Lighting Global Off-Grid Lighting Third-Party Certification Body

Request for Expressions of Interest

1. Introduction

The World Bank Group's Lighting Global program, and its sister programs, Lighting Africa, Lighting Asia, and Lighting Pacific, have jointly developed the leading international framework for product quality assurance for the global off-grid solar industry. The Lighting Global program, which currently provides quality assurance services for pico-solar systems and other similar off-grid lighting products and is working to expand coverage to solar home system (SHS) kits,[1] has enabled sales of over 10 million off-grid solar products in African and Asian markets. Moreover, sales in the sector are growing rapidly and revenues associated with sales of Lighting Global quality assured products are projected to exceed $1 billion annually by 2024. The Lighting Global program and brand are widely used and widely recognized in the sector, and its quality assurance framework was adopted by the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) in 2013. Subsequently, the framework has been adopted or referenced by a growing number of national governments, development organizations, financial institutions, and investors. As a result, Lighting Global Quality Assurance has become a critical foundational element for market development in this dynamic and growing sector. The World Bank Group's (WBG) original goal for its suite of "Lighting…" programs was to catalyze commercial market development for quality assured, affordable off-grid lighting and energy solutions in order to enable greater levels of energy access. Now that the market is taking off, the WBG is seeking partners that can carry the quality assurance work forward on a sustainable basis.

The purpose of this Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI) is, therefore, to identify organizations interested in playing a leading role to build and run an Off-Grid Energy Products Certification Body (hereafter, the Certification Body). Background information about the off-grid lighting market, product quality assurance work undertaken by the WBG to date, the anticipated scope of work, and the skills required to be successful, are all found below in the body of this document. However, before providing these details, IFC would like to make clear a few characteristics of this opportunity that distinguish it from REOIs and RFPs generally issued by the IFC and other similar institutions. In this REOI, the IFC is looking for proposals that would result in:

- **A sustainable framework**: One of the most important aspects of this REOI is to convey IFC's interest in establishing an independent, financially self-sustaining, off-grid energy products quality assurance certification organization that builds on the foundational quality assurance framework that the WBG has developed through the Lighting Global Program. While IFC envisions having the capability to provide partial financial support for the Certification Body over an initial period of operations necessary to get the off-grid energy products certification body established, funding through the WBG would be limited in duration and amount. Thus IFC is seeking a collaborator interested in building and running an organization, and with the capability of ensuring that the Certification Body will be financially viable beyond the initial period of

[1] In the context of the Lighting Global program, pico-solar products are defined as off-grid solar energy systems that have solar photovoltaic (PV) modules that are rated at 10 watts or less. The planned expansion to solar home system kits is slated to cover products with solar PV modules with ratings between 10 and 100 watts.

funding from the WBG. Therefore, a key criterion used to evaluate proposals will be the degree to which the organizations involved have a framework for and capabilities required to realistically ensure financial sustainability of the Certification Body.

- **Multiple contributors:** IFC anticipates that a consortium of multiple organizations may be required to successfully build and run the Certification Body. It is envisioned that there will be one organization that plays a central role, coupled with one or more additional organizations that provide targeted expertise (although we are open to other viable configurations). In addition to coordinating activities, a key responsibility of the central organization will be revenue generation and fundraising. As described above, the ability to achieve the financial sustainability for the Certification Body will be a critical component of the evaluation. If the applicant organization is interested in playing the central role then it should indicate an express intention to do this in its Expression of Interest. Moreover, it should articulate the initial conceptual structure of the associated proposed consortium, although it is recognized that the full consortium may not yet be identified at this stage of the process. If the applicant sees itself as undertaking specific activities highlighted under Section 4 - 'Current Activities of Lighting Global' without playing a central role in the consortium, such an approach will also be acceptable in a submission of this REOI. In such cases, the applicant should indicate which activities it can fulfill and substantiate this with relevant experience in these areas.

- **Continued involvement of current team:** Currently there is a team of IFC contractors that have deep technical experience in the area off-grid lighting quality assurance and have developed key relationships with the off-grid lighting industry as well as the IEC[2]. IFC envisions that this team of contractors[3] will support the newly selected organization or coalition of organizations through its existing contract with IFC during a transition period. This contractor *may* continue to collaborate with the Certification Body – if the relevant parties decide to pursue continued collaboration – after the transition period has ended. However, additional funding from a source other than IFC/WBG will be needed to support such an arrangement.

The results of this REOI will be used to determine how a Request for Proposal (RFP) can be constructed by IFC to identify an appropriate consortium of organizations, or a single entity, that would then own, operate, and further develop the Lighting Global quality verification protocol, framework and/or brand.

The remainder of this REOI document is organized in the following sections:

- **Section 2** provides background on the potential for modern lighting products for off-grid populations, the Lighting Global Program, the role of product quality assurance, and the rationale for establishing an Off-Grid Energy Products Certification Body.

- **Section 3** establishes the purpose of this REOI.

- **Section 4** describes the vision for a Certification Body, including the activities it would undertake, its geographic focus, the type of organizations and team effort that is likely to be

[2] The IEC is the leading global standards body for electrical appliances and equipment. The primary test methods utilized by the Lighting Global Quality Assurance Program are published by IEC through Joint Working Group 1 (JWG1) of Technical Committee 82 (Photovoltaics) in the form of Technical Specification 62257-9-5. The Lighting Global Quality Assurance Team has worked closely with IEC, and the technical lead for the current QA team is a member of JWG1 of IEC's TC82.

[3] The current team of contractors is managed by the Schatz Energy Research Center at Humboldt State University in the United States of America.

required for successful implementation, and the need to develop a plan for long-term financial sustainability.

- **Section 5** lists the skills and experience that IFC is seeking in the organizations that would be selected to successfully build and run the Certification Body.

- **Section 6** provides guidelines for submitting a response to the REOI.

In addition, respondents are strongly encouraged to review two supporting documents that provide useful background information and analysis:

1) Lighting Global Quality Assurance Roadmap: This document provides an overview of the existing Lighting Global Quality Assurance program, a summary of key challenges identified, and measures that have been or are being taken to address those challenges. This report is available on the Lighting Global website at this link: https://www.lightingglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/LG_QualityAssurance-Roadmap_July_2015_v3.pdf

2) Report titled "Analysis of the Potential Future of the Lighting Global Quality Assurance Program." This report was prepared by Navigant Consulting for the U.S. Department of Energy through the Global LEAP initiative and is available at this link: http://cleanenergyministerial.org/Portals/2/pdfs/Potential_Future_of_the_Lighting_Global_QA_Program.pdf

2. Background

Potential of Modern Lighting Products for Off-Grid Population

Up to 1.2 billion people worldwide, including over 500 million in Sub-Saharan Africa and nearly 700 million in Asia, live without access to electricity. They are obliged to spend hard earned income on very low quality and polluting fuel-based lighting such as kerosene lamps. This provides inadequate illumination and poses significant health risks while hindering economic and social development. Increasing the supply of affordable and clean illumination options is thus a vital developmental objective.

The Lighting Global Program ("Lighting Global") is a World Bank and International Finance Corporation (IFC) project that supports the development of a market for quality off-grid lighting products (www.lightingglobal.org). It began as a regionally focused pilot program in Kenya called Lighting Africa (www.lightingafrica.org), and it has since expanded to a global-scale effort that includes an expanded Lighting Africa regional program, as well as additional regional programs: Lighting Asia (www.lightingasia.org) and Lighting Pacific, and the global umbrella program under which product quality assurance is managed, Lighting Global. The off-grid lighting products industry that these programs support are based on solar photovoltaic and light-emitting diode (LED) technologies, as well as a growing array of other high efficiency DC appliances. These products offer compelling benefits compared to the fuel-based lighting products they replace. These devices can provide clean, affordable, high-quality lighting, and increasingly as the industry matures, other basic energy services. Many products also include mobile phone charging. They enhance economic and social development by providing the opportunity to access affordable, high quality, and safe lighting services to underserved populations.

Sales of off-grid lighting and energy products that have been quality assured through the Lighting Global program exceeded 10 million units globally by the end of 2014. Sales in Sub-Saharan Africa, where the program has the longest record of verified sales of quality assured products, have totaled over 7 million units through the end of 2014, and sales grew during the period from 2009 to 2014 at an annual rate of

105%. More recently, the Lighting Global, Lighting Africa, and Lighting Asia programs began an effort to expand their activities to cover plug-and-play SHS kits with solar modules up to 100 watts. The programs are expected to begin supporting quality verified SHS kits through quality assurance and business support activities within the coming months.

Quality Assurance is Critical to a Sustainable Market

Although off-grid lighting technology is much more affordable than the fuel-based technology it replaces over the product life cycle, it faces an up-front investment cost barrier that is a deterrent to low-income users. Additionally, because the industry is relatively immature, with limited brand identities and inexperienced consumers, many buyers have difficulty determining the quality and performance of the products at the time of purchase. If product quality is not addressed on a sustained basis the off-grid lighting and energy products market may flounder from market spoiling by poor quality products and consumer resistance to adopting risky new technology. This can occur because the trade-off between price and quality will remain opaque, and consumers will become wary of investing in potentially poor quality products. Ensuring accurate measurement and communication of product quality is thus a key step to help the solar off-grid lighting market develop and help raise the standard of living for hundreds of millions of people. (See Side Bar 1.)

To help combat spoiling of the emerging off-grid lighting market, the Lighting Global program manages a Product Quality Assurance Program ("Quality Assurance Program") that verifies the quality and performance of products, conducts market surveillance activities, and provides advisory services to manufacturers.[4] The Quality Assurance Program has successfully provided product testing and certification for the off-grid lighting sector for the past six years. To date, over 130 commercially available products have been tested and approximately 50 currently have status as quality verified by Lighting Global – with products holding the certification for a two-year period. To support the framework, the Quality Assurance Program manages a growing network of qualified test laboratories that includes labs in China, India, Kenya, Germany, and the United States. Several additional labs are expected to become active over the coming year. A growing market of both public and private sector stakeholders widely regard Lighting Global product quality verification as a key point of entry for successful market deployment.

To increase the Quality Assurance Program's reach, Lighting Global has worked with the IEC to institutionalize product quality test methods developed under the program in the form of IEC technical specifications. As noted previously, the primary test methods utilized by the Quality Program are published in the form of IEC Technical Specification 62257-9-5. The Quality Assurance Program is additionally working to expand its quality assurance activities to cover plug-and-play SHS kits that include solar modules with ratings up to 100 watts. Once the corresponding test methods have been developed and verified, they will be submitted for adoption by IEC.

Several national governments have now adopted key elements of the Quality Assurance Program and/or IEC TS 62257-9-5, including Kenya, Ethiopia, Bangladesh, and Nepal. A number of other countries are actively considering adoption, including India and the 15 West African member countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).[5]

The WBG developed the Quality Assurance Program to fill an important void in the nascent off-grid solar market at a key moment in the industry's development. The resulting take-off of the global market, the

[4] The scope of the existing Quality Program work, in relation to the scope of the future Certification Body, is further detailed in Section 4 under the sub-section "Team Composition and Eligibility Criteria".

[5] The members of ECOWAS include Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.

emergence of a strong contingent of over 25 companies currently making quality verified products, the expansion of the range of products and companies making those products that will be quality verified, the adoption of and reliance on the Lighting Global quality verification by governments, investors, buyers, and consumers, and the establishment of a fee-based system of product testing means that the Quality Assurance Program has been fully established on a strong foundation and is in position to grow as an entity independent of the WBG. Thus, the foundational work of the WBG as a catalyst for institutionalized development is near complete, with the next step being the hand-off of the asset to an organization or consortium of organizations able to take this work to the next level.

Side Bar 1: Off-Grid Lighting Market Growth Challenges:

- **Customers perceive risk when quality not visible**: The market uptake of any technology whose value proposition involves a higher initial investment rewarded through lower life-cycle costs is sensitive to the perceived risk that the lower-life cycle cost may not be realized.
- **Market poisoning risk when quality not visible**: When quality is unknown or invisible, the market-uptake for the technology as a whole becomes very vulnerable to the risk of poisoning from low-quality products that fail to deliver the life-cycle benefits
- **Risks exacerbated for cost-conscious buyers**: When this occurs it can retard or kill a market, as consumers have no way of knowing what they are investing in and fear the worst. This is especially the case when consumers are very cost-conscious as they will not be prepared to invest in uncertain yet costly devices when the incumbent technology has no significant early failure risk

For this reason Lighting Global has put measures to address quality at the heart of its off-grid lighting and energy products market-building efforts.

Rationale for an Off-Grid Lighting Certification Body

The off-grid solar services and products industry operates in an early-stage consumer goods market where brand identity is limited and consumers have limited experience with the technology. In this environment, the Quality Assurance Program has been critical to the market's rapid development to date. The Global Off-Grid Lighting Association (GOGLA), in collaboration with Navigant Consulting, surveyed its membership during the second quarter of 2015 and found strong support for the importance of a continued quality assurance operation supporting the sector – even as the WBG looks to graduate its Lighting Global Quality Assurance operation to a third party operator. The industry members have strongly voiced their belief in the importance of maintaining a credible third party quality assurance function to enable the continued market growth of high quality off-grid lighting products.

Whatever form the institutional home of this quality assurance function would take, the core function of this body will be to certify off-grid lighting and energy products in accordance with internationally accepted quality standards and test methods, including the quality assurance framework that is included in IEC TS 62257-9-5 (which covers pico-solar products with solar modules up to 10 watts) and the newly emerging quality assurance framework for SHS kits. In addition, the entity should track technological advances in the sector, maintain and revise existing test methods and standards, work to develop new standards and methods where needed, and manage a network of qualified test laboratories. Moreover, it should work to create supply of and demand for quality products by communicating information about product quality to market stakeholders, by providing technical support and feedback to manufacturers, and through outreach to key stakeholders such as governments, private sector companies, financial institutions, buyers, and others. Promoting the importance of quality certification to buyers throughout the

supply chain is an especially important activity. Perhaps most importantly, the advancement of a successful Certification Body would set the stage for continued market growth of quality assured products over the subsequent decades.

If successful, it is expected that the Certification Body will be one of the key legacies of the Lighting Africa, Lighting Asia, Lighting Pacific, and Lighting Global programs and will foster the market conditions that will provide affordable, clean and high-quality lighting and energy services to tens of millions of off-grid households. Over the longer-term it is envisioned that the Certification Body will have sufficient revenue streams stemming from product certification and other related services required to support the growing industry to cover a significant portion of annual operating expenses. Initial seed funding from WBG and – potentially – from its partners will be used to transition the current quality assurance activates from Lighting Global to an independent entity and establish key certification and outreach activities. Given the challenges and expense of serving off-grid populations and the relatively early stage of the industry's development, IFC does not envision that the Certification Body will cover all of its expenses through certification fees in the foreseeable future. However, given the public benefits generated by the emergence and growth of the off-grid lighting and energy services industry as an important force in the efforts of the global economic development community to address the intractable challenges of providing modern energy services to the estimated 1.3 billion people living without access to modern energy services, it is envisioned that the compelling nature of its mission and the extraordinary impacts being generated will help the Certification Body raise additional funds through philanthropic and public sources in the development community.

3. Purpose of this REOI

To build upon the work of the Quality Assurance Program and take it forward, the WBG now seek institutions capable of fulfilling the roles necessary to sustain and further develop the Lighting Global quality assurance function. It is envisioned that some responding institutions could potentially collaborate with others as implementing partners to establish an independent, financially self-sustaining, off-grid lighting quality certification organization. However, the institutional framework and form ultimately embraced by the successful institution(s) are not prescribed by WBG, and such structure is left to the interested institutions to define. This operating entity would function outside of the WBG but would leverage the existing work of the Quality Assurance Program to become the permanent owner and operator of product quality certification and related support services for the benefit of industry and the general public. The expectation is that this body will build on the success of the Lighting Global Quality Assurance program and continue to be a catalyst to the development of the global off-grid lighting and energy products market.

The WBG is seeking expressions of interest from organizations with the capacity, strategic vision, and complementary resources to develop and operate the Certification Body. Interested organizations will be short-listed if they demonstrate the capability, commitment, and vision to create a self-sustaining, long-term and high-impact program that leverages the assets developed through the Lighting Global program to date. Short-listed entities will subsequently be invited to present more detailed proposals, including a detailed business plan. We further expect that, with assistance from the WBG through the short-listing process, interested organizations will be able to identify potential partner organizations from among the short-listed firms, with which they can work in developing proposals and business plans.

4. Vision for Off-Grid Lighting and Energy Products Certification Body

Overview

The WBG is hereby inviting suitable organizations to indicate their interest to further develop substantial proposals for their ownership and operation of the quality assurance program presently operated by the WBG under Lighting Global. Such organizations would see a strategic opportunity to leverage the assets

developed through the Lighting Global program to further develop, own and operate the Certification Body. The legal and organizational structure of the operational entity that would implement this body of work is not pre-determined by the WBG, but rather is to be conceived by the proposing entities in a subsequent proposal. Given the rapidly developing nature of the off-grid lighting market and the vast number of people affected by the outcome, the World Bank and IFC believe this opportunity has unique potential to position the Certification Body at the forefront of global development efforts to support energy access, and at the hub of a substantial emerging global industry that is attracting growing attention from the investor community, and could well become a familiar name among millions of end-users.

Activities

IFC envisions that the Certification Body would have six main functions as shown below in Figure 1 and then described below. The core work of the Certification Body would be to receive applications for certification of specific products and then to provide certification once products prove conformity with standards. This work will entail the management and further development of a network of accredited third party laboratories and accreditation bodies. In addition, the Certification Body would undertake a range of other activities to support the success of the certification in the marketplace.

Figure 1: Off-Grid Lighting Certification Body, Main Functions

1. Certify Products and Carry Out Market Surveillance: Receive applications, have products tested to verify their conformity with program requirements and verify that declared performance characteristics are accurate (truth in advertising). This work will entail the maintenance and further development of a network of accredited third party laboratories and accreditation bodies. In addition, the work includes market surveillance activities aimed at ensuring that products sold into the market have quality and performance levels that match those observed in certification testing.

2. Maintain Global Quality Standards and Testing Methods: Coordinate the development, maintenance, and periodic revision of appropriate off-grid lighting and energy products standards throughout the different socio-economic and regulatory environments of developing countries, including continued engagement with IEC and other relevant organizations.

3. Assist Manufacturers: Assist off-grid lighting and energy product manufacturers to obtain certification to ensure supply of certified products.

4. Provide Public Information: Provide public information about certification standards, testing procedures, and certified products.

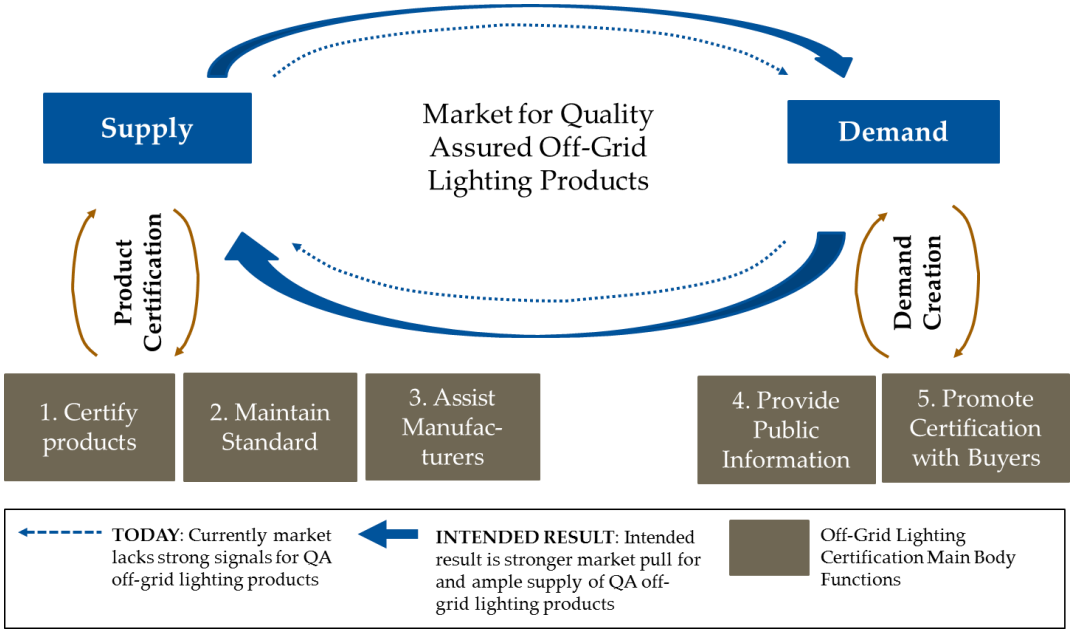
5. Promote Certification with Buyers and Engage with Stakeholders: Promote off-grid lighting and energy product certification with buyers and key market influencers, such as government regulatory agencies, buyers throughout the supply chain, and financial institutions, to support development of demand for certified products. Engage with key stakeholders throughout the sector to ensure that a range of perspectives are considered and represented in quality assurance and certification activities.

6. Manage Business Operations, Raise Funds, and Generate Fees to Support Operations: Develop a sustainable way to keep the Certification Body funded year over year, based on payments for product certification, advisory support, or other sources. Manage business operations, coordinate activities of the participating organizations, and manage legal issues and risks.

A more detailed list of the anticipated activities is found in *Appendix 1*.

The main functions of the Certification Body work together to simultaneously stimulate supply and demand of quality assured off-grid lighting products, as shown in Figure 2. The functions of the Certification Body are interdependent and ultimately, success of the Certification Body relies on the ability to implement well across all functions.

Figure 2: Interdependence of functions



The proposed Certification Body resembles certification organizations that serve other products markets at an early stage of development and which also generate public benefits, like the Forest Stewardship Council and Fair Trade, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Comparison of Certification Body Functions

Certification Body Activities	Eurovent Certification Company	Forest Stewardship Council	Fair Trade USA
1. Certify Products	●	●	●
2. Maintain Standard	◔	●	●
3. Assist Manufacturers/Producers	◔	◕	●
4. Provide Public Information	◑	●	◕
5. Promote Certification with Buyers	○	●	◕
6. Raise Funds to Support Certification Body	○	●	●

Relative Activity Level

High● Significant ◕ Some ◑ Limited ◔ None ○

Organizations similar in scope to the proposed Off-Grid Lighting Certification Body

Geographic Focus

It is anticipated the Certification Body will serve as the global face of quality assurance for the off-grid lighting and energy products market, garnering international recognition along with corporate and philanthropic attention. The Certification Body will need to work with manufacturers worldwide, and with governments, distributors and consumers primarily located in Africa and Asia. While the certification work will initially target products sold in Africa and Asia, the Certification Body does not have to be headquartered in these continents, although it will need to have or develop capacity in both to effectively administer the program.

Team Composition and Eligibility Criteria

In response to this REOI, organizations may apply in association with others or alone. Eligible organizations include non-profits, private firms, multilateral agencies, or academic institutes. Preference will be given to existing organizations with the capacity to include the off-grid lighting and energy products certification roles into their existing functions and with a clear commitment to a long-term philanthropic mission. While preference will be given to organizations or teams that can provide comprehensive services covering all activities that the Certification Body is required to perform, IFC would also like to hear from organizations interested in providing services for a portion of the listed activity areas.

Also, IFC envisions that current contributors to Lighting Global – both operational partners and funders -- could continue to take responsibility for and contribute to some part of the activities, as needed, for their expertise or industry relationships. The existing Lighting Global team intends to work with selected organizations during the transition period to share expertise and gradually shift responsibility for these core roles. A comparison of the Quality Assurance Program's current activities to the activities envisioned for the Certification Body is contained in Figure 4. As shown, the Quality Assurance Program is currently doing many of the functions envisioned for the Certification Body, with an emphasis on certifying products, maintaining the standard and assisting manufacturers. It is anticipated that, by

establishing the Certification Body and bringing in new partners, more extensive work can be done to provide public information about the program and promote the certification with buyers.

Figure 4: Comparison of Lighting Global Quality Assurance Program to Anticipated Certification Body Activities

Certification Body Activities	Lighting Global QA	Comment
1. Certify Products and Carry Out Market Surveillance	◕	• QA team manages test laboratory network • Certification is based on comparison of test results and Lighting Global Quality Standard. • Market surveillance includes market check testing and warranty monitoring in selected countries.
2. Maintain Standard	●	• Test methods & quality framework adopted by IEC. • Lighting Global continues to maintain quality standards (i.e. pass criteria)
3. Assist Manufacturers/ Producers	◕	• QA team provides feedback to manufactures to help them achieve certification. LG provides funding to cover most certification-related costs.
4. Provide Public Information About Certified Products	◑	• Information about product quality and technical notes available through website. Quality mark could be developed in the future.
5. Promote Certification with Buyers and Engage with Stakeholders	◑	• Quality assurance program is promoted to stakeholders by Lighting Global and the broader Lighting Africa and Asia teams. Team engages with stakeholders through a range of activities.

Current Activity Level High● Significant ◕ Some ◑ Limited ◔ None ○

Funding

IFC anticipates making available seed funding to help enable the transition of the current Lighting Global Quality Assurance Program to a long-term sustainable operation. Such financial and related technical support would partially cover the operational costs of the Body and is anticipated to be available for two years in order to assist the Certification Body to develop its capacity and implement its longer-term plan. The amount of such support would be negotiated during the selection process in a subsequent proposal stage. In the future it is anticipated that the Certification Body's activities will be sustained from a variety of revenue streams which could include; certification fees; advisory and service fees to client manufacturers, system aggregators, large-scale buyers of off-grid lighting, and contributions from international economic development funding programs, including an array of support from philanthropic, multi-lateral, bi-lateral, government agency and foundation sources. Thus, interested parties should be able to demonstrate their capacity to develop revenue streams from services provision and raise funding from third party investors and donors.

5. Skills, Experience, and Qualifications

As shown above, the responsibilities for a successful off-grid lighting certification body will encompass a broad scope of activities. Thus, IFC is seeking organizations and teams with all or some of the following skills and experience:

Technical (Product Testing and Standards Development)

- Capacity to accredit, coordinate, and/or supervise a network of testing labs
- Ability to develop, revise, and maintain quality standards and test methods, including engagement with IEC
- Skills to evaluate test reports from labs, analyze data associated with product quality and performance trends, and communicate technical information to key stakeholders

Upstream (Manufacturers)

- Strong experience in ongoing engagement with product manufacturers
- Demonstrated capacity to administer a quality certification or similar process

Downstream (Distribution Channels, Government Agencies, Institutional Buyers, Consumers)

- Ability to enforce a quality standard by tracking products in the market, potentially including development of appropriate capacity to manage legal risks and pursue enforcement activities when needed.
- Marketing experience, especially for quality assurance and standards programs
- Developing country market experience, especially with key industry associations and distributional, government, and institutional buyers
- Understanding of off-grid energy markets and the needs and capabilities of end-users in relevant African and Asian countries

Managerial and Leadership

- Successful record of fundraising and/or revenue stream development from services provision
- Experience leading a team effort involving multiple organizations
- Communication skills for written documents and presentations
- Access to experienced legal counsel able to guide key program decisions and manage risks

Legitimacy and Reputation

- Strong reputation for integrity and competence
- Viewed by key stakeholders as a legitimate organization to deliver quality assurance services for the off-grid energy sector
- Free from conflicts of interest (or the perception thereof)

6. Guidelines for Submission

To demonstrate qualifications for the skills and experience listed above, interested organizations must provide the following:

- **Relevant Expertise and Experience**: A narrative and information describing your expertise and experience in any similar assignments (5 page limit)

- **Key Staff**: CVs for key staff highlighting skills and experience relevant to this REOI (limit 10 people, 2 pages per CV, 20 pages total)

In addition, for those organizations interested in taking a lead role in building and running the Certification Body (as opposed to those organizations who are primarily interested to play a supporting role), please take an additional five pages to also provide a narrative or information on the following: (Total narrative length allowed, including the five pages noted above and the five pages noted here, is ten (10) pages)

- **Vision and approach**: Your vision for the Certification Body and how it fits with your mission. This section should include specific reference to activities that the organization would carry out,

the role that your organization and potential partners would play, and the approach you will use to ensure that the effort succeeds and is sustainable. What are the strategic elements of your organization's orientation and direction that indicate points of leverage that will enable your long-term success and commitment to the success of the Certification Body. Refer to Appendix 1 for additional information about potential Certification Body activities.

- **Managerial and Leadership Capacity**: Description of your organizations' managerial structure and how it would be applicable to taking a leading role in the Certification Body, including experience undertaking similar endeavors.
- **Fundraising Experience**: Evidence of prior fundraising experience, including highlights of amounts and sources of funds raised.
- **Legal Capacity**: Describe how your organization would manage legal risks associated with managing the Certification Organization and your organization's current capacity in this area.

Responses should be submitted by Friday, October 12, 2015. If submissions exceed page limits noted above, IFC reserves the right to only consider the content that falls within the page limit noted.

Please note that standard marketing materials should only be provided as attachments and will not be considered as a substitute for written responses. Elaborate artwork is not required or encouraged.

IFC reserves the right to limit the number of shortlisted firms. IFC reserves the right to verify any information provided, or to request additional information after EOIs have been received. While IFC anticipates releasing an RFP, the timeline for the release may be extended due to the complex scope of the undertaking. Moreover, IFC also reserves the right not proceed with issuing an RFP and/or to modify the scope of work for the RFP as necessary.

All data and information received from IFC for the purpose of this assignment is to be treated as confidential and is only to be used in connection with the execution of this REOI. The contents of any written materials obtained and used in this assignment may not be disclosed to any third parties without the expressed advance written notice of IFC.

[All correspondence related to this REOI, including requests to discuss any questions related to the opportunity, should be sent to LtgGlobalQA@ifc.org. IFC is not responsible for any verbal explanation or interpretation of these documents.]

7. About IFC

IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, is the largest global development institution focused on the private sector in developing countries. We create opportunities for people to escape poverty and improve their lives. We do so by providing financing to help businesses employ more people and supply essential services, by mobilizing capital from others, and by delivering advisory services to ensure sustainable development. For more information, visit http://www.ifc.org.

Appendix 1: Off-Grid Lighting and Energy Products Certification Body - Detailed List of Potential Activities

The body of this document introduces six key functions for the Off-Grid Lighting and Energy Product Certification Body. This Appendix provides more detail regarding the specific activities that may be included under each of the functional areas.

NOTE: This is not a list of required or mandatory activities, but rather reflects the current scope of activities as well as potential activities that have emerged from dialogue with industry and other stakeholders reflecting the direction of the sector's development. When the "*" symbol appears next to an activity, it indicates a new activity compared to what is undertaken currently by the Lighting Global Quality Program. In these cases, it would largely be the responsibility of the new Certification Body to develop these activities. For the activities without the "*" symbol the Certification Body would benefit from the prior experience of the Lighting Global Quality Program, although it is certainly possible to propose changes.

1. **Certify Products and Carry Out Market Surveillance**

a) **Manage application process**: Manage application process and issue certificates (which could include fee-reduction, especially over the next 3-5 years)
b) **Provide certification mark***: Provide certified companies with quality mark (when available) or other program symbol, and issue use guidelines
c) **Oversee accreditation of testing labs**: Develop and manage a network containing a sufficient number of accredited laboratories and accreditation bodies (which could include product screening facilities)
d) **Support product selection**: Support product selection for testing from warehouses, retail outlets in relevant markets, or other locations
e) **Implement market check testing**: Manage market check testing and other related activities associated with verifying the quality and performance of previously certified products
f) **Manage testing conflicts and disputes***

2. **Maintain Global Quality Standard and Testing Methods**

a) **Identify need for changes**: Monitor market to identify needs for changes to IEC quality standard or testing methods, based on product developments, standard usage, and/or end-user preferences. This could include development and implementation of a quality mark for products.
b) **Collect input on modifications**: Work with industry and other key stakeholders on updates to standards and testing as needed
c) **Propose alternatives**: Propose alterative language for IEC standards and test methods whenever the existing documents become outdated
d) **Monitor global standards***: Monitor work being done on off-grid lighting and energy product quality standards and testing methods or similar products in other countries and by other international bodies (like the UN). Identify when there might be a need for collaboration or other partnerships.

3. Assist Manufacturers

a) **Build supply-side awareness**: Build awareness with manufacturers and testing laboratories about the quality standard and testing methods, including through partnership with the Global Off-Grid Lighting Association (GOGLA). The goal of this activity would be to promote the product certification and QA marking scheme among industry.

b) **Provide technical assistance to manufacturers**: Provide technical assistance to manufacturers in understanding the quality standards and test methods, finding testing laboratories, interpreting results, and identifying product improvements.

c) **Provide technical assistance to testing laboratories and accreditation agencies**[6]: Provide technical assistance to testing laboratories and accreditation agencies, including providing the following:
   - Train test labs in how to conduct the tests via the development of a test procedure operational manual, training and witness testing
   - Train accreditation agencies in how to accredit test labs doing the test to ensure the accreditation process is in line with the above
   - Organize round-robin tests to confirm that the tolerance of results from accredited test labs is in line with the program requirements and to address and deficiencies found

d) **Enforce standard***: Develop alliances and partnership to enforce the legal use of the Certification Body's logo on products.

e) **Recognize leaders**: Provide awards and recognition for leading and innovative manufacturers (as funding is available to do so)

4. Provide Public Information

a) **Maintain approved list of products and participant companies**: Make list of approved products available on website and list companies participating in certification program. This could include development and maintenance of communication tools that may be available to retail vendors and/or end-users, such as information about certified products that can be viewed using mobile devices.

b) **Provide technical briefs**: Provide useful information to key stakeholders in the form of newsletters and/or technical briefs

5. Promote Certification with Buyers and Key Institutions

a) **Build awareness***: Build awareness with large buyers of off-grid lighting products (e.g., distributors, government rural electrification programs, aid/relief agencies, and microfinance organizations) and with key market influencers (e.g., government regulatory agencies and relevant development agency programs).

b) **Provide technical assistance**: Provide technical assistance to large buyers, government regulatory agencies, and other market influencers to help them adapt the standard to local situations, when needed, or find ways to harmonize it with other on-going country, regional or global efforts.

[6] Certification Body could become an accreditor.

6. Manage Business Operations and Raise Funds to Support Certification Body

a) **Build revenue through certification***: Identify how much revenue can be collected for product certification.

b) **Develop network of donors***: Create a network of different funding sources that are aligned with Certification Body goals. Organizations that are likely candidates for funding the Certification Body include development-focuses foundations, OECD governments, and multi-lateral organizations (e.g., UNDP).

c) **Manage certification body operations**: Manage day-to-day operations in an efficient manner. Coordinate activities among coalition partners and associated stakeholders.

d) **Manage legal risks**: Manage legal issues and risks associated with operating a certification organization.