



## Terms of Reference

### General Information

<b>Project</b>	:	Digital Integration for Generating Innovative Work Opportunities (DIGIWORK)
<b>Activity Title</b>	:	Economic Researcher
<b>ToR Number (Please refer to it when applying)</b>	:	TOR/DigiWork/01
<b>Location</b>	:	Palestine
<b>Date of Announcement</b>	:	April 17 <sup>th</sup> 2025

### Leaders International

Leaders International (LI) plans and delivers innovation and economic development interventions with a particular focus on private-sector development, entrepreneurship, job creation, digital transformation, and access to markets. The organization manages a multi-million active portfolio of grants and service contracts to ensure the economy's access to the necessary means and resources for development and economic prosperity. Through its projects, LI leverages its expertise in research, strategy, and management to provide its beneficiaries with sustainable technical and financial assistance and build their capacity and resilience to adapt to different economic challenges.

### Project Background

The project, funded by GIZ, aims to assess trends and opportunities within the digital economy, identify skills needs, and analyze freelancing platforms in the MENA region, with a focus on Palestinian freelancers. This includes mapping sectors, identifying skill gaps, evaluating market demand, and determining barriers to market penetration, especially in payment gateways. The expert will conduct an analysis of the freelancing landscape, evaluate key economic trends, and provide insights to support the development of a strategy to enhance freelancing opportunities for Palestinians.

### Objective

The objective of this role is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of trends in the digital economy and freelancing market, identify promising sectors for freelancing, and skills gaps, and evaluate the platforms relevant to the Palestinian market. The selected expert will provide strategic insights to inform the development of the project framework and action plan.

## Scope of Work

### 1. Market Analysis

- Review global and MENA freelancing trends, in-demand skills, and sector developments.
- Evaluate freelancing platforms (local and international) for relevance and market potential for Palestinian freelancers.
- Identify promising freelancing domains and customer targeting strategies.

### 2. Mapping and Identifying Key Sectors:

- Map out key sectors for freelancing that could include ICT, translation, graphic design, social media, marketing, and data analytics.
- Align findings with previous freelancing initiatives to match international demand with local skills.

### 3. Stakeholder Identification:

- Identify key local and international stakeholders in the freelancing market, including graduates from previous local projects.
- Create a database of key players and stakeholders relevant to the project, including agencies, freelancers, and platform providers.

### 4. Skills Availability and Gaps:

- Analyze local skill availability vs. local and international market demands.
- Analyze key skills required by the freelancing market and recommend best capacity-building measures for Palestinian freelancers.

### 5. Barriers to Market Penetration:

- Identify non-skill-related barriers (regulatory, infrastructure, financial).
- Provide recommendations for overcoming these barriers to facilitate entry into international freelancing markets.

### 6. Digital work/freelance Agency Evaluation

- Assess local/international agency performance on freelancing platforms.
- Identify the key quality standards required and the optimal market positioning for Palestinian agencies.

### 7. Payment Processing

- Explore feasible payment options within the Palestinian context.
- Recommend cost-effective, accessible payment systems.

## 8. Reporting & Recommendations for Training Customization

- Produce a comprehensive report covering current and future trends, gaps, barriers, market opportunities, and AI-related risks, including the perception of Palestinian talent and international willingness for work collaborations.
- Provide strategic recommendations to:
  - Enhance the project's digital work platform, leveraging Palestinian expertise.
  - Guide the beneficiary selection of freelancers and the identification of digital work agencies.
  - Support training curriculum development based on the identified skills gaps, sector trends, and platform requirements, and tailored to international standards and platform-specific standards.
  - Identify best practices considering localization of trends, preferably providing data visualization assessments, summarizing implications & providing policy recommendations for growth, inclusivity, and sustainability.

### Reporting and Coordination

The selected expert (s) will report directly to the DigiWork Project Coordinator at Leaders Organization. Regular updates will be provided through bi-weekly meetings

### Duration of Work

May 2025 - July 2025

### Deliverables:

The selected expert is expected to submit deliverables associated with their Scope of Work, including but not limited to the following:

- **Comprehensive Report:** A detailed analysis of the digital economy and freelancing market, identifying key sectors, stakeholders, skills gaps, and barriers to market penetration.
- **Stakeholder Map:** A database of local and international stakeholders relevant to the freelancing ecosystem.
- **Skill Gap Analysis:** A comprehensive analysis of available skills and gaps, with recommendations for capacity building.
- **Payment Processing Evaluation:** An assessment of feasible payment processing options and associated costs.
- **Recommendations Document:** A document providing strategic recommendations on how to position Palestinian freelancers and agencies for success in international freelancing platforms.
- **Customized Curricula Recommendations:** Inputs and suggestions for training developers to tailor their curricula to better align with freelancing market needs.



## Qualifications Required

The selected expert shall have the following qualifications:

- Education: A degree in Economics, Business, International Development, or a related field. A Master's degree is preferred.
- Experience: At least 5-7+ years of experience in economic research, particularly within the digital economy, freelancing, or similar sectors.
- Strong analytical and research skills, with the ability to synthesize complex data.
- Experience in the MENA region and knowledge of the Palestinian context is highly preferred.
- Familiarity with freelancing platforms and digital economy trends.
- Strong report-writing skills and the ability to present findings clearly to stakeholders.
- Experience in identifying market gaps and developing actionable recommendations.

## Taxes and Other Terms

- The offer should include VAT;
- For individual consultants, Applicable tax laws apply
- Please address the offer to: **Leaders Organization/ DigiWork**
- Please mention the ToR number: **TOR/DigiWork/01** in the email subject
- Please submit your technical and financial offer (**Deliverable Based**), in addition to your company profile or CV (Individual Consultants) to:  
[palestineprocurement@leadersinternational.org](mailto:palestineprocurement@leadersinternational.org), no later than May 1<sup>st</sup> 2025 in **EUR Currency**.