to temperate horticulture (apples, pears)
n) Lack of skills and trained manpower

Annual climate-induced losses already exceed **₹ 1.5 lakh crore** (NICRA 2024); without systemic resilience, they could swell by another 40 % by 2050.

3) Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Climate Resilient Agriculture (CoECRA)

To address the challenges, CoE would bridge the skill gap, build the human capability that climate-resilient agriculture requires. Centre of Excellence would function as an occupational-skilling and

institutional-learning body that converts climate, weather, market and technology information into practical competencies across the agricultural workforce.

The strategic Objectives would focus in the following areas:

- Skilling and Capacity-Building
- Risk Reduction
- Resource Mobilisation
- Decarbonisation
- Digital Transformation
- Innovation & Enterprise
- Policy Influence & Replication

3.1) Functions of Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Climate Resilient Agriculture (CoECRA).

CoECRA will be an autonomous individual body which would be self-sufficient with respect to resources (revenue streams), commercially viable and be sustainable in long run.

CoECRA will also provide services related to advance skill trainings, on ground pilot initiatives, undertake evidence-based research, etc.

4) Scope of Work & Duration

The Agency is expected to plan and design for delivering the execution model for CoECRA with respect to **5 years' timeframe** and **directly executing the initial model (for six-month)** to build the programme portfolio and revenue streams for the Centre of Excellence for Climate Resilient Agriculture.

While designing and preparing the plan of action, few reference points need to be considered are mentioned below:

Models for operationalization

Identify Sustained Revenue Streams / Business Model

Action-Plan for Skilling Initiative

Define Financial Trajectory for the CoE

Identify key stakeholders

Overall Goal for CoECRA is to become India's premier Centre of Excellence that mainstreams climate-resilient, technology-enabled and finance-ready agriculture, delivering measurable gains in productivity, income stability and low-carbon transition for 10 million stakeholders by 2035.

Targets (for initial 5 years)

1. Skill 2 lakh practitioners (including 40% women and 30% youth) in climate-resilient agriculture, dairy, fisheries, horticulture & allied sectors.
2. Mobilise INR 1,000 cr in blended climate-finance for farmer-centric adaptation / mitigation projects.
3. Reduce climate-induced yield variability by 15% in pilot geographies through bundled advisory, risk transfer and market access.
4. Enable state roll-outs- at least five states adopt the hosted template and sign MoUs with CoECRA for curriculum, trainers and MRV services.

Inception Report

- Define the Road map for operationalization of the CoECRA with details work-plan, deliverables and timelines.
- Specify the appropriate model for execution of the CoECRA.
- Deployment of team and initiation of work.
- Identify and suggest institutional linkages (Partnership with thematic alignment-based institutions of repute)
- Assess the institutions where CoE can be co-hosted / established.
- Development of Skill Training curriculum & courses as Qualification Packs as per the NCVET (National Council for Vocational Education and Training) to initiate the training batches

5) Evaluation Criteria

Agriculture Skill Council of India / CEASI will evaluate the proposals on the basis of their professional experience, thematic knowledge, projects executed, project implementation experience, methodology and execution work plan.

Technical proposals shall be evaluated on the basis of following pre-identified criteria:

- Agency / Firms General Experience in carrying out similar projects and initiatives, Experience in Climate Change thematic domain across geographies in the country. Experience in the design, Detailed Project Report (DPR) / feasibility preparation, or setting up of climate-resilience programmes.
- Details of completed assignments / projects of a similar nature (scale, scope, sector etc.) in the last five years. Assignments delivered by the proposed Key Experts in their earlier organisations may be included, with the expert's role and the delivering organisation clearly stated.
- Adequacy and quality of the proposed execution design and work plan for (initial six-months plan) in responding to the Request for Proposal. The plan should include proposed business model, revenue stream generation (expected resource mobilization in the initial six-months' time frame) and risk mitigating strategies.
- Qualification and Experience of Team members involved, SME (Subject Matter Expert). Given that the assignment is expertise-driven, this criterion carries the highest weightage.
- Financial Costs involved in the rollout of the CoE (for initial six months' time frame).

Marking scheme for the Technical Proposal (100 marks; minimum qualifying score: 70 marks):

(a) Agency / Firm experience in similar assignments, including assignments delivered by the proposed Key Experts – 20 marks

(b) Proposed execution design and six-month work plan, business model, revenue-stream generation and risk mitigation – 35 marks

(c) Qualification and experience of the Team Leader and Key Experts – 35 marks

(d) Proposed use of technology, digital tools, data / MRV systems and climate-finance linkages for CoECRA – 10 marks

Only technically qualified proposals will have their financial proposals opened. Financial score = (Lowest evaluated cost ÷ Cost of the proposal under consideration) × 100. Combined score = 0.70 × Technical score + 0.30 × Financial score. The proposal with the highest combined score

will be ranked first.

Note - The Agencies / Firms work will be monitored and reviewed by Agriculture Skill Council of India / CEASI, who reserves the right to select any agencies based on the above evaluation criteria.

6) Professional Expertise

6.1) Agency/ Firm's Details & Experience

A brief description of the Agency /Firms & involved team members and an outline of the recent experience of the Agency that is most relevant to the RFP.

For each past assignment and similar nature of project delivered, the outline should indicate the names of the Agencies Key Experts, team members and Advisors / Consultants who participated, the contract amount, and the Consultant's role/involvement and brief description on the assignment.

Start-ups and young organisations may list assignments executed by their proposed Key Experts in earlier organisations, clearly indicating the expert's role and the organisation through which the assignment was delivered.

Agency / Firm Name	Key Experts	Description of the Assignment / Project	Contract Amount	Funding Agency

6.2) Details of the Team Members to be involved / Experts Curriculum Vitae (CV)

The nature of assignments demands high specialized inputs and a futuristic view to work in the thematic domain of Climate Resilient Agriculture sector and in order to achieve the objectives of the assignment, the proposed Team Leader should have at least 15 years of professional experience, of which at least 7 years should be in climate change / climate resilience, agriculture and allied sectors, rural livelihoods, risk management or skill development. Each other Key Expert should have at least 10 years of relevant professional experience. Support staff, analysts and interns are not subject to these minimums and need not be submitted for evaluation.

Position Title and No.	
Name of Team Members / Experts:	{Insert full name}
Date of Birth:	{day/month/year}
Country of Citizenship/Residence	

Professional Education: {List college/university or other specialized education, giving names of educational institutions, dates attended, degree(s)/diploma(s) obtained}

_____

_____

Engagement records relevant to the assignment: {Starting with present position, list in reverse order. Please provide dates, name of employing organization, titles of positions held, types of

activities performed and location of the assignment, and contact information of previous clients and employing organization(s) who can be contacted for references. Past employment that is not relevant to the assignment does not need to be included.}

Period	**Employing organization and your title/position. Contact information for references**	**Country**	**Summary of activities performed relevant to the Assignment**
[e.g., May 2005-present]	[e.g., Ministry of ……, advisor/consultant to… For references: Tel… ...../e-mail……; Mr. XXXXX, deputy minister]		

	General Instructions
1.	**Name of the Client:** Agriculture Skill Council of India / Centres of Excellence for Agriculture Skills in India (CEASI) **Method of selection:** Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS), with technical: financial weightage of 70:30, based on the Evaluation Criteria and marking scheme in Section 5.
2.	**The name of the assignment is**: Selection of Agencies to be the Technical Rollout Partner for Centre of Excellence for Climate-Resilient Agriculture (CoECRA)
3.	**The Client needs to share the proposal on the basis**: of their professional experience, thematic knowledge, projects executed, project implementation experience, methodology and execution work plan. Financial Costs involved in the rollout of the CoE (for initial six months' time frame).
4.	**Validity of Proposal - 90** calendar days after the proposal submission deadline.
5.	**Costs of preparing bid:** No costs incurred by the bidder in preparing and submitting the bid shall be reimbursable. All such costs shall be borne by the bidder. If proposed agencies / firms / experts are called for presentation / interaction, all costs shall be borne by the bidder.
6.	**Ownership of the bid**: The Agriculture Skill Council of India (ASCI) retains ownership of all bids received under this bid process. Consequently, bidders have no rights to have their bid returned to them.
7.	**Agency / Firms Eligibility** 7.1 **Legal status:** Be a legal entity registered in India as a Company (under the Companies Act, 2013 / 1956), Limited Liability Partnership, Society, Trust or Section 8 Company. Please attach the Certificate of Incorporation / Registration, PAN and GST registration (if applicable). 7.2 **Financial standing:** Have a positive net worth as per the latest audited accounts (FY 2025-26, or FY 2024-25 where FY 2025-26 accounts are not yet audited). Entities incorporated less than three years before the proposal due date shall submit audited

	accounts for the years available. Please attach a certificate from a Chartered Accountant. 7.3 **Start-up relaxation:** In line with Rule 173(i) of the General Financial Rules, 2017, start-ups recognised by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) are exempt from requirements of prior turnover and prior experience of the entity, subject to meeting the technical requirements of this RFP. Please attach the DPIIT recognition certificate. 7.4 **Key Experts:** The proposed Team Leader must have a minimum of 15 years, and each other Key Expert a minimum of 10 years, of professional experience as set out in Section 6.2. Please attach signed CVs. 7.5 **Relevant experience:** The Agency, or its proposed Key Experts, must have completed at least one assignment in the last five years in one or more of the following: (i) design, DPR or feasibility study for a Centre of Excellence or skilling institution; (ii) climate-resilient agriculture or climate-risk programmes; (iii) agricultural skilling or capacity-building programmes. Please attach work orders, completion certificates or client references. 7.6 **Consortium:** Proposals from a consortium of up to three entities are permitted. The Lead Member shall meet criteria 7.1 and 7.2, sign the proposal and be responsible for the assignment; the experience of all consortium members may be counted towards criteria 7.4 and 7.5. A signed consortium agreement / MoU must be attached. 7.7 **Integrity:** The Agency, its consortium members and Key Experts must not be blacklisted or debarred by any Government, PSU or multilateral agency. Please attach a self-declaration. 7.8 **Conflict of interest:** Bidders must disclose (a) any prior or ongoing engagement with ASCI / CEASI relating to CoECRA, including preparation of the Detailed Project Report, and (b) any advisory, financial, employment or family relationship between the bidder or its Key Experts and any ASCI / CEASI official or evaluation committee member. Disclosure will not by itself disqualify a bidder; ASCI / CEASI will ensure that any official with a declared relationship does not take part in the evaluation. To ensure a level playing field, the broad contours and summary of the CoECRA DPR will be shared with all prospective bidders on request. 7.9 EMD- Not Applicable Applying Agencies / Firms are required to provide documentary evidence of meeting all the above requirements. Eligible Agency /Firm's proposals will only be considered for technical and financial evaluation. Criteria 7.1, 7.2, 7.4, 7.5, 7.7 and 7.8 are cumulative and must all be met; criteria 7.3 and 7.6 are enabling provisions.
8.	**The Proposals must be submitted no later than:** **Date: 27.11.2026 Time: 18:00 pm** (Indian Standard Time) **Email id**: eh@ceasi.in **Address:** Agriculture Skill Council of India, [ASCI] / CEASI Unit No. 101, First Floor, Greenwoods Plaza, Block 'B' Greenwoods City, Sector-45, Gurugram, Haryana-122009; Mb. No.: +91 7428706078 E-Mail: eh@ceasi.in **Contact person:** Chief Executive Officer: Dr. Satender Arya

Annexure I - Bid Form

Bidder's Details

1.	Name of the Agency / Firm	
2.	Name and Designation of Authorized Signatory	
3.	Communication Address	
4.	Office Phone No, Mobile No:	
5.	E-Mail ID of key contact person	
6.	GST registration Number (if applicable):	
7.	PAN Number	
7a.	Date of Incorporation / Registration	
7b.	DPIIT Start-up Recognition No. (if applicable)	
7c.	Bidding as single entity or consortium (if consortium, names of all members and Lead Member)	

Details of Bidder's representative

8.	Name of the Contact Person:	
9.	Designation:	
10.	Phone No:	
11.	E-Mail ID:	

END OF PAGE

Continuation of Annexure I

DECLARATION

I, _____, Resident of _____, Proprietor / Director / Authorized Signatory of the Company / Firm / Agency, mentioned above, is competent to sign this declaration and execute this bid document.

I / We hereby certify that I / we have read the entire terms and conditions of the bid documents, including all documents like annexures etc., which form part of the contract agreement and I / we shall abide hereby by the terms / conditions / clauses contained therein.

The rates quoted by me / us are valid and binding upon me for the entire period of contract and period of extension.

The information / documents furnished along with the above application are true and authentic to the best of my knowledge and belief. I / we are aware of the fact that furnishing of any false information / fabricated document would lead to rejection of my / our bid at any stage besides liabilities towards prosecution under appropriate law.

The corrigendum(s) issued from time to time by your department/organization too have all been taken into consideration, while submitting this declaration letter.

I / we hereby unconditionally accept the bid conditions of above-mentioned bid document(s) in its totality. In case any provision of this bid is found violated, then your organization shall without prejudice to any other right or remedy be at liberty to reject this bid.

I / we further declare that I / we have made all disclosures required under the conflict-of-interest provision (Point 7) of the General Instructions, and that neither I / we, nor any consortium member or proposed Key Expert, is blacklisted or debarred by any Government, PSU or multilateral agency.

Authorized Signatory (Signature In full): _____

Name and title of Signatory: _____

Stamp of the Company: _____

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