



## **TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)**

### *Invitation to Submit Proposal: Consultancy to Develop ST&I Helpdesk Operational Manual June 2025*

#### **1. Background**

The Sankore project, funded by the Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) and executed by UNESCO in partnership with the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology aims to drive the transformation of the Science, Technology, and Innovation (ST&I) domains in Ghana and Nigeria by strengthening ST&I ecosystems, enhancing data accessibility, and fostering inclusive digital participation.

In furtherance of this, an ST&I Helpdesk is being established to support FCDO and west African government partners with the demand-led ST&I technical guidance. One key function of the Helpdesk would be to see out the establishment, operationalization, and raise the awareness of its services, thereby providing ST&I support to FCDO teams across West Africa. It will also aid in processing rapid, short-term, and medium-term requests as well as identifying and procuring a specialist network to support its smooth operations. This Terms of Reference (ToR) outlines the expected tasks and outputs related to the development of the ST&I Helpdesk Operational Manual.

UNESCO in partnership with the UKCEH West Africa, seek the services of a qualified consultant or consulting team to develop a comprehensive Operational Manual that will guide the setup, staffing, service delivery model, workflows, and monitoring mechanisms for the ST & I Helpdesk for West Africa.

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

The primary objective of the assignment is to develop a comprehensive Operational Manual leveraging existing on the ST&I ecosystem of west Africa as well as initiatives like the Africa Research and Innovation Partnerships (ARIP) and UNESCO's Chairs, Networks and Centres. The manual should outline clear procedures, roles, responsibilities, tools, and performance standards necessary for the Helpdesk's effective and sustainable operation.

Additionally, the Helpdesk Operational Manual will form the basis for the design and development of an ST&I Management Information System (MIS), which will facilitate data collection, management, and dissemination, enabling data-driven decision-making and improved ST&I facilitation across partner institutions.

#### **3. Scope & Plan**

The consultant(s) would be expected to carry out the following:

- Consult stakeholders and review relevant Helpdesk models to propose a governance structure, define services and users, draft SOPs, outline staffing and digital needs, and ensure integration with existing functions.
- Identify needs and gaps in relation to the Helpdesk operations and service delivery.
- Develop Operational Manual for the ST&I Helpdesk including step-by-step procedures for Helpdesk operations, creating templates, forms, and flowcharts, key performance indicators (KPIs), and monitoring tools, etc.
- Finalize the ST&I Helpdesk Operational Manual and present deliverables to stakeholders for feedback, validation, and approval.

#### **4. Duration and Location of Project**

**Duration:** Development of Operational Manual will be from **1<sup>st</sup> August 2025 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025**.

**Location:** The Helpdesk consultant(s) will carry out their services remotely.

#### **5. Required Expertise**

The consultancy will require the following qualifications:

- Advanced expertise in developing operational manuals, relating to science, technology and innovation systems, information management, technical support in operational procedures of organizations, and communication, with a strong understanding of institutional systems and governance.
- Proven experience in ST&I-related advisory systems or Helpdesk operations.
- Demonstrated skills in stakeholder consultation and institutional capacity development.
- Strong communication and technical writing abilities, supported by examples of previous work such as published reports, operational manuals, or strategic documents.
- Familiarity with national and regional ST&I ecosystems in West Africa, including relevant actors, policies, and coordination mechanisms.

#### **6. Submission Guidelines**

- Interested consultants are invited to submit their Technical and Financial Proposals (Max. 5 pages) by **Friday, 18 July 2025**, including:
- CVs indicating relevant experience; minimum two (2) references of similar assignment completed during the past five (5) years:
- Description of approach, methodology and work plan.
- Financial proposal with cost breakdown in **Ghanaian Cedis**.
- Proposals should be submitted via email to: [westafrica@ceh.ac.uk](mailto:westafrica@ceh.ac.uk)

## **7. Other Information**

- The Consultant(s) will work with the team from the UKCEH West Africa Office, led by Adelaide Asante and supported by the ST & I Helpdesk Manager.
- There will be opportunity to engage other stakeholders including management of UKCEH, UNESCO's Sankore Project Leads in West Africa and the team from FCDO ST & I hub in West Africa.