



# Request for Proposal

## Consultancy for Developing a Feasibility Study on Establishing a Certification System for Genebanks

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR PROVIDER

February 2025

### 1 BACKGROUND

The Global Crop Diversity Trust (Crop Trust) is committed to ensuring the long-term conservation and availability of crop diversity in genebanks for food and nutritional security worldwide. In line with this mission, the Crop Trust is exploring the possibility of establishing and managing a certification system to enhance the transparency, efficiency, and reliability of genebank operations world-wide. The certification system would set benchmarks, recognize excellence, and promote best practices.

A document prepared for the [PRO-GRACE project](#) (“Blueprint for a Genebank Quality Certification System”) has outlined the merits, possible scope and potential components of a genebank certification system in the context of Europe. Building on this foundation, the Crop Trust intends to commission a feasibility study to describe and evaluate the most appropriate options it may have for putting in place a process to develop and implement a system globally. This paper will serve as a basis for consultation with key stakeholders.

### 2 OBJECTIVE

The objective of the proposed consultancy is to develop a comprehensive feasibility study outlining the process that the Crop Trust could follow to establish and manage a certification system for genebanks. The study will address the system's scope, design, operational framework, cost and potential implementation pathways while incorporating insights from existing documentation and selected stakeholders. The study will assess whether the creation of a certification system has a reasonable chance of success given factors like demand, cost, potential risks and technical requirements.

### **3 GENERAL TERMS OF WORKING RELATIONSHIP**

#### **3.1 Working style**

Meetings will need to be conducted during Crop Trust working hours unless prior arrangements are made. As needed, the Consultant must accommodate the working hours of partners.

#### **3.2 Location**

The work will be conducted remotely.

#### **3.3 Contract duration**

The consultancy will last for a period of four (4) months, with the following indicative timeline:

- Week 2: Submission of inception report.
- Weeks 3-7: Literature review, stakeholder consultations, and initial drafting.
- Week 8: Submission of draft feasibility study.
- Weeks 9-10: Feedback integration and finalization of the feasibility study.
- Week 12: Submission of final deliverables and presentation.

There is a possibility of extending the consultancy for an additional month if needed, and if both parties are agreed.

#### **3.4 Travel**

In case travel is needed to fulfill this contract it must be reviewed and approved by the Project Manager prior to implementation. Arrangements on travel to partner countries or to the Crop Trust office will be coordinated with the travel officer of the Crop Trust. Fees related to visa, airport, health testing requirements, flights, and accommodations will be paid by the Crop Trust separately, including allowances for meals and other incidental costs during the travel.

#### **3.5 Use of third-party providers**

The tasks agreed with the Consultant should not be outsourced to a third-party provider.

#### **3.6 Insurance**

The Consultant is responsible for managing their own insurance, including healthcare, travel, pension, and any other insurance necessary for or related to the tasks. The Crop Trust will not compensate for any insurance or damages suffered during the term of the contract.

### **4 SCOPE OF WORK**

The consultant will:

#### **4.1 Collect data**

- Analyze the existing document (“Blueprint for a Genebank Quality Certification System”) from the point of view of the Crop Trust.
- Conduct a review of existing quality management systems and certification frameworks including current certifying and accrediting bodies, their market share and their relative strengths and weaknesses.
- Conduct interviews and/or surveys of selected key experts and stakeholders.
- Assess the practicality and viability of a genebank certification system by analyzing the following:

- a) demand for a certification system for crop genebanks
- b) technical requirements for the implementation of a certification system (skills and competence needed, management and staffing structure, etc.)
- c) financial implications for the establishment and management of a certification system (costs related to staff, operation, etc.)
- d) risks that could threaten the success of a certification system
- e) potential conflict of interests for the Crop Trust

#### **4.2 Define key components of the certification system**

- Propose core elements of the certification system, such as, inter alia, governance structure, quality standards, KPIs and metrics, requirements for certification, assessment processes, and recognition mechanisms.
- Provide options for potential model(s).
- Recommend approaches for implementation, including in phases as necessary.

#### **4.3 Outline implementation pathways**

- Provide a step-by-step process for the Crop trust to pilot and scale the proposed certification system.
- Discuss potential partnerships, funding mechanisms, and institutional arrangements required for the system's sustainability.

#### **4.4 Draft the feasibility study, which should include**

- An introduction to the need, value and purpose of a certification system.
- Key findings from reviews and expert consultations.
- Key findings regarding demand, technical requirements, institutional arrangements, financial implications, funding mechanisms, risks and mitigation strategies and conflicts of interest.
- Proposed process for establishing the certification system.
- Recommendations for next steps and stakeholder engagement.

#### **4.5 Facilitate discussions**

- Present the draft feasibility study to Crop Trust and selected stakeholders for feedback.
- Revise the document based on comments and suggestions.

### **5 DELIVERABLES**

- An inception report, as agreed with the Project Manager, describing the methodology, work plan (including timeline and milestones), and template for the feasibility study document.
- A draft of the feasibility study for review by the Crop Trust and stakeholders.
- A final draft of the feasibility study incorporating feedback and editorial changes so as to make it ready for dissemination.
- A summary presentation of the feasibility study's key findings and recommendations.

## 6 PAYMENT

Payments will be based upon the timely and satisfactory submission of invoices and deliverables, as listed in Section 5, and following the disbursement schedule below:

Deliverable	% Budget
1. An inception report, as agreed with the Project Manager, describing the methodology, work plan (including timeline and milestones), and report template for the feasibility study.	20%
2. A draft of the feasibility study for review by the Crop Trust and stakeholders.	30%
3. A final draft of the feasibility study incorporating feedback and editorial changes so as to make it ready for dissemination.	30%
4. A summary presentation of the feasibility study's key findings and recommendations.	20%
<b>Total % of budget disbursed</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 7 PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

Interested candidates should submit the following:

- A detailed CV highlighting relevant experience.
- A technical proposal outlining the approach, methodology, and work plan for the consultancy (maximum 5 pages).
- A financial proposal detailing consultancy fees and any other costs.
- Examples of previous work related to certification systems.
- Filled out and signed supplier self-assessment
- Signed Declaration of Undertaking

## 8 PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

**8.1 Minimum Requirements:** Applicants must provide the following:

- Example(s) of a quality management system or certification framework they have been involved in developing or implementing, with an **official statement\*** of the exact nature of their contribution. (\*A statement from the organization which commissioned or implemented the QMS to which they contributed.)
- Example(s) of a policy or technical document for which they have been the main author.

Familiarity with standards and international frameworks related to plant genetic resources and biodiversity conservation will be an advantage.

**8.2 Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of:**

- Supplier Self-Assessment (5%)
- Understanding of the scope of work (20%)
- Relevant experience undertaking similar work (25%)
- Expertise and qualifications relevant to conduct the work (30%)
- Cost and cost-effectiveness (20%)

For the above-mentioned items, a series of quantifiers shall be used to objectively evaluate and compare bidder proposals.

## 9 VAT

The Crop Trust has tax exempt status in Germany and is eligible to claim back VAT directly from the Government. Please indicate clearly in your proposal if you will accept our tax exempt status by not charging VAT, and please budget accordingly. If you are not able to accept our tax exemption, the assessment of your offer will be based on gross amounts. Assessments of quotes from German companies are generally based on offers excluding VAT.

## 10 PROPOSAL APPLICATION & SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- 10.1 Tender documentation should demonstrate that the interested supplier satisfies the conditions stated above and is capable of meeting the specifications and timeframes listed in the Terms of Reference. Documentation must also include supporting examples to address the evaluation criteria.
- 10.2 Tender application forms must be **completed in full** – DO NOT refer us to your CV, Technical Proposal or website. Failure to complete the forms in full will mean your application will not be eligible.
- 10.3 Interested applicants are requested to submit their proposals based on the outlined above and the calendar of activities to the procurement office no later than 23:59 CET on 02 March 2025.
- 10.4 The bidders accept to be bound by their proposals for a period of 30 days following the deadline of submitting proposals as indicated in 10.3 above.
- 10.5 Only emails, including proposal documents, sent solely to: [procurement@croptrust.org](mailto:procurement@croptrust.org) will be considered. **Please note, any documents sent (even in copy) to individual members of the Crop Trust, will be automatically excluded from the tender process.**

## 11 General Bidder Information

Please note: for information or feedback on the procurement process, please address your email to [procurement@croptrust.org](mailto:procurement@croptrust.org)

Please be advised that the Crop Trust is not bound to accept any proposal, nor award a contract or purchase order, nor be responsible for any costs associated with bidder's preparation and submission of a proposal, regardless of the outcome or the manner of conducting the selection process.