



# **ASEAN-AUSTRALIA DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION PROGRAM (AADCP) PHASE II**

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **Advisor for Strengthening ASEAN Secretariat Capacity in Ensuring Effective Implementation of the AEC Blueprint 2025**

The ASEAN Secretariat and the Australian Government, through AADCP II, invite applications from ASEAN nationals for the above-referenced consultancy.

#### **I. Background**

ASEAN is currently at a critical juncture of its economic community-building process. While good progress has been made, it is not fast enough and simply not enough. Implementation of key initiatives will need to be accelerated, some of which are critical to realise the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint 2025. Indeed, ASEAN is still lagging in completing some key action lines that would significantly contribute to the achievement of the goals set out in the AEC Blueprint 2025. This includes the enhancement of the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA), addressing Non-tariff Measures (NTMs)/ Non-tariff Barriers (NTBs), advancing the services and investment agenda, achieving meaningful convergence in competition, consumer protection and IPR frameworks, and overall regulatory environment. At the same time, in order to strengthen its position as an open and inclusive economic region, ASEAN needs to ensure the smooth and effective ratification and implementation of major new regional agreements especially the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), EU-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and ASEAN-Canada FTA. In addition, new megatrends and current global developments such as COVID-19 pandemics, are posing disruptive challenges to the progress that ASEAN has made.

Given this background, the role of the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC) has become ever more crucial to support ASEAN navigate through these issues and achieve its goals. This in turn requires ASEC notably the AEC Department to be supported with experienced expert who will provide strategic and policy guidance on the above-mentioned areas as well as on other cross-cutting and emerging issues which are important for the full realization of the vision and mission of the AEC Blueprint 2025.

The ASEAN Secretariat is seeking qualified candidates for the post of **Advisor** to provide the support. The Advisor will be supported by a Senior Project Officer and a Project Officer (both positions will soon be recruited). Reporting to the Deputy Secretary-General for the AEC (DSG AEC), the Advisor will provide strategic, technical and policy advice to the

Secretary General of ASEAN and DSG AEC to ensure effective delivery of ASEAN Secretariat operations and its mandate to support ASEAN Member States (AMS) in its regional economic integration agenda. Specifically, the Advisor is expected to contribute in developing strategies to address relevant pending, cross-cutting and emerging regional economic integration matters/issues particularly those pertaining to trade and investment integration discussed at the Senior Official and Ministerial level.

The Advisor supported by his/her team is also expected to manage and provide strategic and technical guidance on issues related to effective implementation of ASEAN Plus FTAs and the RCEP Agreement including the preparatory works towards the establishment of the RCEP Secretariat. In this regard, the advisor and his/her team are expected to complement ASEC's work by enhancing capacity of Divisions involved in facilitating ratification and implementation of FTAs. This includes strengthening coordination and building the relevant Divisions' in-depth understanding of FTAs requirements and benefits, highlighting the cross-cutting nature of the FTAs to ensure better provision of support to their respective Sectoral Bodies. The team will also develop advocacy and promotional programs to raise awareness of the practical benefits of the FTAs.

In performing its tasks, the Advisor and his/her team will work closely and in coordination with relevant officers of the ASEAN Secretariat where necessary. Specifically, the team will coordinate with

1. AMS and other stakeholders (e.g., ASEAN Dialogue Partners, international organisations, industry, think tanks and civil society) on pending and emerging issues related to ASEAN Economic Integration;
2. Desk officers and/or designated focal points from the three ASEAN community pillars and other relevant desks at ASEC.

The Advisor will be offered a contract until **31 December 2021**, with possibility for extension for another year, subject to funding availability. This is a full-time position based in ASEC, Jakarta, Indonesia. Subject to any applicable COVID-19 travel restrictions, the Advisor will be required to travel intermittently to ASEAN countries as necessary.

## **II. Tasks and Activities**

Under the overall guidance of the DSG AEC, the Advisor will be responsible in leading the development, initiation, and implementation of strategic advisory activities on issues pertaining to regional economic integration particularly those related to trade and investment integration. The Advisor will also lead capacity building and outreach activities.

The Advisor will perform the following tasks:

1. Provide policy and strategic advisory service to the Secretary General of ASEAN and DSG AEC on pending, cross-cutting and emerging issues pertaining to ASEAN Economic Integration particularly those pertaining to trade and investment integration which are crucial in ensuring effective and timely implementation of the AEC Blueprint 2025. This will be performed in close collaboration with the relevant officers from AEC

Department through among others real-time policy advice, sectoral analyses, formulation of actionable documents, and other relevant activities;

2. Strengthen the capacity of the ASEAN Economic Community Department to effectively monitor, support and respond to the evolving policy needs of ASEAN. The advisor will work closely with the Directors of the AEC Department in the identification and/or formulation of relevant capacity building programs, and facilitate delivery of the identified activities as appropriate;
3. Participate in and provide advisory and technical support to relevant ASEAN senior official and ministerial economic meetings upon request of AMS, the Secretary-General of ASEAN, or the DSG AEC;
4. Provide technical advice to the relevant division on negotiations of the ASEAN Plus FTAs, where needed;
5. Provide strategic and policy guidance on activities and matters related to RCEP i.e., its entry into force, implementation, promotional/advocacy activities and potential establishment of the RCEP Secretariat;
6. Perform other duties as assigned by the DSG AEC.

### **III. Reporting**

The Advisor is expected to submit monthly reports summarizing activities undertaken and issues that have arisen. Once approved, the monthly report will be used as basis for payment. The monthly reports will be submitted to the DSG AEC and AADCP II via email.

### **IV. Qualifications and Experience**

Those applying for this consultancy should possess the following qualifications and experience:

- Advanced university degree (Master's or equivalent degree) with academic qualifications in public policy, international cooperation/studies, development economics and/or development studies with a minimum of fifteen (15) years relevant professional experience gained in international/regional development institutions, research institutes, public sector, project management, and development and research consulting.
- Demonstrated in-depth expert knowledge and practical experience in the areas of regional trade and investment integration or Free Trade Agreements, particularly in ASEAN, is preferable.
- Proven leadership role in the areas of regional trade and investment integration or Free Trade Agreements at regional and international level,
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills in a complex organisational and multicultural environment.
- Ability to plan and organise tasks and work flows, with proven ability for multitasking and maintaining accuracy under pressure and adherence to deadlines.
- Excellent command of English, complemented with good oral and written communication skills, as well as strong interpersonal and team skills in cross-cultural environment and international settings.
- Proven ability to work independently as well as in a team in a multicultural environment.

- Flexible, resilient, and adaptable to changing circumstances in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **V. Submission of Application**

Applicants should send their application, highlighting his/her suitability and potential contribution together with a detailed CV and his/her monthly service rate in US Dollar via email to **tender@aadcp2.org**, no later than **1 October 2021 at 05:00pm Jakarta time (GMT +7)**. Please put **“Advisor-Strengthening ASEAN Secretariat Capacity in Ensuring Effective Implementation of the AEC Blueprint 2025”** as the subject of the email.

Please note that the monthly service rate should only include professional fee, including any applicable income tax. Activity costs such as airfares, travel costs and daily subsistence allowance for approved travel will be provided to the Advisor based on the prevailing ASEC rules and rates. The Advisor will also be provided with monthly allowances to cover housing/ accommodation, utilities, and communications. Provision of life and medical insurance coverage as well as children’s education allowance (as applicable) will be according to the prevailing rules and rates.

For Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), please visit <http://aadcp2.org/aadcp-ii-tender-frequently-asked-questions/>

Any queries on the TOR should be sent to **contact@aadcp2.org** with the subject line: **“Advisor-Strengthening ASEAN Secretariat Capacity in Ensuring Effective Implementation of the AEC Blueprint 2025”**.