



MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

**Level 14 Eric Williams Financial Complex
Independence Square, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, WI
Tel: 627-9711/Fax: 623-8123**

Call for Proposals - Annexes

Annex V – Background Information on Finishing Schools

By definition, finishing schools are non-formal programmes designed for short-term training, and implemented via public sector, academia, and private sector partnerships. Their main objective is to train a specific labor pool segment according to specialized industries in order to improve employability¹. Given the dynamism in the technology sector, finishing schools provide an agile means to address the skills gap in the labor market in a responsive and tailored manner.

According to “best-practice”, flexibility and customization are two (2) core traits of effective finishing schools. In terms of customization, effective finishing schools build on the theoretical knowledge of the formal education system, while incorporating a practical, industry-specific, and a learning-by-doing approach that gives students the capabilities desired by companies in a particular sector. In the best case scenario, the private sector will also provide co-financing, trainers for some of the required content and skills, as well as contribute in terms of mentoring, internships, and immediate job placement.

Generally, finishing school programs run from five weeks to one year. The teaching mode can be face-to-face or distance training through e-learning, or blended learning platforms. The programs are organized by courses or modules, and developed around particular functional, technical, and/or “soft” skills requirements. In general, finishing schools are geared toward recent graduates from tertiary institutions. However, persons in the ITeS labor pool, who are trying to “up-skill” or “re-tool”, may be considered as candidates for a finishing school as well.

¹ García, P. M., & Bafundo, F. (2014). Best Practices in Finishing School Programs for the Global Services Industry. Inter-American Development Bank.