



## **Request for Proposals**

### **B2B Listing and Matchmaking**

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#### **1. Request for Proposals**

Building Markets is seeking a vendor to support the development of a B2B listing and matchmaking platform. Specifically, we invite vendors who fit one or more of the following capabilities:

- ❖ Full stack software development
- ❖ Development of configuration of SAAS software
- ❖ Integration of off-the-shelf software
- ❖ Modern generative AI application

We request proposals that align with the requirements laid out in Sections 4 and 5 of this Request for Proposals (RFP). ***To respond to the RFP, please send submission materials to [newyork@buildingmarkets.org](mailto:newyork@buildingmarkets.org) by June 11th 2024.*** Submission packages should include:

1. Project description, including
  - a. discovery phase activities to establish scope and specific objectives
  - b. proposed technical methodology
  - c. estimated timeline
  - d. cost estimates based on phases (discovery, phase 1, phase 2), including labor, infrastructure, software, and licensing
  - e. resumes of project lead and key team members
2. 2-3 examples of relevant past performance projects to support the project description.



## 2. Background

Our world is grappling with monumental challenges: escalating inequality, deepening poverty, and the ever-looming threat of climate change. These global crises exacerbate growing global inequality and leave billions of people economically vulnerable, from refugees and migrants to women and young people. Without the conditions to build economic self-sufficiency, they cannot gain agency over their futures or break cycles of poverty and inequality. It is a loss for them, their communities, and their economies.

Building Markets is at the forefront of addressing these issues. Every day, we strive to create a sustainable world where everyone has the chance to thrive, no matter their starting point. We do this using our Find-Build-Connect-Advance model, integrating small business leaders from economically vulnerable communities into supply chains and e-commerce opportunities.

We focus on empowering small business leaders because those business owners represent over 70% of global employment. Since 2004, our work has bolstered over 27,000 small businesses and injected more than \$1.4 billion into local economies worldwide, creating over 74,000 jobs where they are most needed.

### ***Find, Build, Connect, Advance***

***Find:*** We bring visibility to small businesses by gathering and sharing high-quality market information on their past performance, capabilities, and potential.

***Build:*** We enhance the commercial and digital capacity of small businesses through training and advisory services, helping them compete in a global marketplace.

***Connect:*** We improve market efficiency for small businesses through tender distribution services, matchmaking services, and access to working capital.

***Advance:*** We engage regional, national, and global stakeholders to advocate for the integration of economically vulnerable small business leaders in the economy.

Our success has been underpinned by four differentiators in how we work:

1. **Multilingual:** we provide bilingual and trilingual offerings to small businesses in our network, opening opportunities that would otherwise be lost. Our global team currently operates in English, Spanish, Arabic, Turkish, and Burmese.
2. **Relational:** we build long-term, trust-based relationships with small businesses and buyers, building their trust in one another
3. **Active:** we actively seek out and create timely matches between buyers and small business suppliers, providing support to see an opportunity from match through to contract
4. **Impact-driven:** beyond matches, we track revenue generation and job creation, enabling suppliers and buyers to confirm the value of our services.

### **3. Strategy for growth**

The functionality of this digital platform is intended to support Building Markets in achieving the ambitions set out in our five-year global strategy: to serve 65,000 vulnerable entrepreneurs and direct \$400 million of capital to their local communities through their small businesses by 2028. Through this platform we will also engage hundreds of buyers, both within our markets of operation and globally through cross-border operations. We will prioritize markets where we currently work (Turkiye, Colombia, Myanmar) and additional markets in Latin America, the Middle East, Africa, and the United States. The language capabilities of the platform are intended to allow small business leaders and buyers to seamlessly connect without language constraints or delay.

### **4. Requirements**

BuMa will build on our differentiators (multilingual, relational, active, impact-driven) to develop a platform that supports our scaling plans. Selected vendors should conduct a discovery phase to ensure the development team understands the problem that is trying to be solved, refine scope, and determine goals. The below are a variety of activities we expect to occur during this phase, but you may include additional activities your organization typically conducts during a discovery phase as well.

1. Stakeholder Interviews
2. User Research
3. Technical Feasibility Analysis
4. Prototyping
5. Risk Assessment
6. Scope Refinement and Roadmap Development
7. Presenting results of the Discovery Phase and aligning on next steps

Platform development is prioritized in two distinct phases:

#### **Phase 1**

1. Registration and account management for small businesses
2. Report detailed business profile data on verified suppliers in BuMa's network, including location, past performance, ESG, and employee data
3. Searchable small business information across a range of goods and services and profile characteristics (e.g. location, ESG characteristics, employees, past performance)
4. Dynamic search by product and business profile characteristics.
5. Translates data and buyer-supplier communications across Spanish, English, French, Arabic, and Turkish
6. Usage reports (views, subscriptions, logins, activity tracking, messaging for any technical issues)

#### **Phase 2**

7. Retrieves tenders from external sites and summarizes key elements (sector, product, deadlines, costing, certifications) of the tender requests
8. Generates matches between buyer requests and small businesses/ products
9. Sends alerts to buyers and suppliers about potential match opportunities

Optional add-on functions that we may consider later include bid application support and transaction/payment capabilities.

## **5. Detailed requirements**

### **Phase 1**

#### **1. Registration and account management for buyers and suppliers**

- a. Simple 8-10 questions registration and account opening
- b. Account management for profile updates and favorites (countries, products, certifications)
- c. Setting preferences for alerts
- d. Setting preferences for preferred communication channels (WhatsApp, email, other)
- e. Setting preference for language

#### **2. Business profiles**

- a. Data from Annex 1
- b. Badges based on Tier characteristics (e.g., “public procurement ready”, “exporter”)

#### **3. Product and Service descriptions**

- a. Photos of products
- b. Consistent product and service codes and descriptions based on at least one international classification structure for products (goods and services), such as the Harmonized System (HS) and/or Statistical Classification of Products by Activity (CPA)

#### **4. Search and query**

- a. Search by buyer profile characteristics
- b. Search by supplier profile characteristics
- c. Search by product codes and characteristics
- d. Promote suppliers with relevant past experience

#### **5. Translation**

- a. Platform operates for left-to-right and right-to-left scripts
- b. Translation applies to all website content as well as communications (alerts, messaging)
- c. Deploy internationalization best practices

#### **6. Administration**



- a. Usage reports - Views, subscriptions. Logins, applications
- b. User reports - Active users, Activity tracking
- c. Messaging system where users can alert the Admins about access or other technical issues with the system.

**Phase 2**

**7. Tender retrieval and Asks**

- a. Scrape public record procurement listings
- b. Buyers can also manually add requests
- c. Tag tenders and opportunities based on business profile and product characteristics

**8. Matchmaking**

- a. Generate shortlists of buyer-supplier matches based on product and profile characteristics

**9. Communication**

- a. Chat functionality within platform
  - i. Between users
  - ii. AI/ chatbot support
- b. Alerts on potential matches

**6. User profiles**

The platform will be used by three distinct user groups. The table below describes these groups and the value proposition the technology platform would offer each.

User Profile	Value proposition
<p><b>Small business (supplier)</b> Typically &lt;50 employees Typically &lt;15 Product SKU Smartphone users WhatsApp use for messaging, document sharing Often monolingual Right-to-left and left-to-right language scripts Bandwidth/Internet quality is low to high, depending on geography</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clear product descriptions and quality images to share with potential buyers</li> <li>- Access to relevant and timely information on B2B opportunities</li> <li>- Ability to communicate with buyers in diverse markets</li> <li>- Access to support for bid applications</li> <li>- Visibility on other suppliers to jointly bid on opportunities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Buyer</b> Private, municipal, social sector Global industrial product categories</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sourcing vetted, diverse suppliers for specific products and services</li> <li>- Access to data on suppliers for use in</li> </ul>



<p>Tenders, purchase requests, phone orders Mobile and desktop users WhatsApp use for messaging WhatsApp and email for document sharing Often bilingual Right-to-left and left-to-right language scripts Bandwidth/Internet quality is medium to high</p>	<p>ESG and impact reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Ability to communicate with suppliers in diverse markets, across multiple languages</li><li>- Access to curated lists of suppliers</li></ul>
<p><b>Building Markets staff</b> Mobile and desktop users WhatsApp use for messaging WhatsApp and email for document sharing Bilingual/ trilingual Bandwidth/Internet quality is medium to high</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Automation of manual processes (tender retrieval, matchmaking)</li><li>- Increased trust from buyers, suppliers and partners</li><li>- Ability to work with larger number of small businesses and buyers within existing and in new markets</li><li>- Ability to add-on revenue-generating advisory services</li></ul>



## Annex 1: Small Business Data for Digital Platform

Guidance:

All Tiers

Tier II + Tier I

Tier I Only

Contact Information

- Languages Spoken
- Country and City of Operations

Sector<sup>1</sup>

*High-risk sectors require additional data collection related to their areas of risk (environment, social/labor, health/safety)*

- Goods and Services Description<sup>2</sup> - Adopt global product codes and descriptions
- Trade Groups

Ownership & Management

- Ownership Structure
- Ownership and Management Information
- Gender
- Refugee Status
- Disability Status

Employment & Inclusion

- Employment (Full-time and Part-time)
- Gender
- Refugee Status
- Disability Status
- Skill-level

Legal & Registration

- Registration Information<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> ISIC Sectors and Subsectors or another global standard for industrial classification, such as NACE

<sup>2</sup> Small business provides information on what activities it conducts and products/services it sells.

<sup>3</sup> Registration depends on country requirements, including, but not limited to, specific government agencies like the Department of Trade, tax identification or national entity numbers, and/or commercial registries in chambers.



# Building Markets

Small **Business.** Big **Impact.**

- Years in Operation
- Business Licenses
- Certifications, Associations, and Vendor Lists *vary by market*

## Financials

*Collect different financials depending on SME Tier*

- Financial Management Capabilities
- Certified Balance Sheets
- Profit & Loss Statements
- Revenue & Profits
- Formal Financial Inclusion/Banking
- Payments Accepted

## Occupational Health & Safety

*Varies by Tier*

- Policy
- Management system
- Performance data / targets
- Certifications

## Environment/Sustainability

*Varies by Tier*

- Business Opportunities
- Risk assessment
- Policy
- Management system
- Performance data / targets
- Certifications

## Labor/Social Issues

*Varies by Tier*

- Standard supplier disclosures
- Management system
- Performance data / targets
- Certifications