

Terms of Reference

Youth Entrepreneurship Investment Readiness Consultant

Youth Business International

We are the global leader in youth entrepreneurship. For over 25 years we've combined global influence with local knowledge and expertise.

Young entrepreneurs have the power to boost employment and drive economic growth, their fresh perspectives and bold ideas also have the potential to reshape industries and societies for the better.

But for too many young people, starting a business feels out of reach and they need the right support to succeed.

At Youth Business International (YBI) we support aspiring young entrepreneurs around the world to start, scale and sustain their businesses.

We develop and scale the most effective solutions to help young entrepreneurs succeed, from developing business skills, driving innovation and nurturing talent to unlocking finance and access to markets.

Join us to unleash the potential of young entrepreneurs to drive a generation for change.

Background to ToR

Youth Business International (YBI) is committed to strengthening the investment readiness of young entrepreneurs by equipping them with the necessary skills, knowledge, and tools to attract capital, scale their businesses, and sustain impact. This initiative will provide structured learning pathways that enable entrepreneurs to develop investment-readiness, refine their financial structure, navigate diverse funding opportunities, and de-risk their business for the type of finance they are seeking. Targeted businesses for the programme will already be operational, have all the necessary formalities and business systems in place, and already in the market with an established track record and defined market positions. They will be established businesses with a good business foundation for rapid growth.

The programme will be designed to support young entrepreneurs regardless of sector, with investment readiness as the central focus. While elements of climate entrepreneurship investment readiness—such as impact measurement, sustainability-linked financing, and alternative capital pathways—will be included, the broader goal is to ensure accessibility to a wider pool of businesses.

YBI's EYE Academy and Digital Bootcamp will serve as key platforms for delivering this training, making it accessible to young entrepreneurs across YBI's global network. Additionally, the programme will be structured as a scalable, ready-made product for YBI

members, enabling them to independently deliver investment-readiness training to entrepreneurs.

This initiative will follow a Train-of-Trainer (ToT) model, equipping Entrepreneurial Support Organisations (ESOs) with the expertise to facilitate investment-readiness training while ensuring that entrepreneurs remain the primary beneficiaries.

The consultant will be responsible for refining and validating the investment-readiness curriculum, developing a ToT framework, and supporting the integration of the programme into YBI's digital learning platform.

Objectives

The consultant will be responsible for:

1. Developing an investment-readiness curriculum for young entrepreneurs to be ready to get funding, providing a checklist of requirements and corresponding support so they can de-risk their business for different types of financing, covering:
 - Business model refinement and financial structuring refinement for investment
 - Investor communication, deal structuring, and negotiation skills
 - Alternative financing mechanisms (e.g. revenue-based financing, impact-linked finance, social impact bonds, blended capital)
 - Peer-based due diligence models and inclusive investment strategies
 - Impact measurement and reporting, including climate-specific investment considerations where relevant
 - Sign-posting entrepreneurs who are ready for financing to the types of follow-on support they might need on their journey of accessing investment
2. Designing a Train-of-Trainer (ToT) programme for ESOs to equip them with the tools to deliver investment-readiness support to entrepreneurs.
3. Supporting digital integration of the training into YBI's EYE Academy and Digital Bootcamp, making it a scalable and widely accessible learning resource.
4. Developing tailored case studies and developing or identifying existing, suitable investment-readiness assessment tools that entrepreneurs and ESOs can utilise in real-world funding scenarios.
5. Validating the programme through pilot training sessions with ESOs and entrepreneurs, gathering feedback for refinement.

Scope of Work

Phase 1: Programme Development & Digital Integration (Months 1-3)

- Identify the primary types of financing that are the best market fit for high-growth potential entrepreneurs supported by YBI members, and carry out some validation through calls with funders and investors
- Co-create a comprehensive investment-readiness curriculum with three selected ESOs, ensuring alignment with real-world needs, tailored for young entrepreneurs, incorporating:
 - Business model validation for investment attraction
 - Investor engagement strategies
 - Alternative financing models (e.g., crowdfunding, community-ownership models, blended capital approaches)
 - Impact measurement and sustainability-linked financing
- Design a Climate Funder Mapping Tool: A practical tool co-created with ESOs to identify and document relevant climate funding opportunities. The tool will include funder profiles, funding criteria, timelines, and application best practices. The consultant will provide a customisable template and work with ESOs to tailor it to their ecosystems.
- Design a knowledge evaluation framework as part of the curriculum, so YBI can grant certificate/credential to those to complete the programme.
- Work collaboratively with the three ESOs to develop a **Train-of-Trainer (ToT) programme and live training** that reflects practical challenges and solutions, ensuring they can deliver investment-readiness support effectively.
- Work with YBI to define appropriate Creative Commons license for the final product
- Work with YBI's **EYE Academy team** to integrate the training

Deliverables:

- Identification of most relevant types of financing and validation
- Draft Entrepreneur Investment-Readiness programme and curriculum
- Draft Climate Funder Mapping Tool
- Draft of knowledge evaluation framework
- Train-of-Trainer programme for ESOs
- Recommendations for Creative Commons license for the final product
- Integration programme for EYE Academy and digital bootcamp

Phase 2: Pilot Testing & Refinement (Months 4-6)

- Support the same three ESOs involved in Phase 1 to pilot the programme with at least 5 entrepreneurs each, test and refine the curriculum and toolkit.
- Gather feedback and refine materials based on real-world application.
- Feed in relevant investment-readiness best practices developed through established external programmes

Deliverables:

- Pilot Implementation Report
- Revised Investment-Readiness Curriculum & ToT programme

Phase 3: Expansion & ESO Capacity Building (Months 7-9)

- Scale the pilot programme to five ESOs with different operational models and investment-readiness levels, ensuring adaptability and scalability.
- Develop case studies showcasing investment-readiness outcomes.

Deliverables:

- Regional ESO Case Study Report
- ToT programme delivered to an additional five ESOs from within YBI's network, who will go on to deliver the investment-readiness programmes to entrepreneurs in their country

Phase 4: Finalization & Strategic Positioning (Months 9-10)

- Finalise the investment-readiness programme, building in any further refinement, based on learnings from testing in Phase 3.
- Finalise impact assessment reports and framework for ongoing programme evaluation.
- Ensure the final product is aligned with investor and donor expectations.

Deliverables:

- Final Investment-Readiness Programme Package
- Impact Assessment Report & Recommendations

Key Deliverables and Timeline

Phase	Deliverables	Timeline
Phase 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of most relevant types of financing and validation 	Months 1-3

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Entrepreneur Investment-Readiness programme and curriculum • Draft climate funder mapping tool • Draft of knowledge evaluation framework • Train-of-Trainer programme for ESOs • Recommendations for Creative Commons License • Integration programme for EYE Academy and digital bootcamp 	
Phase 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot Implementation Report • Revised Investment-Readiness Curriculum & ToT programme 	Months 4-6
Phase 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional ESO Case Study Report • ToT programme delivered to an additional five ESOs from within YBI's network, who will go on to deliver the investment-readiness programmes to entrepreneurs in their country 	Months 7-9
Phase 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Investment-Readiness Programme Package • Impact Assessment Report & Recommendations 	Months 9-10

Qualifications and Experience Required

Essential:

- Strong expertise in investment-readiness models for SMEs, business finance, and impact measurement
- Strong understanding of funding landscape and a network of different types of funders
- Experience designing training programmes for entrepreneurs and ESOs.
- At least 8+ years of experience in entrepreneurship support, finance, or ecosystem development.
- Excellent facilitation, research, and report-writing skills.

Preferred:

- Experience in climate finance and adaptation funding.
- Background in blended finance mechanisms for small businesses.
- Familiarity with YBI's network and previous ESO engagement.

- Knowledge of digital learning platforms and programme integration.
- Knowledge about Creative Commons licenses

Duration

- **Duration:** 10 months, beginning in June 2025
- **Engagement Model:** Fully remote

Budget

The maximum budget for this consultancy is US \$30,000 (including VAT and taxes)

Submission of proposals

Proposals for conducting this consultancy must be submitted in English to Anna Chojnicka, Head of Responsible Business, at anna.chojnicka@youthbusiness.org by **9.00 am (GMT) on 14 May 2025**.

Proposals must include:

- Technical proposal (max four pages) including: understanding of the work to be completed; methodology; detailed work plan with timeline
- Financial proposal separating out fees and any expenses
- CV (max two pages) for each consultant involved
- Two examples of comparable work
- Two professional references from past engagements

Proposals will be reviewed by YBI's Network Team, and the process may include a short interview call. Outcomes will be communicated to all applicants one week after the application deadline.

For any questions, please contact Anna Chojnicka by email.

Privacy statement

YBI promises to respect any personal data you share with us. We aim to be clear about why we need to collect your data and we will not do anything you wouldn't reasonably expect. We store all data securely and restrict access to only those people necessary. This may include other agencies, which are bound by Confidentiality agreements. In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act, we want and strive to ensure that the data we hold is accurate, adequate, relevant and not excessive. We will only retain it for as long as we need it. Please see our Data Protection policy to find out more.

You have the right to a copy of all the information we hold about you. To obtain a copy, write to the Data Protection Officer at YBI. The most efficient way to do this is by email to info@youthbusiness.org, including the words "**Subject Access Request**" in the *subject line*. We aim to reply as promptly as we can and, in any case, within the legal maximum of 1 month.