

TERMS OF REFERENCE

European Buyer Recruitment and Trade Mission Coordination for Caribbean Firms in the Agro-Processing and Nutraceutical Sector – the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Belgium and Spain

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Beneficiaries

The primary beneficiaries under this project are firms that produce products in the agro-processing and natural ingredients sector in the CARIFORUM Region (Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and, Trinidad and Tobago) that are exporting or are export ready.

1.2 Contracting Authority

The contracting authority for this assignment is the Caribbean Export Development Agency (*hereinafter* Caribbean Export/the Agency).

1.3 Relevant background

While there is a plethora of market opportunities in the European Union (EU) market which have been made available through the CARIFORUM-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), and although CARIFORUM firms have the ability to produce high quality goods and services, there is still a severe lack of indigenous Caribbean goods and services entering and expanding in the EU market. This is largely due to the fact that regional firms are unable to effectively establish strategic relationships with potential buyers. They also do not have appropriately selected distribution channels and have inadequate in-market support. Under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) Regional Private Sector Development Programme (RPSDP), Caribbean Export endeavors to address these trade barriers for CARIFORUM firms, namely through market penetration activities, which included the delivery of the CARIFORUM - EU Business Forum.

The CARIFORUM-EU Business Forum is an international trade and business development conference designed to connect Caribbean, African, Pacific and European businesses, and to assist CARIFORUM businesses in maximizing the benefits available within the EPA. More specifically, the event was conceptualized to provide a platform for the private sector in the region to realize the full benefits of the

CARIFORUM-EU EPA; establish networks and strategic alliances; and penetrate new markets engendered by better understanding the business environment in the European Union. It also plays a role in positively impacting the business and investment climate in the Caribbean region, through public-private dialogue on trade and investment issues held between Caribbean and International business leaders and trade experts.

The 4th edition of the CARIFORUM-EU Business Forum was held on the 26th to 28th September 2019 in Frankfurt, Germany. It provided up to 93 Caribbean goods and services firms (30 of which were represented by Business Support Organizations (BSOs) or BSO representatives) a platform to meet and engage with European buyers and potential investors. The sectors of focus for the event were 1) alcoholic beverages (primarily rum producers), 2) agro-processors (primarily sauces and condiments), 3) natural ingredients (including cosmetics and nutraceuticals) and 4) creative industries (music, film and animation).

According to feedback provided by 48 Caribbean exhibitors and 31 EU buyer attendees, all four of the Business Forum's main indicators were achieved. That is, (i) to secure business leads, (ii) enhance understanding of product/service entry into EU markets, (iii) enhanced knowledge on trade opportunities with the Caribbean and (iv) overall satisfaction with the Business Forum itself. Up to 138 serious business leads were secured at the Business Forum, with an average of 4 serious business leads made per exhibitor at the event. The full event report will be made available to the selected consultant.

As a follow-up to the 4th CARIFORUM-EU Business Forum, Caribbean Export is planning a series of trade missions to the United Kingdom, Spain, the Netherlands and Belgium. These missions will primarily focus on the beverages, agro-processing, natural ingredients and cosmetics producers. The mission is expected to take place in late June through to early July (actual dates to be confirmed).

2. OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE & EXPECTED RESULTS

2.1 General objective

The overall objective of this project is for selected CARIFORUM exporters in the agro-processing (primarily sauces and condiments) and natural ingredients (nutraceuticals, cosmetics, natural food products) sector to engage EU buyers (retailers, distributors and wholesalers) and secure contracts for their goods in the highlighted markets through targeted one on one meetings in each market.

2.2 Specific Objective

Specifically, this initiative seeks to: retain the services of a consultant (s) who will research and qualify potential EU buyers (retailers, distributors and/or wholesalers) for the agro-processing, cosmetics and natural food sector in each target market interested in buying or distributing CARIFORUM products and; assist in the coordination of a trade mission of CARIFORUM producers to Europe, that includes business to business meetings between the qualified buyers and CARIFORUM exporters.

2.2 Results to be achieved by the consultant:

The consultant will be expected to deliver the following:

- a. Identify and engage with a database of potential EU retail buyers/distributors/wholesalers from the agro-processing, cosmetics and natural product sectors in each target market that expressed a demand for CARIFORUM goods. The consultant must provide a list that includes full contact details and background profile of each potential buyer/distributor. Caribbean Export will provide a full list and detailed profiles along with samples for all participating CARIFORUM firms;
- b. Secure at least 10 buyers/distributors to meet with at least 5 CARIFORUM firms in each target market;
- c. Develop a schedule of Business to Business (B2B) meetings;
- d. Organize and facilitate B2B meetings for each recruited buyer;

- e. Provide on the ground support and coordination to ensure each B2B meeting is executed;
- f. Facilitate engagement with key organisations, such as Chambers of Commerce (among others), with whom sustainable relationships can be built for future missions.

3. ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS

3.1 Assumptions underlying the project intervention

- There is a demand for CARIFORUM products in the selected markets;
- EU buyers are interested in supplying indigenous CARIFORUM products to their customers;
- CARIFORUM firms can meet the quantity and quality requirements (technical regulations and standards) of the European Union markets; and
- The selected CARIFORUM firm profiles that are prepared and provided by Caribbean Export are finalized and of high quality, meeting the information needs of potential buyers;

3.2 Risks

- The major risk is that the above-mentioned assumptions are not fulfilled and therefore the anticipated results and objectives of the project are not realized.
- The Consultant does not find adequate appropriate buyers.
- CARIFORUM states are predominantly small open economies susceptible to many shocks (E.g. exchange rate volatility, natural disasters, excess import dependence) which may adversely affect member states ability to fulfil obligations.

4. SCOPE OF THE WORK

The trade mission will target buyers and distributors in Spain, Netherlands, Belgium and the United Kingdom that are interested in doing business with Caribbean firms.

This consultancy will ensure that:

- EU buyers participating in the mission have expressed a demand for CARIFORUM products by either being an existing buyer/distributor of Caribbean products or have the potential and vested interest to distribute CARIFORUM products within the target markets;

- At least 10 buyers in each target market for the highlighted sector participate in B2B meetings with suppliers from CARIFORUM;
- EU buyers have committed to attend the mission by May 2020. Committed buyers complete the Buyer Registration and pre-assessment forms;
- The product portfolios for participating CARIFORUM Firms are distributed to all EU buyers who will be attending the mission, prior to the meetings;
- CARIFORUM firms participating in the mission have been prepared and are fully knowledgeable on doing business in the EU; and
- Key stakeholders on the ground, such as Chambers of Commerce in each target territory are engaged to ensure continuity of the Agency's efforts in each market.

4.2 Project Management

4.2.1 Responsible Body

The Agency will be responsible for contracting the consultant, and ensuring the required outputs are achieved.

4.2.2 Management structure

The Manager - Competitiveness and Export Promotion will retain overall responsibility for the project and will report on the performance of the project to the Officer-In-Charge. Day-to-day supervision of the activities of the project is the responsibility of the Senior Advisor – Competitiveness and Export Promotion, who will communicate progress to the Manager, Competitiveness and Export Promotion.

5. LOGISTICS AND TIMING

5.1 Location

The assignment is commissioned from Barbados but does not require physical presence in that country to execute the assignment. The consultant must work closely with Caribbean Export's management and staff.

5.2 Commencement date & Period of implementation

The expected duration of this project is **March 6, 2020**, with implementation until **August 31, 2020**.

6. REQUIREMENTS

6.1 Personnel

Qualifications and Experience Required

- I. In-depth knowledge/experience of the retail and distribution channels of the retail food sector within the key European markets;
- II. Demonstrate good understanding of the CARIFORUM private sector and knowledge of the business climate in the region;
- III. Proven experience in coordination trade missions and buyer recruitment exercises;
- IV. Proven experience in working in a consultative role organising and conducting B2B meetings;
- V. Analytical skills, particularly the ability to conduct research and prepare appropriate findings and conclusions; and
- VI. Excellent oral and written communication skills.

6.1 Required Documentation

The Applicant should submit the following in addition to any other relevant supporting documents:

A technical and financial proposal for services should be sent by email to Mrs. Natasha Edwin-Walcott at nwalcott@carib-export.com, copied to Dr. Damie Sinanan at dsinanan@carib-export.com no later than 4:30 pm AST **2nd March, 2020**.

6.2. Office accommodation

No office accommodation at Caribbean Export is required. If accommodation is required, appropriate facility shall be made available.

6.3. Facilities to be provided by the Consultant

The Consultant shall ensure that additional experts, if required are adequately supported and equipped.

He/she shall ensure that there is sufficient administrative, secretarial and interpreting provision to enable him/her to concentrate on his/her primary responsibilities. The Consultant must also transfer funds as necessary to support the activities under the contract and to ensure that all employees are paid regularly and in a timely fashion.

6.4. Equipment

No equipment is to be purchased on behalf of the Contracting Authority/beneficiary country as part of this service contract or transferred to the Contracting Authority/beneficiary country at the end of this contract. Any equipment related to this contract, which is to be acquired by the beneficiary country must be purchased by means of a separate supply tender procedure.

7. REPORTS

7.1. Reporting requirements

The consultant will submit the following reports:

- (a) **Inception Report** to be produced **after one week** from the commencement of implementation. In this report, the consultant shall highlight any difficulties encountered and/or foreseen difficulties in addition to submitting a detailed work schedule. The consultant is advised to proceed with his or her work in the absence of comments by the Contracting Authority to the inception report.
- (b) **Progress Report** containing a detailed itinerary for each buyer/distributor as part of the buyer recruitment exercise including scheduled meetings, appointments dates and times.
- (c) **Final Report** which includes all completed deliverables for final approval from Caribbean Export, final list and profiles of EU buyers/distributors that participated in the mission and should include completed application and pre-assessment forms. This report should be submitted no later than four weeks, after the submission of the completed buyer recruitment exercise listed in the Progress Report.

7.2 Submission & approval of reports

The reports referred to in 7.1 above must be submitted to the Manager, Competitiveness and Export

Promotion with copy to the Senior Advisor – Competitiveness and Export Promotion. All reports must be submitted in English and in electronic format. The Manager, Competitiveness and Export Promotion is responsible for approving all reports.

7.3 Payment Terms

- An initial payment of 30% of the project cost will be made upon delivery and acceptance of the Inception Report which included all foreseen difficulties in completing this project and a detailed work schedule.
- The remaining payments will be disbursed according to submission of Progress Report and Final Report. Payments will be on a performance basis, structured on the number of buyers delivered to the mission as well as the level of support agreed to on the ground in each market (travel expenses should be included in the consultant's expenses).

8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

8.1 Definition of Indicators

Performance on this assignment will be measured by timely and pertinent submission of completed deliverables outlined in Section 7 above and as outlined within the work plan, and that meets or exceeds the expectations of the Executing Agency. Feedback on each submitted deliverable is not a requirement for the continuation of the project, however, comments will be provided in a timely manner. The Contracting Authority will provide feedback to the consultant **within 7 days of receipt** of the final report.

8.2 Special Requirements

None.