



University Grants Commission
Sanothimi, Bhaktapur

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

(Date of Publication: 22 December, 2025)

COUNTRY: NEPAL

NAME OF PROJECT: Nurturing Excellence in Higher Education Program (NEHEP)

Loan No./Credit No./Grant No.: IDA6884-NP

Assignment Title: Consulting service for conducting Beneficiary Satisfaction Survey (Endline)

Reference No.: NEHEP/UGC/CS/CQS-01/082/83

The University Grants Commission (UGC) Nepal has received financing from the World Bank towards the cost of the Nurturing Excellence in Higher Education program (NEHEP) and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services. The consulting services ("the Services") include the conducting endline Beneficiary Satisfaction Survey. The expected start date of assignment is Mid February 2026. The detail TOR of the assignment can be found at the website: www.ugcnepal.edu.np or can be obtained at the address given below.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) now invites eligible consulting firms ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services (criteria related to required qualifications and experience of the firm, but not individual experts' bio data). The shortlisting criteria are: **General experience of consulting firm (25), relevant experience (50) and technical and managerial capability of firm (25)**. Key experts will not be evaluated at shortlisting stage.

Consultant should submit company registration, VAT registration, Tax clearance (FY 2081-82 or time extension letter for tax return), power of attorney and JV agreement (if applicable) for eligibility.

Consultant may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications but should indicate clearly whether the association is in the form of a joint venture and/or sub consultancy.

The attention of interested Firms is drawn to paragraphs 3.14, 3.16 and 3.17 of Section III of the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" Fifth edition September 2023 ("Procurement Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Consultant's Qualifications based Selection (CQS) method set out in the procurement Regulations of the World Bank. Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours 10:00 to 16:00 hours.

Expression of Interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below in person or by email by 05 January, 2026, 16:00 hours Nepal Standard Time.

University Grants Commission

Attn: Prof. Dr. Gyan Bahadur Thapa, Secretary
Sanothimi, Bhaktapur, Nepal, Tel: 01-6638548, 6638549
E-mail: procurement@ugcnepal.edu.np



University Grants Commission

Sanothimi, Bhaktapur

Nurturing Excellence in Higher Education Program

(IDA Credit: 6884-NP)

Terms of Reference (TOR) for conducting Beneficiary Satisfaction Survey (NEHEP/UGC/CS/CQS-01/082/83)


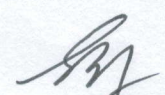
1. Background

University Grants Commission (UGC), is an apex body of higher education in Nepal that provides financial, policy and regulatory support to higher education institutions (HEIs) in Nepal. The main objectives of the UGC are to coordinate among universities; allocate and disburse government grants to Universities and HEIs and take appropriate steps for assurance and enhancement of quality of higher education in these institutions. UGC allocates and releases grants to the universities and their constituent and affiliated campuses. With funding from the World Bank, the UGC is implementing the Nurturing Excellence in Higher Education Program (NEHEP) as an integral part of the National Higher Educational Program (NHEP) initiatives.

The NEHEP supports specific reform initiatives of the NHEP in four Result Areas (RA): RA1 - Improved Labor-market relevance, Entrepreneurship, and Collaborative Research; RA2 - Strengthening Governance and Financing of higher education for Quality Enhancement; RA3: Widening Access to Quality Higher Education for Disadvantaged Students; and RA4: Extending Digitalization of Higher Education. These RAs are clustered around six key performance indicators (KPIs), 17 Intermediate Results Indicators (IRIs) and 19 Disbursement Linked Results following the August 14, 2024 restructuring. These indicators measure the overall progress of the program during implementation and upon completion. Beneficiary Satisfaction Survey (BSS) is one of the key activities of the NEHEP.

This TOR has been prepared for the second beneficiary satisfaction surveys of NEHEP (2021-2026). Initially, three surveys were planned for NEHEP - baseline, mid-implementation and end-of-program period; but due to the delays in the preparation of the second survey, the second and the end-of-program surveys have been combined. The baseline survey was conducted in 2023, and the report is available on the UGC website (www.ugcnepal.edu.np).

This study will be conducted in line with the baseline survey, ensuring effective identification of contextual needs and areas for improving overall satisfaction for future lessons. The study will adopt both quantitative and qualitative research techniques to evaluate beneficiaries' satisfaction towards academic and learning environment in a sample of universities and HEIs in Nepal that received interventions supported by NEHEP to understand the impact of NEHEP on direct and indirect beneficiaries. The proposed satisfaction survey will assess the satisfaction level of the direct beneficiaries, namely, students/graduates, faculty members, academic leaders (including VC, Rector and Registrar), administrative staff, and indirect beneficiaries, i.e. employers and policy makers, in terms of access to and quality of education, teaching & learning, research environment and facilities, governance, alternative modes of learning including digitalization,





collaboration with the stakeholders and employers in terms of their perception and participation in improving the quality of graduates in areas of the NEHEP intervention. The survey findings will provide valuable inputs to the program implementation completion report.

A Consulting Firm with a proven track record of conducting similar surveys will be hired to conduct the satisfaction survey as per the needs, terms and conditions of the UGC, targeting direct and indirect beneficiaries listed above. UGC will engage a consulting firm selected on the basis of a competitive process in accordance with the World Bank's Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, 5th edition September 2023.

2. Objective

Objectives of the NEHEP Beneficiary Satisfaction Survey are to:

- Measure the satisfaction levels of direct and indirect beneficiaries against the baseline benchmarks.
- Assess how the beneficiaries perceive and value interventions under the NEHEP program.
- Examine the extent to which baseline concerns have been addressed during NEHEP implementation and analyze changes in satisfaction over time.
- Identify major issues and areas for improvement to enhance future activities.
- Consolidate lessons learned from NEHEP interventions to institutionalize and sustain effective reforms beyond the program period.

3. Scope of Work:

The survey will employ both qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection and review of secondary information. The Consulting Firm will have to conduct surveys involving students/graduates, faculty members, academic leaders, administrative staff, employers, and policy makers as respondents. The survey will be conducted using a structured questionnaire (draft developed by consultant and approved by UGC) and key informant interviews (KIIs) as well as Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) will be conducted to collect qualitative data. Primary data will be collected through an online survey tool such as Kobo Toolbox while KIIs and FGDs could be conducted in a hybrid mode facilitated by experts.

The evaluation data should be collected so that gathered information supports analysis of all relevant result areas (RAs) and Disbursement Linked Indicators (DLIs) indicated in NEHEP documents. Additionally, secondary information shall be collected from program documents and other relevant documents (which will be provided by UGC). FGDs and non-structured interviews with key informants will provide information on existing teaching and learning practices, industry linkage, employment opportunities, the current higher education system and governance structure, and higher education plans and policies. Also, it shall provide information from fiduciary, environmental and social safeguard perspectives, Code of Conduct, climate change (adaptation and mitigation) and others as required in the program documents.



There are now 13 universities under the federal jurisdiction that receive government grants through UGC. University education is extended through the constituent as well as affiliated campuses of universities, numbering 1,432 Campuses across Nepal (UGC EMIS data, 2023/2024). The affiliated campuses include community and private campuses. Besides, there are 7 university-level degree-awarding health academies and 6 provincial universities. Tribhuvan University, along with the other universities under the federal jurisdiction, as well as their HEIs, including constituent campuses and community campuses, are primary beneficiaries of the NEHEP. Beneficiary institutions are expected to be at various statuses and stages of benefiting from NEHEP programs. The sample should be drawn from all categories of primary beneficiary HEIs in a weighted manner to assess the impact of NEHEP interventions. The sampling methodology should cover some of the same institutions as those included in the baseline survey for comparison purposes. The survey will be done using a specified questionnaire for each target group and FGD, taking into account the questionnaires used in the baseline survey. The firm and the UGC shall finalize the questionnaires and survey instruments.

4. Targeted beneficiary groups:

The targeted beneficiary groups are NEHEP beneficiaries who have been directly benefited through the program's interventions and financial support:

1. Students/graduates
2. Faculty members
3. Academic leaders, including VC, Rector and Registrar
4. Administrative staff
5. Universities/participating HEIs
6. Employers
7. Policy makers

5. Coverage

The surveys must cover the following six Disbursement Link Indicators (DLIs) across the four Result Areas identified for NEHEP interventions:

Result areas (RA)	DLIs
RA 1 : Improved Labor-market relevance, Entrepreneurship, and Collaborative Research	DLI-1 Labor market-driven autonomous programs, faculty members training and academic leaders' sensitization
	DLI-2 Collaborative research and entrepreneurship program
RA 2: Strengthening Governance and Financing of Higher Education for Quality Enhancement	DLI-3 Quality Assurance and Accreditation (QAA), and Quality Enhancement (QE)
	DLI-4 Performance Based Grants
RA 3: Widening Access to Quality Higher Education for Disadvantaged Students	DLI-5 Enrolment of disadvantaged students including in lagging and/or disaster affected



	provinces and remote regions.
RA 4: Extending Digitalization of Higher Education	DLI-6. Online teaching, learning and digitized administration including EMIS and academic networking

Detailed tools and appropriate methodologies will be prepared by the Consultant to start survey activities in consultation with relevant thematic divisions of UGC and the departments/schools of relevant universities/HEIs. UGC will provide letters and documents to facilitate the contact and surveys. The Consultant shall propose a list of employers, which will be discussed with the UGC and finalized. Detailed research questions will be developed jointly by UGC and the Consultant during the preparation of the inception report and the data collection tools, including online data collection methods. All the proposed tools will be discussed with the UGC for finalization.

6. Sampling Methodology and Size

The consulting firm should primarily use the project monitoring and evaluation framework applicable to the World Bank-funded projects, and follow the baseline survey outcomes. The report should cover – Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Sustainability, Impact, Coherence, Coordination, Replicability /extension, institutional governance and transparency, gender and social inclusion.

The following are, but not limited to, general criteria:

- 1) The sample selected for student, faculty and staff surveys must be representative of the beneficiary HEIs across all DLIs of the NEHEP.
- 2) The sample selected for the employer survey must represent different sectors and geographic locations and relevant to graduate employment.
- 3) The sampling and survey methodology adopted should ensure that the sample represents the different beneficiary groups and is of a size sufficient for statistically significant results. The study will be conducted using specified questionnaires for each organization and focus group discussions (FGDs)
- 4) The survey shall be conducted online and face to face for all stakeholder groups followed by in-person or hybrid FGDs with selected stakeholders. UGC will provide the firm with all the necessary information for sampling, survey administration and FGDs. This includes, but is not limited to, names of HEIs along with size of student body, faculty and staff, contact information, employer names, contact and location, introductory letters and scheduling assistance to enable survey administration, etc.
- 5) The firm will clean and analyze the data to ensure satisfaction levels are reported for each stakeholder group and each survey topic. Preliminary findings will be presented to the UGC, and additional analysis and revisions will be included in the final analysis and report. It is essential that the report includes an in-depth interpretation of the quantitative data by results areas and provinces, linking it with findings from the qualitative data to provide clear pictures of beneficiary satisfaction and produce meaningful lessons. All cleaned data will be submitted to the UGC.
- 6) The report and/or presentation summarizing the survey findings will be developed according to a format that is acceptable to the UGC.
- 7) The firm can propose a sampling plan to ensure that the sample selected for the survey represents all types of HEIs involved in the program, following the rules and conditions of a longitudinal study at this mid-term stage.

[Handwritten signatures]

7. Survey Instruments

UGC will provide informational documents related to NEHEP, as well as all available Education Management Information System (EMIS) documents, to the consultant. The consultant is required to design the survey based on these documents. It will be the consultant's responsibility to prepare the initial draft questionnaires and FGD protocols, revising them based on the suggestions from the UGC. Specific questionnaires should be developed for all target groups. In addition to the survey questionnaire, FGD should be arranged for graduate students, faculty members and employers. The methodology will combine personal intercept interviews with online questionnaires to meet the basic requirements of the survey. All survey instruments must be finalized jointly by the UGC, the World Bank and the Consultant.

8. Duties and responsibilities of consulting firm

1. Develop a survey design, including defining the target population, designing the sampling plan, specifying the data collection through hybrid/blended instrument and online survey tools such as Kobo Toolbox, propose analysis plan, and develop a realistic timetable.
2. Ensure that the survey design achieves the highest practical response rates, commensurate with the importance of survey uses.
3. Ensure that survey results are representative of the target population, allowing for confident decision-making.
4. Train the Online Survey facilitators, moderator and other supporting hands who would work in different modes - face to face or online with respondents, in techniques for obtaining respondent cooperation and building rapport with respondents.
5. Develop and finalize questionnaires in consultation with respective thematic divisions/secretariat of UGC.
6. Implement safeguards throughout the research process to ensure that survey data is handled ethically and that confidentiality is maintained.
7. Implement quality and performance measurement and process control systems to monitor data collection activities and integrate them into the data collection process.
8. Pilot test the questionnaires in a small scale.
9. Enter data and provide a cleaned dataset in SPSS, STATA and/or other pre-agreed data analysis formats with UGC.
10. Conduct field and online survey in targeted areas using both quantitative and qualitative approach of data collection as necessary and develop and administer FGD protocols for use in qualitative data collection.
11. Provide a draft report of the survey that includes a description of survey procedures and sampling methods, summary tables, data tables and analysis, findings of the survey, challenges, recommendations, lesson learned, success stories and so on. Deliver a clean version of database in both MS Excel and SPSS formats and,
12. Prepare final report incorporating feedbacks and suggestions and submit the compiled version in both hard copy and electronic version (word) within the contract period.
13. In the final report, the major outputs of this study shall be compared with international practices.

HR
[Signature]



9. Deliverables

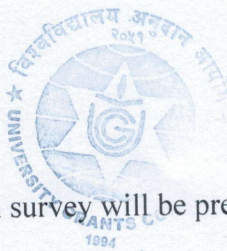
The complete assignment for the consulting firm will include the following deliverables with the allocated timeline with total duration of 4 months after the contract signing:

Task	Details	Timeline
Inception Report	Upon signing the contract, produce an inception report detailing the research design which should include methodology, sampling methods, data collection methods, data collection tools and data analysis plan, supervision and validation of collected data and report writing in close consultation with the UGC.	within 0.5 month
Sampling	Selection of representative samples from each of the groups described. Appropriate sampling weights must be provided, where required.	Within 1 month
Questionnaire design	Prepare separate questionnaires for each group, both in English and Nepali.	within 1 month
Pilot survey	Conduct a pilot survey to test questionnaires and share the results with the UGC.	Within 1.5 months.
Draft Report and database	Draft the report according to structure agreed with the UGC, and provide database of collected data in SPSS/Stata/Excel format	3 months
Final Report	Submit a final report incorporating inputs and comments received from the UGC	4 Months

10. Qualification of the Consultant

The consulting firm should have:

- At least five years of experience in designing, developing and implementing similar surveys, including socio-economic surveys.
- Proven experience in designing, developing and implementing at least two education sector surveys in educational institutions including universities and campuses, public and private agencies and employers' associations.
- Experience in conducting at least two surveys focused on employers.



Experience of similar beneficiary satisfaction survey will be preferred.

Consultant staffing (proposed)

SN	Role	Minimum qualification and experience desired
1	Team Leader/ Senior Researcher (1)	A Master's degree (PhD preferred) in Social Science/Education/Management; having an experience of leading large-scale surveys; having at least 7 years of experience in heading similar research projects and overall experience of 10 years.
2	Researcher (2)	A Master's degree (PhD preferred) in Social Science/Education/Management with minimum 5 years of research experience in the relevant field.
3	Data Analyst (1)	A Master's degree in relevant subject or equivalent with minimum 5 years of data analysis experience in the relevant field.
4	Survey facilitator (1)	At least Bachelor's degree in any discipline with the experience of conducting surveys and data collection of at least two surveys. 11.
5	Data Entry Persons (2)	At least Bachelor's degree with the experience data entry work of one year.
6	Support Staff (1)	A Bachelor's degree in any discipline

11. Duration of the Assignment

The Beneficiary Satisfaction Survey should take up to four months: one month for preparation, one and a half months for field survey, one month for data entry, and half a month for report writing. This survey is expected to be conducted from February 2026- June 2026.

12. Facilities and Guidance to be provided by UGC

UGC will provide the following facilities and guidance:

1. Overseeing the whole survey process.
2. Providing relevant information and data for sample selection and survey administration, as needed.
3. Provide suggestions on technical aspects and issues;
4. Participation in finalization of the sample;
5. Writing letters to the universities, departmental/school head and HEIs to assist the survey firm to get enough cooperation from the institutions.
6. Making timely payments based on agreed schedule and conditions; and
7. Suggesting way out in unforeseeable condition experienced by the consultant.

13. Procedure for Selection of Consultant

The consultant shall be selected based on the selection of Consultant's Qualifications based Selection (CQS) of the World Bank's procurement regulations of IPF borrowers for goods, equipment, works and consulting services, 5th edition September 2023.

HL *by*