

**Proposals for Prequalification of Consulting Firms for  
Business Need Assessment (BNA) Activities for MSMEs**



**Proposal No.: SMEDA/OM-RO/BNA/028**

**Issued on January 21, 2026**

**General Manager – Outsourcing Management Division  
(Procuring Division: Regional Operations)  
Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority  
4<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, BUILDING NO. 3, AIWAN E IQBAL COMPLEX,  
EGERTON ROAD, LAHORE  
Tel: 042-111-111-456**

## **Invitation of Proposals**

### **For Prequalification of Consulting Firms for Business Need Assessment (BNA) Activities for MSMEs**

1. SMEDA, in Regional Operations Division, invites electronic applications from experienced and financially sound Consulting Firms, registered with Income Tax and Sales Tax Departments for pre-qualification of Consulting Firms for Business Need Assessment (BNA) Activities for MSMEs in term of Rule 15 & 16(i) of PPR 2004.
2. Electronic Prequalification document containing detailed requirements, terms and conditions is available for the registered firms on EPADS at [www.eprocure.gov.pk](http://www.eprocure.gov.pk) and SMEDA website [www.smeda.org.pk](http://www.smeda.org.pk).
3. The electronic proposals, prepared in accordance with the instructions in the pre-qualification document, must be uploaded on EPADS on or before **February 4, 2026** by **12:30 PM** and will be opened on the same day at **01:00 PM**. SMEDA reserves the right to reject all offers in terms of Rule 33 of PPRA rules.
4. Notification of the GRC constituted in terms of Rule 48 of PPR 2004 is provided on SMEDA website [www.smeda.org.pk](http://www.smeda.org.pk) and on EPADS at [www.eprocure.gov.pk](http://www.eprocure.gov.pk).

**General Manager – Outsourcing Management Division  
(Procuring Division: Regional Operations)**

4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Building No. 3, Aiwan-e-Iqbal Complex,  
Egerton Road, Lahore  
Tel: 042-111-111-456 Website: [www.smeda.org.pk](http://www.smeda.org.pk)

## SECTION – 1

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### **1. Background and Rationale**

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are a critical driver of Pakistan's economic growth, contributing significantly to employment, industrial output, and exports. Despite their importance, MSMEs face persistent challenges, including limited access to finance, outdated production technologies, shortages of skilled labor, weak linkages with larger firms and markets, and complex regulatory requirements.

In alignment with SMEDA's renewed emphasis on evidence-based MSME development, the Business Needs Assessment (BNA) function has been institutionalized as a key tool to identify, validate, and prioritize the evolving needs of MSME clusters across Pakistan, including AJK and Gilgit-Baltistan. Given the scale and diversity of clusters to be covered annually, and the need for timely, cost-effective, and technically sound execution of assessments, SMEDA seeks to prequalify a panel of reputable consulting firms to support the roll-out of two full BNA cycles each year. The objective of this prequalification is to establish a pool of eligible firms with demonstrated capabilities in qualitative and quantitative research, stakeholder consultation, field-based validation, and structured reporting, who may subsequently be engaged through a competitive process to undertake cluster-specific BNAs as per SMEDA's operational plan.

#### **2. Objectives of the Assignment**

The objective is to prequalify competent consulting firms to support SMEDA in conducting Business Need Assessments (BNAs) across selected MSME clusters. These assessments aim to identify business constraints, opportunities, and development needs to guide policy, planning, and targeted support interventions. Specifically, the prequalification process is targeted:

- To create a panel of technically sound consulting firms capable of conducting comprehensive BNAs for various MSME clusters across Pakistan.
- To ensure geographic and sectoral diversity in the pool of prequalified consultants for timely deployment based on project needs.
- To ensure quality, transparency, and cost-effectiveness in the selection and engagement process.

#### **3. Scope of Work**

Prequalified firms may be engaged, through limited competitive bidding, to perform the following tasks in each assignment:

- Conduct field-based consultations with cluster stakeholders (e.g., MSMEs, chambers, associations, service providers).
- Collect and analyze qualitative and quantitative data on business practices, constraints, productivity, and potential.
- Identify specific developmental needs and proposed interventions at the cluster level.
- Prepare comprehensive BNA reports using formats and guidance as may be approved by SMEDA.
- Present key findings to SMEDA and support dissemination or planning sessions, if required.

#### **4. Terms and Conditions**

The following basic terms and conditions shall be deemed accepted by the consulting firms upon

submission of their pre-qualification application and shall apply to all pre-qualified firms during the validity period of the prequalification:

- a. No Guarantee of Engagement:** Prequalification does not constitute a commitment by SMEDA to award any specific assignment or project to any or all prequalified firms.
- b. Validity Period:** The prequalification shall remain valid for a period of **three (03) years**, unless cancelled or withdrawn by SMEDA due to non-performance, misrepresentation, or any other valid reason.
- c. Fair Opportunity:** Prequalified firms shall be invited, as and when required, to submit technical and financial proposals for cluster-specific assignments based on a rotational or competitive selection process in accordance with SMEDA's outsourcing management protocols.
- d. Good Standing:** Firms must continue to maintain their status as active taxpayers, remain compliant with legal registration requirements, and must not be blacklisted or under investigation by any government authority during the prequalification period.
- e. Confidentiality:** Firms shall maintain confidentiality of any information shared during the assignment and must not use SMEDA's proprietary documents, tools, or data for any other purpose without prior written consent.
- f. Code of Conduct:** Firms must adhere to high standards of integrity, objectivity, and professionalism in dealing with SMEDA, its stakeholders, and all external partners.
- g. Disqualification:** SMEDA reserves the right to disqualify any firm at any stage of the process (including during assignment execution) if false information is provided, performance is unsatisfactory, or any conflict of interest arises.
- h. Compliance with Assignment Terms:** All further project-specific assignments awarded to prequalified firms shall be governed by separate **work orders** or **assignment-specific contracts** which shall outline detailed scope, deliverables, timelines, and payment terms.
- i. No Partnership etc. with SMEDA:** It is expressly understood and agreed that prequalification of a firm under this process does not, and shall not be deemed to, establish any partnership, joint venture, agency, employment, or fiduciary relationship between SMEDA and the pre-qualified firm.

Each assignment will clearly define deliverables, timelines, and reporting formats.

## SECTION – 2

### INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANTS

#### **2.1. Definitions:**

- 2.1.1. “Government of Pakistan” means the Government of Pakistan and all its associated departments, agencies, autonomous / semi- autonomous bodies, boards, universities and similar other organizations.
- 2.1.2. “Client” means the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA),
- 2.1.3. “Applicant” means any Service Provider / Firm / Organization / Company applying for contesting in prequalification process.
- 2.1.4. "Relevant Experience" means the demonstrated capabilities in qualitative and quantitative research, stakeholder consultation, field-based validation, and structured reporting.

#### **2.2. Preparation & Submission of Applications:**

- 2.2.1.PDF files of proposals, for contesting in prequalification process, must be uploaded on EPADS, not later than **February 4, 2026 by 12:30 PM**.
- 2.2.2.The PDF file must be clearly marked “Proposal for Prequalification of Consulting Firms for Business Need Assessment (BNA) Activities for SMEs”.
- 2.2.3.The name and mailing address of an Applicant must be clearly marked at first page of PDF file.
- 2.2.4.The proposals shall be prepared in the English language and as per format prescribed in the prequalification document.
- 2.2.5.The Applicant must respond to all questions and provide complete information as indicated in this document. Any lapses to provide essential information may result in rejection of an Application.
- 2.2.6.Applicants shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of their prequalification documents. The Client is not bound to accept any Application and reserves the right to annul the selection process at any time prior to prequalification intimation, in accordance with the prescribed rules / regulations without thereby incurring any liability to the Applicants.

#### **2.3. Eligibility and Submission Requirements to Apply for Prequalification:**

- 2.3.1.Eligibility and submission requirements shall be as given in Section – 3 of this document.

#### **2.4. One Person One Application:**

Each Applicants shall upload only one proposal under this Prequalification notice. If an Applicant uploads more than one Proposal, such Proposals shall be disqualified.

#### **2.5. Prequalification Proposals Preparation Cost**

The Applicant shall be responsible for all of the costs associated with the preparation of its Prequalification proposal and its participation in the contesting process. Procuring

agency will not be responsible or in any way liable for such costs, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the contesting process.

## **2.6. Evaluation of Proposals:**

- 2.6.1. The Client will evaluate and prequalify the applicants in accordance with the evaluation criteria specified in Section-3 of the Prequalification documents.
- 2.6.2. The Client will upload on EPADS name of each Applicant whether or not he has been prequalified for further process.

## **2.7. Updating Prequalification Information:**

- 2.7.1. The Client at any stage of the selection proceedings, having credible reasons for or *prima facie* evidence of any defect in applicant's capacities, may require the Applicant to provide information concerning their professional, technical, financial, legal or managerial competence whether already prequalified or not.
- 2.7.2. Applicants shall be required to update the information concerning their professional, technical, financial, legal or managerial competence used for the prequalification at any subsequent stage as may be required by the client, to ensure their continued compliance with the prequalification criteria and verification of the information provided at the time of contesting.

## **2.8. Client's Right:**

- 2.8.1. The Client can cancel the prequalification process and reject all Applications, in the event that the Client does not wish to proceed with the assignment. In such an eventuality, no expense and / or cost whatsoever incurred by any Applicant in the preparation of proposal shall be payable by the Client.
- 2.8.2. The Client shall disqualify an Applicant if it finds, at any time, that the information uploaded by the Applicant was false and materially inaccurate or incomplete.

## **2.9. Ownership of Prequalification Document:**

- 2.9.1. All documents uploaded by an Applicant in response to this prequalification shall become the property of the Client. However, intellectual property in the information contained in the application uploaded by the Applicant shall remain vested in the applicant.

## **2.10. Alteration, Erasures or illegibility:**

- 2.10.1. Except for amendments to the entries made by an Applicant which are initialed by the Applicant, proposals bearing any other alterations, erasures or illegibility are liable to rejection.

## **2.11. Applicable Laws:**

- 2.11.1. All proposals uploaded pursuant to this invitation and the formation of any resulting contract, shall be governed by the laws of Pakistan. Any amendment or a further legal requirement issued by Govt. of Pakistan even after issuance and receipt of Applications shall be applicable without any financial repercussion.

## **2.12. Misconduct:**

- 2.12.1. If an Applicant or any person on its behalf makes any attempt to canvass, solicit or approach any official of the Client or any of its officials in any matter relating to or arising out of this Application, its Proposal will be liable to rejection and the

Applicant liable to debarment for a period to be fixed at the discretion of the Client.

### **2.13. Full Compliance:**

- 2.13.1. The Applicants shall comply fully with the instructions to Applicants, Forms, and Appendices etc. Non-compliance of any item may render an Applicant not eligible for contesting.

### **2.14. Amendment in Pre-Qualification Documents:**

- 2.14.1. At any time prior to deadline for submission of Applications, the Client may amend the Prequalification documents by uploading an addendum on EPADS.
- 2.14.2. Any addendum uploaded shall be part of the Prequalification Documents and shall be communicated to all those who have obtained the Prequalification documents.
- 2.14.3. To give prospective Applicants reasonable time to take an addendum into account in preparing their proposals, the Client may, at its discretion, extend the deadline for the submission of proposals.

### **2.15. Prequalification Proposals Validity: 120 Days from the Date of Opening of proposals.**

- 2.15.1. **Cancellation of Pre-Qualification:** The Client reserves the right to cancel the Pre-Qualification process at any time, if required, without any obligation to the prequalified consulting firms.
- 2.15.2. **Re-call of Prequalification Proposals:** The Client, if considers necessary, may call fresh proposals at any time before award of contract.

### **2.16. Clarification of Prequalification Documents:**

- 2.16.1. Applicants may request a clarification of any provision of the Prequalification documents, seven (07) days before the proposal submission date. Any request for clarification must be sent electronically through EPADS.

### **2.17. Geographical Coverage for Prequalification:**

- 2.17.1. The applicants can apply in one or more than one provinces, for contesting.

### **2.18. Format and Signing of Prequalification Proposals**

The Applicant shall provide all the information as per this Prequalification. SMEDA will evaluate only those proposals, for prequalification that are received in the required format and are complete in all respects.

### **2.19. Validity**

The status of prequalified consulting firms, as a result of this process will remain valid for a period of three (03) years from the date of announcement of results of prequalification of consulting firms. However, if deemed necessary the Client may extend the period of validity of all prequalified consulting firms by issuing an extension notice. The Client, if considers necessary, may call fresh applications for Prequalification at any time during the currency of validity by cancelling the process already done.

### **2.20. Amendment of Prequalification Documents**

At any time prior to the deadline for submission of Prequalification Application, SMEDA may, for any reason, whether at its own initiative or in response to clarifications requested by any Applicant, modify the Prequalification Document by the uploading of an Addendum in accordance with PPRA Rules, on EPADS.

## SECTION – 3

### ELIGIBILITY & SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

#### 3.1. Eligibility Requirements

3.1.1. Firms looking to apply for the prequalification must meet the following minimum requirements:

- i. Legally registered entity in Pakistan.
- ii. Valid NTN registered with **FBR** and **Provincial Sales Tax Authorities**.
- iii. Listed on the **Active Taxpayers List (ATL)**.
- iv. Not debarred by any government, semi-government, or donor agency or blacklisted by the Authority.
- v. Demonstrated experience of at least **three (03) years** in research, data collection, or consultancy assignments.

#### 3.2. Submission Requirements

3.2.1 Applicants must submit following documents to support their claims meeting Eligibility Requirements:

- i. Copies of Organizational Profile and Registration Documents along with duly filled in Form at **Annex-B**.
- ii. Copies of NTN and PST Registration Certificates
- iii. Affidavit of not being blacklisted on the prescribed format (Annex-H)
- iv. Details of assignments conducted in previous three years on the prescribed format (**Annex-D**)

#### 3.3. Evaluation Criteria

Category	Sub-Factor	Max Marks	Evidentiary Requirements
<b>General Experience (20 Marks)</b>	≥10 years consulting / research experience	20 marks for 10 or more years' experience. Relative marking for others	Certificate of incorporation + work history summary ( <b>Annex-D</b> )
<b>Relevant Experience (30 Marks)</b>	≥10 relevant assignments (not less than 05 million) (national/international) in the last 05 years	30 marks for 10 or more assignments. Relative marking for others	Copies of contract awards / completion certificates ( <b>Annex-E</b> )
<b>Geographical Reach (10 Marks)</b>	Presence / offices or proven operations in ≥4 provinces	10 marks for presence in 04 or more provinces. Relative marking for others	Office addresses ( <b>Annex-C</b> )

<b>D. Human Resource Capacity (15 Marks)</b>	Core expert team (Team Leader, Sector Specialist, Research/M&E Specialist – <b>at least 3 total</b> ) <b>Educational Qualifications:</b> Master/BS (minimum 16 years of education) in the relevant field. <b>Experience:</b> Minimum 10 years of consulting experience including cluster/sector studies, SME diagnostics, and/or public-private engagement.	8	<b>Submission of CVs of key staff on prescribed formats is mandatory (Annex-F &amp; F 1)</b>
	Dedicated QA & Documentation Team (QA Specialist and Report Writer/Editor – <b>at least 2 total</b> ) <b>Educational Qualification:</b> Master/BS (minimum 16 years of education) in the relevant field. <b>Experience:</b> Minimum five year of relevant experience	5	CVs + evidence of relevant QA/reporting assignments
	Capability to deploy field teams (Cluster Coordinators + Enumerators) across assigned clusters	2	Deployment strategy or previous field deployment records / HR rosters / third-party field outsourcing strategy /agreements
<b>Financial Strength (15 Marks)</b>	Average annual turnover $\geq$ PKR 30 million (last 3 yrs)	15 marks for more than 30 million turnover. Relative marking for others.	Audited financial statements / bank statements/tax returns ( <b>Annex-G</b> )
<b>Quality Management &amp; Data Systems (10 Marks)</b>	Demonstrated use of digital survey tools / QA processes	10 marks for 03 or more tools. Relative marking for others	Screenshots, tool licenses, sample output reports, or system descriptions
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	

### **3.4. Qualifying Marks**

3.4.1. Applicants must obtain a minimum of 70 marks out of 100 to qualify.

### **3.5. Evaluation and Approval Process**

- i. Technical evaluation will be conducted by SMEDA's evaluation committee in accordance with the evaluation criteria listed above read with the applicable PPRA Rules.
- ii. Prequalified firms will be notified in writing and listed on SMEDA's approved panel for the applicable period of prequalification unless terminated earlier.
- iii. SMEDA reserves the right to verify all submitted information and disqualify firms for misrepresentation during and after the prequalification process.

## **SECTION – 4: ANNEXURES**

## **Annexure – A**

## **FORMAT FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION APPLICATION [On the Letter Head of the Applicant's Firm]**

Date:

To:

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**Subject: PRE-QUALIFICATION OF CONSULTING FIRMS FOR BUSINESS NEED ASSESSMENT (BNA) ACTIVITIES FOR SMEs**

Dear Sir,

We, hereby declare that all the information and statements made in this document are true and accept that any misleading information contained in it may lead to rejection of proposal.

We hereby appoint and authorize Mr./Ms. [Name & CNIC] presently employed with [Organization Name] holding the position of [Designation] as our authorized representative, to do in our name and on our behalf, all such acts, deeds and things necessary in connection with or incidental to our EOI application submission and further process.

We confirm that the Prequalification application is valid for a period of 120 days from the due date of submission of Prequalification application and is unconditional.

We understand you are not bound to accept any application you receive.

Yours sincerely,

[Authorized Signature [In full and initials  
Name of the Organization, Address]

### Applicant seal & stamp

**Annexure – B**  
**“Organizational Profile”**

<b>Sr. #</b>	<b>Required Information</b>	<b>Response</b>
1	Legal name of the Firm	
2	Year of Registration / Incorporation	
3	NTN / FTN	
4	Sales Tax Number	
5	What is the legal status of your organization? Tick the relevant box (one box only). (Attach Copy / Copies of Registration Certificate(s) where required)	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Sector Organization <input type="checkbox"/> Section 42 Company <input type="checkbox"/> Public Ltd. Company <input type="checkbox"/> Private Ltd. Company <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership Firm <input type="checkbox"/> Others (Please specify)
6	<b>Name and designation of ‘Head of Organization’</b>	
	Mobile #:	
	Phone/s:	
	Email:	
	Address of organization:	
7	Geographical Coverage [Please tick all or the relevant box where you will be interested to provide services in case of prequalification]	<input type="checkbox"/> Punjab <input type="checkbox"/> Sindh <input type="checkbox"/> Khyber Pakhtunkhwa <input type="checkbox"/> Balochistan <input type="checkbox"/> AJK <input type="checkbox"/> GB
9	<b>Name and designation of ‘Authorized Contact Person’:</b>	
	Phone/s:	
	Mobile:	
	Email:	
	Fax:	

**Annexure – C**  
**“Organizational Geographical Presence”**

<b>Office Location (Province)</b>	<b>Office Address</b>	<b>Focal Person</b>	<b>Contact Details (Tel, fax, E-mail)</b>

## Annexure - D

### “Organization’s General Experience”

[Please attach list of projects / assignments completed during last 10 years] (Provide work history summary as per below.)

<b>Experience of General Assignments</b> <small><sup>*</sup> (Project Sheet 1 )</small>		
<b>Sr. #</b>	<b>Required Information</b>	<b>Response</b> (Please provide exact information with project title, location/s and duration)
1	Project Title and duration (The project title means name of the project, as mentioned in award of contract)	Title:  Duration (Days):
2	Year of Completion (YYYY):	
3	Please elaborate Applicant’s role in this assignment	Attach separate Page and provide reference / page number here.
4	Contact details of client:	Name:  Address (City):  Tel:  Email:
5	Total value of the project / assignment (PKR)	
6	Share of the applicant in case of joint projects (PKR)	

**Copy the above table for another response.**

Please mark the other sheets, if submitted, as Project Sheet 2 and Sheet 3 up-to 10 respectively.

**Annexure - E**  
**“Organization’s Relevant Experience”**

[Please attach list of projects / assignments completed during last 05 years] Provide (Documentary Evidence: Award of Contract / Completion Certificates/ Recommendation Letter)

#	Description	Details
1.	Title of the Assignment	
2.	Assignment Date	
3.	Assignment Duration (Days)	
4.	Assignment Location (City)	
5	Assignment Monetary Value	
6.	Implementation Year	
7.	Client Details	Name: City: Tel: Email:
8.	Geographical Coverage	
9.	Sector / Cluster	
10.	Key Activities Performed	
11.	Evidence Attached (Completion Certificates, Work Orders, Client Confirmations)	

**Copy the above table for another response.**

Please mark the other sheets, if submitted, as Sheet 2 and Sheet 3 up-to 10 respectively.

**Annexure – F**  
**“Template for Organization’s Human Resource”**

#	Name	Designation	Qualification	Experience (Years)	Expertise Area	Current Role in Firm (Full/Part time)	CV Attached

## Annexure – F 1

### “Curriculum Vitae for the Management Staff”

<b>Name of Expert:</b>	(Insert full name)
<b>Date of Birth:</b>	(day / month / year)
<b>CNIC Number:</b>	
<b>Mobile Number:</b>	
<b>Email Address:</b>	
<b>Postal Address:</b>	
<b>Current Position Title</b>	

**Education:** (List College/University or other specialized education)

#	Name of Degree / Diploma	Specialization	Year of Passing (YYYY)	Name of the Institution, Location

**Total Experience of the Employee (Years):** \_\_\_\_\_

#### Employment with Applicant

<b>Period:</b> MM/YYYY) to (MM/YYYY)	
<b>Job Title:</b>	
<b>Summary of activities performed:</b>	

**Other Employment record relevant to the assignment:** [Starting with present position, list in reverse order.]

#	Name of Employing organization	Titles of Positions Held	Dates	Types of activities performed	location of the Assignment	Contact Information of Previous Clients & Employing Organization(s)

**Membership in professional Associations and Publications:**

Certification:

I, the undersigned, certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief, this CV correctly describes myself, my qualifications and my experience, and I am available to undertake the assignment in case of an award. I understand that any misstatement or misrepresentation describes herein may lead to my disqualification or dismissal by the client.

Name:	
Date:	
Signature	

## Annexure – G

### “Financial Strength”

Annual Turnover for previous three (03) years as per audited statements / bank statements / tax returns (PKR in millions)			
2022-23 (A)	2023-24 (B)	2024-25 (C)	Average (A+B+C) / 3

## Annexure – H

### **UNDERTAKING REGARDING NOT BEING BLACKLISTED**

*(Printed and signed on Rs 100 stamp paper)*

Date DD-MM-YYYY

To,

**General Manager Outsourcing Management - SMEDA**

4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Building No. 3,  
Aiwan e Iqbal Complex,  
Egerton Road, Lahore  
Tel: 042-111-111-456

Dear Sir,

Subject: **UNDERTAKING REGARDING NOT BEING BLACKLISTED**

It is hereby declared that **[Organization Name]** is/are neither debarred by any government institution nor blacklisted by the Authority.

That SMEDA Blacklisting Policy 2023 as available at [www.smeda.org](http://www.smeda.org) and its provisions have been read and accepted as a part and parcel of the bidding documents/contract.

#### **Authorized Person**

Name:

Designation:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization / Company Seal:

**Annexure – I**  
**Eligibility Response Checklist**

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Necessary Eligibility Information</b>	<b>Response / Elaboration</b>
1	Registration to prove legal identity of your firm/organization [Name of Registration Authority]	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Copy Attached
2	Proof of registration for NTN / FTN	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of Certificate Attached
3	Proof of registration for sales tax	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of Certificate Attached
4	Proof of being on Active Tax Payers List (ATL) for Income Tax on FBR	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy Attached
5	03 Years Bank Statement / Audited Financial Statements / Income Tax Returns	<input type="checkbox"/> Copies Attached
6	Undertaking that firm was never blacklisted by any government authority or department? (Annexure-H)	<input type="checkbox"/> Undertaking attached (Stamp Paper)
7	Details of assignments conducted in previous three years on the prescribed format	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Annex-D</b>