

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TORs)

CONSULTANCY FIRM TO PROVIDE A CORPORATE WHISTLEBLOWING SYSTEM TO *icipe*

1. Background

Established in 1970, the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (www.icipe.org), is distinct, being the only research institute in Africa working primarily on insects and other arthropods. *icipe* is also the sole institution that combines research and development activities across plant health, human health, animal health and environmental health. The Centre is a model of scientific excellence, blending the generation of insect science and its translation into nature positive, One Health, inclusive innovations that transform the livelihoods of millions of people in Kenya and across Africa. Additionally, *icipe* nurtures Africa's talent and leadership in insect and related science, through its long-standing doctoral training, research and innovation in applied sciences, engineering and technology, and the creation of a bioeconomy in Africa. Headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, *icipe* has a staff of about 500 international and national staff, operations in more than 40 countries in Africa, and over 300 partnerships with universities and research organizations across the world.

icipe's Mission

“To help alleviate poverty, ensure food security and improve the overall health status of peoples of the tropics by developing and extending management tools and strategies for harmful and useful arthropods, while preserving the natural resource base through research and capacity building”.

2. Invitation to Bid

icipe is committed to maintaining high standards of integrity, transparency and accountability. The Centre therefore seeks to continue operating a secure Corporate Whistleblowing System that enables staff, partners, suppliers and other stakeholders to report suspected fraud, corruption, misconduct and breaches of *icipe* policies and the Code of Conduct confidentially and, where preferred, anonymously.

icipe invites proposals from qualified and experienced service providers to provide an online whistleblowing solution that supports secure reporting, communication with whistleblowers, and effective case management and investigation. The successful provider must demonstrate proven technical capability, robust information security and confidentiality measures, and relevant experience providing similar services to comparable organisations.

3. Objectives

The vendor will deliver a secure and reliable whistleblowing system that meets the following objectives:

- Provide multiple, easily accessible reporting channels (web portal, e-mail, toll-free telephone/hotline and SMS) to enable whistleblowers to report concerns conveniently.
- Guarantee the anonymity and confidentiality of whistleblowers who choose not to disclose their identity, and safeguard the confidentiality of all other reporters.
- Ensure robust information security, including data encryption, secure hosting and safeguards against tracing of whistleblowers, in compliance with the Kenya Data Protection Act (2019) and other applicable data protection standards.
- Provide an efficient case management system that logs, tracks and routes reports to designated icipe recipients, with timely alerts on new cases.
- Ensure prompt turnaround and feedback to whistleblowers, with clear escalation procedures for urgent or life-threatening matters.
- Support investigation processes undertaken by *icipe's* internal and/or external investigation teams.
- Provide data archival and retrieval functionality, including secure deletion or archiving of closed cases in line with data protection requirements.
- Build awareness of the whistleblowing system among *icipe* staff and stakeholders through training, sensitisation materials and tools.
- Provide periodic trend analysis and statistical reporting to inform *icipe's* risk management and governance processes.
- Ensure the system can be implemented within a short lead time and scaled to accommodate *icipe's* operations across its multiple country offices.

4. Scope of Work

A. Solution Design and Requirements Definition

- Propose a system architecture and reporting channel mix, clearly outlining features, limitations and any additional/optional modules.
- Work closely with *icipe's* Tender/Evaluation Committee to confirm reporting channels, workflows and reporting lines (centralised or decentralised).

B. Multi-Channel Reporting System

- Web portal and e-mail reporting channel, including a customised landing page and reporting form tailored to *icipe's* needs.
- Toll-free or low-cost telephone hotline, with multilingual call handling and, where feasible, an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) option.
- SMS reporting facility linked to the web portal or call centre.

- Issuance of a unique, secure reference code/password to each whistleblower to enable anonymous follow-up dialogue and status tracking.

C. Information Security and Data Protection

- Encryption of all data in transit and at rest, with restricted, role-based access for designated *icipe* Case Management Team members.
- Safeguards to prevent tracking of whistleblower identity or IP address, including anonymisation of reports and voice recordings where applicable.
- Secure, high-availability hosting, with account lock-out after repeated failed login attempts and no storage of passwords in human-readable form.

D. Case Management and Investigation Support

- An online case management/viewer tool that logs new reports, sends automated alerts to designated recipients, and supports secure two-way dialogue with anonymous whistleblowers.
- Investigation support services (either included or available at an additional cost, to be clearly quoted) for *icipe's* internal and external investigation teams.
- Configurable case retention, archival and secure deletion periods, in compliance with applicable data protection rules, with the ability to export data as required.

E. Awareness Creation, Training and Change Management

- Development and delivery of awareness creation materials and sensitisation sessions for *icipe* staff and stakeholders on use of the system.
- Training of the *icipe* Case Management Team on the administration of the system, including a Training-of-Trainers (ToT) option.
- Provision of user guides and administrative documentation.

F. Testing, Launch and Post-Launch Support

- System configuration, testing and demonstration to confirm functionality prior to go-live.
- Deployment/activation of the whistleblowing system within an agreed, short implementation period.
- Ongoing post-launch support, including periodic trend analysis reports, system updates and helpdesk support.

5. Deliverables

Phase	Deliverables
1. Solution Design	Confirmed system requirements, proposed architecture and reporting channel mix, approved by <i>icipe</i> .

Phase	Deliverables
2. System Configuration	Fully configured multi-channel whistleblowing system (web portal, e-mail, telephone/hotline, SMS), case management module, and security/encryption documentation.
3. Testing & Demonstration	System demonstration report, test results, and resolution log for any identified issues.
4. Training & Awareness	Training materials, awareness/sensitisation content, and record of training sessions for the icipe Case Management Team and staff.
5. Launch	Live, fully operational whistleblowing system, user/administrative guides, and a post-launch support plan.
6. Post-Launch Support	Ongoing helpdesk support, periodic trend analysis and statistical reports as agreed with icipe.

6. Vendor/Consultant Qualifications

Interested firms must provide evidence of the following:

- Evidence of the firm's legal status, including statutory registration documents (Certificate of Incorporation, PIN, valid Tax/VAT Compliance Certificate, and relevant registration with regulatory bodies).
- A clear organisational profile demonstrating that the core business of the firm is the provision of whistleblowing, ethics/compliance reporting, or case management systems, with at least five (5) years of relevant experience. Include postal address, physical location, Tel/E-mail/Website addresses and designated contact person(s).
- Proven relevant experience, including at least three (3) references from reputable organisations (preferably including international/regional organisations) for whom similar services have been provided.
- Demonstrated technical and managerial capability of the firm to undertake and deliver the assignment, including CVs of key staff who will support the assignment.
- A detailed financial proposal, presented as a full cost breakdown covering (as applicable) one-off set-up/implementation fees, licensing or subscription costs, telephone/hotline and SMS costs, training and awareness-creation costs, and any recurring monthly/annual support fees. The financial proposal should be submitted separately from the technical proposal.
- Declaration of any conflict of interest with *icipe* by signing a Disclosure form provided for this purpose.

Other specific requirements:

- Proven experience providing anonymous, multi-channel whistleblowing or ethics reporting systems (web, e-mail, telephone/hotline, SMS).
- Demonstrated compliance with recognised information security and data protection standards, and ability to comply with the Kenya Data Protection Act, 2019.
- Experience providing investigation support services and case management tools.
- Ability to support multiple languages.
- Experience working with international, research or not-for-profit organisations is an added advantage.

7. Duration

The Centre is seeking to enter into an initial one-year contract renewable up to a maximum of five years based on satisfactory performance to be defined in a Service Level Agreement (SLA).

8. Timeline for Project Implementation

The tender process and subsequent implementation of the corporate whistleblowing system are expected to follow the timelines below:

Milestone	Target Date
Bid invitation	25 August 2026
Bid submission deadline (15-day application period)	16 September 2026
Bid evaluation process (3 weeks) – preliminary/desk review, system demonstration, client reference and site visits, and review of financial proposals	October 2026
Award decision, contract review and signatures (2 weeks)	October 2026
Presentation of the system to the <i>icipe</i> Governing Council (GC) representatives by the awarded Vendor/Consultant	October 2026

9. Evaluation criteria:

- Technical proposal 70%
 - Firm & technical team qualification and experience in a similar assignment as sought by *icipe* (20%)
 - Technical features and effectiveness (via demo) of the proposed solution (40%)
 - Client reference check (10%)
- Competitive pricing and value for money (30%)

Note: *icipe* reserves the right to adjust timelines or scope based on tender process progress and organisational needs.