



CDB PROPEL
OPEN GRANT CALL
INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING FOR MSME DEVELOPMENT

TOTAL GRANT VALUE: USD300,000

APPLICATION DEADLINE: November 16, 2026@11:59pm

WHO WE ARE

CDB Propel, formerly the Caribbean Technological Consultancy Services (CTCS) Network, is the Bank's primary mechanism for mobilising expertise and resources from a broad range of stakeholders, including regional and national institutions that provide technical assistance and/or financing to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, supporting enterprise development across its 19 Borrowing Member Countries (BMCs).

WHAT WE DO

CDB Propel supports the competitiveness of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) while strengthening the capacity of business support organisations and public sector entities to provide high-quality services to MSMEs through targeted technical assistance, workshops, and training attachments.

BACKGROUND

Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) are central to Caribbean growth, employment, innovation and resilience, but continue to face limited access to finance and markets, weak capacity and productivity, low use of data and digital tools, and exposure to economic and climate-related shocks.

Effective MSME support depends on capable public institutions, Business Support Organisations (BSOs), Development Finance Institutions (DFIs), private sector bodies, associations, cooperatives, academic institutions and other intermediaries. Across the Region, these

organisations often face overlapping mandates, uneven capacity, outdated systems, weak coordination and limited use of data and results-based management.

CDB's Strategic Plan 2026-2035 identifies institutional strengthening as essential to resilient, inclusive development. The Project will therefore help selected BMC institutions improve governance, staff capability, systems, data, partnerships and monitoring, thereby increasing the quality, reach and measurable impact of MSME services.

OPPORTUNITY

PROPEL is providing targeted grant-financed technical assistance through competitive Calls for Proposals under its Institutional Strengthening programme. Eligible national and regional institutions will submit applications addressing defined constraints and align with one or more Project components. Applications will be assessed against the established eligibility and evaluation criteria, after which shortlisted applicants will be invited to submit detailed proposals outlining the project scope, budget, implementation schedule, expected results, reporting arrangements and counterpart contributions.

Technical assistance may be delivered by qualified consultants, training providers or other service providers, with beneficiary institutions retaining responsibility for project implementation and coordination.

Beneficiary institutions are required to contribute at least 15% of total eligible project cost, unless otherwise specified in the Call for Proposals. Contributions may comprise cash and eligible in-kind resources. Applicants must identify the source, value and timing of contributions and provide supporting documentation. Detailed requirements regarding valuation, verification and any minimum cash requirement will also be outlined in the Call and financing agreement.

CDB will manage appraisal, approval, fiduciary oversight, quality assurance and portfolio monitoring. Each beneficiary will appoint a project lead, provide counterpart resources, maintain records, manage implementation risks and report on implementation and project results. Financing agreements will establish the governance, procurement, financial management, reporting and remedial arrangements applicable to each project.

EXPECTED IMPACT AND RESULTS

Expected Impact. More effective, inclusive and resilient MSME support ecosystems contribute to improved enterprise productivity, competitiveness and access to finance in participating BMCs.

Expected Outcome. Participating MSME support institutions deliver more coordinated, consistent, data-informed and sustainable services, with stronger integration of gender equality, youth inclusion, digital transformation and climate resilience.

The technical assistance is expected to strengthen governance and operations; improve coordination, data and monitoring; increase service quality and consistency; and integrate inclusion, digitalisation and climate resilience.

Expected changes are: (a) greater use of approved governance and service standards; (b) functional coordination and referral mechanisms; (c) increased use of reliable, disaggregated MSME data; (d) improved service quality through standardised tools and feedback; and (e) systematic integration of gender equality, youth inclusion, digital transformation and climate resilience.

Outputs will comprise completed institutional assessments and action plans; trained staff; upgraded tools, procedures, data and reporting systems; and improved coordination arrangements.

Indicators will measure action-plan completion, achievement of capacity benchmarks, adoption of tools and systems, functional partnerships, timely data-informed reporting, and application of inclusion, digital and climate measures. Each approved project will define baselines, targets, sources, frequency and responsibilities.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Calls for Proposals will address five mutually reinforcing components towards Institutional Strengthening:

Component I: Institutional Diagnostics and Reform Planning. Assess governance, mandates, staffing, service delivery and results management; establish baselines; and produce prioritised action plans with responsibilities, milestones and performance measures.

Component II: Human and Organisational Capacity Development. Provide targeted training, coaching and practical tools in MSME diagnostics, advisory services, results management, inclusion, digital delivery, climate resilience and programme management. Peer learning may be used where justified.

Component III: Systems, Tools and Data Strengthening. Develop or upgrade information systems, databases, intake and diagnostic tools, reporting formats, procedures and service guidelines, with appropriate provisions for data governance, privacy, security, accessibility and continuity.

Component IV: Coordination and Partnerships. Establish or improve forums, referral pathways, partnership protocols and knowledge exchange, with clear roles and information-sharing arrangements.

Component V: Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning. Establish results frameworks, baselines, indicators, feedback, reporting and reviews, with clear data ownership, quality assurance and adaptive-management responsibilities.

TIMELINE

The technical assistance should be for a period of three (3) to nine (9) months.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Applicant/Entity must be a formally registered entity in a CDB BMC operating as a business support organisation, non-governmental organisation, university or community-based organisation mandated to provide technical or financial assistance to MSMEs.
- Eligible applicants may include BSOs, public institutions, statutory bodies, DFIs, membership bodies, associations, cooperatives, academic institutions and regional organisations that provide developmental and technical support to MSMEs in CDB BMCs.
- Applicants/Entities must be able to cover at least fifteen percent (15%) of the total project cost.

Successful applicants must be willing to allow for monitoring and evaluation of the project for impact assessment up to 24 months after the closing of the programme and allow for publishing of non-sensitive business information for programme promotional purposes.

FUNDING INFORMATION

A total of three hundred thousand United States dollars (USD300,000) is allocated for this Call: We invite for consideration applications for grants valued to a maximum of USD40,000 for national projects and a maximum of USD100,000 for regional projects (Entities from at least 3 BMCs);

Entities applying should be able to contribute co-financing (in-kind, etc.) amounting to at least 15% of the total project budget. Grants will be disbursed in tranches with payments tied to project component deliverables and reporting requirements.

INDICATIVE CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF PROJECTS

Criterion	Assessment requirements and indicative evidence
Eligibility and mandatory requirements	Eligible institution, BMC, activity and request; complete authorised application; acceptance of counterpart and reporting requirements. Evidence: legal or institutional documents, mandate, forms and commitment letter.
Strategic alignment, need and readiness	Alignment with CDB and the Call; defined constraint; management commitment, staff, data access and reform authority. Evidence: problem analysis, plans, endorsement, focal point and assessments.

Development impact and results	Credible pathway to measurable institutional and MSME benefits, with realistic indicators, reach and replication. Evidence: results framework, baselines, targets and beneficiary estimates.
Technical feasibility and capacity	Realistic scope, schedule, procurement, staffing, risk management and reporting. Evidence: workplan, implementation arrangements, risk register and relevant experience.
Sustainability, partnerships and value for money	Institutionalisation of systems and skills; clear partner roles; reasonable output-linked costs and prospects for scale. Evidence: sustainability plan, resource commitments, partnership documents and budget.
Inclusion, digitalisation and climate resilience	Proportionate, evidence-based measures and safeguards. Evidence: disaggregated data, inclusion analysis, digital requirements, climate-risk considerations and indicators.
Counterpart contribution	At least 15% of eligible cost unless otherwise specified; identifiable, eligible and available. Evidence: signed commitment, cash evidence and in-kind valuation.
Decision rules	Applications must meet mandatory requirements and achieve at least 70% of available points. CDB may set minimum scores for impact and feasibility. Ties will be resolved by impact, then value for money; time-bound conditions may precede contracting.

EVALUATION, AWARD & CONTRACT INFORMATION

All project applications will be assessed. Shortlisted applications will be required to submit a detailed Technical Assistance (TA) proposal. This proposal would be assessed based on approved established assessment criteria, by the PROPEL Team, with technical input from relevant CDB officers, and external expertise as required. The assessment will include review and scoring of eligible proposals against the approved criteria, identification of strengths, weaknesses and risks, and preparation of recommendations for funding or conditional funding. The PROPEL Team will prepare a consolidated evaluation report containing proposal scores, rankings, recommendations for funding, and any conditions attached to approval. All shortlisted applicants will be notified of the outcome by the 15th of December 2026.

Grant awardees will be required to collaborate with PROPEL to finalise a detailed project Appraisal, covering the project components that will inform the contractual requirements.

APPLY NOW: <https://cdb.submittable.com/submit>