

**INSTITUTE FOR TRAINING AND TECHNICAL
COOPERATION**

REGIONAL TRADE POLICY COURSES



WTO OMC

**INFORMATION GUIDE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR
THE SELECTION OF PARTNER INSTITUTIONS TO HOST
REGIONAL TRADE POLICY COURSES**

INFORMATION GUIDE FOR THE SELECTION OF PARTNER INSTITUTIONS TO HOST REGIONAL TRADE POLICY COURSES

REGIONAL TRADE POLICY COURSES (RTPCs)

- **What is an RTPC?**

Regional Trade Policy Courses (RTPCs) are training courses for government officials from WTO Members or Observers implemented in partnership with selected academic institutions. RTPCs are "generalists" training courses situated at Level 2 (intermediate) of the WTO Progressive Learning Strategy (PLS). The courses last 8 weeks and they cover most of the trade topics of the Multilateral Trade Agreements. The courses are co-delivered by officials from the WTO Secretariat, trade policy specialists, and academics from the region thus adding a regional dimension to the topics being discussed.

- **Who is entitled to participate in an RTPC?**

RTPCs are addressed to government officials from Members and Observers in a specific region, who are working on trade-related issues. All candidates must satisfy the course pre-requisite of either 1) having successfully completed the WTO E-Learning course "Introduction to the WTO"; or 2) having completed, within the most recent four years, a Geneva-based Introduction Course for LDCs. In exceptional circumstances consideration will be given to candidates who do not meet the aforementioned criteria but who possess knowledge or professional experience that is demonstrably commensurate with the course's requirements.

- **Which are the objectives of an RTPC?**

The objectives of RTPCs are to: 1) deepen the participants' understanding of the WTO Agreements and the functioning of the WTO, its rules and procedures; 2) enhance the participants' understanding of relevant trade policy issues in their regional context; 3) increase the participants' autonomy to work on WTO issues by strengthening their capacity to access and utilize WTO information resources and in particular the WTO Legal Texts; and 4) facilitate the strengthening of the participants' network of professional contacts (including other participants, as well as regional and WTO experts).

SELECTION PROCESS

- **Who can submit proposals to host RTPCs?**

The call for expressions of interest to propose a suitably qualified academic institution to host an RTPC is addressed to Members from the region where an RTPC selection is being undertaken. The WTO organizes RTPCs in the following regions: English-speaking Africa; French-speaking Africa; Asia-Pacific; Latin America; Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus (CEECAC); Arab and Middle East; and the Caribbean. Proposals must be submitted to the WTO by the interested Members through their mission to the WTO; proposals received directly from academic institutions will not be considered. Please note that proposals received after the deadline(s) will not be considered.

- **How many proposals may be presented by a Member?**

Each interested Member is requested to present no more than one proposal which must identify one academic institution only; i.e. multiple proposals or proposals containing more than one potential partner institution will not be considered.

- **How is the selection process organized?**

All proposals received by eligible Members are reviewed by a selection committee from the WTO Secretariat who will shortlist them based on the following criteria: quality and completeness of the proposal; type of institution and of the partnership proposed; appropriateness of the RTPC academic and administrative team; quality of the training infrastructure and facilities; suitability of logistical arrangements (including accommodation,

catering, transport arrangements as well as nearby facilities); and overall costs. There is no pre-defined limit to the number of institutions that may be short-listed since this will depend on the number and quality of the proposals received. Each of the shortlisted partner institutions will be informed and a visit to the institution by a delegation from the Selection Committee will be carried out. The final decision of the selection process will be taken by the senior management of the WTO following a review of the proposal and the site visits.

- **Who are the members of the Selection Committee?**

The Selection Committee is comprised of four WTO directors who oversee the entire selection process of partner institution from reviewing the proposals received as well as conducting the site visits of the shortlisted institutions and making recommendations to WTO senior management. The work of the RTPC Selection Committee is supported by the RTPC Unit under the supervision of the Chief of the Course Design and Training Section of the Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation (ITTC). The Head of the RTPC Unit acts as Secretary of the RTPC Selection Committee.

- **How long does the selection process of a new partner take?**

The duration of a selection process can vary depending on factors such as the number of proposals and how long it takes to plan and carry out site visit(s). The process should normally be completed between six months to one year from the date of the call for expressions of interest.

- **What type of agreement governs the partnership between the WTO and the selected partner institution? For how long will it last?**

The partnership between the WTO and the selected partner institution will be governed by a Memorandum of Understanding (Agreement) stipulating the obligations of each of the parties to the partnership. The MoU is concluded for the duration of one RTPC and renewed each year provided that all parties so agree. The partnership will typically last three years with the possibility to extend it for a fourth year.

HOST PARTNER INSTITUTION

- **What is a suitable institution?**

The WTO is interested in building synergies and leveraging trade-related expertise and resources. In this respect, the WTO seeks partnerships with academic institutions/universities to host the RTPCs, i.e., degree-granting institutions at a tertiary level. Partnerships may include, in addition to the selected academic institutions/universities, other regional organizations who may contribute to the RTPC through the selected academic institutions/universities. Both public and private universities/institutions are eligible partner institutions.

- **What are the responsibilities of the partner institution?**

The partner institution is responsible for the on-site management of the RTPC through a dedicated RTPC team providing academic and logistical support. The RTPC team comprises a full-time course manager (Academic Coordinator) with sufficiently good knowledge of the WTO and its Agreements to guide participants in their course work and extensive pedagogical experience to organize academic activities and monitor and evaluate participants, speakers, and the course curriculum. The course manager will be responsible for the on-site management of the RTPC in accordance with guidelines to be provided by the WTO. Typically, the course manager is assisted by a full-time administrative/logistical officer who will conduct the functions assigned to them by the course manager. Administrative and logistical responsibilities include setting up and managing the training venue and providing the RTPC's training equipment (projector, laptop, flipcharts, markers, writing pads, pens, videoconference and photocopying facilities as needed, water); receiving funds from the WTO and processing payments for the subsistence allowance for participants when applicable; setting up a virtual classroom for the RTPC; addressing participants queries and concerns; organizing a professional visit and cultural visits where possible, etc.

- **What are the benefits of the partnership for the partner institution?**

Through the partnership the WTO seeks to leave a visible footprint beyond the RTPC by facilitating trade-related capacity building at the national and regional level. The contribution of the RTPC towards this objective greatly depends on the level of investment in the partnership both by the hosting government and the partner institution. Exposure to WTO and regional trade experts and to WTO pedagogical tools and training material can contribute to maximizing the training of national government officials working on trade-related issues, knowledge sharing on multilateral and regional trade, and establishing national and regional hubs of expertise on these issues. Examples of the potential benefits of the RTPC include organizing side national training events to the scheduled visits of WTO and regional experts; attendance of RTPC modules by faculty members of the partner institution; building in-house knowledge on the WTO and multilateral and regional trade; and establishing research centers and academic programs on WTO-related issues.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

- **How are the costs of the RTPC shared?**

The information regarding the financing of the RTPC is contained in the Terms of Reference. In its proposal, the partner institution must indicate which of the required RTPC elements (management of the RTPC; infrastructure and training facilities; logistics) it intends to provide at its own cost as contribution to the partnership. The WTO's priority is to partner with the most appropriate institution in order to provide the highest-quality RTPC possible by considering each of the selection criteria indicated earlier and balancing these with the overall cost of the RTPC as indicated in the proposal.

CONTACTS

- **Who can be contacted if more information is needed?**

The following WTO official can be contacted for further information:

- Vonai MUYAMBO, Head of Regional Trade Policy Courses Unit – T. +41 22 739 6918; e-mail: vonai.muyambo@wto.org

REGIONAL TRADE POLICY COURSES (RTPCS)

Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

1.1. The purpose of this note is to enlist the services of a suitably qualified academic institution to host a Regional Trade Policy Course (RTPC). The selected institution will have the task of on-site course management for the effective running of the 8-week RTPC. The host institution is expected to conclude a Memorandum of Understanding with the WTO which will outline the obligations of the parties concerned.

1.2. The Regional Trade Policy Courses (RTPCs) are 8-week courses for government officials, organized by the WTO in partnership with regional academic institutions. The courses are co-delivered by officials from the WTO Secretariat, trade policy specialists and academic experts from the region.

2. Background

2.1. The WTO's Technical Assistance (TA) activities are outlined in a biennial TA Plan approved by the WTO Members. The main purpose of the WTO's TA programmes is to enhance the human and institutional capacity of Members so that they can take full advantage of their participation in the rules-based Multilateral Trading System and that they can enforce their rights and obligations associated with this participation. The TA Plan incorporates the concept of results-based management (RBM) which is embedded into the management and delivery of trade capacity building programmes. A cornerstone of the WTO's TA is the Progressive learning strategy (PLS). The aim of the PLS is to promote higher levels of learning with a view to building long-lasting human and institutional capacity for the beneficiaries. As such, the training provided by the WTO is categorised into three levels: basic (level 1), intermediate (level 2) and advanced (level 3). The RTPC is an intermediate-level activity.

2.2. It is in the WTO's interest to build on synergies and to leverage expertise and resources from organizations active in trade capacity building in the targeted regions. For this reason, as well as for the need to bring a regional dimension to WTO TA where appropriate, the WTO wishes to identify academic institutions/universities to host RTPCs and to partner with relevant regional organizations in the delivery of these courses.

3. Participants for the RTPCs

3.1. The RTPC participants will be government officials from the region working on WTO-related issues who need to deepen and broaden their knowledge of the multilateral trading system. Participants will be selected by the WTO following a rigorous review of candidates submitted by governments.

4. Objectives

4.1. The objectives of the RTPCs are primarily to: 1) deepen the participants' understanding of the WTO Agreements and the functioning of the WTO, its rules and procedures; 2) enhance the participants' understanding of relevant trade policy issues in their regional context; 3) increase the participants' autonomy to work on WTO issues by strengthening their capacity to access and utilize WTO information resources and in particular the WTO Legal Texts; and 4) facilitate the strengthening of the participants' network of professional contacts (including other participants, as well as regional and WTO experts).

4.2. The WTO's objective in partnering with another institution is to deliver the RTPC more efficiently, benefit from regional expertise and knowledge, and encourage cooperation and transfer of knowledge and capacity.

5. Host-Partner for the RTPC

5.1. The duration of the partnership with an academic institution/university for the delivery of an RTPC will be initially for one year. There will be the possibility to extend the partnership for a further two times of one-year each, based on an evaluation of the implementation of the RTPC, and the availability of funding. The WTO will conclude a Memorandum of Understanding with the partner institution on an annual basis to host the RTPC. The total duration of the partnership will typically last three years with the possibility to extend it for an additional fourth year.

6. Services required of the host partner institution

6.1. The host partner institution should be located in the capital city and easily accessible by air transport and in close proximity to an international airport in order to facilitate the travel of participants and resource persons coming from overseas.

The host partner institution is required to provide the following elements, for the full duration of the course:

a. Basic management of the RTPC

- i. A course manager (Academic Coordinator) on a full-time basis who should have sufficiently good general knowledge of the WTO and its Agreements to guide participants in their course work and possess extensive pedagogical experience to organize academic activities and monitor and evaluate the course's participants, speakers and curriculum. The course manager will be responsible for the on-site management of the RTPC in accordance with guidelines to be provided by the WTO. The institution will propose a name(s) of the course manager (academic coordinator) in its proposal; final determination will be made jointly by the WTO and the partner.
- ii. In accordance with the terms to be agreed, administrative and logistical support dedicated to the RTPC will be provided for the full duration of the course. Administrative/Logistical support will be required to deal with the day-to-day administrative management of the course, including responding to the needs of participants and trainers. Some administrative tasks will need to be carried out prior to the start of the course, so time should be allocated for this. The administrative support must be carried out in close cooperation with the course manager and the WTO Secretariat. The partner institution should indicate in its detailed budget for the RTPC the number of personnel needed to provide the required support, and the role and responsibilities of each.
- iii. The RTPC will be delivered in a paperless environment and all training material, including presentations and background documents, will be made available on a "virtual classroom". Paper copies of the training material will be limited to what is strictly necessary. Wi-Fi/high-speed internet must be available in the RTPC training room. IT support to facilitate participants' use of the virtual classroom will be required on an ad hoc basis, throughout the RTPC.
- iv. The partner institution is expected to provide the above-mentioned management and support services for a period not exceeding three months, including the duration of the RTPC.

b. Infrastructure and facilities to be provided

- i. One appropriately sized and equipped training room, with Wi-Fi/high-speed internet access to accommodate up to 30 participants, plus breakout training rooms/areas, as required;
- ii. Training equipment which should include one computer connected to the internet which can be used for projecting content in the training room; an overhead projector (beamer); microphones; flip charts; chalk/white boards; screens; notice boards for the names of participants; and office supplies;

- iii. Access to a limited number of laptops to be loaned to participants not possessing one (participants are requested to bring their own laptops to the course);
- iv. Access to video-conference facilities which would facilitate delivery of training by video conference, as required;
- v. The training infrastructure and facilities must be available for the exclusive use of RTPC participants and personnel for the duration of the RTPC;
- vi. If the partner is not in a position to provide such facilities on its own campus, an alternative training facility should be proposed, and the cost of the alternative facilities specified.

7. Accommodation for participants

7.1. Participants must be accommodated in facilities of a standard of comfort suitable for government officials over a period of eight weeks and in a location with easy and secure access to the training facilities and other facilities such as shopping malls, restaurants, and medical centres. Given the long duration of the course, accommodation with kitchenettes is recommended where available.

7.2. The partner institution will be required to identify in its proposal a minimum of three accommodations facilities matching the requirements below and provide related price quotations (quotes must be based on 30 rooms with single occupancy with breakfast for 56 days). Self-catering apartments, if available, would be favourably considered. In identifying suitable facilities, the following should be considered:

- a. 30 rooms of the same standard for single occupancy with private bathroom. Each room should have a safe and a desk/workstation;
- b. good breakfast facilities;
- c. good level of safety, hygiene and room service;
- d. laundry services on-site;
- e. good communication facilities (telephones and internet);
- f. kitchenette and sport facilities are desirable;
- g. the accommodation should be located close to the training venue and to shopping centres, restaurants and medical facilities.

8. Local transport requirements

8.1. The partner institution must indicate how the following local transport requirements can be met:

- a. airport transfers must be organized for participants and trainers on their arrival and departure to and from their place of accommodation;
- b. transport must be organized between the place of accommodation and the training facility for each day of the training course. Such service can be dispensed with if the accommodation and the training facilities are within safe walking distance;
- c. where transport has to be hired, three quotations should be provided to the WTO;
- d. the partner institution will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the transport company selected.

9. Financial institution

9.1. The partner institution will be expected to receive the total amount of participants' DSA (Daily Subsistence Allowance) and disburse their allotted amounts to them at specific intervals during the course (50% on the first day of the course and 50% on the first day of the second month of the course). A fee commensurate with the cost of the service may be paid to the partner institution.

If the above option is not feasible, participants must have access to a financial institution such as a Western Union office, from which they will be able to receive their DSA. Ideally this institution

should be located close to the partner institution or close to the hotel so that the time needed for financial disbursements will be the least disruptive to the course programme.

10. Lunch and coffee breaks

10.1. The proposal must describe the facilities/options that will be available at the partner institution for the provision of lunch and two coffee breaks per each working day of the RTPC.

10.2. If a catering company is to be used, the proposal should include three quotations as well as samples of the menus provided.

11. Memorandum of Understanding

11.1. The WTO will sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the partner institution which will stipulate the rules and regulations governing the partnership, including an annex with the breakdown of the costs for the services provided as shared between the WTO and the partner institution.

12. Budget considerations

12.1. The partner institution is free to indicate which of the required RTPC elements including human resources and training facilities mentioned above it intends to provide as its contribution to the partnership. For those elements to which the partner institution is not able to contribute outright, it should include in the proposal a detailed budget, in local currency or US dollars, indicating the cost of providing such elements (see Proposal Template in attached word document). The partner institution will be required to provide a detailed budget that lists individually the cost of each item of the RTPC to be funded by the WTO. The WTO will review and indicate which expenses it would cover.

12.2. The WTO's priority is to partner with the most appropriate institution in order to provide the highest-quality RTPC possible. The selection process will also take into consideration the total cost of the RTPC as indicated in each proposal.

13. Financial conditions

13.1. All RTPC expenses declared by the host partner institution must be supported by original documents (invoices, vouchers, contracts, order forms, tickets, etc.) and these original documents must be provided to the WTO at the end of the course for the reconciliation of the final accounts. The partner institution will be expected to provide appropriate responses to any query the WTO might have on these accounts. Detailed financial conditions will be covered in the Memorandum of Understanding.

14. Course dates

14.1. The dates for the RTPC will be decided for each year in consultation with the partner institution, also taking into consideration the dates of other WTO training activities.

15. Application process

15.1. Applications should contain information as complete as possible on all the elements outlined above in order to facilitate the selection process. This includes identifying the proposed course manager. Supporting documentation, including any quotations, must also be provided.

15.2. The Selection Committee will only consider proposals received by the date indicated in the call for expression of interest. The proposals will be shortlisted based on the completeness of the elements indicated above. As such, interested partners are encouraged to furnish as many elements as possible including video or photographic presentations of the training room(s) and training equipment, the facilities for coffee breaks and lunch, as well as lavatories and any other aspect of the training location and facilities that would be helpful in the selection process.

Annex I: List of RTPC Partner Institutions for the CEECAC Region

| Regional Trade Policy Course for Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus Countries | | |
|---|--|--------------|
| Country | University | Years |
| Turkey | Istanbul Bilgi University Istanbul | 2011-2015 |
| Kazakhstan | University of International Business Almaty | 2017-2019 |
