

Request for Proposal

Assessment of the Samoa Apprenticeship Scheme and Review of the Samoa Apprenticeship Act 2014

Location	Apia, Samoa - open to hybrid (in person/remote) support
Duration	Up to 13 November 2026 with option to extend based on agreed workplan
Supervisor	CEO, Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour
Eligibility	Open to national and international firms and individuals

About the Program

The Tautai – Governance for Economic Growth Program (Tautai Program) will consolidate and build on Australia’s previous investments supporting the Government of Samoa (GoS) to improve fiscal management and promote equitable economic growth. The Tautai Program will support Australia’s engagement with the GoS and other development partners in policy-driven budget support arrangements, and to complement and support Australia’s other major bilateral investment through the Tautua Samoa Human Development and Social Inclusion program, working in health, education, and social protection. The overall objective of the Tautai Program is: To promote equitable economic recovery and growth in Samoa with improved fiscal efficiency, reducing the country’s vulnerability to debt and external shocks.

The two End of Program Outcomes (EOPOs) are:

- Ministry of Finance (MoF) and the Executive develop and execute annual national budgets with clear policy intent to improve Samoa’s fiscal position and deliver on improved social wellbeing.
- GoS finance and deliver community level economic development that stimulates inclusive broad-based productivity and growth.

There are four (4) pillars of the Program, represented by the four (4) Intermediate Outcomes:

- Fiscal Management - Improved finance sector and whole-of-government coordination and oversight of reforms in revenue collection and public financial management.
- Economic stimulus and investment - Economic stimulus investments delivered by GoS and other partners in line with the Pathway for the Development of Samoa.
- Community and private sector engagement - GoS policy reforms and investment choices informed and supported by industry and the community.
- Multi-stakeholder collaboration - Improved integration and coordination of investments within Government and with external stakeholders.

Background

The Samoa Apprenticeship Scheme was introduced by the Apprenticeship Act 2014 and is one of two primary programs implementing the National Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Strategy and Policy framework 2019-2024. The policy aims to strengthen TVET governance, improve TVET access and enhance TVET relevance to Samoa’s labour

market needs. Along with the TVET courses delivered by the National University of Samoa these programs provide pathways to key skills development.

A TVET policy review in 2022 highlighted challenges including provider quality assurance, student access, employer engagement and financial sustainability. In 2026 the national TVET policy is planned to be reviewed by the Ministry of Education and Culture with support from the Pacific Australia Skills program. This workstream should also inform the review of the apprenticeship scheme.

Additionally, several relevant processes are also in progress including the review of the 1990 Trade Commerce and Industry Act and the 2020 Micro, Small Medium Enterprises Policy and strategy led by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour. This assignment should also be read alongside the Samoa National Workforce Plan 2025/26–2039/40 (NWP), which sets out Samoa's workforce priority skills and immediate, medium-term and long-term skills needs by sector. The Apprenticeship Scheme should align with these priorities.

The Samoa Apprenticeship scheme combines workplace-based learning, technical training, employer participation to support apprentices to gain practical skills and recognised competencies across accredited trades. Governance is coordinated through the Samoa Apprenticeship Council (SAC). In 2022, the program was restructured to strengthen alignment with industry demand and modern TVET practices. The reforms introduced accredited qualification pathways, increased emphasis on workplace-based learning and assessment, stronger employer engagement, and closer integration with national qualifications and quality assurance systems managed by the Samoa Qualifications Authority. The revised model also expanded opportunities in priority sectors such as hospitality, cookery, and tourism.

While these reforms strengthened the practical and industry-focused nature of apprenticeship training there remain areas for improvement. The review is an opportunity to align the program with current policy and national workforce priorities and assess the effectiveness of governance arrangements and delivery model in the context of broader TVET shifts. The nature and range of domestic and international partners and modalities supporting skills development has shifted and includes scholarships, placements, workplace training, certified training, mentoring and coaching. Additional TVET providers have emerged including private colleges providing accredited courses.

New opportunities include emerging industries in the care economy, tourism and related to the district level development program. These provide options to further strengthen inclusion of women and rural populations in skills development to support early childhood education, development of tourism services, and vocational trades. The Samoa Budget FY2025-26 Budget allocated ST100 million for district development and ST\$10 million for government scholarships. There is increased focus on the addressing long standing development challenges on the island of Savaii.

The care economy is a growing sector internationally and increasingly relevant in Samoa. This comprises of early childhood education and care, disability support, aged care, and health care. The national Early Childhood Care and Education framework calls for minimum service standards and an early childhood development workforce plan. Access to services for Persons with Disability in Samoa is limited and the National Policy for 2021-2031 commits to increase enrolment of persons with disabilities in technical and vocational education and training. Samoan workers already participate in the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility aged care expansion program. Eligibility requires the Australian Certificate III in Individual Support (Ageing) and permits qualifications to be delivered in Samoa. The pathway to develop these

occupations in Samoa could include apprenticeship, or an equivalent form of registered workplace-based training.

The tourism and hospitality industry is Samoa's largest services export. The Samoa Tourism Sector Plan 2022-2027 identifies industry training, an annual industry training calendar, and an increase in trained and accredited employees as priorities and identifies the loss of skilled staff to seasonal labour mobility as a sector risk. Samoa's first national Tourism policy is in draft led by the Samoa Tourism Authority. This includes consideration of reforms to better integrate the sector into a whole of government approach. The programs of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour (MCIL) are particularly relevant. The Samoa Qualifications Authority has established Qualifications and National Competency Standards in tourism at Certificate levels I to IV, endorsed by the Tourism and Hospitality Sector Advisory Group. The review is an opportunity to assess the potential of the apprenticeship scheme to support tourism including extended access for hotel, restaurant, tour operators and guides to participate on the same basis as trades employers.

MCIL performance reporting in the FY2025-26 Approved Budget records new apprentice entrants for 2024-2025 at approximately 95% male and 5% female. This indicates a significant opportunity to improve the participation of women by considering barriers such as eligible occupations, barriers within specific occupations, mechanisms and training delivery modalities. Remote courses, night classes and accreditation of additional training providers are options to increase access by women and rural populations living away from the Apia Urban Area where TVET schools are concentrated. Subsidy settings and occupational coverage are also factors. The FY2025-26 Budget Address revised the apprenticeship cost share, reducing the apprentice contribution from 20% to 5% and raising the government contribution from 50% to 65%, to address capacity constraints in the construction industry.

Increased access to climate resilient and digital transformation skills are in need across and within sectors. The role of the Apprenticeship Scheme in Samoa's response to climate change, energy transition and digital transformation is an important consideration. The review is an opportunity to consider occupational coverage of emerging skills in future training pathways. This includes green trades, digital capabilities, e-commerce and modern workplace practices.

Purpose

Assess the Samoa Apprenticeship Scheme and identify practical evidence-informed recommendations to improve the relevance and responsiveness to Samoa's evolving context, workforce and economic priorities. This includes strengthening governance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and responsiveness to Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI), safeguarding and climate change.

Scope of Services

The assignment will include a broad assessment of the Samoa Apprenticeship Scheme and make practical findings and recommendations for improvement at levels including policy, legislative, resourcing and operational. The assessment will draw on document review, relevant national policy and parallel policy processes, stakeholder consultation and available performance data. It will consider areas of divergence and convergence across stakeholder groups including male/female, rural/urban, persons with disabilities, employers' organisations, training providers (existing and potential), and different regulatory and policy agencies. Recommendations should include a strong focus on sustainability, including strengthening

investment in apprenticeships by individuals, businesses, public bodies and communities. The outputs of the assessment are intended to be shared with Ministries, the schemes Governing body and inform apprenticeship stakeholders.

The specific objectives:

- 1. Assessment and diagnostic review:** Assess the performance, relevance and effectiveness of the Samoa Apprenticeship Scheme, including its governance, administration, training delivery, workplace learning and assessment arrangements.
 - Review the alignment of the Samoa Apprenticeship Scheme with relevant national policies linking with relevant ongoing reviews and policy processes to assess the design, governance and administration and the roles and responsibilities of SAC, MCIL, training providers, employers, apprentices and other relevant institutions.
 - Assess the effectiveness of current implementation arrangements, including apprenticeship registration, employer participation, training delivery, workplace learning, workplace assessment, monitoring, reporting and compliance processes.
 - Identify key strengths, challenges, gaps and opportunities affecting the quality, consistency, accessibility, equity and sustainability of the Scheme. This includes considering how the Scheme is designed, governed and delivered, to identify improvements to enhance industry relevance, quality apprenticeship training, workplace learning and assessment, stronger employer and apprentice participation, inclusive access for women, young people, rural populations, persons with disabilities and other under-represented groups, and efficient administration and compliance.
 - Assess the adequacy of resources, incentives and support arrangements for employers, apprentices and training providers, including the government tuition subsidy and shared contribution arrangements where applicable.
 - Assess the adequacy of the supply and capability of qualified workplace trainers and assessors to support the Scheme and any future occupational expansion, noting that the Samoa National Workforce Plan identifies TVET educators and trainers as an immediate national workforce priority.
 - Review and consider findings, recommendations and emerging priorities from the National TVET Strategy and Policy Review to support coherence of the Apprenticeship Scheme with the broader TVET system. Identify opportunities for the Scheme to contribute to emerging TVET priorities, including in relation to governance, institutional roles, industry engagement and financing.
- 2. Stakeholder engagement and evidence gathering:** Identify operational challenges, opportunities and resource requirements affecting apprentices, employers, training providers, industries, SAC, MCIL and other administering agencies and stakeholders.
 - Consult apprentices, registered employers, industry representatives, SAC, MCIL, NUS, SQA and other relevant stakeholders to understand the Scheme's strengths, challenges, gaps and opportunities.
 - Engage relevant stakeholders in the care, tourism, hospitality, ICT and other priority sectors, including MEC, Ministry of Health, MFSA, Pacific Australia Skills, Samoa Tourism Authority, Samoa Chamber of Commerce and Industry, NOLA, service providers and other organisations representing persons with disabilities.

- Ensure stakeholder consultations are inclusive, accessible and culturally appropriate and safe, with reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities and meaningful opportunities for women, young people and other under-represented groups to participate and provide feedback.
 - Analyse stakeholder feedback and available administrative, financial and performance data, including disaggregated data where available, to identify participation, retention, completion, employment, accessibility, quality, consistency, equity and sustainability gaps.
 - Apply an intersectional GEDSI analysis to understand barriers affecting access, participation and completion, including those related to gender, age, disability, geographic location, socioeconomic circumstances and caring responsibilities.
 - Participate, where appropriate and feasible, in coordination and information-sharing with relevant initiatives, including the National TVET Strategy Review, on shared areas such as TVET governance and institutional roles, industry engagement and representation, skills-to-jobs pathways and work-based learning, financing and financial sustainability, and emerging occupational and future skills priorities.
- 3. Review the 2022 reforms:** Consider and assess implementation of the reformulated apprenticeship structure, workplace-based learning requirements, three-year competency framework, and formal workplace assessment arrangements.
- Assess whether the reformulated structure is clearly understood and consistently applied by employers, apprentices, training providers and administering agencies.
 - Identify operational, policy, resourcing or implementation adjustments required to strengthen the effectiveness and consistency of the revised model.
- 4. Occupational coverage:** Assess coverage and future workforce needs, including opportunities to expand structured workplace-based training into priority occupations and sectors identified in the Samoa National Workforce Plan (NWP) and other national and sector plans, while considering GEDSI, safeguarding, climate and green skills, and qualification recognition and portability.
- Map occupations currently covered by the Scheme against Samoa's labour market demand, employer needs, national and sector plans (including the national workforce priority skills and immediate/medium/long-term skills needs identified in Tables 1-3 of the Samoa National Workforce Plan 2025/26–2039/40), and the Samoa Qualifications Framework, and identify priority occupations outside current coverage.
 - Assess opportunities and feasibility of extending apprenticeship, or an equivalent structured workplace-based training to priority occupations, including care economy occupations such as early childhood education and care, disability support, aged care, and health care support roles.
 - Assess opportunities to strengthen pathways in tourism and hospitality, including commercial cookery, food and beverage service, front office, housekeeping and tour guiding, taking account of existing qualifications, employer demand, seasonality, small and micro enterprises, and village-based and beach fale operations.

- Consider ICT and digital occupations where supported by labour market demand and stakeholder evidence, including the availability of relevant qualifications, training providers and suitable workplace learning opportunities.
- Consider whether occupational coverage should also extend to other sectors identified as having immediate or medium-term workforce shortages in the Samoa National Workforce Plan but not otherwise addressed in this scope of services, such as agriculture and fisheries, transport and infrastructure trades, energy, manufacturing, and water and sanitation, and confirm the basis on which the care economy, tourism/hospitality, ICT and green trades have been prioritised ahead of these.
- Identify opportunities to incorporate climate change, green skills and green trades into apprenticeship pathways, workplace learning and future workforce planning, including skills relevant to climate adaptation, energy transition, resilience and sustainable economic development, such as solar technicians and EV mechanics.
- Assess safeguarding requirements and risks associated with expanded occupational coverage, including work with children, older people and persons with disabilities, as well as risks affecting apprentices such as sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, bullying, discrimination and other work harm.
- Assess the implications of expanded occupational coverage for the participation of women, youth, persons with disabilities and other under-represented groups, including measures to reduce occupational segregation and support equitable participation.
- Consider implications for qualification recognition, portability, labour mobility and retention of trained workers, including alignment with Australian and New Zealand qualifications where relevant.
- Assess the provider capacity, workplace capacity, resourcing and funding implications of any recommended changes to occupational coverage, including the government tuition subsidy, employer incentives, workplace assessors, and SAC and MCIL administrative capacity.
- Assess how domestic care pathways would interact with labour mobility, including the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility arrangements in aged care and early childhood education and care, and identify options for qualification recognition, credit transfer, and retention of trained workers in the domestic care workforce.
- Establish how the Scheme currently serves the tourism and hospitality sector and how it could be better targeted to it. This should consider use of the existing Samoa Qualifications and National Competency Standards in tourism and hospitality at Certificate Levels I to IV, the suitability of the current apprenticeship duration and the balance between theory and workplace hours for occupations such as commercial cookery, food and beverage service, front office, housekeeping, and tour guiding, and the treatment of seasonality, small and micro enterprises, and village-based and beach fale operations.
- Consult the Samoa Tourism Authority, hotel and hospitality industry representatives, and tourism employers on demand for a registered workplace-based training pathway, on the workforce priorities in the Samoa Tourism Sector

Plan 2022-2027, and on the barriers that have limited tourism and hospitality employer participation in the Scheme to date.

5. Legislative and regulatory review: Review the legislative, regulatory, and policy framework supporting the Scheme and identify changes required to strengthen governance, coordination, accountability and future delivery.

- Consult with the Office of the Attorney General on required legislative review processes, identify relevant associated legislative review process, and obtain guidance on preferred timing to inform advice
- Review the Apprenticeship Act 2014 and associated Regulations against the findings of the Scheme assessment to determine whether the current legal framework supports existing and future apprenticeship delivery arrangements. Consider implications of related legislative reforms including the TCI Act and National OSH Policy.
- Identify legislative, regulatory and policy gaps relating to governance, institutional mandates, apprenticeship contracts, employer and apprentice obligations, dispute resolution, compliance, workplace assessment, data collection and reporting.
- Assess whether the legislative and regulatory framework enable the inclusion of occupations beyond traditional trades, including service and care occupations, and identify any amendments required. This should consider the definitions of trade, apprentice and apprenticeship; mechanisms for designating occupations; employer registration and eligibility, including public, church-based and not-for-profit employers; qualification and supervision requirements for workplace trainers and assessors; screening, safeguarding and workplace protections; and relevant interactions with the Labour and Employment Relations Act, education legislation, and health professional registration requirements.
- Develop recommendations for amendments to the Act, Regulations or related administrative instruments where required to strengthen the Scheme's effectiveness, accountability and sustainability.

6. Analysis, options and validation: Assess monitoring, reporting, compliance and funding arrangements and develop practical, evidence-based options and recommendations to strengthen the Scheme's effectiveness, sustainability, transparency and value for money.

- Summarise key evidence from document review, stakeholder consultations, administrative and performance data, and legal analysis to develop key findings and practical options to strengthen the Scheme.
- Develop recommendations on governance, implementation, occupational coverage, resourcing, funding, GEDSI, safeguarding, climate and green skills, and the legislative and regulatory framework.
- Assess the feasibility, sustainability and potential implications of proposed options, including impacts on SAC, MCIL, employers, training providers and apprentices. Provide economic modelling of scenarios to inform decision makers and budget managers.
- Validate preliminary findings and recommendations with key stakeholders and incorporate relevant feedback into the final assessment and recommendations.

Selection Criteria

Potential Suppliers must address the following criteria in their submission.

- **Expertise.** Demonstrated qualifications and technical expertise relevant to the assessment of apprenticeship, labour market, workforce development, public policy, institutional governance and legal or regulatory reform. The proposed team should include personnel with appropriate academic qualifications and practical knowledge of Samoa's apprenticeship, training and labour market context, including demonstrated understanding of GEDSI, inclusiveness, safeguarding and climate-responsive or green skills approaches in skills development.
- **Experience.** Demonstrated experience undertaking scheme, program or policy reviews, evaluations or assessments, particularly in apprenticeships, labour policy, legal drafting, institutional reform or workforce development. Experience working with government agencies, training providers, employers and industry stakeholders in Samoa or the Pacific will be highly regarded, as will experience integrating GEDSI, safeguarding, inclusive participation or climate change and green skills considerations into program design or review.
- **Communication and stakeholder engagement.** Demonstrated ability to communicate clearly, facilitate inclusive and safe consultations, analyse stakeholder feedback and prepare high-quality written outputs for government, industry and development partner audiences. The proposed approach should show how the supplier will engage respectfully and effectively with apprentices, employers, SAC, MCIL, NUS, SQA, women, young people, persons with disabilities and other relevant stakeholders.
- **Price.** A competitive and realistic financial proposal that demonstrates value for money, taking into account the proposed methodology, level of effort, team composition, technical merit, pricing competitiveness and ability to deliver all required outputs within the expected timeframe.

Reporting & Performance

All outputs are to be submitted in editable electronic format to MCIL and the Tautai Program. The contract will be managed and administered by the Tautai Program, with technical oversight and endorsement of deliverables will be provided by MCIL in consultation with SAC and other relevant stakeholders. Payments will be linked to the satisfactory acceptance of agreed deliverables.

The following deliverables are required for the assessment of the Samoa Apprenticeship Scheme and the targeted legislative and regulatory review. Deliverables must be submitted in English, in editable Microsoft Word and PDF format, and must comply with MCIL and Tautai Program requirements.

Deliverable	Description	Indicative Timeline
1. Inception Report and Work Plan	Approved agreed methodology, work plan, stakeholder engagement approach, key assessment questions and proposed approach to the occupational coverage, legislative, GEDSI,	Supplier to propose

safeguarding and climate-related components of the review.

2. Assessment and Diagnostic Report	Approved evidence-based assessment of the Scheme's performance, governance, administration, delivery, workplace learning and assessment, participation, funding, monitoring, reporting and compliance. The report should identify key strengths, gaps, and areas for improvement, including findings on occupational coverage benchmarked against the priority and shortage skills identified in the Samoa National Workforce Plan.
3. Stakeholder Consultation Summary	Approved summary of stakeholder perspectives, key findings, evidence gaps and areas requiring further consideration, including consultations with priority sector and relevant government and industry stakeholders.
4. Options Paper and Draft Recommendations	Approved practical options and draft recommendations to strengthen the Scheme, including governance, operational, policy, legislative and regulatory considerations, future occupational coverage, resourcing, safeguarding, GEDSI and climate-resilient skills development.
5. Final Assessment and Legislative Review Report	Approved final report incorporating validated findings and stakeholder feedback, with prioritised recommendations and implementation considerations, including any proposed legislative or regulatory changes for consideration by MCIL, SAC and relevant government agencies. Identify key linkages between the Apprenticeship Scheme and the broader TVET system, including recommendations that may inform the 2026–2030 TVET Policy and Strategy.

Basis of Selection and Payment

Suppliers are requested to submit both a Technical and a Financial proposal in response to this RFP via email to recruitment@tautaipartnership.org no later than **11.59pm (GMT +13) Apia Samoa on 25 September 2026**.

The Technical proposal must include the proposed methodology for delivery and a statement addressing the selection criteria. The methodology should explain how GEDSI, safeguarding and climate change considerations will be incorporated and how occupational coverage will be assessed against the priority skills identified in the National Workforce Plan and occupation specific considerations in the care economy and tourism. It should also include:

- details of the Supplier's profile
- CVs of specified (key) personnel
- an indicative workplan with an estimate of total time input (days)
- evidence of registration (e.g. a copy of a valid Business License / registration certificate)
- a completed Due Diligence Assessment Part A (refer to 'Notes' below).

The Financial proposal should present a total cost for the services in Samoan Tala (WST) exclusive of VAGST incorporating all fees & charges (see also 'Notes' below) based on the indicative workplan & level of effort outlined in the Supplier's Technical proposal. The Financial proposal should list all key personnel and provide a breakdown of their estimated input days and daily rate(s).

Notes

The preferred Supplier will be required to meet minimum safeguard standards relating to Fraud, Prevention of Sexual exploitation abuse and harassment, Child protection and modern slavery. Where no adequate Supplier policies exist, DT Global policies will apply to the services being delivered and all specified personnel will be required to comply with these policies and undertake relevant training.

To support DT Global's commitment to meeting these standards and to support our own due diligence obligations, potential Suppliers will be required to demonstrate their suitability and capacity to ethically perform the services. Potential Suppliers will be required to include a completed Due Diligence Assessment for submission with their proposals.

The preferred Supplier will be required to have reasonable Professional Indemnity and Public Liability Insurance cover in place before commencement, in addition to Worker's Compensation insurance as appropriate. DT Global will seek certificates of currency prior to the commencement of services or the mobilisation of personnel.

Financial proposals must be inclusive of the above insurance requirements, whether captured within the daily rate(s) or listed as a separate cost item.

Costs (if any) associated with approved international travel arrangements, including economy-class flights, reasonable accommodation, transport and incidental costs (such as communications), will be reimbursed at cost (on supply of invoices/receipts), and will be arranged by the Supplier unless otherwise agreed or directed by DT Global.

Other Information

DT Global Asia Pacific Pty Ltd is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, colour, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status, gender identity, or national origin.

Our organisation is committed to child protection and safeguarding the welfare of children in the delivery of our international development programs. Recruitment and selection procedures reflect this commitment. We are committed to safety and the prevention of sexual abuse and harassment, child protection and bribery prevention.

We want to engage with the right people to deliver our client programs. As part of our approach, Suppliers will be subjected to formal background screening, criminal record checks, employment verification and periodic compliance checks. All our staff and subcontractors receive safety, compliance and safeguards training and are responsible for contributing to a safer working culture.

About DT Global

At DT Global Asia Pacific, we aim to positively impact people's lives through delivery excellence. As a leading implementing partner across Asia and the Pacific, we co-create locally led solutions in partnership with governments, communities, and stakeholders. We bring together talented teams and deep regional expertise to deliver initiatives that promote inclusive economic growth, essential services, and resilient, secure communities. With over 1,500 staff, experts in 22+ countries and more than 60 years of development experience, we tackle complex community, national and transnational challenges — from governance and justice systems to climate resilience, infrastructure and social equity — with innovative thinking and a commitment to long-term impact.

For more information, please see www.dt-global.com