Request for Expressions of Interest

Initiatives to increase women’s participation in the Sri Lankan hotel industry

Introduction

Market Development Facility (MDF) works with private businesses, government, industry associations and other organisations to improve market competitiveness. MDF is currently present in Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Fiji, Timor Leste and Papua New Guinea. In Sri Lanka, MDF works to strengthen the tourism industry, as well as improve specific value chains of Sri Lankan products such as coffee, seafood, and organic herbs and spices. MDF works to make these markets function better and create significant change through sustainable income and job creation.

MDF is funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAT). It is implemented by Palladium in partnership with Swisscontact.

Background

Tourism is a key growth sector for Sri Lanka, and the industry is facing a critical shortage of workers that is expected to worsen. Unless the shortage is addressed, quality of service will decline, affecting the customer experience and negatively impacting Sri Lanka’s reputation as a tourist destination.

Globally, tourism has a very high percentage of female employees, but women’s participation in tourism in Sri Lanka is significantly lower. MDF sees potential for the hotel industry to tackle this worker shortage, by unlocking this untapped human resource pool and increasing the number of women employed in tourism.

Objectives

MDF is seeking to partner with interested organisations in the Sri Lankan hotel industry to attract and retain more women in their workforce.

MDF will work with partner hotels to:

- Develop a 3-year HR strategy to increase women’s participation in the short-medium term with specialised support from an industry expert. The expert is an industry veteran with over 40 years of experience in hospitality, especially in human resource management and capacity building. He has worked in Sri Lanka as well as abroad extensively, in over 10 countries, and has expertise with notable local and international brands.
- Implement the devised strategy within the organisation for a period of up to two years.
MDF can offer financial support on a 2:1 cost sharing basis (up to LKR 2Mn from MDF) to implement the revised strategy and recommendations.

Scope of activities

MDF can partner with organisations on designing and implementing customised solutions to target more women, such as the following:

- Reviewing and revising existing policies to better attract and retain women
- Conducting outreach programs in communities among women or youth groups to increase awareness
- Upskilling and training your HR team on innovative recruitment strategies
- Designing and helping you conduct internal training for your staff on gender-sensitization
- Reviewing or revising HR structures to offer more attractive and flexible working conditions (e.g. shift basis work)
- Providing better support services and facilities which can cater to women (e.g. staff transport and separate quarters)*

* Capital expenditure cannot account for more than 30% of the total cost-shared budget.

Application guidelines

Interested organisations are requested to provide an Expression of Interest incorporating the following key elements:

a. Company Profile - an overview of the organisation including employee turnover ratios, total employee count with a breakdown of the male/female employee ratios
b. A brief explanation of why the organisation would like to increase the participation of women in your workforce
c. A description of the top 3 priorities or goals that the organisation would like to partner with MDF on and why
d. Contact details of a designated person/s at the organisation who will oversee and manage this initiative

Eligibility and how to apply

This offer is open to organisations (hotels/groups of hotels) registered to operate in Sri Lanka.

The ideal organisation should have:

- A minimum of 80 employees across all properties
- A minimum of 30 hotel rooms across all properties

If interested, please submit an EOI to minal.cabraal-MDF@thepalladiumgroup.com by 29th March 2020.

For further clarifications, please contact the above address.