

LAC Ex-post Entrepreneurship Research

Notification of deadline extension

To whom it may concern,

Please note the following amendment to the Request for Proposal dated February 28, 2022.

In consideration of the timeframe and logistical challenges that the original RFP deadline for submission may have caused for candidates observing public holiday(s) during the week of Monday, April 11th, 2022, **TechnoServe is hereby extending the deadline for submission to Tuesday, April 19th.**

In the section labeled "Order of Events", the Event "Last date that proposals will be accepted by TechnoServe" should read "4/19/2022".

Request for Proposal

Date: 2/28/2022

Subject: Ex-post research study of entrepreneurship programs in LAC

Introduction: TechnoServe is an international nonprofit organization that helps people lift themselves out of poverty by harnessing the power of the private sector. Operating in almost 30 countries, we work with hardworking women and men in the developing world to build competitive farms, businesses, and industries. By linking people to information, capital, and markets, we have helped millions to create lasting prosperity for their families and communities.

General Requirements: The requirements for TechnoServe's anticipated purchase are listed below. An additional and more detailed Statement of Work is also attached.

This assignment is to conduct a ex-post evaluative study of the business accelerator programs that TechnoServe has operated in Latin America since 2008. This would include the countries Chile, Peru, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama.

Period of Performance: The period of performance of any contract resulting from this solicitation is anticipated to be between the start and end dates listed below. Proposals shall detail the estimated length of time required to accomplish all requirements, with detail on individual activity implementation dates, as referenced in the Scope of Work.

Start Date: 6/15/2022

End Date: 12/31/2022

Proposal Content Instructions: In addition to responding to the Statement of Work, all proposals must:

- Describe the qualifications, experience and capabilities of the firm in providing the type of services being requested by this RFP. Resumes or CVs of "key personnel" shall be submitted as an attachment.

- Include a contact name, email address, and telephone number to facilitate communication between TechnoServe and the submitting organization.
- A brief outline of the company and services offered, including:
 - Full legal name, jurisdiction of incorporation, and address of the company.
 - Full legal name and country of citizenry of company's President, Chief Executive Officer, and/or all other principal officers of the company.
- Year the business was established.

Proposals must contain a detailed cost breakdown with applicable taxes and other charges clearly identified (and be presented in conformity with any further instructions included in the Statement of Work).

To ensure consideration, all quotes must be submitted in the language, currency, and by the due date noted below:

Language: English

Currency: USD

**Submission
Instructions:**

All proposals must be emailed to the address below with your proposal attached in one or more files (PDF preferred). You will receive an auto-confirmation upon receipt. To ensure the integrity of this procurement exercise, DO NOT email your proposal to any employee of TechnoServe or deliver your proposal in hard copy to a TechnoServe office. **Failing to strictly adhere to these instructions may make your proposal ineligible for consideration.**

Email: buy+US+P0008365@tns.org

Order of Events:

This solicitation exercise will be administered in accordance with the following dates (subject to change at TechnoServe's sole discretion):

Date	Event
4/6/2022	Last date that questions will be accepted. Note that questions and answers will be distributed to all interested parties, so questions should not disclose trade secrets, confidential information, or information that might give another vendor a competitive advantage. Questions should be emailed to: jtinker@tns.org
4/8/2022	Date that answers to questions will be distributed to all.
4/15/2022	Last date that proposals will be accepted by TechnoServe.

Terms and Conditions:

- The Request for Proposal is not and shall not be considered an offer by TechnoServe.
- All responses must be received on or before the date and time indicated on the RFP. All late responses will be rejected.
- All unresponsive proposals will be rejected.
- All proposals will be considered binding offers. Prices proposed must be valid for the entire period provided by the respondent or required by the RFP.
- All awards will be subject to TechnoServe contractual terms and conditions and contingent on the availability of donor funding.
- TechnoServe reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal or cancel the solicitation process at any time, without assigning any reason, and shall have no liability to any vendors submitting proposals for such rejection or cancellation of the RFP.
- TechnoServe reserves the right to accept all or part of the proposal when awarding the purchase order/contract.
- All information provided by TechnoServe in this RFP is offered in good faith. Individual items are subject to change at any time and all bidders will be provided with notification of any changes. TechnoServe is not responsible or liable for any use of the information submitted by bidders or for any claims asserted therefrom.
- TechnoServe reserves the right to require any bidder to enter into a non-disclosure agreement.
- The bidders are solely obligated to pay for all costs, of any kind whatsoever, which may be incurred by bidder or any third parties, in connection with the Response. All Responses and supporting documentation shall become the property of TechnoServe, subject to claims of confidentiality in respect of the Response and supporting documentation, which have been clearly marked confidential by the bidder.
- Bidders are required to identify and disclose any actual or potential Conflict of Interest.

Criteria for Selection:

The evaluation of each response to this solicitation will be based on the requirements set out in the Criteria for Selection and according to the requirements in this RFP. At the sole discretion of TechnoServe, the responsive bidders may be selected for follow-up questions or to provide an oral presentation. TechnoServe reserves the right to award the contract to the organization whose proposal is deemed to be in the best interest of and most advantageous to TechnoServe. TechnoServe will not award a contract to any bidder where there is indication of a lack of business integrity. After TechnoServe receives proposals and written evaluations are completed, the selected bidder will be notified. Commitments made by the bidder after selection, and final demonstration will be considered. The following points will be assigned to the proposals for evaluation purposes.

Max Points	Criterion
30	Price, inclusive of all delivery fees and taxes
30	Technical approach
20	Institutional capacity: conducting research CI,PE,SV,GT,NI,HN,PA
20	Past Performance (based on past reports and reference check)

The attached Statement of Work represents an integral part of this solicitation.

EXHIBIT 1: Statement of Work

Performance Location

Remote

Background and Objective

This assignment is to conduct an ex-post evaluative study of the business accelerator programs that TechnoServe has operated in Latin America since 2008. This would include the countries Chile, Peru, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama. The core of the intervention is a graduated model starting with workshops or group trainings, followed by several months of one-on-one aftercare support by a business advisor for selected businesses. The proposed ex-post evaluation would collect data from former program participants as far back as 2011 to come up with an estimate of the sustainability of TechnoServe's impact using the most rigorous methods possible. Specific evaluation questions include:

Primary research questions include:

- Did participation in a TechnoServe business accelerator program lead to improved revenue or job creation? Were these impacts sustained over time?
- Has participation in a TechnoServe business accelerator program helped make entrepreneurs and their businesses more resilient during COVID and other political crises?

Secondary research questions

- What were the characteristics of high and low performing businesses? What makes a business most likely to succeed in business acceleration?
- What aspects of business acceleration lead to the most impact? E.g. training, access to finance, access to markets, fee models, etc.

TechnoServe's business accelerators operate on the basic theory of change that building key managerial skills among entrepreneurs will result in increased revenues and profit, higher job quality, and job creation.

This study would include up to 3500 businesses that graduated from five different accelerators. TechnoServe groups businesses in Latin America into two different segments: microbusiness (<\$25k revenues per year) and small businesses (above \$25k to \$250k per year). The intervention for these two groups differs slightly in content, approach, and intensity. For example, cohorts working with smaller businesses may focus on business management practices and finance, while cohorts working with larger businesses may focus on growth strategies and investment planning. As such, we propose treating the analysis separately for these two segments. The available programs and cohorts available for the evaluation included:

Programs	Country	Description
Emerge	Chile	Operating since 2011 in a partnership with Anglo American to provide enterprise development in communities near mining areas. The program also helps participating businesses to enter the supply chains of various large businesses. Currently in 17 municipalities, all located in urban areas. There are more than 1200 businesses that have graduated since 2016 that could be included in the study. This project had cohorts of both micro and small businesses. Cohorts of 100 to 200 starting every 6 months.
Potencia Patagonia	Chile	Launched in 2013 in partnership with the Chilean Government and the Multilateral Investment Fund in the remote Chilean Patagonia region with a particular focus on access to finance and access to markets. Most businesses are in food, textile, tourism and fish farming industries. There are more than 300 businesses that have graduated since 2016 that could be included in the study. This project had cohorts of both micro and small businesses. Cohorts contained 30 to 50 businesses and started every 6 months.
Impulsa Tu Empresa - Chile	Chile	ITE Chile was delivered between 2014 and 2016 in partnership with the MetLife Foundation in the Metropolitan Region of Chile. In that time the project graduated 576 businesses from 4 separate cohorts. The program provided guidance on foundational business and financial topics to low-income entrepreneurs that run small-scale businesses.
Impulsa Tu Empresa - Central America	Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Panama	Since 2012, ITE has worked in strengthening the business performance of small and growing businesses (SGBs) in Central America while also testing and analysing different and innovative approaches in doing so. To date, through two program iterations, ITE has reached over 1,500 SGBs, 42% led by women.

Participants are typically selected in a two step process. In the first step, participants apply online and are invited to come to an interview if they meet all of the selection criteria (size, geography, availability, sector, etc.). In the interview participants are assessed on their entrepreneurial mindset, commitment, and appetite for growth.

The ex-post evaluation should include all four projects. The evaluators may choose to include all graduating businesses or may propose a sampling strategy. Proposals will be assessed on a cost effectiveness basis relative to the amount of learning we expect the research model to generate.

Evaluation Approach and Methodology

As part of the proposal, applicants should propose their own evaluation methods. The projects did not have control groups and the evaluator will need to construct a counterfactual argument. This likely will require triangulating using multiple methods which may include contribution analysis, benchmarking against publicly available data sources, propensity score matching, or other methods.

TechnoServe can provide the evaluator with:

- Names and contact information for all program graduates (consent to participate in evaluation activities was provided at the time they entered the program).
- All monitoring and evaluation data collected during the course of the project.
- Records from the selection process when available. This includes wait-listed applicants, and applicants that did not meet the selection criteria for location or business size. While this may be used in assessing attribution through a regression discontinuity design, this should not be considered the primary evaluation strategy.
- A TechnoServe employee to serve as the point of contact within each relevant country office to provide timely feedback should the evaluator have any questions about the interventions or the datasets.

Applicants are encouraged to include qualitative methods as part of their methodology.

Contractor Tasks

The contractor will be responsible for designing the research study, collecting all relevant data, and delivering a final report of the findings.

Deliverables

The key deliverables for this evaluations will include but not limited to:

- *Finalized work plan, evaluation methods, and data collection tools:* This should be submitted within 2 months of signing the contract.
- *Monthly progress reports:* After the research activities have launched and until the evaluation report is submitted the evaluator will submit a brief 1-page summary of activities conducted that month. TechnoServe and the evaluator may opt for regularly scheduled check-in calls instead.
- *Draft evaluation report:* A draft evaluation report will be submitted to TechnoServe at least one month before the due date for the final report. TechnoServe can provide a format and guidelines for the evaluation report.
- *Evaluation report:* The final report will be submitted within 12 months of signing the contract unless alternate timelines are agreed upon.
- *Close out meeting:* The engagement will conclude with a meeting in which the evaluation consultants will share their findings directly with TechnoServe leadership and discuss their implications.

Deliverables (continued)

The evaluator will be encouraged to publish their findings in a journal, if possible, or through other channels. TechnoServe is committed to transparency, contributing to public knowledge, and conducting research of the highest integrity. While this research is being funded by a private donor and commissioned through TechnoServe, we invite any measures the evaluators would like to propose to ensure the independence and credibility of their work.

Profile of evaluator/evaluators

The evaluator must demonstrate:

- Strong experience in designing and leading multi-faceted program evaluation that covers multiple geographies.
- The evaluation team must be fluent in Spanish and have experience conducting evaluations in Latin America.
- Proven ability to use quantitative and qualitative methods, with examples and references that can speak to this experience.
- Data analysis and presentation skills, and strong writing ability.
- Experience evaluating entrepreneurship programs, SME growth, or business policy.
- Preference is given to research with a track-record of peer-reviewed publications.

Operation and Logistical Considerations

The lead research on this study may be located anywhere, however, completing the assignment will require in-country data collection, so it is critical to have regional and country-specific experience.

Submission and Evaluation of proposal

Contractors meeting the above criteria are invited to submit a proposal to TechnoServe through our online portal. Questions should be sent to James Tinker (jtinker@tns.org) with the subject line **“Questions on RFP for Latin America Ex-Post Evaluation”** Proposals should be received no later than **April 6, 2022**. The main body of the proposal should not exceed 4,000 words (est. 8 pages) and should include the following:

- A cover letter showing expression of interest and describing relevant experience in research and evaluation related to business development in Latin America.
- A proposed methodology and sampling plan (if applicable) that demonstrates an understanding of these programs and the requirements of the ToR.
- Institutional experience in applying different quantitative and qualitative methodologies (provide some details of specific assignments, challenges encountered and how the challenges were mitigated)
- List of three referees who can attest to your experience and expertise in evaluation. Include contact information (Day time phone numbers and email contacts)
- List of the five relevant assignments assignments or publications that you have undertaken. Please provide links if available.

Appendices (not included in the 4,000 word limit)

- CVs of the evaluator, outlining previous evaluation experience and accomplishments as it relates to demonstrating the skills and knowledge needed to fulfill the requirements of the ToR
- At least two examples of evaluation reports recently completed (These reports would be handled with utmost confidentiality).
- Detailed budget including estimates for key line items including data collection, staff time, and travel.

END OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

LAC Ex-post Entrepreneurship Research - Responses to RFP Questions

What data is collected from applicants?

There is variation between each project. Below is one example from EMERGE Chile.

Nombres
Apellido Paterno
Apellido Materno
Comuna
¿Cómo se enteró del programa Emerge?
Si la opción es "otro", indique ¿Cómo fue?
Indique su nivel educacional
Nombre del negocio
Dirección
Comuna
Rubro
RUT del Negocio
Sitio web (opcional)
¿El negocio cuenta con inicio de actividades ante el SII?
Indicar el PROMEDIO de ventas mensuales de los últimos 6 meses (que sean demostrables con algún medio, puede ser un cuaderno de ventas, el libro de ventas, etc.). Ejemplo de ventas para el cálculo: junio 2016 \$350.000 + julio 2016 \$420.000 + agosto 2016 \$180.000 + septiembre 2016 \$220.000 + octubre 2016 \$310.000 + noviembre 2016 \$345.000 es igual total ventas \$1.826.000 DIVIDIDO POR 6 MESES = \$304.333 promedio mensual. RESPUESTA: 304.333
Número total de trabajadores en el negocio
Número de familiares trabajando en el negocio
¿Cuándo se inició el funcionamiento de su negocio? (Formal o informal)
Descripción del negocio (¿Cuál es la actividad principal del negocio? Máximo 300 palabras)
¿Esta actividad es su principal fuente de ingresos?
¿Tiene alguna actividad paralela?¿Cuál?
¿Tiene un proyecto o idea para hacer crecer su negocio ? (Explique el proyecto o idea) (máximo 300 palabras)
Prefiere trabajar para su emprendimiento en vez de para otras personas

Está dispuesto a asumir un mayor riesgo por su negocio
En su historia como emprendedor ha tenido más de un emprendimiento (no importa el tamaño ni si fue formal o informal)
¿ Qué hace ante cualquier dificultad con el negocio?
Ha tenido logros en base a plantearse objetivos desafiantes
Su nivel de disponibilidad de tiempo para el programa durante la semana
Su nivel de disponibilidad de tiempo para dedicar a otras actividades paralelas en la semana (Familia, Deporte, Trabajos extras, etc.)
Su nivel de dedicación a su negocio / emprendimiento
Su nivel de cumplimiento con los compromisos que asume.
Indique ¿en que nivel usted asume responsabilidades de acuerdo a sus capacidades?
En la actualidad usted está participando de otro programa de desarrollo de emprendimiento (Fosis, Corfo, Sercotec, otro)
Si es "SI", indique cual y las horas de dedicación
¿Es capaz de escribir un mail?
¿Es capaz de adjuntar un archivo a un email?
¿Es capaz de redactar una carta utilizando Word?
¿Sabe buscar información en internet?
¿Sabe utilizar la planilla de cálculo excel? (Sumar, restar, multiplicar, dividir)
VALIDO
NIVEL

What is the budget ceiling for this work?

The budget ceiling is USD 170,000. Proposals will be evaluated on a cost-efficiency basis and it is possible or likely that the winning proposal will not require all of the funds, allowing us to do a second project later.

The RFP mentions the business accelerator program began in 2008, what year did the program end?

EMERGE is our longest-standing accelerator and is still active. I am not certain it was branded as EMERGE in 2008 (it was by 2012) but it grew out of whatever program was active in 2008. Juan Carlos was active in EMERGE, so we would still have people with institutional knowledge from the early days available to you throughout the research project.

The RFP mentions that all monitoring and evaluation data collected during the course of the project can be shared with the evaluator. Is this data in Spanish or English, or both?

Spanish

The end date is listed as 12/31/22 on the RFP but under deliverables the RFP states "Evaluation report: The final report will be submitted within 12 months of signing the contract unless alternate timelines are agreed upon." Can you confirm that we should consider 12/31/22 as the end date for submission of deliverables in our timeline?

We can move the end date back if appropriate.

The RFP mentions that the evaluation team must be fluent in Spanish. Does TNS expect/require the entire team to be fluent in Spanish, or will it accept a team with some fluent Spanish speakers in addition to the strategic use of translators as needed?

We do not require everyone to be fluent. Especially for an evaluation with significant qualitative analysis, having lots of fluency in the senior research team is preferable.