



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

1. The Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) invites all eligible individual consultants to submit proposals for the **Consulting Service for Liberalization and FDI Performance: Evidence from the Digital Sector**.
2. The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) is **PhP672,000.00**.
3. Interested consultants must submit the following documents using PIDS the prescribed forms:
 - a) Curriculum Vitae of the proposed Consultant(s)¹
 - b) Technical Proposal Form¹
 - c) Financial Proposal Form¹
 - d) Filled out Data Privacy Notice and Personal Data Protection Form¹
 - e) Statement of Completed contracts²
 - f) Statement of All Ongoing and Awarded But Not Yet Started Contracts²
 - g) Notarized Omnibus Sworn Statement (for ABC above PhP50,000.00)¹
 - h) Income/Business Tax Returns (for ABC above PhP500,000.00)¹
 - i) PhilGEPS Registration Number (certificate or screenshot)¹
 - j) Valid Mayor's/Business Permit (Firm) or BIR Certificate of Registration³ (Individual).
 - k) Image of Official Receipt or Service Invoice (*required for individual consultants during payment*)
4. Interested consultants may obtain further information from the Procurement Management Division at telephone via email at procurement@pids.gov.ph.
5. The Institute shall adopt the Quality-Based Evaluation procedure in selecting consultants based on the attached Terms of Reference.
6. The deadline for submission of proposals is on **05 March 2026 (5:00 PM)** addressed to:

The BAC Chairperson for Consultancy
Services c/o The BAC Secretariat
Procurement Management Division
18/F Three Cyberpod Centris – North Tower, EDSA cor. Quezon Ave., Quezon City

Proposals may also be submitted through email at procurement@pids.gov.ph .

7. PIDS reserves the right to reject any or all of the proposals, declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract if there is evidence of collusion, including any act that restricts, suppresses, or nullifies competition, or if there is a failure to follow the prescribed bidding procedures. PIDS also reserves the right to waive any required formality in the proposals received and select the proposal it determines most advantageous to PIDS.


DR. CONNIE B. DACUYCOY
Chairperson
PIDS-BAC for Consultancy Services

Reference No.:2026-068

¹Applicable for individual consultants and firms

²Applicable for firms only

**Philippine Institute for Development Studies
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Consulting Service
for
Liberalization and FDI Performance: Evidence from the Digital Sector

1. Background and Rationale

The 18th Congress introduced key economic reforms by amending three (3) laws – the Public Service Act (PSA) (RA 11659, 2022), the Foreign Investments Act (FIA) (RA 11647, 2022), and the Retail Trade Liberalization Act (RTLA) (RA 11595, 2021), which liberalized the foreign investment environment of the Philippines. The PSA amendment removed foreign ownership limitations in sectors that are public services but are not considered public utilities, such as telecommunications and transport services. The FIA amendment eased entry barriers to support job creation and technology transfer in small domestic enterprises as well as boost the growth of start-ups or start-up enablers; while the RTLA amendment lowered the capital requirements for foreign retailers to encourage investment, competition, and consumer choice. Despite the reforms that strengthened the policy framework for attracting Foreign direct investment (FDI), the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028 Midterm Update (DepDEV 2025) noted that the country’s FDI share in ASEAN remained modest at 3.16 percent in 2024, below the 5 to 10 percent target and behind regional peers like Singapore and Indonesia.

The FDI performance observed requires a deeper examination of the effect of the policy reforms to date. What are the factors, both internal and external, which could account for the trend? Are there implementation issues or regulatory gaps that have affected FDI flows? These laws are especially relevant to the digital sector, which includes, among others, telecommunications, e-commerce, and digital tech startups. Connectivity and digitalization are part of the transformation agenda outlined in the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028 and President Marcos Jr. emphasized in his first State of the Nation Address the importance of universal connectivity to ensure that digitalization benefits everyone. Based on the data from the ITU, only 6.54 percent of the population had fixed broadband subscriptions in 2023, while 73.72 percent of the population had active mobile broadband subscriptions. In terms of prices, the affordability target set by the UN is 2 percent of the monthly Gross National Income (GNI) per capita, which the Philippines has met for mobile broadband at 1.56 percent. Fixed broadband is still expensive, however, at 4.69 percent. In terms of speed, download and upload speeds for both fixed and mobile are slower than the ASEAN average. Other indicators of the state of digital readiness show that the Philippines ranks 56th out of 69 economies in the 2025 Overall IMD Digital Competitiveness Ranking. Its main weaknesses are in the regulatory framework (67th out of 69), particularly in starting a business and enforcing contracts; scientific concentration (63rd); and other areas such as communications technology (66th) and government cybersecurity capacity (63rd). FDI can help bridge the digital divide, but various factors such as domestic capacities, market conditions, and the regulatory environment affect the attractiveness of an economy to foreign investment in the digital sector (UNCTAD 2025).

Considered game-changing, it is necessary to examine if the key liberalization measures have played a significant role in increasing foreign investment and identify complementary reforms that may be needed to achieve the intended outcomes. The focus is on the digital sector, given its importance as an engine of growth in the 21st century. The study is in line with the Philippine Development Plan, specifically under the Chapter 7 (Reinvigorate Services), Chapter 9 (Promote Trade and Investment), and Chapter 10 (Promote Competition and Improve Regulatory Efficiency), and Chapter 12 (Expand and Upgrade Infrastructure). It also responds to DTI’s recommendation of studying the impacts of the Amended Public Service Act, Amended Foreign Investment Act, and Amended Retail Trade Liberalization Act on investment.

2. Objectives of the study

General Objective

Assess the impact of the economic reforms (i.e., PSA, FIA, RTLA amendments) on foreign direct investment (FDI) performance in the digital sector.

Specific Objectives

- i. Determine the status of implementation and identify the impediments.
- ii. Review the FDI performance in the relevant industries.
- iii. Provide recommendations to improve the effectiveness of policy reforms and increase FDI.

3. Objectives of the Consultancy

The consultancy aims to engage a Consultant who will support the Project Director/Principal Investigator throughout the research study. This includes achieving the study's goals and objectives through involvement in developing the research design and methodology, conducting data collection and analysis, drafting the report, and presentation. His/her expertise will be instrumental in interpreting research findings and making substantive contributions to scholarly outputs.

4. Scope of Work, Deliverables, and Schedule of Payment Releases

Under the guidance and technical oversight of a PIDS Research Fellow who serves as the Project Director/Principal Investigator, the Consultant¹ is expected to work with the Project Team and undertake the following tasks/activities.²

1. Co-write with the Project Director/Principal Investigator, and other members of the study team the required reports and participate in the conduct of project activities such as:
 - a. Desk review of relevant literature
 - b. Data analysis and presentation
 - c. Discussion Paper
 - d. Policy Notes
 - e. Research workshop presentation
 - f. Final research report
 - g. Other documents as required of the Project
2. Liaise with the Project Director/Principal Investigator for their inputs in the reports; consolidate, review, and integrate their submitted outputs, and ensure timely submission of deliverables
3. Provide inputs to a data management and quality control plan, which will be used for data collection, if applicable.
4. Assist in supervising and performing data collection, processing, and analysis; lead the implementation of the research design.
5. Conduct Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) sessions. Prepare/submit the transcript of KIIs and FGDs.

¹ The consultant may be an individual or a firm.

² If the consultant needs to undertake physical/face-to-face interviews and data collection and related activities, the consultant has to ensure compliance with existing and future policies, rules, and resolutions as may be issued by concerned government agencies pertaining to health and safety.

6. Present the findings of the study in a research workshop together with the Project Director/Principal Investigator
7. Sign a Non-Disclosure Undertaking with PIDS. Any information gathered and generated in the implementation of the project shall be processed subject to the applicable provisions of the Republic Act No. 10173, known as the “Data Privacy Act of 2012” and its Implementing Rules and Regulations and relevant issuances of the National Privacy Commission (NPC).
8. Others as may be assigned by the Project Director.

The Consultant will prepare the following outputs based on the schedule below:

Activities and Deliverables	Due Dates	Payment Tranches
REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE Review and synthesis of relevant studies, policies, and regulations.	1 month after signing of contract [Indicative: April 30, 2026]	15%
PROGRESS REPORT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcription of the KIIs and FGDs ³ • Data analysis • Inputs to a data management and quality control plan, if applicable 	2 months after the submission of review of relevant literature [Indicative: June 30, 2026]	25%
PRELIMINARY DRAFT REPORT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inputs to the Draft Report⁴ • Presentation in a Research Workshop 	Draft report: 3 months after the submission of the preliminary progress report [Indicative: September 30, 2026] Research Workshop: TBD Subject to the agreed-upon schedule with the Research Services Department (RSD) [Indicative: September 30, 2026]	35%
PRELIMINARY FINAL REPORT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inputs to the Final Report addressing comments on the Draft Report and comments from the Research Workshop⁵ 	1 month after the submission of preliminary draft report [Indicative: October 31, 2026]	25%

³ The transcription document must not reveal the respondent/resource person's identity, nor allow the identification of the respondent/resource person when put together with other information. As such, the names of specific people (and places, if mentioning it will allow the identification of the respondent/resource person) must be replaced with generic terms (e.g. Respondent 1; Source 1; City 1). A separate masterlist containing the identification key/code shall be submitted as an annex to the transcription. In the report, however, the names of agencies or offices may be disclosed, provided that doing so does not reasonably lead to the identification of the specific respondent. Respondents may also be given the option to consent to the disclosure of their names and/or agency affiliation.

⁴ For applicable outputs, the draft and final reports submitted by the consultants should be aligned with the following guidelines: PIDS' Guide in the Preparation of Manuscript for Publication and General Guidelines in Preparing and Formatting a PIDS Discussion Paper, Guidelines in the preparation of Policy Notes.

⁵ For research outputs that will be released as a PIDS Discussion Paper (DP), the consultant shall prioritize the publication outlets of PIDS, particularly the peer-reviewed Philippine Journal of Development (PJD) and Research Paper Series (RPS). If the DP is not selected by PIDS Management for publication either as a PJD article or an RPS issue, the consultant may identify other dissemination outlets outside of PIDS. Guidelines for Authorship in PIDS Research Projects shall apply.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Note • Terminal Report • Turnover of draft and materials used together with Certification indicating the turnover of as well as the deletion of such data and that it will allow PIDS to verify if the data is complete. 		
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NOTE: Payments will be based on the acceptance and approval by PIDS of the corresponding outputs

5. Qualifications of the Consultant

Preferred qualification of the Consultant:

- At least a Master’s degree in economics, development studies, or related fields
- 6 to 10 years of relevant experience (i.e., exposure to Information and Communication Technology (ICT), digital economy, regulation, competition, investment, and/or economic policy research)

Desirable Qualifications:

- Professional or research experience in ICT sector, digital economy, competition, and regulation
- Advanced technical writing and verbal communication skills.
- Advanced research and project management skills.
- Advanced expertise in stakeholder engagement and knowledge management
- Able to manage queries and correspondence as needed.

6. Project Duration

The engagement will be effective for seven (7) months after the signing of the contract. However, the engagement should not go beyond December 31, 2026. The Consultant’s work must be completed by December 31, 2026, and no person days will be chargeable after this date. The consultant’s engagement will be on a part-time basis.

7. Approved Budget for the Contract

The approved budget for this consulting service is up to PHP 672,000, depending on the qualifications. This amount includes the professional fees of the Consultant. It does not include the costs of data collection, which will be defrayed by PIDS. PIDS shall not cover hospitalization and other COVID-related health expenses of the consultant, as no employer-employee relationship exists between the PIDS and the Consultant.

8. Evaluation Criteria

a. Evaluation Criteria:


Consultants will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Consultant’s Qualifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education 	60%
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<p>At least a Master's degree in economics, development studies, or related fields.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience <p>6 to 10 years of relevant experience (i.e., exposure to ICT, digital economy, regulation, competition, investment, and/or economic policy research)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desirable <p>Professional or research experience in ICT sector, digital economy, competition, and regulation</p> <p>Advanced technical writing and verbal communication skills.</p> <p>Advanced research and project management skills.</p> <p>Advanced expertise in stakeholder engagement and knowledge management</p> <p>Able to manage queries and correspondence as needed.</p>	
<p>Plan of approach and methodology:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Clarity, feasibility, innovativeness, and comprehensiveness of the approach Incisive interpretation of problems and reflection on suggested solutions 	40%
<p>Total</p>	100%

b. Detailed rating sheet (see attached file)

Prepared by: 
RAMONETTE B. SERAFICA
Project Director

Reviewed and approved by: 
CHRISTINE RUTH P. SALAZAR
OIC, Research Services Department