

**GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
(Planning & Development Division)**

**PRE-QUALIFICATION OF CONSULTING FIRMS TO CONDUCT THIRD
PARTY EVALUATION/VALIDATION OF PSDP DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS
FUNDED BY HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION (HEC) OF PAKISTAN**

1. Background

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan is the apex body responsible for regulating, developing, and promoting higher education in the country. Established in 2002, HEC's primary mandate is to enhance the quality of education, ensure equitable access, and foster research and innovation in universities and higher education institutions. HEC formulates policies, provides funding for universities, accredits degree programs, and supports faculty development and research initiatives. It also works to align Pakistan's higher education system with international standards, promoting excellence, transparency, and accountability.

As per its mandate, HEC submits to the Federal Government the recurring and development budgets for public sector Institutions and allocate funds to public sector Institution out of bulk financial provision received from the government. HEC also reviews and examines the financial requirements of public sector Institutions and provide funds to these Institutions on the basis of annual recurring needs as well as for development. Accordingly, HEC executes various Public Sector Development Program (PSDP) projects across universities and higher education institutions (HEIs) nationwide, focusing on improving infrastructure, quality assurance, access, research, and innovation.

To ensure transparency, accountability, and effective utilization of public funds, Third Party Evaluation/Validation (TPE/V) of development projects has become an essential requirement under the direction of Prime Minister of Pakistan and the Public Finance Management Act, 2019

2. Objectives of Third-Party Evaluation/Validation:

The primary objectives of Third-Party Evaluation/Validation of HEC-funded PSDP projects are to:

- i. Assess the progress of ongoing projects against the approved PC-I targets, timelines, and deliverables.
- ii. Validate the physical and financial progress and verify project outputs/outcomes as specified in the approved PC-I.
- iii. Evaluate the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy of project interventions in achieving intended results and ensuring value for money.
- iv. Identify bottlenecks, risks, and systemic challenges affecting project implementation, including causes of delays, cost overruns, and scope variations (if any).
- v. Provide actionable, evidence-based recommendations for improving project design, execution, monitoring, and long-term sustainability.
- vi. Verify compliance with relevant PSDP, Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA), HEC, and PC-I guidelines, ensuring adherence to approved processes, standards, and protocols.

vii. Assess the adequacy and performance of project management structures, including institutional capacity, procurement practices, financial management systems, and quality control mechanisms.

3. Key Considerations for Pre-Qualified Consulting Firms

- i. Higher Education Commission is inviting an Expression of Interest (EoI) for pre-qualification of Consulting Firms as per rule 6 & 7, read with rule 5 of Procurement of Consultancy Services Regulations 2010 from all interested consulting firms/JVs meeting the eligibility criteria, for acquiring TPE/V services.
- ii. The pre-qualification will be for three (03) years, and tasks will be assigned in phases as required.
- iii. This pre-qualification process will be conducted for the following three categories of HEC-funded projects:
 - a. General University Projects, including civil work and infrastructure-related assignments;
 - b. Human Resource Development (HRD) including Scholarship award Projects; and
 - c. Technological and IT-related Projects.

Interested firms may apply for anyone, two, or all three categories, depending on their specialization, demonstrated experience, and technical capability. Firms will be evaluated strictly based on the documents submitted and in accordance with the evaluation criteria prescribed for the respective category. Interested Firms should clearly mention in their application letter, to which Category they are applying for pre-qualification.

4. Scope of Work

HEC has been executing and sponsoring 141 development projects reflected in PSDP 2025-26 (list can be obtained from P&D HEC) with an overall financial outlay of Rs. 401.565 billion. These projects mainly categorized into three major categories; (i) General University Projects – these projects include construction of academic and research facilities, procurement of lab and ICT equipment, procurement of furniture, fixture, transport and books, human resources development and hiring of PMU etc., (ii) HEC HRD Projects – these include HEC funded local and foreign scholarships for Pakistani students, and scholarships for foreign students to study in Pakistan, and (iii) Technological Projects includes procurement of Laptops, development of ICT facilities for universities, establishment of hi-tech centers in emerging technologies etc.

HEC is planning to conduct Third-Party Evaluation/Validation of these projects in phases and intends to pre-qualify consulting firms in the above three categories. The scope of the work includes:

a. Project Review and Verification:

- i. Review all relevant project documentation, including but not limited to the approved PC-I, periodic progress reports, financial statements, audit reports, monitoring visit reports, and completion reports (where applicable).
- ii. Verify the physical and financial progress of the project against the targets, timelines, and deliverables approved in the PC-I.
- iii. Assess the efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and value for money of project activities, ensuring alignment with approved budgets, scope, and technical specifications

b. Technical and Operational Evaluation:

- i. Validate the quality, functionality, and conformity of infrastructure, equipment, ICT systems, and all other deliverables with the standards, specifications, and scope approved in the PC-1.
- ii. Review and verify academic outcomes, including but not limited to student enrollment trends, faculty development initiatives, research productivity, program strengthening, and other academic indicators supported under the project.
- iii. Evaluate compliance with HEC-prescribed academic standards, policies, and benchmarks, as well as requirements of relevant accreditation bodies (where applicable), to ensure that project interventions align with national quality frameworks.

c. Financial and Regulatory Compliance:

- i. Verify project expenditures, disbursements, procurement processes, and contract management to ensure compliance with applicable Financial Rules, Audit requirements, and Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) regulations.
- ii. Identify any variances, inefficiencies, irregularities, or instances of non-compliance with the approved financial and regulatory framework and assess their implications on project implementation and outcomes.

d. Impact Assessment:

- i. Assess the short- and medium-term impacts of the project in line with the outcomes, outputs, and indicators defined in the approved PC-1.
- ii. Evaluate the institutional capacity, operational readiness, and sustainability mechanisms established by the implementing agency to ensure continuity of project benefits.
- iii. Document key lessons learned, best practices, and innovation areas that emerged during project implementation for future planning and policy improvement

e. Reporting:

- i. Prepare and submit a draft Third-Party Validation Report containing verified findings, analysis, and actionable recommendations.
- ii. Present key findings, gaps, and recommendations to HEC senior management and relevant stakeholders for review and discussion.
- iii. Incorporate HEC's feedback and finalize the Validation Report, ensuring completeness, accuracy, and alignment with the approved TORs.

The assignment will involve the following key tasks:

- i. Review of Documents.
- ii. Site Visits (projects location nation wide).
- iii. Data Collection and Verification from the Executing Agencies.
- iv. Assessment & Analysis.
- v. Reporting & Recommendations.

The sub-tasks may include the following but are not limited to:

- i. Review of relevant secondary data and documents provided by the Higher Education Commission (HEC).
- ii. Preparation and submission of an Inception Report, clearly outlining the objectives, scope, methodology, sampling framework, data collection and analysis plan, fieldwork schedule, reporting outline, and overall timelines for the assignment.
- iii. Collection of primary and secondary data, both quantitative and qualitative, using approved data collection tools and techniques in accordance with the methodology finalized in the Inception Report.
- iv. Analysis and presentation of preliminary findings to HEC (designated official/committee) as required by HEC.
- v. Preparation of a draft Third-Party Validation Report as per the TORs and structure agreed upon in the Inception Report.
- vi. Incorporation of HEC's feedback on the draft report through revisions and refinements.
- vii. Presentation of key findings to HEC senior management prior to submission of the final report, and incorporation

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6. Eligibility Criteria for Pre-Qualification:

- i. At least 5 years extensive experience of designing, managing and delivering third-party evaluation/validation assignments (year of incorporation of the firm/company and list of TPV projects undertaken will be required as an evidence). Clients' satisfaction Certificate must be made part of the proposal.
- ii. Registration with SECP, Registrar of Firms, Chamber of Commerce, or any other government body depicting legal status of Firm, Company or Organization (copy of registration certificate will be required).
- iii. Registered with Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and on Active Taxpayer List (ATL) (documentary evidence will be required)
- iv. Audited reports of the consultant from a CA firm for the last three years.
- v. Must have a qualified and experienced team of TPE/V, with a diversified background such as IT, Natural/ Social/ Management Sciences/ Statistics/ Economics and Engineering etc., and other subjects relevant to the given sectors (CVs of the team must be made part of the proposal).
- vi. Geographical experience and outreach in one or more geographical areas (Kindly mention the stretch of geographical areas where the projects were undertaken)
- vii. Firms must have demonstrated capacity/capability of use of IT based on TPE/V systems such as primavera and MS projects.
- viii. Undertaking by the firm/company on a Legal Paper/Stamp Paper/Letter Head that it is not blacklisted by any Federal, Provincial, State or Local Government department and/or by any Government owned Company/ Foundation / Authority / Autonomous Body / Attached Department. Details of arbitration, if any, with any Government/Autonomous/Semi Government/Private entity must also be provided.

7. Procurement Process after pre-qualification.

- i. The financial bids shall be invited from pre-qualified firms in accordance with the relevant PPRA rules.

8. Marking Criteria for Pre- Qualification

The consulting firms will be pre-qualified based on the following criteria. Kindly note that appropriate documentary evidence needs to be submitted to claim the scores. Minimum 65% marks are required to qualify.

S#	Criteria Description	Total Score	Scoring Criteria
1	Relevant experience present and past performance and understanding of the assignments Note: - Projects for each category will be considered separately and marked accordingly	65	
a.	Relevant experience in design, managing and delivering third-party evaluation/validation Assignments.	45	Completion of TPE/V projects costing at least Rs 1.0 billion and above along with its report submission in the last 10 years a) 3 projects, full marks b) 2 projects, 30 marks c) 1 project, 15 marks NOTE: - The certificate of satisfactory completion of past relevant projects will be required from the Client (Project Director, Supervisory Officer and Head of Organization for scoring.
b.	In- hand projects of third part evaluation/ validation assignments	10	In hand/Ongoing projects costing at least Rs 500 million and above. a. 1 project, 5 marks b. 2 projects, 10 marks NOTE: - Award letter or Letter of acceptance by the respective clients must be attached for consideration.

c.	Adequacy and quality of the proposed methodology, work plan, management approach etc. in responding to the Terms of Reference (TORs)	10	The consulting firm shall submit a Methodology and Work Plan document (maximum 10 pages) demonstrating its understanding of the assignment. It should outline the proposed methodology, evaluation approach, work plan with timelines, and management strategy, including quality assurance measures. The submission will be assessed for clarity, feasibility, and alignment with the TORs.
2.	Relevancy and Capability of Proposed Personnel, & geographical coverage	35	
a.	Professional & Technical Capabilities of Personnel Employed. (5 marks for each professional. Attach CVs of professionals on the firm payroll)	25	i. Team Leader / Senior Consultant ii. Civil Works / Infrastructure Expert iii. IT / ICT Specialist iv. Quantitative Data Analyst v. Writer / Documentation Specialist
b.	Geographical coverage of projects done (Evidence required in form of completion report from the client)	10	2 marks for each project covered in provinces of Pakistan
	Total	100	

09. Duration of Assignment

The total duration of the assignment will be intimated as per specific task and given in the respective document.

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