

## **Advancing North East 2.0 – Professional Empanelment Memorandum**

*(An Initiative of North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Ltd. – NEDFi)*

### **1. Project Background and Objective**

Advancing North East 2.0 is a structured digital initiative of the **North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Ltd. (NEDFi)** aimed at strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem across the North Eastern Region of India, including Sikkim. The initiative has been designed to facilitate easy access to **qualified and verified professional services** for entrepreneurs, startups, MSMEs, and enterprises operating in the region.

The core objective of the project is to create an organised, transparent, and accessible platform that connects entrepreneurs with competent professionals who can assist them in meeting regulatory, statutory, technical, financial, and advisory requirements essential for business establishment, operation, and growth.

### **2. Role of NEDFi**

Under Advancing North East 2.0, **NEDFi acts as the nodal institution** responsible for conceptualising, hosting, and administering the digital platform. NEDFi's role is limited to:

- Establishing and maintaining the portal infrastructure
- Defining eligibility and empanelment criteria for professionals
- Verifying credentials and basic eligibility of applicants
- Ensuring orderly operation of the platform in line with its stated objectives

NEDFi does not provide professional services through the portal and does not participate in any professional engagement arising from the platform.

### **3. Nature and Scope of the Service Provider Portal**

The Advancing North East 2.0 Service Provider Portal functions strictly as a **directory and discovery platform**.

- The portal lists verified professionals and displays their profile information
- Entrepreneurs may search professionals based on service category, expertise, and geographical location
- The portal does **not** act as an intermediary, agent, broker, or facilitator
- All professional engagements, negotiations, agreements, service delivery, payments, and outcomes are undertaken **directly between the professional and the client (entrepreneur)**.

NEDFi and the portal bear **no responsibility or liability** for the quality, pricing, timelines, or outcome of services rendered by empanelled professionals.

#### **4. Eligible Professionals**

Applications for empanelment are invited from qualified and experienced professionals, including but not limited to:

- Chartered Accountants (CA)
- Company Secretaries (CS)
- Cost & Management Accountants (CMA)
- Lawyers / Advocates
- Registered Valuers
- Architects
- Graduates under any discipline having 3 years of experience in the relevant domain
- Civil, Electrical, Mechanical, Environmental, and Fire Safety Engineers
- Business, Financial, Startup, and Project Consultants
- Other recognised domain experts relevant to enterprise development

Professionals may apply as individuals or through registered firms, subject to fulfilment of prescribed eligibility criteria.

#### **5. Services Covered Under the Portal**

Empanelled professionals may offer services across one or more of the following broad categories:

##### **A. Registration and Licensing Services**

- Business and statutory registrations
- Industrial, labour, environmental, fire, electrical, boiler, and factory-related approvals
- Licence renewals and periodic compliances

##### **B. Legal and Compliance Services**

- Entity formation and constitutional documentation
- Statutory filings and regulatory compliance
- Legal documentation, notices, and representations

##### **C. Financial and Accounting Services**

- Bookkeeping and accounting
- Preparation of financial statements
- Tax planning, assessment support, and audit-related services

##### **D. Valuation Services**

- Business and enterprise valuation

- Property, plant and machinery valuation
- Intangible and specialised valuation services

#### **E. Technical and Engineering Services**

- Civil, structural, electrical, mechanical, and fire safety services
- Environmental compliance and engineering services

#### **F. Business and Project Advisory Services**

- Startup and new venture advisory
- Business planning and strategy
- Funding, financial, and investment advisory

### **6. Eligibility and Empanelment Criteria**

#### **Individual Professionals**

- Valid professional qualification and registration/licence with the relevant regulatory authority
- Active practice with relevant experience in the proposed service area
- Physical office or practice presence within North East India
- No criminal conviction involving moral turpitude
- No debarment, suspension, or blacklisting by any regulatory or government authority

#### **Firms and Organisations**

- Registered legal entity in India
- Qualified professionals engaged on a permanent or contractual basis
- Minimum operational experience as prescribed
- Office presence in North East India or a demonstrable commitment to operate in the region

### **7. Empanelment and Verification Process**

The empanelment process includes:

- Submission of a prescribed online application form
- Uploading of self-attested supporting documents
- Declaration of compliance with portal rules and guidelines
- Credential and background verification by the portal

Empanelment is subject to verification and approval and does not confer any automatic right to listing.

## **8. Professional Listing and Profile Visibility**

Upon successful empanelment, the professional's profile will be published on the portal. The profile may include:

- Name and professional category
- Educational and professional qualifications
- Registration or licence details
- Areas of expertise and services offered
- Years of experience
- Office address and contact information
- Geographical service coverage

Professionals are responsible for ensuring that all profile information remains accurate and up to date.

## **9. Professional Conduct and Responsibilities**

Empanelled professionals are expected to:

- Conduct themselves with integrity, transparency, and professionalism
- Provide clear disclosure of scope of work, fees, and timelines
- Maintain confidentiality of client information
- Avoid conflicts of interest and unethical practices
- Comply with the code of conduct and standards prescribed by their respective regulatory bodies

Any violation of these expectations may lead to suspension or de-listing from the portal.

## **10. Empanelment Validity and Renewal**

- Empanelment is valid for a period of **one year** from the date of listing
- Renewal is subject to continued compliance with eligibility criteria and portal guidelines
- Updated documents and declarations may be required at the time of renewal
- Renewal and Empanelment is at the sole discretion of NEDFi.

## **11. Relationship Between the Portal and Professionals**

- Empanelment does not create any employment, partnership, joint venture, or agency relationship with NEDFi
- Professionals act as independent service providers
- The portal does not participate in fee negotiation, payment collection, or dispute resolution.