

INVITATION TO TENDER | 07.05.2026

Call for external market experts for the project Leap4Growth

1. PROCUREMENT PROCEDURE

The procurement procedure will follow the Finnish law on public procurement and the procurement rules of the Interreg Central Baltic programme. The total budget for this procurement is a maximum of EUR 40,000 for all market experts collectively. This shall not be construed as a guarantee of an equal share per market expert, nor as an obligation to expend the full amount under this call. Allocation of funds shall be determined based on the number of companies supported and the actual work performed. Any unutilized funds may be carried forward and applied to future procurements within the project period.

1.1 Definitions

- In this invitation to tender, the term market expert refers to the applicant submitting a proposal in response to this call. Once selected, the market expert will be referred to as the Market expert in the agreement and during the delivery of services.
- In this invitation to tender, the term of Client refers to Business Tampere
- The Client shall select a group of external market experts as market experts (herein after *Market expert*) into a pool that can be utilised during the Leap4Growth project. Market expert must meet the suitability requirements specified in Section 3 and 4 to provide the service in accordance with Section 5 and 6.
- The market experts shall be rejected if the requirements specified in the invitation to tender are not met if the market expert does not otherwise correspond to the invitation to tender or if the tender is submitted late.
- The Client reserves the right not to carry out the procurement.

2. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

2.1. Client information

Business Tampere (BT) brings extensive networks and expertise to the project, with a team of about 40 professionals focused on promoting international business through ecosystems such as cleantech, circular economy, health tech, and emerging technologies. Their work includes business development and acceleration services aligned with the project's export objectives. BT has strong global connections, particularly in the Southern APAC region, spanning public authorities, investment firms, and multinational corporations, and has facilitated high-profile delegation visits and business forums. They also maintain close relations with local companies experienced in these markets and collaborate actively with Business Finland offices and embassies, including in South APAC and the UAE. Additionally, the City of Tampere's sister city relationship with Guangzhou and strategic partnerships with Shenzhen and Ho Chi Minh City further strengthen public support for business growth.

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2.2 Project Leap4Growth

The Leap4Growth project is implemented by a consortium of four partners: Norrköping Science Park (NOSP, lead partner), Business Tampere, Cleantech Latvia, and Tallinn Science Park Tehnopol. Together, these organisations collaborate under the Interreg Central Baltic programme to strengthen the international growth capacity of SMEs in the Central Baltic region.

Leap4Growth supports SMEs from Estonia, Finland, Latvia, and Sweden in identifying and developing new business opportunities, while helping them overcome the barriers associated with expansion into Southeast Asian markets. The project places particular emphasis on two strategic entry gateways: the Greater Bay Area (GBA) via Hong Kong and Vietnam. These regions have been selected due to their strong growth potential and increasing demand for innovative solutions, which closely align with the competencies and export ambitions of Central Baltic SMEs. The target companies primarily operate in the fields of health technology, greentech, and education-related greentech, with a strong focus on advanced digitalisation, including cybersecurity and artificial intelligence.

A key ambition of the project is to secure 20 sales contracts in the Southeast Asian region by building and supporting a cohort of up to 100 participating companies from the partner countries. In addition, a central objective is to strengthen cross-border collaboration between SMEs, project partners, and supporting local organisations across the Central Baltic region.

Up to 100 selected companies will be invited to join the Leap4Growth programme and will be allocated across the two target markets, with approximately 50 companies focusing on the Greater Bay Area and approximately 50 companies on Vietnam. These figures are indicative and may be adjusted during project implementation depending on market conditions and participant readiness.

The project will also organise up to two export missions during its lifetime, each involving a maximum of 10 SMEs from the cross-border region travelling to the target markets. All participating companies will be pre-selected by the project consortium and their national representatives from Sweden, Finland, Latvia, and Estonia. In addition, local market experts will play an important role in ensuring quality by reserving the right to exclude companies that are not considered suitable for the target markets, for example where there is insufficient engagement, cooperation, or readiness for internationalisation.

3. ITEM TO BE PROCURED

Business Tampere is launching a call for external market experts specializing in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) to support Finnish companies in their internationalisation efforts. Through this procurement call, we are establishing a pool of individual experts for the GBA target market. The aim is to select up to 2 additional market experts to complement an already existing pool of 3 experts, ensuring sufficient capacity and expertise throughout the L4G project period.

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The project previously included a joint procurement of mentoring services involving international project partners. This current procurement addresses a separate need identified during project implementation by the Finnish partner. It focuses on targeted expert support requiring expertise that was not fully covered by the earlier procurement.

The procurement differs from the earlier mentoring services in its scope, purpose, expertise requirements, and implementation arrangements. It is conducted only by the Finnish partner and does not extend the earlier procurement framework or expert pool. The need emerged during project implementation, particularly due to gaps between the available expert backgrounds and the sector-specific market access needs of participating companies.

In this tender, the experts shall:

1. **Have verifiable direct access** to senior decision-makers (C-level executives and/or director-level representatives) within key industries, companies, and organizations relevant to the project scope—particularly in healthcare, green technology, education, and electric vehicles—and of strategic interest to Finnish companies. In the Chinese business environment, where decision-making authority is highly centralized, such access is considered essential for enabling Finnish companies to achieve concrete and measurable business outcomes. The expert shall possess an extensive and well-established network across both public and private sectors in the Greater Bay Area, built through substantial and relevant professional experience.
2. **Possess a proven track record** in developing and executing brand strategy and communications for Nordic companies in the Chinese market. This includes the ability to effectively bridge linguistic and cultural differences by translating Nordic brand strengths and value propositions into locally resonant strategies—ensuring alignment with Chinese market expectations while preserving core brand identity and competitive advantages.
3. **Have a strong understanding** of the Finnish business environment, including experience working with Finnish small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The expert shall be capable of aligning Finnish companies' capabilities and expectations with opportunities in the Chinese market, acting as a credible and informed interface between the two business ecosystems.
4. **Possess deep-rooted expertise** in both Hong Kong and Mainland China markets, supported by substantial lived and professional experience in the region. This may include senior roles in relevant trade associations, as well as experience in establishing and operating companies in these jurisdictions. The expert's background should reflect sustained engagement with the business, institutional, and cultural environments of Greater China.

Tasks of the selected market experts

- **Evaluation of the company's target market readiness.** Evaluation of the company's target market readiness include evaluating companies' business models, readiness to enter to the selected target market, its team, product/service fit, its financial resources, its sales strategy and activities, marketing materials and readiness, IO aspects, if necessary, risk management and other criteria that is important before entering to the selected target market. Overall, market experts should be able to monitor and see the improvement possibilities in a company's business. Market experts must point out the missing parts and provide advice to overcome these. Communicating with the companies' representatives directly according to their needs.
- **Opening new markets by providing at least 3 leads to each participating company.** If the company has been evaluated and is ready to enter the target market, market experts are

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expected to provide at least 3 business connections/leads (based on the company's expectations and its needs) to each participating company in one of the specific target markets. Market experts should provide intros to these business connections. (Business connections can overlap for several participating companies.)

- The market expert shall present plans and progress at meetings convened by the Client. Upon request, the market expert shall provide a comprehensive report to the Client, including an overview of plans and progress with the companies being supported. The market expert shall also attend any meetings called by the Client

4. QUALIFICATION OF THE MARKET EXPERT AND QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

The market expert should provide

- CV (or alternatively LinkedIn profile) and short biography according to the matter of the market expert call.
- A description of prior work with consultancies and/or industries), highlighting relevant focus areas such as business modelling, marketing, and market entry, along with examples of previous work and references from companies the market expert has supported, and a brief overview of the market expert's existing business network in the selected market.
- The market expert may list more than one market expert in the tender. In such cases the market expert will submit documents stipulated above per each listed market expert.

The market expert shall either reside in the selected market country or possess sufficient relevance and contacts within the market. Compliance with this requirement shall be evaluated by the Client

The market expert, and any entity controlled by or affiliated with the market expert, shall not be subject to any sanctions under European Union regulations.

The procurement agreement will only be signed with the Market expert that is a juridical person that fulfils the conditions of stipulated in the Clause #3 and #4.

The Market expert must be registered in the local country Business Register or other similar national business register in accordance with the legislation of its domicile country.

The Market expert has paid the necessary taxes, social security contributions and pension insurance premiums etc that are needed in the country where the company registered.

Market experts can submit their offers as natural persons only if they provide the procurer with evidence

- that they have officially begun with the establishment of their company and that their company will be registered in the local country Business Register or other similar national business register in accordance with the legislation of its domicile country within a reasonable time (no later than 8 weeks after the tender decision)

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- they can provide proof that registration of the company will be started in 5 working days after the tender results announcement and will be finished no later than 11 weeks after the deadline for submitting the tender.

If the service to be tendered involves the processing of personal data, the Market expert must follow the best practices for processing personal data and meet the requirements of the EU General Data Protection Regulation.

If the Market expert cannot be considered to have the technical, financial, or other prerequisites for carrying out the procurement or has failed to pay taxes or statutory social security contributions in the country in which it is headquartered, it may be excluded from the competitive tendering process.

The Market expert can be requested to deliver the following certificates

- Tax authority's confirmation of paid taxes (certificate must not be older than three (3) months) on the date of the deadline for tender submission)
- Extract from the Trade Register or other national business register.

The aforementioned requirements and clarifications also apply to the subcontractors (as juridical persons) specified by the Market expert in its tender. The Market expert shall be responsible for the subcontractor's actions as for its own.

In its tender, **the Market expert shall specify the name and e-mail address of a contact person** who can be contacted for additional information about the tender as well as an e-mail address to which the procurement decision is to be sent after the competitive tendering and tender comparison process.

5. AGREEMENT PERIOD AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS

5.1 Signing the procurement agreement

- A written agreement shall be made with the Market expert selected.
- The procurement agreement will only be signed with the Market expert that is a juridical person. Market experts who applied as natural persons should fill related criteria of Clause 4 and provide company details.
- Should a market expert as a natural person whose company was being registered at the time of submitting the tender, be successful in the procurement, they shall present the procurer with evidence stipulated in clause 4 paragraph 1 no later than 5 working days after the results of the procurement have been announced. Inability to present the evidence stipulated in clause 4 paragraph 1 will lead to the rejection of the tender.
- The agreement period starts when the procurement agreement has been signed and is valid until the end of the Leap4Growth project (31.05.2028). Market expert agreements are evaluated based on client experience if the service quality has responded to the needs, and if together market expert and clients find a mutual agreement to work, the agreement will not be stopped.
- If the Client and the selected Market expert cannot reach a sufficient mutual understanding for signing the agreement, the Client may continue the agreement negotiations with the other

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Market expert to select another fitting market expert for the pool or may restart the competitive tendering process.

5.2 Terms and conditions

- The Market expert's own terms of delivery or any general terms and conditions of agreement in the tender may lead to the rejection of the market expert due to terms that contradict the invitation to tender. If the Market expert announces in its tender that it shall use its own terms of delivery or general terms and conditions, the tender must clearly indicate the extent to which these shall be applied.
- If there are special terms and conditions for the Market expert's funding that affect the project activities, these shall be further specified in the commission agreement. By submitting the tender, the Market expert accepts that there may be special terms and conditions for the funding that shall be further specified when preparing the commission agreement.

5.3 Terms of invoicing and payment

- The work ordered will be calculated by the hourly rate set by the external market expert. For the offer, the Market expert must state the hourly price that will be set in the agreement.
- The work shall be paid based on invoices and reports of the tasks done in accordance with the agreement.
- Detailed terms of invoicing shall be stipulated in the agreement. Invoicing terms may stipulate that only e-invoicing must be used, depending on the terms set by the Client. The Market expert invoices the Client with an (e-)invoice stating the measures implemented and the parties implementing them. The (e-)invoice shall fall due for payment after 14 days from the date of an approved invoice. The (e-)invoice shall fall due for payment after the period stipulated in the agreement.
- If the Client decide the market expert is a fit for participating in the market delegations, the price of the service will be stated in detail when a contract is concluded between the market expert and the Client. The Client will evaluate this based on relevance for the companies and the agenda for the delegations.
- Travel costs required for on-site work by market experts (e.g., meetings outside the GBA) shall be subject to separate agreement with the Client and may be reimbursed outside the scope of this tender.

5.4 Cancelling the agreement and resolving disputes

The Client reserves the right to cancel the agreement with immediate effect if the Client notes that the content of the service procured has been insufficient, inappropriate or of poor quality and if a quality meeting between the Client and the selected Market expert cannot reach a mutual understanding on how to proceed. The Client is nevertheless obliged to inform the Market expert immediately about any deficiencies in the service. The Client and the Market expert shall agree on compensation for the work done before the agreement is terminated. Disputes caused by or concerning the agreement shall be resolved by the Pirkanmaa District Court in Finland.

6. SELECTION AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

6.1 Selection and evaluation criteria for the external market experts will be as follows

- Background description of the market expert and list of its consultancy areas will count for 60% of the total result. Highest ranking as 60 points will be delivered to market expert that has its background, its connection with the industries, focus areas and/or consultancies, previous working experiences, its network and results in accordance with this tender call. Incomplete compliance with the requirements will result in a lower score
- Price per hour (in EUR) will be the evaluation criteria for another 40% of the total result. The Merit Point Systems method will be used in ranking the prices.
- The market expert may list more than one market expert in the tender. In such cases the market expert may stipulate an hourly price for the market coaching session per each market expert.
- In case the market expert has listed more than one market expert in the tender, the selection and evaluation criteria, stipulated above, will be applied per each market expert individually (as the work for the project will be conducted personally by the market expert). The total score of the tender is calculated as the average of all listed market expert's evaluations.

6.2 All the selected experts will accept the following selection criteria when applying for the expert pool

- Market expert and the client understand that being selected in the pool of experts does not automatically guarantee that there will be any minimum work hours or that the expert necessarily has the availability for market coaching sessions (availability will be always confirmed before confirming the sessions with the companies).
- Selected market experts' information (name, photo, title, brief biography) can be used as part of marketing for the L4G project.
- The experts may be requested for a short online call/meeting as part of the selection process.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY

According to the legislation on the publicity of documents, procurement documents are mainly public. After the procurement decision is made, the concerned parties are entitled to receive information about all the procurement documents with the exception of confidential information. The latter includes information about another Market expert's business or trade secrets apart from prices and their formation. Market experts must strive to prepare their tenders such that they do not include trade secrets. If including trade secrets in the tender cannot be avoided, this must be specifically indicated in the tender. Appendices and information to be kept confidential must be clearly indicated in the tender.

8. SUBMITTING THE TENDER

8.1 Documents to be submitted

- CV (or alternatively LinkedIn profile) and short biography
- Market expertise: the submission shall include a description of prior work with consultancies and/or industries), highlighting relevant focus areas such as business modelling, marketing, and market entry, along with examples of previous work and references from companies the market expert has supported, and a brief overview of the market expert's existing business network in the selected market.
- Tax authority's confirmation of paid taxes (not applicable if the market expert is a market expert as a natural person).
- Documents demonstrating that the Market Expert is authorized to sign contracts with the Client on behalf of the company.
- Extract from the Trade Register or other national business register (not applicable if the market expert is a market expert as a natural person) or copy of registration certificate,
- An extract from the national business register or other official register proving the company's registration process is underway (if applicable).
- A free form signed statement that The Market expert is ready to provide an extract from the national business register or other official register proving the company's registration process is in progress (please see detailed requirements in Article 4)
- Hourly price (in EUR) for the market coaching session and list the VAT separately if applies.

8.2 Other requirements

- The contents of the tender must be in accordance with the invitation to tender and include all the information requested.
- The tender and the appended documents shall be submitted in English.

8.3 Deadline and delivery address for tenders

- The tender must be submitted by 21.05.2026.
- The tender must be submitted via e-mail to: Yi Tang, project lead in Tampere Region Economic Development Agency Business Tampere Oy, e- mail: Yi.Tang@businesstampere.com
- Any questions regarding the call for experts can be made until Friday 15.05.2026 by e-mailing to Yi.Tang@businesstampere.com.
- The e-mail subject must be "L4G external market expert information".
- Additional information on the Leap4Growth project is available on the [Central Baltic](#) webpage and [LinkedIn](#).
- The tender must be valid for one month after the deadline for tender submission.

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9. ANNEXES

Annex 1: Recommended template for market experts

Name of the Market expert	Complete if the company is already registered in the national business register
Name, Surname	
Short biography	
LinkedIn link (if applicable) or indicate that the CV is attached	
Target Market (Greater Bay Area)	
Offered market coaching price per hour (EUR)	
Contact person details	Name, surname, e-mail, mobile phone number
Consultancy or Industry Focus Areas List relevant areas based on previous experience	
Previous Experience List similar work and provide references from companies served	Include company name, time, reference as attachment
Overview of Existing Business Network Provide a short description of relevant contacts in one of the selected target markets.	
Required Attachments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CV ● References ● Confirmation of paid taxes ● Company registration certificate or documents proving that registration has started, or ● Confirmation of readiness to provide the certificate within 8 weeks 	