



CONSORTIUM OF AFRICAN FUNDS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

CAFÉ

A 501(c)(3) Conservation Finance Network

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Development and Implementation of an Online Fundraising Platform

Digital Fundraising and Communications Consultancy

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| Issuing Organization | Consortium of African Funds for the Environment (CAFÉ) |
| Document Title | Terms of Reference – Online Fundraising Platform Development and Implementation |
| Reference Number | CAFÉ/TOR/2026/001 |
| Consultancy Type | Individual Consultant or Consulting Firm |
| Issue Date | 13 April 2026 |
| Submission Deadline | 15 May 2026 |
| Contract Duration | 10 months (with possibility of extension) |
| Primary Contact | Executive Secretary stain@cafeconsortium.org |
| Application Language | English or French |
| Legal Status of Issuer | 501(c)(3) Non-profit Organization |

1. BACKGROUND AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

1.1 About CAFÉ

The Consortium of African Funds for the Environment (CAFÉ) is a membership-based network of African Conservation Trust Funds (CTFs) dedicated to driving nature conservation, environmental sustainability, and community well-being across the African continent. Incorporated as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organisation, CAFÉ operates at the intersection of conservation finance, institutional capacity development, and knowledge management.

CAFÉ's mission is to build a learning community that shares best practices and pursues innovative finance mechanisms to foster conservation, environmental management, and sustainable development in Africa. In executing this mission, CAFÉ serves as a critical convening and facilitation platform, strengthening the institutional capacities of its member CTFs and expanding their access to diversified funding streams.

CAFÉ at a Glance

- 21 member Conservation Trust Funds currently operating in 23 African countries
- 15 Annual General Assemblies convened to date, most recently in August 2025 in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, hosted by the Okapi Fund for Nature Conservation
- Registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organisation
- Core services: networking, capacity development, knowledge exchange, technical assistance, and access to funding opportunities

1.2 Strategic Context and Rationale

To sustain and expand its valuable services and amplify its continental impact, CAFÉ must secure a stable, diversified, and resilient financial base. Achieving this requires the strategic engagement of both public and private sector partners, as well as the mobilisation of internal resources from its expanding membership network.

In an era of rapidly evolving digital philanthropy, leveraging online platforms is no longer optional but essential for international conservation organisations seeking to broaden their outreach, enhance institutional visibility, and attract diversified support. Digital fundraising offers CAFÉ a unique opportunity to harness cutting-edge tools that showcase the achievements and best practices of its member CTFs through compelling storytelling, multimedia content, scientific publications, newsletters, and impact reports.

This initiative draws on internationally recognised best practices in digital philanthropy – including narrative-driven campaign design, multimedia storytelling, peer-to-peer fundraising mechanics, and systematic donor stewardship – to position CAFÉ as a credible, impactful, and inspiring conservation financing platform. The envisaged online fundraising platform will not only generate direct financial support for CAFÉ and its members, but will also significantly enhance the organisation's global visibility, expand its supporter base, and build long-term relationships with individual donors, corporate partners, and philanthropic networks.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

2.1 Overall Objective

The overall objective of this consultancy is to design, develop, and launch a fully functional, secure, and user-friendly online fundraising platform for CAFÉ, enabling the organisation to diversify its revenue streams, enhance its digital presence, and strengthen donor engagement in support of conservation and sustainable development across Africa.

2.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the assignment are to:

1. Conduct a comprehensive digital landscape assessment, including benchmarking of online fundraising practices adopted by organisations such as The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), the IUCN Save Our Species initiative, and leading Conservation Trust Funds globally;
2. Develop a robust, scalable, and accessible online fundraising strategy tailored to CAFÉ's institutional profile, donor base, and programmatic priorities;
3. Design and build a professional online fundraising platform, fully integrated with CAFÉ's existing website and digital communications infrastructure, incorporating best-in-class user experience (UX) and donor journey design;
4. Establish an integrated donor stewardship framework, including acknowledgement workflows, donor reporting systems, and relationship management protocols;
5. Build the internal capacity of CAFÉ Secretariat staff to manage, maintain, and continuously improve the platform following handover;
6. Ensure full legal and regulatory compliance of the platform with applicable US non-profit law (501(c)(3) requirements), international data protection standards (including GDPR where applicable), and payment processing regulations.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

3.1 Phase I: Situational Analysis and Strategy Development (Months 1-2)

The consultant shall carry out the following tasks under Phase I:

- Conduct a stakeholder mapping and donor landscape analysis to identify target donor segments, including individual philanthropists, high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs), corporate sustainability departments, foundations, and diaspora networks;
- Review and benchmark existing online fundraising platforms of comparable conservation and environment organisations, with particular reference to models employed by The Nature Conservancy, GEF Small Grants Programme, African Wildlife Foundation, WWF, and Wildlife Conservation Society;
- Assess CAFÉ's current digital infrastructure, communications assets, brand identity, and content inventory;
- Facilitate consultations with the CAFÉ Secretariat, Governing Board, and selected member CTF representatives to validate priorities and co-design the fundraising strategy;
- Develop a comprehensive Digital Fundraising Strategy document, including platform specifications, content strategy, campaign calendar, revenue projections, and a monitoring and evaluation framework;
- Present the strategy to the CAFÉ Governing Board for review and endorsement.

3.2 Phase II: Platform Design and Development (Months 3-6)

The consultant shall carry out the following tasks under Phase II:

- Design and develop a professional, mobile-responsive online fundraising platform with an intuitive donor experience, including one-time and recurring giving options, dedicated campaign pages, and peer-to-peer fundraising functionality;
- Integrate secure, internationally compliant payment processing systems supporting multiple currencies and payment methods, including major credit/debit cards, digital wallets (PayPal, Stripe), and, where feasible, mobile money platforms common in Africa;
- Develop a donor management back-end, including donor database architecture, automated acknowledgement and receipt generation, and integration with CAFÉ's CRM system or recommendation of an appropriate CRM solution;
- Develop a content library of member CTF profiles, scientific publications summaries, annual reports, and conservation achievement data;
- Design and implement a Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) and digital marketing strategy to drive traffic to the fundraising platform;
- Develop social media integration and fundraising campaign templates for CAFÉ's primary channels (LinkedIn, Facebook, X/Twitter);
- Produce a comprehensive Platform Administration Manual and training materials for the CAFÉ Secretariat.

3.3 Phase III: Pilot Launch, Testing, and Refinement (Months 7-8)

- Execute a controlled pilot launch of the platform, including a targeted soft-launch campaign to CAFÉ's existing networks, partners, and member CTF stakeholders;
- Ensure that payment processing systems are seamlessly integrated with CAFÉ's financial institutions and bank accounts, utilizing efficient and cost-effective tools.
- Conduct user acceptance testing (UAT) and incorporate feedback from diverse user groups, ensuring accessibility for users across different African regions and internet connectivity environments;
- Perform rigorous security testing, including penetration testing and vulnerability assessments, in accordance with industry standards;
- Refine platform functionality, content, and user experience based on pilot feedback and analytics data;
- Deliver hands-on capacity building training sessions for CAFÉ Secretariat staff, covering platform administration, donor communications, campaign management, and reporting.

3.4 Phase IV: Full Launch and Transition (Months 9-10)

- Execute a full public launch of the online fundraising platform, including a flagship inaugural fundraising campaign aligned with a strategic moment in CAFÉ's calendar (e.g., World Environment Day, a major international conservation event, or the Annual General Assembly);
- Implement post-launch monitoring and provide technical support for a minimum of three months following full launch;
- Produce a comprehensive End-of-Assignment Report, including platform documentation, lessons learned, a sustainability and operational continuity plan, and recommendations for future digital fundraising campaigns;
- Facilitate a formal handover of all platform assets, credentials, documentation, and intellectual property to the CAFÉ Secretariat.

4. DELIVERABLES AND TIMELINE

The consultant shall produce the following deliverables in accordance with the indicative timeline below. All deliverables shall be submitted in English and/or French, as agreed with the CAFÉ Secretariat, in both editable and final formats.

| # | Deliverable | Indicative Deadline |
|-----------|--|---------------------|
| D1 | Inception Report: Detailed work plan, methodology, stakeholder consultation schedule, and benchmarking framework | End of Month 1 |
| D2 | Digital Fundraising Strategy: Comprehensive strategy document including donor landscape analysis, platform specifications, content strategy, revenue projections, and M&E framework, endorsed by Executive Committee | End of Month 2 |
| D3 | Platform Design Prototype: Interactive wireframes and design mockups for all key platform pages, submitted for CAFÉ review and approval | End of Month 4 |
| D4 | Content Package: Facilitation/collection of full suite of impact narratives, member CTF profiles, multimedia assets (videos, infographics, interactive maps) | End of Month 5 |
| D5 | Fully Developed Platform: Functional online fundraising platform with all integrations (payment processing, CRM, social media, SEO), tested and ready for pilot launch | End of Month 6 |
| D6 | Pilot Launch Report: Analysis of pilot performance, user acceptance testing results, security assessment findings, and refined platform version | End of Month 8 |
| D7 | Capacity Building Package: Training sessions delivered; Platform Administration Manual, campaign templates, donor stewardship toolkit, and staff competency assessment completed | End of Month 9 |
| D8 | End-of-Assignment Report: Full documentation, lessons learned, sustainability plan, future campaign recommendations, and formal platform handover | End of Month 10 |

5. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND MANAGEMENT

5.1 Reporting Lines

The consultant shall report directly to the CAFÉ Executive Secretary, who will serve as the primary point of contact for the day-to-day management of this assignment. The Executive Secretary will be supported by a Technical Oversight Committee comprising three member CTF representatives with relevant expertise, and two Executive Committee members.

5.2 Responsibilities of CAFÉ

CAFÉ shall be responsible for:

- Providing timely feedback and approvals on all submitted deliverables within agreed review periods (maximum 10 working days per deliverable);
- Facilitating access to relevant institutional documents, data, brand assets, and communications materials;
- Arranging and supporting stakeholder consultations with Executive Committee members and member CTF representatives;
- Providing access to CAFÉ's existing website infrastructure, domain management, and hosting arrangements;
- Ensuring the availability of designated Secretariat staff members for training and capacity building activities;
- Processing payments in accordance with the agreed contract schedule.

5.3 Responsibilities of the Consultant

The consultant shall be responsible for:

- Delivering all outputs in accordance with the agreed scope, quality standards, and timeline;
- Proactively communicating progress, challenges, and proposed solutions to the CAFÉ Executive Secretary;
- Maintaining the highest standards of professional conduct and confidentiality with respect to all institutional, financial, and donor-related information accessed during the assignment;
- Procuring and managing any sub-contractors, third-party software licences, or technical services required to complete the assignment, subject to CAFÉ approval;
- Ensuring compliance with all applicable legal, regulatory, and data protection requirements;
- Transferring all intellectual property rights in deliverables to CAFÉ upon completion.

5.4 Contracting Arrangements

The selected consultant(s) will be engaged under a fixed-price service contract for an initial period of ten (10) months. Payments will be linked to the acceptance of deliverables by CAFÉ in accordance with an agreed payment schedule. CAFÉ reserves the right to withhold or adjust payments in cases of unsatisfactory performance.

6. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

CAFÉ invites applications from qualified individual consultants or consulting firms with demonstrated expertise in digital fundraising, non-profit communications, and platform development. Applicants must meet the following minimum requirements:

6.1 Education

- Advanced university degree (Master's level or equivalent) in Digital Marketing, Communications, Information Technology, Development Studies, Environmental Science, or a closely related field. A Bachelor's degree combined with an additional five (5) years of directly relevant professional experience may be accepted in lieu of an advanced degree.

6.2 Professional Experience

- Minimum of seven (7) years of progressively responsible experience in digital fundraising, online campaign management, or non-profit digital communications, including demonstrable experience in designing and implementing successful online fundraising platforms;
- Demonstrated track record of managing fundraising campaigns for international non-profit, conservation, or environmental organisations; experience with Africa-focused organisations is a significant asset;
- Proven experience in website and web application development, user experience (UX) design, and systems integration, including payment gateways and CRM platforms;
- Strong knowledge of digital marketing disciplines, including SEO, social media advertising, email marketing, and online donor acquisition strategies;
- Experience in developing and delivering institutional capacity building programmes for non-profit staff in digital tools and platforms;
- Familiarity with the international conservation finance landscape, including the structure and operations of Conservation Trust Funds, is highly desirable;
- Prior experience working with organisations funded by or affiliated with entities such as GEF, KfW, AFD, USAID, or major conservation foundations is an advantage.

6.3 Technical Competencies

- Proficiency in web development technologies and content management systems (e.g., WordPress, Drupal, or comparable platforms);
- Experience with fundraising-specific platforms and plugins (e.g., Salesforce NPSP, Raiser's Edge, Bloomerang, Givebutter, Donorbox, Classy, or equivalent);
- Knowledge of data protection regulations, including GDPR and US non-profit compliance requirements under IRS 501(c)(3) guidelines;
- Proficiency in data analytics tools (e.g., Google Analytics, Hotjar, or equivalent) for campaign performance tracking and reporting.

6.4 Language Requirements

- Fluency in English **or** French (written and spoken);
- Fluency in both English and French (written and spoken) will constitute a distinct added advantage, given CAFÉ's operations across both Anglophone and Francophone Africa.

7. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SELECTION PROCESS

Proposals will be evaluated by a CAFÉ Technical Evaluation Committee using a combined technical and financial evaluation methodology. The evaluation will be conducted in two stages: technical evaluation (minimum qualifying score: 70/100) followed by financial evaluation for qualifying applicants.

| Evaluation Criterion | Weight | Specific Assessment Areas |
|--|---------------|--|
| Technical Qualifications | 30% | Relevance of education; depth and breadth of professional experience; specific experience with conservation/environmental organisations and Africa |
| Demonstrated Technical Expertise | 25% | Portfolio of online fundraising platforms developed; evidence of successful campaign outcomes; technical proficiency in relevant platforms and tools |
| Understanding of Assignment & Methodology | 25% | Quality and clarity of proposed methodology; evidence of understanding of CAFÉ's mandate; innovation and feasibility of approach |
| Institutional Capacity (firms only) | 10% | Organisational structure, team qualifications, quality assurance systems, and prior experience in comparable contracts |
| Financial Proposal | 10% | Value for money; transparency and justification of costs; reasonableness relative to scope of work |

CAFÉ reserves the right to request interviews, technical presentations, or demonstrations from shortlisted candidates prior to final selection. CAFÉ is not bound to accept the lowest-priced proposal and will select the candidate offering the best overall value for money.

8. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Interested and qualified applicants are requested to submit a complete application package comprising the following documents:

8.1 Technical Proposal

- Cover letter (maximum two pages) expressing interest and summarising relevant qualifications;
- Detailed technical proposal (maximum fifteen pages, excluding annexes) describing the consultant's understanding of the assignment, proposed methodology, phased work plan with timeline, and risk management approach;
- Portfolio of at least three (3) comparable online fundraising platforms or digital campaigns developed within the past five years, with documented evidence of outcomes achieved;

- Curriculum vitae(s) of key personnel who will be directly involved in the assignment, highlighting relevant qualifications and experience (for consulting firms: CVs for all proposed team members);
- Names and contact details of three (3) professional references, including at least one reference from an international non-profit or conservation organisation.

8.2 Financial Proposal

- Detailed financial proposal with itemised budget, broken down by phase, deliverable, and cost category (professional fees, third-party services, software licences, travel, and other direct costs);
- Proposed payment schedule linked to deliverable milestones;
- Currency of proposal (USD preferred);
- Declaration of any potential conflicts of interest.

8.3 Legal and Administrative Documents

- Certificate of incorporation or business registration (for consulting firms);
- Evidence of tax compliance status;
- Proof of professional indemnity insurance (for consulting firms, minimum coverage to be specified in the contract);
- Signed Declaration of Eligibility confirming that the applicant is not under any sanctions, debarment, or ineligibility status with any international donor or regulatory body.

8.4 Submission Instructions

- All application materials must be submitted electronically in PDF format to: stain@cafeconsortium.org, copying theophile.zognou@fondationtns.org and es.consortiumcafe@gmail.com ;
- The subject line of the email must read: “Application – CAFÉ/TOR/2026/001 – Online Fundraising Platform”;
- Technical and financial proposals must be submitted as separate PDF attachments;
- Late, incomplete, or non-compliant submissions will not be considered;
- Enquiries regarding this ToR may be directed to the CAFÉ Secretariat at stain@cafeconsortium.org no later than ten (10) working days before the submission deadline.

9. ETHICAL STANDARDS, SAFEGUARDS, AND COMPLIANCE

9.1 Code of Conduct

The selected consultant shall adhere to CAFÉ’s institutional Code of Conduct and Ethical Guidelines throughout the duration of the assignment. This includes compliance with CAFÉ’s zero-tolerance policies on fraud, corruption, sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), harassment, and any form of discriminatory conduct.

9.2 Confidentiality and Data Protection

The consultant shall treat all institutional, financial, donor, and member CTF information accessed during the assignment as strictly confidential. A Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) will be required as a condition of contract. The platform must be developed in full compliance with applicable data protection legislation, including the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) for European donors and any applicable African national data protection laws.

9.3 Intellectual Property

All outputs, deliverables, data, code, content, and intellectual property produced under this assignment shall vest exclusively in CAFÉ upon acceptance of the final deliverable. The consultant shall not retain, reuse, or license any such materials for third-party purposes without the prior written consent of CAFÉ.

9.4 Anti-Money Laundering Compliance

Given CAFÉ's status as a 501(c)(3) organisation and its online fundraising activities, the consultant must ensure that the platform incorporates appropriate Know Your Donor (KYD) and anti-money laundering (AML) safeguards in accordance with US Treasury and IRS requirements for tax-exempt organisations, as well as any applicable FATF recommendations.

10. BUDGET AND FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

CAFÉ has allocated a budget envelope for this assignment commensurate with the scope of work described in these ToRs. The indicative budget range will be communicated to shortlisted candidates during the proposal clarification stage. In preparing financial proposals, applicants are advised that:

- All fees should be quoted inclusive of all applicable taxes, in-country costs, and professional overhead;
- Costs related to third-party software licences, platform hosting, and payment processing infrastructure should be itemised separately and shall remain operational assets of CAFÉ upon contract completion;
- CAFÉ will not be responsible for any costs incurred by applicants in the preparation or submission of proposals;
- Payments will be made via international bank transfer within fifteen (15) calendar days of CAFÉ's written acceptance of each deliverable.

11. MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND LEARNING

The consultant shall develop and implement a performance monitoring framework for the online fundraising platform, including the following key performance indicators (KPIs) to be tracked and reported on a quarterly basis following launch:

11.1 Financial Performance KPIs

- Total online revenue generated (disaggregated by donor type, campaign, and geographic region);
- Number of new donors acquired per reporting period;
- Donor retention rate and average gift value;
- Cost per donor acquired and return on investment (ROI) per campaign;
- Percentage of recurring versus one-time donors.

11.2 Digital Engagement KPIs

- Platform visitor traffic (total visits, unique visitors, session duration, and bounce rate);
- Conversion rate from platform visitor to donor;
- Social media reach, engagement rate, and referral traffic generated;
- Search engine ranking for targeted keywords.

11.3 Institutional Capacity KPIs

- Number of CAFÉ Secretariat staff trained and assessed as competent in platform management;
- Member CTF engagement with the platform (number of CTF profiles collected, stories submitted, etc.).

12. GENERAL CONDITIONS AND DISCLAIMER

The following general conditions apply to this procurement process:

7. CAFÉ reserves the right to cancel this procurement process, in whole or in part, at any stage and without prior notice, without incurring any obligation to applicants;
8. CAFÉ reserves the right to extend the submission deadline, modify the scope of work, or re-issue these ToRs if circumstances require;
9. Submission of a proposal does not guarantee the award of a contract;
10. CAFÉ is not bound to accept the lowest-priced proposal and will not enter into correspondence regarding its selection decisions;
11. All information and data provided to the consultant in connection with this assignment remains the exclusive property of CAFÉ;
12. These ToRs do not constitute a contractual offer. A contract will only be formed upon execution of a written service agreement signed by authorised representatives of both parties;
13. The contract will be governed by applicable laws in the jurisdiction agreed between the parties;

14. Canvassing of CAFÉ Governing Board members, Secretariat staff, or member CTF representatives by applicants at any stage of the procurement process will result in immediate disqualification.