

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Development and implementation of the ARE INVESTMENT ACADEMIES 2024

“Project development and pitch deck writing”

Access to finance training and capacity building programme for local early- stage companies of the decentralised renewable energy sector in Africa

English and French editions

1. Background

Access to finance is one of the key barriers for companies of the decentralised renewable energy (DRE) sector, especially for early-stage, local businesses in Africa. To address this obstacle, the Alliance for Rural Electrification, supported by GET.invest, has developed a series of training and capacity building programmes on improving access to finance for local micro, small and medium-size (MSMEs) DRE companies.

The **Alliance for Rural Electrification** ([ARE](#)) is an international business association that promotes a sustainable decentralised renewable energy industry for the 21st century, activating markets for affordable energy services and creating local jobs and inclusive economies in Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America.

Accelerating the development of sustainable, equitable and private-sector driven local DRE markets is one of ARE's key objectives. To this end, ARE offers a wide range of activities to promote local entrepreneurship, including training and capacity building programmes for local MSMEs on how to access finance for their businesses.

[GET.invest](#) is a European programme that mobilises investment in renewable energy in developing countries, supporting project developers and companies towards investment readiness, and linking them with financiers. GET.invest is funded by the European Union, Germany, Norway, the Netherlands, Sweden and Austria.

As follow-on activity to the virtual ARE Investment Academy on “Improving Access to Finance for DRE SMEs” organised in 2021 and 2022, ARE launches its **Investment Academies 2024** on the topic of “Project Development and Pitch Deck writing”.

2. Objectives and description of the training programme

■ Key objectives of the training programme

- Providing in-depth, practice-oriented and interactive **Project Development and Pitch Deck writing training** for locally owned or led early-stage MSMEs active in the DRE sector in Africa, improving their capabilities to access financing for their businesses and projects and to develop bankable funding proposals.
- Providing an **overview of existing funding sources and financing facilities** and guidance on how to access existing funding sources.
- **Preparing high-potential, high-impact DRE companies for their fundraising journey** and for further capacity building and business advisory offered by other organisations and programmes, such as the **GET.invest Finance Readiness Support**, the **GET.invest Finance Catalyst**, PFAN and others.
- The programme specifically aims to support **women-owned or -led businesses**, targeting 50% women participation.

■ Description of the training programme

In **5 training modules** (three virtual, two in-person sessions), participants will receive intensive training on project development and access to finance-related topics. The training sessions will focus on practical skills development and be as interactive as possible. Theoretical training units will be complemented with a range of practical, interactive activities, including case studies, presentations by guest speakers (industry experts, financiers & investors, peers from the DRE sector), practical exercises, and problem-solving exercises in small groups.

Guest speakers from different financial institutions and funding programmes will present their instruments, investment priorities, and expectations from an attractive funding proposal. Representatives from African DRE SMEs that have done successful fundraising will share their experience and lessons learned.

Participants will be asked to **develop a detailed pitch deck** for their company or investment project **for presentation in a Pitching Session** at the end of the programme. During that session, participants will have the opportunity to pitch their businesses and/or investment projects to a group of financiers who will provide feedback on each pitch and select the most attractive project. The winner of the Pitching Session will be presented in an **Awards Ceremony**.

Upon successful completion of the training, participants will receive a **Certificate**.

There will be an **English edition of the training programme** targeting companies from English-speaking African countries **as well as a French edition** for companies from French-speaking African countries. The two editions will be conducted in parallel.

The number of participants will be limited to 15 companies per cohort, i.e. a total of maximum 30 companies.

■ Indicative dates and training programme

The training will take place during the **period 19th March – 23rd May 2024**, with final dates still to be confirmed.

The training programme will consist of **5 training modules**, with a **combination of virtual and in-person sessions**: (i) the first three modules will be conducted virtually and last 4-5 hours each (including breaks); and (ii) the last two modules will be held in-person on the day before and during the **ARE Energy Access Investment Forum (EAIF) 2024** which takes place from **21st to 23rd May 2024** in **Lagos, Nigeria**.

The indicative training schedule is as follows:

#	Training Module	Date	Time	In-person/ virtual
1	Business model development Business plan development	Tue, 19 th March 2024 (en) Wed, 20 th March 2024 (fr)	14.00 – 18.00 EAT 13.00 – 17.00 GMT	Virtual
2	Business plan development (cont.) Financing plan & financial model	Tue, 2 nd April 2024 (en) Wed, 3 rd April 2024 (fr)	14.00 – 18.00 EAT 13.00 – 17.00 GMT	Virtual
3	Pitch deck writing	Tue, 16 th April 2024 (en) Wed, 17 th April 2024 (fr)	14.00 – 18.00 EAT 13.00 – 17.00 GMT	Virtual
4	Overview of funding sources Financial model deep-dive Pitch deck presentation exercise	Mon, 20 th May 2024 (en & fr in parallel)	9.30 – 17.00 WAT	In-person, ARE EAIF, Lagos, Nigeria
5	Pitching session to financiers & Awards Ceremony Matchmaking opportunities	Wed, 22 nd May 2024 (en) Thur, 23 rd May 2024 (fr)	9.30 – 12.30 WAT 9.30 – 12.30 WAT	In-person, ARE EAIF, Lagos, Nigeria

■ Target companies

The training specifically targets the following companies:

- Locally owned or managed energy access companies from African countries which are providing DRE products and services to rural customers (households and/or businesses) and which are suffering from lack of access to finance
- Eligible technologies: standalone systems (solar lanterns, solar home systems (SHS), etc); micro-/mini-grids; productive use of energy equipment and services; clean cooking (solar cook stoves, electric pressure cookers, etc)
- Early-stage companies (with an annual turnover of less than US\$500,000) with a clear strategic vision and with concrete funding needs (investment project, business expansion, etc)



- Specific focus on women-owned or -led businesses (target: minimum 50% of participating companies) and on young entrepreneurs (below age of 30)
- Priority in the selection process will be given to companies that:
 - Create high environmental & social impact (serving last-mile customers or specifically vulnerable populations; focus on women customers; PUE; job creation; GHG emissions reductions; strengthen climate resilience; etc)
 - Offer productive use of energy (PUE)/income generating energy solutions
 - Have high innovation potential (product/technology, business model, distribution system, financing solutions, digital solutions etc)
 - Have replicable business model with high potential for scaling.

Participants will be selected through a **Call for Expressions of Interest** launched in January 2024. **The number of participants will be limited to up to 15 companies per cohort, i.e. a total of maximum 30 companies.**

3. Objectives of this assignment

The objective of this assignment is to support ARE with the development and successful delivery of the ARE Investment Academies 2024, both the English and the French edition. The ultimate goal is to enhance the participating companies' capabilities to develop well-structured business plans and attractive funding proposals that improve their ability to access funding, and to prepare them for follow-on business advisory support.

4. Scope of works

To support the development and delivery of the ARE Investment Academies 2024, the Trainer is expected to provide the following services:

Under the guidance of ARE,

- Develop the detailed training programme (for both the English and the French editions):
 - structure, topics to be covered, sequence of training units, time schedule, etc
 - content of the individual training sessions, all training materials (session briefs, presentations, case studies, background readings, practical exercises)
 - support ARE with the selection and invitation of guest speakers (financiers & investors, funding programmes, DRE companies, business advisory firms, etc)
 - support ARE with the organisation of the in-person training sessions at EAIF in Lagos, Nigeria, including the Pitching Session and the Awards Ceremony
 - develop a simple scoring system for the assessment of the participants' performance in the training (as basis for training Certificate)
- Deliver the training programme (both the English and the French edition),



- conduct all training modules of the programme, including practical exercises, group discussions etc
 - review the written pitch decks prepared by the participants and provide recommendations on how to improve them
 - moderate, or support ARE with the moderation of, sessions with guest speakers as well as the Pitching Session and the Awards Ceremony
- Support ARE with developing a post-activity survey and with preparing the post-activity report summarising the feedback from participants and key lessons learned.

5. Expected deliverables and timelines

- No later than two (2) weeks from Contract signature, the Trainer shall submit the detailed training programme (structure, topics to be covered, sequence of training units, time schedule, proposed guest speakers, etc) as well as draft training materials
- No later than four (4) weeks from Contract signature, the Trainer shall submit to ARE a draft scoring system for the assessment of participants' performance as well as a draft post-activity survey
- No later than one (1) week before each training session, the Trainer shall submit to ARE the final training materials of the forthcoming session, including a session brief
- The Trainer shall conduct each training session on the agreed dates, including the in-person sessions at EAIF in Lagos, Nigeria
- No later than 15th June 2024, the Trainer shall submit to ARE his/her contribution to the post-activity report (including a summary of the results of the post-activity survey as well as key lessons learned from the training programme)

6. Preparation of Proposal

Bidders are required to submit the following documents to ARE:

- **Technical proposal** of maximum 10 pages, including
 - A brief description of the Bidder's organisation and an outline of recent experience on assignments of a similar nature
 - Any comments or suggestions on the TOR, and a detailed description of the proposed methodology, work plan and timeline for the provision of the services
 - Expertise and experience of the expert(s) who will deliver the services, including CV(s)
 - Estimates of the total time effort to carry out the Assignment



- **Financial proposal** should list all costs (in EUR) associated with the delivery of the training (including travel, accommodation, per-diem etc for in-person training sessions in Lagos, Nigeria).

The Proposal shall be **written in English**.

7. Submission of the Proposal

Both the technical and financial proposals shall be submitted by email to ARE, attn. **Mrs Gabriele Pammesberger** (email: g.pammesberger@ruralelec.org), with **copy to Mr. Jens Jaeger** (email: j.jaeger@ruralelec.org) no later than 18h00 CET on 2 February 2024.

8. Proposal evaluation

A two-stage procedure shall be adopted in evaluating the proposals. The technical evaluation shall be carried out first, followed by the financial evaluation.

Only proposals whose technical score is higher than 70 points (out of 100) will be considered in the next stage, i.e. the financial evaluation.

The selected Bidder is expected to be contracted by **late February 2024**.

9. Fees and payment schedule

The fees quoted in the financial proposal shall be all-inclusive and not subject to change.

Payments will be made upon satisfactory completion of the following delivery milestones:

- 20% of Contract value upon signature of Contract
- 30% of Contract value upon submission of the detailed training programme, the list of proposed guest speakers, and a draft scoring system for the assessment of participants' performance as well as delivery of training modules 1 and 2
- 50% upon successful delivery of all training modules as well as submission of the post-activity report