



**public works  
& infrastructure**

Department:  
Public Works and Infrastructure  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME**

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE:**

# **REVIEW OF THE EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME (EPWP) RECRUITMENT GUIDELINES**

**17 July 2025**

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## 1. Introduction

In response to the persisting complex and inter-related challenges, the Growth and Development Summit (GDS) convened in 2003 had culminated in a social contract amongst government, labour, community and the private sector. One of the key elements of the agreement was the continuation and expansion of public works programmes, and it states that the “Expanded Public Works Programme can provide poverty and income relief through temporary work for the unemployed to carry out socially useful activities”.

The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) is one of Government’s medium to long-term strategies to reduce unemployment and alleviate poverty through the creation of work opportunities using labour-intensive methods. The EPWP is implemented in four sectors namely: Infrastructure, Social, Environment & Culture and Non-State. All spheres of government and State-Owned Entities are expected to implement the programme leveraging on existing funding for their votes. Since its inception in 2004, the programme has been rolled in four phases of five years, in which more than 14 million work opportunities have been created in all Sectors across all the spheres of government. From 01 April 2024, government begun to implement the EPWP Phase 5, with a target of 5 million work opportunities to be created by 31 March 2029.

In a context where the private sector is not creating jobs to the extent required and the number of unemployed remains unacceptably high, there is a high demand to participate in EPWP projects. There have been some indications that recruitment of participants has sometimes been based on party political, factional and/or personal grounds, not following fair and transparent recruitment processes. To address this, in EPWP Phase III, the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) as the overall coordinator of the EPWP in conjunction with all key role players developed the EPWP Recruitment Guidelines, which were approved by the Minister of Labour in December 2017.

The Guidelines were to be used by all the EPWP implementing public bodies to ensure the recruitment of the EPWP participants is undertaken in a fair, transparent and equitable manner; whilst also ensuring that the EPWP targeted groups are reached. As the Programme has entered its Phase V implementation period, there is a need to review the existing Recruitment Guidelines to align with the focus areas for Phase V.

## 2. Background

The EPWP focus is on targeting and recruiting the poor, unemployed population in South Africa, of working age and status, prioritising the most vulnerable groups – youth, women and

persons with disabilities. EPWP participants are selected based on the EPWP Targeting Framework and Recruitment Guidelines which is based on principles of fairness, transparency, equity, ethics, accountability, respect for the environment and commitment, to optimise the achievement of public employment objectives and targets, and to contextualise the recruitment of participants in terms of local realities. In the recruitment of these participants, four targeting mechanisms are utilised, namely.

- a) Geographical targeting – which suggest that EPWP projects must be located in poor communities and recruit participants residing in those communities.
- b) Self-targeting - where participants show a willingness to participate in EPWP under the conditions set by the programme – the wage rate, the type and location of the work.
- c) Community-based targeting occurs where community structures identify the poorest members of a community or those eligible to participate in an EPWP project according to the set criteria.
- d) Demographic targeting - with a specific focus on the youth, women and persons with disabilities.

The basic eligibility criteria for selecting participants are that participants meet the following:

**a) Are willing and able to take up the offered work**

Persons must apply or register for work in accordance with the manner specified by the recruiting body and be available to work on the dates as required by the project.

**b) Are categorised as poor**

- i. Persons of working age receiving social grants, including disability grants, are eligible to participate in EPWP.
- ii. Persons who come from households: where the head of the household has less than a primary school education; or that have less than one full-time person earning an income; or female headed households; or and where subsistence agriculture is the source of income, etc.
- iii. If more participants apply for work than the project can offer, the required number of candidates must be selected through a lottery process from all of those who applied, taking into account the set demographic targets. The prioritisation of these targets must be agreed upfront.

- c) **Are unemployed;** and meet the age limit for participating in the Programme in line with the relevant employment prescripts, which states that any persons of 15 years or older may be employed. However, children under 18 may not be employed to do work inappropriate for their age or that may place them at risk. In exceptional cases, the

relevant authority can deviate from the age limit for participation in EPWP within the existing labour laws.

- d) **Live close to the project area** – participants should reside closer to the ward in which the project is to be implemented. In the event that there is an insufficient number of participants in the ward, then participants may be drawn from neighbouring wards (close to the project site) but may not exceed 20% of the total number of participants unless there are compelling reasons to do so.

### 3. Problem Statement

The EPWP Recruitment Guidelines have been in operation since December 2017 and were specifically developed to combat persistent challenges such as allegations of patronage, inconsistent recruitment processes, and a lack of transparency. However, these issues, including the poor implementation of the guidelines by public bodies with poorly defined criteria for recruitment of participants within the guidelines, continue to undermine the integrity of participant selection in EPWP.

These above-mentioned challenges have also led to other challenges including incorrect targeting of participants; reputational damage to the EPWP brand; and delays or disruptions in the implementation of projects. Noting the above-mentioned challenges, there is a need to review the current guidelines to align with the evolving objectives and mandate of the Programme as it rolls out the EPWP Phase V and the EPWP Policy positions currently in the approval process.

### 4. Assignment Overview

The broad scope for the assignment is to review the current EPWP Recruitment Guidelines by developing practical implementable recruitment methods which considers the involvement of all key role-players in the EPWP, in the recruitment of participants in the EPWP, based on the assessment undertaken.

### 5. Scope of work

The following serves as a brief outline of the assignment and should be considered as a guide and not as an exhaustive project scope. The scope of work for this assignment will be:

- a) To engage public bodies listed below implementing the EPWP to document best practice models they use on the recruitment of EPWP participants.

- a. Three (3) Metros (i.e. City of Tshwane, City of Cape Town and City of Mbombela)
- b. National Departments of Public Works and Infrastructure (NYS), Departments of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Social Development and Corporative Governance (for the CWP)
- b) To facilitate a workshop with all nine (9) provincial departments of Public Works and Infrastructure to document best practice models used in their respective provinces on the recruitment of EPWP participants arranged by the DPWI.
- c) To facilitate a workshop with each province represented by at least three (3) public bodies at a provincial and municipal spheres of government arranged by the DPWI.
- d) To engage the Department of Corporate Governance (DCOG) and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) to determine the functions of the Councillors and the applicable legal prescripts and frameworks which outlines their role in the recruitment of participants in the EPWP within municipalities.
- e) To engage the Department of Employment and Labour (DEL) to assess the implementation mechanisms of the Employment Services of South Africa (ESSA) system and how it can be integrated in the recruitment systems used in the EPWP.
- f) To engage Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator to assess the implementation mechanisms of the SA Youth Mobi. Platform and how it can be utilised and integrated in the recruitment systems used in the EPWP.
- g) To engage the Independent Development Trust (IDT) to understand the Social Facilitation Methods and propose how it can be incorporated into the EPWP recruitment process across all EPWP sectors.
- h) To explore other recruitment methods used by other Public Employment Programmes elsewhere that can potentially be incorporated in the revised EPWP Recruitment Guidelines.
- i) To review the existing EPWP Recruitment Guidelines by incorporating suitable best practice recruitment methods that can address the gaps identified in the report for the implementation review of the EPWP Recruitment Guidelines (**Annexure A**) to ensure it:
  - Covers all EPWP Sectors and outlines various implementable recruitment methods to be adopted by public bodies
  - Involves and clarifies the roles of all role players in EPWP in the recruitment process.

- Is enforceable (to bring measures to be taken against public bodies that do not adhere to the principles of the Guidelines) and has mechanisms to resolve disputes.
- j) To attend and present the revised draft EPWP Recruitment Guidelines to a special workshop arranged by the DPWI.
- k) To incorporate all inputs received from the consultative workshop into the revised EPWP Recruitment Guidelines.
- l) To develop a revised EPWP Recruitment Guidelines and present it to the DPWI EPWP Management.

The Service Provider is required to avail a relevantly qualified team that will support the review process. Each of the team members should be able to work independently. The Service Provider is also expected to submit an implementation plan detailing their staffing skills and qualifications levels and how they will be deployed to deliver as per the scope of this assignment. The Service Provider must avail themselves for the due diligence as an ongoing exercise during the delivery of the assignment.

## 6. Expected Deliverables & Time Frames

The assignment is expected to take not more than four (4) months from date of signed contract by both parties. The breakdown of the assignment activities and timelines are covered in the table below:

<b>Deliverables</b>	<b>Time Frames</b>
Using the available DPWI data, the successful bidder is expected to deliver the outputs listed below within the set timeframes :	
<b>Planning stage deliverables:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Inception report</li> <li>○ Data gathering tools/instruments</li> <li>○ Methodology</li> <li>○ Clear Gantt Chart with project key deliverables and timelines</li> </ul>	Within 2 weeks after contract is signed.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Draft outline of the revised Recruitment Guidelines</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation stage deliverables</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Progress report with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Desktop analysis done</li> <li>○ Field visits and engagement with relevant stakeholders</li> <li>○ Review of the Guidelines</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2 months after the approval of the inception report
<b>Final deliverables</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Draft revised Recruitment Guidelines.</li> <li>○ Stakeholder feedback sessions on the draft report.</li> </ul>	At least 3 weeks before the completion of the implementation stage.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Final revised Recruitment Guidelines incorporate inputs from stakeholders</li> <li>○ Close out report for the project</li> </ul>	At least 1 week before the completion of the project.

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

### 7.1 Project Management

The project will be managed by the Director: PEP Technical Secretariat supported by the project task team appointed by the EPWP Branch and in the absence of the Director: PEP Technical Secretariat, it will be managed by a nominated official representing the DPWI EPWP Branch. In supporting the Project Manager, other officials from the DPWI EPWP Branch will also be involved in the project and will interact with the Service Provider.



## **8. Proposal and Quotation**

### **8.1 Proposal**

The Prospective Bidder is required to provide an implementation plan setting out the basis by which the assignment will be undertaken within the budget specified, and provide the following details: qualifications and relevant experience of the individuals that will be undertaking work, as well as the detailed implementation plan including the following:

- a) Detailed CVs of individuals with relevant qualifications identified to perform the assignment.
- b) Prospective Bidders should submit Portfolio of Evidence and at least three (3) references to support relevant previous work done in a similar assignment.
- c) A detailed implementation plan outlining each component of the work and time frames. The implementation plan should include price per deliverable. If travel is to be undertaken to attend meetings, the Service Provider must make all arrangements in respect of travel costs and accommodation in line with the Government of South Africa travel policy.

Note, the DPWI reserves the right to approve/change the individual team members of the proposed project team. It should be noted that the dates and locations may be amended as necessary by the DPWI.

### **8.2 Quotation/Pricing**

The DPWI will arrange the workshop/meetings logistics that may be required. The contract amount will cover the fees linked to the project deliverables as per the payment schedule outlined in section 11. If there are in person meetings required, the Service Provider should only bring essential team members (not more than three people) required and must be in a position to transport its team members to the respective locations of meetings as and when required. Travel and accommodation costs will be reimbursed as part of the project cost quoted in accordance and subject to published and approved Departmental Policy. Prior to any travel undertaken, the service provider is expected to submit a travel itinerary showing role of each team

member travelling, locations and dates for approval by the DPWI. Furthermore, the service provider is expected to provide their staff with appropriate equipment for capturing, collating, and reporting in the format agreed with the DPWI. The quotation to be provided must be aligned to the scope of work and deliverables and should include all relevant project costs. Note, the project cost should only cover costs for the team listed in the implementation plan.

## **9. Time Frame**

The project will be conducted for the period of four months. The assignment will commence immediately after contract signing by both parties. The DPWI reserves the right to amend the time frame in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

## **10. Contracting Details**

The Service Provider will be contracted by the DPWI. This will be based on the implementation plan and quotation submitted and any amendments made after the initiation meeting. The Service Provider shall be accountable to the DPWI in terms of fulfilling the actions set out in the proposal.

Payments will be made in terms of tranches and milestones are as follows:

- Inception Report = 30%
- Draft Report = 30%
- Final Report = 40%

Payment will be in terms of the fulfilment of agreed milestones and confirmation by the assignment coordinator. To minimise cost, the service provider should strive to conduct virtual meetings with the identified stakeholders or if needed, conduct scheduled meetings at the premises of the stakeholders met.

## **11. Evaluation Criteria and Functionality Criteria**

The providers must attach all required documents as outlined in the Terms of Reference. An omission in any of the required documents will render the bidder non-responsive. A service provider must score at least 60% to be considered responsive.

All bidders that are responsive will then be evaluated on the basis of price, with the responsive bidder with the lowest price appointed. The following criteria will be applied in the review of the proposals:

Criteria	Description	Weight (%)
1.	<p><b>Company experience</b></p> <p>Previous experience based on number of projects of similar nature successfully completed over the last five years. <b>(Bidders must attach the company's profile and at least 3 reference letters from clients). Letters must include the project names and dates of when the projects were executed.</b></p> <p>Successful completion of more than 4 projects = 5 points</p> <p>Successful completion 3 projects = 3 points</p> <p>Less than 2 projects = 0 points</p>	10
2.	<p><b>Technical Quality of the Proposal/Bid.</b></p> <p>The technical quality of the proposal will be assessed using the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Clear understanding of the scope <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Identify the review needs by explaining what must be done and why.</li> <li>ii. Project scope explaining how the project will be implemented and resources</li> <li>iii. Identify possible challenges, limitations and solutions.</li> </ul> </li> <li>b) Detailed research methodology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Design of the review</li> <li>ii. Methodology to conduct the review and consultations</li> <li>iii. Data analysis</li> </ul> </li> <li>c) Clear Project implementation plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Team composition</li> <li>ii. Milestones</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>If the proposal covers all three criteria = 5 points</b>  <b>If the proposal covers only two criteria = 3 points</b>  <b>If the proposal covers only one criteria = 1 point</b>  <b>If the proposal does not cover any of the criteria = 0 points</b></p>	30

3.	<p><b>Team Leader Experience:</b></p> <p>The Team Leader must possess a minimum of ten (10) years' post qualification working experience in the development of Human Resource Management Policies /Public Policy/ Labour Law or Industrial Psychology <b>(Bidders must attach detailed CVs of the Team Leader specifying relevant experience and dates).</b></p> <p>15 years and above = 5 points</p> <p>11 - 14 years' experience = 4 points</p> <p>10 years' experience = 3 points</p> <p>9 years and below = 0 points</p>	20
4.	<p><b>Team Leader Qualifications:</b></p> <p>Team Leader must possess a minimum of a Master's degree qualification in (Social Sciences, Law, Humanities, Public Policy/Development Studies or Industrial Psychology). <b>(Bidders must attach a certified copies of the educational qualification of the Team Leader).</b></p> <p>PhD degree = 5 points</p> <p>Master's degree = 3 points</p> <p>Any qualification below a Master's degree = 0 points</p>	15
5.	<p><b>Team Members Experience:</b></p> <p>A team comprises of at least 3 Member(s). Each team member must possess at least (3) years' work experience in conducting research and drafting policies for government programmes or interventions. <b>(Bidders must attach detailed CVs of the Team Member(s) specifying relevant experience and dates).</b></p> <p>15 years and above combined experience = 5 points</p> <p>10-14 years' combined experience = 4 points</p> <p>9 years' combined experience = 3 points</p> <p>8 years combined experience and below = 0 points.</p>	15
6.	<p><b>Team Members Qualifications</b></p> <p>Team Members must each possess a minimum of a Bachelor's degree qualification. The team should</p>	10

	<p>comprise at least two of the following areas of specialisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Humanities (Psychology or Political Science)</li> <li>b) Social Sciences (Public Policy or Developmental Studies or Economics)</li> <li>c) Law</li> </ul> <p><b>(Bidders must attach a certified copies of the educational qualification of the Team Members).</b></p> <p>Members have a qualification in each of the three streams indicated above = 5 points</p> <p>Members have a qualification in either two of the streams indicated above = 3 points</p> <p>None of the above qualifications = 0 points</p>	
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All bidders are required to attend a compulsory briefing session to be held online on:

Date: 23 July 2025 (Wednesday)

Time: 11h00 – 12h00

Venue: Teams Platform using the following link:

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 358 893 873 607 6

Passcode: U7oS7QQ6

## 12. Reporting

Reporting by the Service Provider will be expected to address the following elements:

- a) Implementation Plan in a Gantt Chart format.
- b) Bi-weekly progress reports.
- c) Draft final database/register of inputs (provided orally or in writing) received during the consultations.
- d) Draft revised Recruitment Guidelines for presentation to EPWP key stakeholders.

- e) Final database/register of inputs (provided orally or in writing) received during the consultations incorporating feedback from the DPWI.
- f) Final revised Recruitment Guidelines.
- g) Close out report for the project.

### **13. Copyright**

Copyright with regard to all the work in support of the EPWP policy development will be vested in the DPWI. All materials (hard copies and electronic) produced during the public consultations become the sole property of the DPWI and is subject to confidentiality clauses as per government regulations. Application should be made to the DPWI for the use of material for any future presentation or publication. After approval of such application, due acknowledgement will be given by user as to the source of data and information.

### **14. Dispute/Conflict Resolution**

The Service Provider shall at all times during the execution of the assignment use their best endeavours to ensure that no action is taken by themselves, their personnel, agents or sub-contractors which may result in or give rise to the existence of conditions which are prejudicial to or in conflict with the best interests of the client.

### **15. Technical Enquiries**

For technical enquiries related to the assignment, please contact Ms Lindiwe Nkuna at [Lindiwe.Nkuna@dpw.gov.za](mailto:Lindiwe.Nkuna@dpw.gov.za) or by telephone at 082 413 9975.