JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT AFRICA

Request for Proposals

Tracer Study of the SET4LYF Program in Nigeria and Rwanda

RFP Reference: ***JAA_M26E08R10L1***

Issue Date: September 23, 2026.

Deadline for Clarification: September 25, 2026.

Proposal Submission Deadline: ***September 30, 2026 at 11:59pm GMT***

1. Background

Junior Achievement Africa (JA Africa) invites qualified consulting firms to submit proposals to conduct a tracer study for the School-to-Work Educational Transitions for Long-Term Youth Fulfilment (SET4LYF) programme. SET4LYF seeks to equip young people, particularly girls aged 16–25, with practical competencies in entrepreneurship, employability, financial literacy, digital skills, leadership, problem-solving and other capabilities required to navigate the transition from education to further learning and economic opportunities.

The programme uses experiential approaches, including the Ideathon and Company Program, complemented by digital learning through the JA Digital Entrepreneurship Education Platform (JA DEEP). The tracer study will focus on all eligible participants recorded by JA Africa who have completed the Company Program as at October 2026. The final eligible population will be confirmed by JA Africa at the commencement of the assignment.

The study is intended to determine what participants have gained from SET4LYF, where they are currently in their educational or economic journey, what they intend to do next, and what support they need to progress. It will also establish a baseline for future longitudinal tracking of participants' actual outcomes.

A particular focus will be placed on participants' transition into university, TVET and diploma-awarding institutions, as well as those who have not transitioned. For participants who have transitioned to TVET/diploma-awarding institutions and those who have not been able to transition, the study will assess their interest, commitment and preparedness to participate in the Social Equity Program (SEP).

2. Purpose of the Assignment

JA Africa seeks to engage a qualified consulting firm to design and implement a rigorous, large-scale tracer study of all eligible SET4LYF Company Program participants who completed the programme on or before the eligibility cut-off date. The study will generate participant-level and aggregate evidence on:

- competencies acquired through SET4LYF;
- current education and economic status;
- transition into university, TVET, diploma-awarding institutions and other pathways;
- participants who have not yet transitioned and reasons for non-transition;
- intended next steps;
- readiness to pursue intended pathways;
- barriers and support needs; and
- interest, commitment and preparedness to participate in SEP among relevant participants.

The assignment should establish a robust baseline for subsequent tracking of actual transitions and longer-term outcomes.

3. Objectives

The study will:

1. Assess the competencies acquired and confidence in applying them.
2. Establish participants' current transition status.
3. Determine the proportion who have transitioned to university, TVET and diploma-awarding institutions.

4. Determine the proportion who have transitioned to employment, entrepreneurship and other pathways.
5. Determine the proportion who have not transitioned and establish the reasons.
6. Establish participants' intended next steps and expected timelines.
7. Assess readiness and preparedness to pursue intended pathways.
8. Identify barriers and support requirements.
9. Assess interest, commitment and preparedness for SEP among participants who have transitioned to TVET/diploma-awarding institutions and those who have not transitioned.
10. Establish a participant-level baseline for future longitudinal tracking.

4. Key Research Questions

The successful firm will refine the research questions during inception, but the study should, at minimum, answer:

Transition Status

- What proportion of participants have transitioned to university?
- What proportion have transitioned to TVET institutions?
- What proportion have transitioned to diploma-awarding institutions?
- What proportion have transitioned to employment, entrepreneurship, apprenticeship, internship or other pathways?
- What proportion have not yet transitioned, and why?
- For the purposes of this study, the firm must propose clear and mutually understandable definitions of “transition”, “current status” and each transition pathway. The methodology must address participants pursuing more than one pathway and distinguish admission, enrolment or acceptance from actual commencement and continued participation.

Competencies

- What competencies have participants acquired through SET4LYF?
- To what extent can participants apply these competencies?
- Which competencies are strongest and which require further development?

Intentions and Readiness

- What do participants who have not transitioned intend to do next?
- When do they intend to transition?
- How prepared and confident are they to pursue their intended pathway?
- What barriers are preventing or may prevent transition?

Social Equity Program

For participants who have transitioned to TVET/diploma-awarding institutions and those who have not transitioned:

- How interested are they in participating in SEP?
- How committed are they to participating?
- How prepared are they to participate?
- What factors may enable or prevent their participation?
- What support would be required for successful participation?

Programme Support

- What additional support does participants require?
- How should support be differentiated according to participants' transition status, intended pathway and readiness?

5. Scope of Work

The consulting firm will be responsible for the full study cycle, including:

- review of SET4LYF programme documentation and participant records;
- development of the research and analytical framework;
- development, testing and finalisation of quantitative and qualitative instruments;
- participant tracing and data collection;
- competency assessment;
- assessment of current transition status;
- assessment of intended pathways and readiness;
- assessment of SEP interest, commitment and preparedness;
- qualitative inquiry into participant experiences and barriers;
- data quality assurance and cleaning;
- statistical and qualitative analysis;
- stakeholder validation;
- reporting and presentation of findings; and
- development of a framework for future longitudinal tracking.

6. Methodological Requirements

The preferred approach is an **attempted census of all eligible Company Program participants**, rather than a conventional sample. The firm should propose a scientifically rigorous **mixed-methods design** combining quantitative and qualitative approaches.

The methodology should demonstrate how the firm will:

- maximise coverage of the eligible population;
- trace participants and manage non-response;
- assess competencies using valid and reliable measures;
- distinguish current status, intentions and actual outcomes;
- assess transition readiness;
- measure SEP interest, commitment and preparedness;
- ensure data quality and minimise bias;
- protect participant data; and
- establish a participant-level baseline suitable for future longitudinal tracking.

Firms may propose innovative approaches to participant mobilisation and data collection, including digital surveys, mobile/telephone interviews, SMS, WhatsApp or other appropriate methods.

7. Competency Assessment

The study should assess competencies aligned with SET4LYF's curriculum and Theory of Change, including, as relevant, entrepreneurship, employability, financial literacy, digital skills, communication, teamwork, leadership, creativity, problem-solving, resilience, career planning and opportunity identification.

The firm should distinguish, where feasible, between perceived competency acquisition, confidence and demonstrated competency and should propose appropriate approaches for scoring and analysing competency domains. Any assessment instrument or scoring framework must be appropriate for the relevant age groups and country contexts and must be tested for validity, reliability, accessibility and potential cultural or language bias. Where validated measures are unavailable or impracticable, the firm must disclose the resulting limitations and avoid presenting self-reported measures as objective evidence of competency acquisition.

8. Social Equity Program Assessment

A dedicated SEP assessment should be undertaken for:

1. participants who have transitioned to **TVET/diploma-awarding institutions**; and
2. participants who have **not transitioned**.

The firm should operationalise and measure three distinct dimensions:

- **Interest:** desire and perceived relevance of participating in SEP;
- **Commitment:** willingness and intention to participate and meet programme requirements; and
- **Preparedness:** availability, capability, information and other conditions necessary for effective participation.

The analysis should identify participant segments requiring different forms of mobilisation or preparation for SEP.

9. Data Analysis

The firm will undertake rigorous quantitative and qualitative analysis. At minimum, the analysis should establish:

- transition rates by pathway;
- non-transition rates and reasons;
- competency profiles;
- intended next steps;
- readiness levels;
- barriers and support needs;
- SEP interest, commitment and preparedness; and
- differences across relevant participant groups.

Subject to data availability, data quality, participant consent and the need to protect participants from identification or harm, results should be appropriately disaggregated by country, state/province, disability, IDP status, vulnerability, age and other available characteristics. The firm may propose appropriate statistical techniques, where justified by the data. Qualitative findings should be thematically analysed and integrated with quantitative findings. The firm must apply appropriate disclosure-control measures and must not present disaggregated findings where the relevant group is too small to preserve confidentiality or support reliable conclusions.

10. Target Population and Coverage

The target population is all SET4LYF participants who have completed the Company Program as at **September** 2026. JA Africa will provide the available participant database to support the study, subject to applicable safeguarding, confidentiality and data-protection requirements. The firm will be required to assess the completeness and quality of the database and must not assume that all contact information is complete, accurate or current.

The firm will be expected to undertake an attempted census and report:

- eligible population;
- number successfully contacted;
- number completing the study;
- response rate;
- unreachable participants;
- refusals;
- incomplete responses; and
- other relevant tracing outcomes.

The firm should assess potential non-response bias and clearly document limitations. The firm must also assess the characteristics of respondents and non-respondents, to the

extent permitted by available data, and explain the likely effect of non-response on the findings. JA Africa does not guarantee that every eligible participant will be traceable or will consent to participate. The firm's performance will therefore be assessed by reference to the quality and implementation of its approved tracing strategy, documented level of effort, data quality and achievement of agreed coverage targets, rather than solely by attainment of a complete census.

11. Research Ethics, Safeguarding and Data Protection

a. The firm must conduct the assignment in accordance with applicable laws, recognised research-ethics principles, JA Africa's safeguarding and data-protection policies and any country-specific requirements communicated by JA Africa.

b. As part of the inception process, the firm must submit a research-ethics and safeguarding protocol, informed-consent and assent materials, a data-management plan, a data-protection impact and risk assessment, participant-contact protocols and procedures for responding to disclosures of harm or safeguarding concerns. Where required by applicable law, institutional requirements or the approved methodology, the firm must obtain appropriate ethical approval before commencing participant contact or data collection.

c. Participation in the study must be voluntary. Participants must receive clear and age-appropriate information about the study, the information to be collected, how it will be used, any reasonably foreseeable risks, their right to refuse or withdraw and the relevant complaint or enquiry channels. Refusal or withdrawal must not affect a participant's access to SET4LYF, SEP or any other opportunity.

d. Where a participant is under 18, the firm must obtain the informed consent of the participant's parent or legal guardian and the participant's informed assent, unless a different procedure has been approved in writing by JA Africa and is lawful and ethically appropriate in the relevant jurisdiction.

e. Personal data must be collected only to the extent necessary for the assignment and must be processed solely for the purposes of the study and in accordance with JA Africa's documented instructions. The firm must implement appropriate technical and organisational safeguards, including role-based access controls, secure authentication, encryption in transit and at rest, separation of identifying information from research responses, secure back-ups, controlled data exports, audit trails and documented retention and deletion procedures.

f. The firm must not appoint a subprocessor, transfer personal data outside the country in which it was collected, store participant data on personal devices or unapproved platforms, or use participant data for any other purpose without JA Africa's prior written approval. Any approved subprocessor must be bound by written obligations no less protective than those applicable to the firm.

g. Any actual or suspected personal-data breach, loss of data, unauthorised disclosure, safeguarding concern or inappropriate participant contact must be reported to JA Africa immediately and, in any event, within 24 hours of discovery. The firm must take immediate containment measures, preserve relevant evidence and cooperate fully with JA Africa in relation to investigation, notification, remediation and any required regulatory or donor reporting.

h. Contact by telephone, SMS, WhatsApp or any other digital channel must follow an approved participant-contact and safeguarding protocol. The protocol must

address identity verification, appropriate contact times, contact with participants under 18, confidentiality, consent to continued communication, prohibited forms of communication and secure escalation of safeguarding concerns.

i. The firm must ensure that all personnel who may access participant data or interact with participants have received appropriate safeguarding, research-ethics, confidentiality and data-protection training and have undergone any background or suitability checks required by JA Africa.

j. At the conclusion of the assignment, or earlier upon JA Africa's written instruction, the firm must return all participant data and study materials to JA Africa and securely delete all remaining copies, including copies held by approved subprocessors, except to the extent that retention is required by law. The firm must provide written certification of deletion upon request.

12. Expected Deliverables

The successful firm will deliver:

#	Deliverable	Indicative Timeline
1	**Inception Report** – methodology, research framework, workplan, tracing strategy, quality assurance and analysis plan.	October 19, 2026
2	**Competency Assessment Framework**.	October 26, 2026
3	**Fieldwork/Tracing Report** – coverage, response rates and challenges.	Weekly updates starting from November 1, 2026
4	**Cleaned Participant-Level Dataset**, with data dictionary/codebook.	December 1, 2026
5	**Preliminary Findings Presentation**.	December 15, 2026
6	**Stakeholder Validation Workshop (each country)**	January 15, 2027
7	**Draft Tracer Study Report**.	February 1, 2027
8	**Final Tracer Study Report** incorporating feedback.	March 15, 2027
9	**Executive Summary and Management Brief**.	March 30, 2027
10	**Longitudinal Tracking Framework** for future tracer rounds. This will take into consideration the framework being developed by Oxford SKOPE.	

- Bidders must propose specific delivery dates for each deliverable within the four-month assignment period. JA Africa will ordinarily provide consolidated comments on each substantive deliverable within five working days of receipt. The firm will submit a revised deliverable addressing those comments within five working days, unless otherwise agreed in writing.

- A deliverable will not be regarded as accepted merely because JA Africa has reviewed, used or commented on it. Acceptance must be confirmed in writing by the designated JA Africa focal point. All final reports, presentations, datasets and related materials must be submitted in editable and PDF formats, as applicable.

13. Required Firm Competencies and Experience

Interested firms must demonstrate:

Institutional Capacity

- Minimum five years' relevant institutional experience in research, evaluation, tracer studies, MEL or related fields.
- Strong project, financial, fieldwork and quality-management systems.
- Capacity to manage large-scale and, preferably, multi-country research.

Technical Experience

- Demonstrated experience conducting large-scale tracer, graduate tracking, outcome or longitudinal studies.
- Experience managing surveys involving several thousand respondents; experience with 10,000+ respondents are strongly preferred.
- Experience with attempted census or near-census approaches is an advantage.
- Strong expertise in youth, education, skills, employability, entrepreneurship or school-to-work transitions.
- Demonstrated experience in competency/skills measurement.
- Strong mixed-methods research capacity.
- Advanced statistical and quantitative analysis capacity.
- Experience with digital data collection and participant tracing.
- Experience establishing longitudinal participant databases.
- Strong data protection, research ethics and safeguarding systems.
- Demonstrated experience working in Nigeria and/or Rwanda, or comparable Sub-Saharan African contexts
- A team fluent in English, with working proficiency in Kinyarwanda and relevant Nigerian languages an advantage
- A demonstrated child and youth safeguarding policies, procedures and practice

Desirable Expertise

Experience in TVET, labour-market research, youth employment, entrepreneurship, gender-responsive research, psychometric measurement, longitudinal cohort studies and data visualisation will be an advantage.

14. Key Personnel

The proposed team should include, at minimum:
Team Leader/Principal Investigator: Master's degree or higher and at least 10 years' relevant experience, including leadership of large-scale research/tracer studies.
Quantitative/Statistics Lead: Master's degree in statistics, economics, data science or related field and at least seven years' relevant experience.
Qualitative Research Lead: Master's degree in social sciences or related discipline and at least seven years' qualitative/mixed-methods experience.
Data Manager/Data Quality Specialist: At least five years' experience in large-scale digital data management, quality assurance and participant tracking.
Fieldwork/Participant-Tracing Lead: Demonstrated experience managing large-scale participant tracing and geographically dispersed data collection.

CVs of all key personnel should be included in the proposal.

15. Evidence Required from Bidders

Firms should submit:

- company profile and legal registration;
- evidence of relevant institutional experience;
- at least **three comparable assignments**, preferably involving youth and/or education tracer studies;
- details of previous study size and geographic coverage;
- client references;
- evidence of digital data-collection capacity;
- evidence of competency assessment experience;
- data protection and quality-assurance procedures;
- CVs of proposed key personnel and confirmation of the availability during the assignment period;
- proposed methodology and participant-tracing strategy; and
- evidence of capacity to manage longitudinal participant data.
- copies or summaries of the firm's safeguarding and data-protection policies;
- a disclosure of any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest;
- details of any proposed consortium member, subcontractor or subprocessor and the role each will perform;

16. Proposal Requirements

Interested firms should submit a **Technical Proposal and Financial Proposal**.

Technical Proposal

The Technical Proposal should include:

1. Understanding of the assignment.
2. Proposed methodology and research design.
3. Participant-tracing/census strategy.
4. Competency assessment approach.
5. SEP interest, commitment and preparedness assessment.
6. Data-quality and data-protection approach.
7. Proposed analytical framework.
8. Risk-management strategy.
9. Workplan and timeline.
10. Proposed team and CVs.
11. Relevant institutional experience and references.
12. Research-ethics and safeguarding approach

Financial Proposal

The Financial Proposal should provide a clear and detailed breakdown of:

- professional fees;
- data-collection costs;
- fieldwork and logistics;
- travel, where applicable;
- data management and analysis;
- workshops/presentations;
- all applicable taxes; and
- any other applicable costs, reimbursable expenses, assumptions, exclusions and any items expected to be provided or paid for separately by JA Africa. Unless expressly stated otherwise in the proposal and accepted by JA Africa, the proposed

price will be regarded as inclusive of all costs necessary to complete the assignment.

17. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated on technical quality and value for money. The indicative technical weighting is:

Evaluation Area	**Weight**
Understanding of the assignment	10%
Methodology and research design	25%
Large-scale participant tracing and data-collection approach	15%
Competency, transition and SEP assessment approach	15%
Qualifications and experience of proposed team	15%
Institutional experience and comparable assignments	10%
Data quality, ethics and data protection	5%
Workplan, risk management and innovation	5%
Total Technical Score	**100%**

Only firms achieving the minimum technical threshold of **[70%]** will proceed to financial evaluation. The final technical/financial weighting will be determined in accordance with JA Africa's procurement procedures, subject to satisfactory due diligence, reference checks, confirmation of the availability of proposed key personnel and successful contract negotiations. JA Africa reserves the right not to make an award where no proposal adequately meets its requirements.

18. Indicative Timeline

The assignment is expected to be completed within 4 months of contract signing. Bidders should propose a realistic schedule covering inception, instrument development, piloting, participant tracing, data collection, analysis, validation and reporting.

19. Management and Reporting

The consulting firm will report to the designated JA Africa focal point and will work closely with the relevant programs team and MEL officers in Nigeria, Rwanda and the ROC. JA Africa will provide available programme documentation and participant records required for the assignment, subject to applicable data-protection requirements. The firm will be responsible for the technical quality, implementation, analysis and delivery of all outputs.

20. Expected Result

The assignment should provide JA Africa with a credible evidence base on the post-Company Program trajectory of participants, answering four fundamental questions:

What have participants gained? → Where are they now? → What do they intend to do next? → What support do they need?

It should establish the proportion of participants who have transitioned to university, TVET, diploma-awarding institutions and other pathways, identify those who have not transitioned and explain the reasons. For relevant participants, it should establish their interest, commitment and preparedness for SEP. Most importantly, the study should create a robust participant-level baseline that enables JA Africa to subsequently measure whether participants' intentions translate into actual educational, employment and entrepreneurship outcomes.

21. General Conditions

- All program and beneficiary data accessed during this assignment is confidential and may be used only for the purposes of this study. The firm must not disclose, publish, commercialise or use such information for another study, client or purpose without JA Africa's prior written consent.
- The selected consultant must comply with JA Africa's child and youth safeguarding policy throughout the assignment, including during all direct and/or digital contact with program participants. Compliance will be a material obligation under the resulting contract.
- All participant data, study-specific instruments, databases, codebooks, analysis files, reports, presentations and other deliverables created specifically for this assignment will belong exclusively to JA Africa upon payment of the applicable fees. The firm will retain ownership of any pre-existing tools, methodologies, software or materials expressly identified in its proposal, but grants JA Africa a perpetual, irrevocable, worldwide, royalty-free and transferable licence to use, reproduce, adapt and share such materials to the extent that they are incorporated into or necessary for the use of the deliverables. The firm must not publish, disclose, reuse or develop any separate work from participant data or the assignment findings without JA Africa's prior written consent.
- JA Africa reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals and is not bound to award the contract to the lowest bidder.
- Where appropriate, JA Africa will notify bidders of any material amendment and may extend the submission deadline.
- Submission of a proposal does not create a contract or any obligation on the part of JA Africa. A binding commitment will arise only when a written contract has been duly executed by JA Africa and the successful bidder.
- Bidders will bear all costs associated with preparing and submitting their proposals, attending clarification meetings and participating in any due-diligence or negotiation process.
- JA Africa may verify any information provided in a proposal, contact references, request clarifications and conduct due diligence on a bidder, its key personnel, consortium members and proposed subcontractors. Any material misrepresentation or omission may result in disqualification or termination of a subsequent contract.
- Bidders must disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest involving JA Africa, its personnel, programme partners, funders or the assignment. A bidder must not attempt to improperly influence any person involved in the procurement process. Failure to comply may result in disqualification.
- Material subcontracting or replacement of proposed key personnel will be subject to JA Africa's prior written approval. The selected firm will remain fully responsible for the performance and conduct of all approved subcontractors and replacement personnel.
- JA Africa may negotiate the scope, methodology, deliverables, timetable and price with the preferred bidder before contract award, provided that such negotiations do not materially undermine the fairness or integrity of the procurement process.
- Proposals must remain valid for 90 days from the proposal submission deadline.

Submission deadline: September 30, 2026
Expected commencement: October 15, 2026
Assignment duration: 5 months
Submission address: procurement@ja-africa.org

Questions and Clarification: Must be submitted in writing by September 25, 2026, to m.e@ja-africa.org