### **Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Business Partner for Business Incubation and Acceleration Programs**

### **Location**: Uzbekistan**Duration**: 2025-2026**Reports to**: Regional VA Lead and AP Kyrgyzstan TA Lead

#### **1. Background**

Virtual Accelerate is implementing project Central Asia Green Inclusive Growth Fund’s Business Development Services (GIG-BDS), which follows the goal of to foster green and inclusive entrepreneurship sector to support Central Asia in its transition toward a green and inclusive economy that tackles inequality, while supporting economic diversification, which spans over Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

For the successful execution of the project in the territory of Uzbekistan, AP Kyrgyzstan is seeking for a business partner. The business partner will play a pivotal role in implementing and supporting business incubation and acceleration programs in Uzbekistan. The goal is to create a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem that links all key stakeholders, including startups, investors, government bodies, and mentors, ensuring the program's success and long-term impact.

#### **2. Objectives**

The business partner will:

a) support the implementation of 1 business tech-enabled and IT incubation program for 40 participants at least and tech-enabled and IT acceleration program for 25 participants at least;

b) facilitate stakeholder engagement and support to build strategic partnerships;

c) ensure program milestones and deliverables are achieved effectively.

d) conducting Demo-Days of the incubation and acceleration programs.

**Indicators for the program success:**

* Business Growth: Increasing the revenue of the businesses and startups.
* Market Expansion: Assist businesses in reaching a larger number of clients.
* Investments raised by the participants during or after graduation.
* Job Creation: Support businesses in creating new employment opportunities.
* Operational Efficiency: Improve the operational processes.

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

The key responsibilities of the business partner will include:

**A. Program Implementation Support:**

- Support in the rollout of business incubation and acceleration programs tailored to the local context of Uzbekistan and all relates activities including outreach (information campaign/mobilization), selection and other relevant activities in close coordination with AP team.

- Ensure smooth execution of all program components, including training, mentorship, networking, and financing opportunities by the program approved by AP Team by sharing best practices, tools, and resources with program participants to enhance their business capabilities.

-Organize and facilitate workshops, seminars, and webinars with subject-matter experts.

- Monitor and evaluate the progress of incubated and accelerated businesses to ensure they are meeting growth targets.

**B. Linkages and Partnerships:**

- Develop strategic partnerships that can provide additional resources, knowledge, or funding for the incubation and acceleration programs.

- Facilitate access to local and international investors, industry experts, and potential business partners to support startups and entrepreneurs.

- Establish and maintain strong relationships with key stakeholders, including government bodies, private sector investors, startups, mentors, and local business development organizations.

***4. Qualifications and Experience***

#### **Operational Experience and Traction 40%:**

#### **A) proven track record** of a minimum of **3 years of experience** in executing acceleration and incubation programs predominantly in IT and Green Sectors. B) **program graduates' success with at** least **100 startups or businesses;** C) **investment raised:** program graduates should have collectively raised at least **$300,000 in investment** (equity, debt, or other types of funding) through connections facilitated by the partner.

### **Credibility with State Institutions 15%:**

### **A) government relationships with established working experience** with relevant Uzbek government bodies, such as the Ministry of Economy and Finances, Ministry of Digital Technologies, or local entrepreneurship support agencies; B) **access to government support with ability** to secure government support for startups, such as access to grants, regulatory facilitation, or public-sector partnerships.

### **Strong Network of Mentors and Subject-Matter Experts 15%:**

### **A) mentor pool with strong, established network of at least 20 mentors** with relevant experience in entrepreneurship, business scaling, and investment; B) **subject-matter expertise in green economy and IT sector, with at least 15 experts being able to deliver high-quality workshops; C) international experts:** The partner should have the ability to bring in **regional and international experts** when it’s required by program design.

### **Access to Investment Networks 10%:**

### **A) investor relationships with** established connections with**local and international investors and** should have the capacity to organize investor pitch days and facilitate introductions; B) **proven investment facilitation with** a track record of facilitating **successful funding rounds** for startups, demonstrated by a minimum of **10 deals closed.**

### **Capacity to Deliver and Scale Programs 20%:**

###  **A) organizational capacity with** a dedicated team capable of managing acceleration and incubation programs, with at least **3 full-time staff**focused on program; B) **Infrastructure and Resources with** a **physical co-working spaces** with necessary infrastructure to support the startups; C) **program scalability with** the ability to**scale programs across Uzbekistan,** beyond major cities like Tashkent, to include underserved regions such as Samarkand, Bukhara, Andijan, Ferghana and other entrepreneurial hubs.

#### **5. Application Process**

Interested partners are requested to submit the following:

* A detailed proposal outlining how they plan to implement the program, including a work plan, timeline, and key deliverables.
* A summary of relevant experience and qualifications of the key personnel.
* Two references from similar programs they have supported.
* Detailed information about the organization, its structure, history and other relevant information to make it suitable for the task based on the template #1.
* Detailed financial quote based on the template #2.

#### **6. Reporting and Supervision**

The business partner will report to Regional VA Lead and AP Kyrgyzstan TA Lead and will work closely with the core program team to ensure alignment with the program’s strategic goals.

#### **7. Duration and Location**

This engagement will be for 1 year, with the possibility of extension based on performance. The partner will be based in Uzbekistan but may be required to travel locally and internationally as needed.

*8. Budget and Payment*

AP is open to discussing with the applicants the tasks that could be completed within the given budget. Payment will be made based on the following schedule.

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| **No** | **Deliverable** | **Payment Schedule**  |
| 1. | Signing the agreement | 10% of the total budget |
| 2 | Tech-enabled/IT incubation program conducted at least 40 participants | 35% of the total budget |
| 3 | Tech-enabled/IT acceleration program conducted at least 25 participants | 35% of the total budget |
| 4 | Submitted report and approval | 20% of the total budget |

#### **9. Proposal submission**

Email applications should be forwarded to the Accelerate Prosperity at ap@akdn.org.

Friday, February 28, 2025, before 5 PM Bishkek time.

For questions regarding the assignment please reach out to Bubunur Alibaeva, Regional VA Lead at bubunur.alibaeva@akdn.org.