

CONSULTANT TERMS OF REFERENCE

I. Contract Overview

Reference Number:	TOR-VNM-2026-024
Consultancy Title:	National Consultant – GEDSI Specialist – to support a province-level, gender-responsive analysis of El Niño risks and GEDSI-responsive interventions in Viet Nam (short-term, lead position)
Location:	Home Based (Ha Noi)
Travel:	No international travel foreseen; possible local travel in Ha Noi and to [01–02] high-risk provinces for consultations
Practice Area:	Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI); Humanitarian Action; Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation (DRR & CCA)
Category (Eligible applicants):	External
Post Type and Level:	01 National Consultant [VNM3] (UN-EU Cost Norm 2022): Position A – GEDSI Specialist (25 working days)
Starting Date:	[1 November 2026]
Duration of Contract:	[1 November 2026] – [31 January 2027] (contract period), comprising 25 working days to be used intermittently according to the schedule of tasks. Details on the distribution of working days by task are set out in Sections 3 and 5.

II. Consultancy Assignment

1. Background/Context

UN Women, grounded in the vision of equality enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, works for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls; the empowerment of women; and the achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security.

Placing women’s rights at the center of all its efforts, UN Women leads and coordinates United Nations system efforts to ensure that commitments on gender equality and gender mainstreaming translate into action throughout the world. It provides strong and coherent leadership in support of Member States’ priorities and efforts, building effective partnerships with civil society and other relevant actors. In Viet Nam, UN Women contributes to the development objectives of Viet Nam’s Socio-Economic Development Plan and the National Strategy for Gender Equality. Its Country Strategy Note for 2022-2026 is aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (CF) 2022-2026 and is focused on supporting Viet Nam’s fulfilment of Gender Equality commitments under The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the promise of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda to “leave no one behind”. The key priorities of UN Women in the 2022-2026 period are:

- By 2026, people in Viet Nam, especially those at risk of being left behind, will benefit from and contribute to safer and cleaner environment resulting from Viet Nam’s effective and gender responsive mitigation and adaptation to climate change, disaster risk reduction and resilience building, promotion of circular economy, the provision of clean and renewable energy, and the sustainable management of natural resources.
- By 2026, people in Viet Nam, especially those at risk of being left behind, will contribute to and benefit equitably from more sustainable, inclusive and gender-responsive economic transformation based on innovation, entrepreneurship, enhanced productivity, competitiveness, and decent work;

- By 2026, people in Viet Nam, especially those at risk of being left behind, will have benefited from and have contributed to a more just, safe and inclusive society based on improved governance, more responsive institutions, strengthened rule of law and the protection of and respect for human rights, gender equality, and freedom from all forms of violence and discrimination in line with international standards.

Under the draft Strategic Note 2027–2031, UN Women Viet Nam will continue to promote gender-responsive disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and humanitarian action, including anticipatory action, women’s leadership in disaster risk management and climate-resilient livelihoods for women, especially ethnic minority women and women in rural, mountainous and climate-vulnerable areas. UN Women works with the Government, UN agencies, international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), the Viet Nam Red Cross Society and the Viet Nam Women’s Union, including through the UN Disaster Risk Management Team (DRMT) and the Disaster Management Working Group (DMWG), to ensure that preparedness and response address the specific needs and capacities of women and girls.

El Niño 2026–2027. According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), El Niño is firmly established and is expected to become very strong, peaking towards the end of 2026, with a likelihood of nearly 100% that it will persist through February 2027 and with climate impacts continuing well into 2027.

At regional level, the inter-agency *El Niño Status and Humanitarian Outlook* (Global ENSO Analysis Cell, updated 22 June 2026) identifies October 2026 – March 2027 as the peak global impact window and lists Viet Nam among the Southeast Asian countries facing drought, heat and water stress, with the main impact window for Viet Nam, Thailand, Cambodia and Lao PDR expected in March – May 2027. The *Asia and the Pacific Snapshot of El Niño & Middle East Crisis* (OCHA, FAO, WFP, WMO; Snapshot #2 as of 28 August 2026, with UN Women contribution) highlights that the region is entering a period of overlapping risks: El Niño conditions are strengthening, a positive Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) is forecast from September 2026 and may reinforce dryness in Southeast Asia, while pressures linked to the Middle East crisis are adding uncertainty to fuel, fertilizer and food markets and supply chains. UN Women’s *Gender Alert: The 2026 El Niño and Compounding Crises in Asia and the Pacific* (June 2026) and the UNFPA/GBV AoR *Asia-Pacific GBV in Emergencies Update – Q2 2026 (Special Release for El Niño)* highlight potential impacts on women’s and girls’ food security, livelihoods, health, unpaid care work and protection, including risks of gender-based violence.

In Viet Nam, the Hydro-Meteorological Agency (Ministry of Agriculture and Environment – MAE) forecasts El Niño at very strong intensity in October–December 2026 (98% probability), persisting into early summer 2027. Two risk scenarios have been issued:

- **Scenario 1 – High risk:** a moderate to strong El Niño weakening in early 2027, with elevated risks of drought, water shortage and saltwater intrusion concentrated in the South Central Coast, Central Highlands and Mekong Delta;
- **Scenario 2 – Very high risk:** a very strong El Niño lasting until mid-2027, compounded by prolonged heat, a late 2027 rainy season, low reservoir levels and reduced Mekong upstream flows, with saltwater intrusion comparable to past very strong El Niño events, reduced hydropower inflows and higher forest-fire risk in the Central region, Central Highlands and Southeast.

Drought and salinity risk is expected from the 2026–2027 dry season (from around November 2026) until around September 2027 depending on the region, with an estimated 424,800–502,300 ha of agricultural land at risk at peak, notably in the South Central Coast, Central Highlands, Mekong Delta, Southeast and North Central regions. A rapid transition to La Niña in late 2027 is also possible, which could bring heavier rainfall, floods and storms in the following season. An 18-month horizon is therefore needed to cover both the El Niño impacts and the possible transition period.

Past events show the scale of potential impacts. The 2015–2016 El Niño caused one of the most severe droughts and saltwater intrusion episodes in Viet Nam in decades, with 18 provinces declaring a state of emergency and serious impacts on food security, water supply, livelihoods, health and nutrition. Women, ethnic minorities, older persons, persons with disabilities and children were disproportionately affected, owing to their roles in agriculture and water

collection, unequal access to land, credit, services and information, and an increased burden of unpaid care work. Economic stress may also heighten the risks of gender-based violence and distress migration.

The current outlook also comes at a time of institutional change: following the 2025 administrative restructuring, Viet Nam now has 34 provinces and centrally run cities with a two-tier local government system, which affects how risk information, historical data and interventions are organized and coordinated at sub-national level.

Operational context – inter-agency contingency planning. The El Niño response in Viet Nam is coordinated under the Government-led disaster management framework (National Civil Defence Steering Committee, with the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment advising on disaster prevention and response) and, on the international side, within the DRRP and the UN Disaster Risk Management Team (DRMT), under the UN Resident Coordinator’s Office and with strong support from OCHA. Discussions and agreements reached so far through the contingency planning sessions include:

- **Viet Nam Multi-Hazard Contingency Plan 2026 (draft, August 2026):** Scenario 1 (drought, heat and saline water intrusion) assumes impacts in up to 12 provinces of the South-Central Coast, Central Highlands and Mekong Delta, with needs concentrated in high-risk communes; up to 1.5 million people exposed, of whom 300,000 are particularly vulnerable and 150,000–200,000 may need temporary support to access safe water. The plan defines a monitoring phase (June–August 2026), a preparedness window (September–November 2026) and an escalation window (December 2026 – April/May 2027), and treats drought and late-season storms/floods as potentially concurrent hazards.
- **Protection, gender equality and inclusion** are cross-cutting in the plan, guided by the Protocol for the Protection of Vulnerable Groups in Humanitarian and Development Contexts (UN Women and the Viet Nam Disaster and Dyke Management Authority), the IASC Gender with Age Marker and the regional Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA) Working Group. Planned protection preparedness actions include GBViE risk mapping and protection audits in the Mekong Delta, South-Central Coast and Central Highlands, gender-sensitive early warning messages, and integration of GBV prevention and women’s leadership into provincial and commune disaster management plans.
- **Viet Nam El Niño Readiness and Response Plan:** following the DRMT meeting, sector leads are completing a template on sector impacts, key needs, priority preparedness and anticipatory actions, contacts and costing (by 22 October 2026), to be followed by a technical workshop in early November 2026.
- **UN Women regional guidance:** the UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) regional discussion on El Niño (25 June 2026) agreed that Country Offices should integrate El Niño impacts into risk registers, strengthen gender-responsive anticipatory action, engage women-led organizations, contribute country evidence to regional analysis, and coordinate with the regional humanitarian team.

Gap. The existing contingency plan provides aggregated planning figures and names priority regions and provinces, but does not provide province-level, sex-, age- and disability-disaggregated analysis that would allow UN Women to justify geographic targeting or to design and cost specific interventions (e.g. for a concept note). Likewise, the regional analysis (the Asia and the Pacific Snapshots and the UN Women Gender Alert) covers Viet Nam only briefly, grouped with Cambodia, Lao PDR, the Philippines and Thailand, without a provincial zoom-in. A Viet Nam-specific, province-level GEDSI analysis is therefore needed to strengthen the gender-responsiveness of the inter-agency response and to inform UN Women’s own interventions.

Against this backdrop, UN Women seeks one **national consultant – Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Specialist** (lead position) – to conduct a province-level GEDSI analysis of El Niño risks, produce a Viet Nam Gender Alert, propose specific interventions and activities for the most vulnerable groups, and support UN Women’s engagement in El Niño coordination at national and regional levels. The consultant will report to the Programme Analyst for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction, UN Women Viet Nam, with oversight from the Programme

Management Specialist and overall management by the Country Representative. The consultant will also work with and report to the UN Women regional humanitarian team (ROAP) as specified below.

2. Objective

The overall objective of this assignment is to strengthen the gender-responsiveness of El Niño preparedness, anticipatory action and response in Viet Nam by providing a province-level GEDSI analysis and concrete, costed interventions for the most vulnerable groups, building on the existing inter-agency contingency planning and regional analysis.

Specific objectives include:

- 1) To conduct a province-level GEDSI analysis of El Niño risks and impacts on women and girls, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, older persons, children and other groups at risk of being left behind (Position A);
- 2) To produce a Viet Nam Gender Alert on El Niño 2026–2027, complementing the regional Gender Alert (Position A);
- 3) To propose specific interventions for each vulnerable group and a prioritized activity plan, including inputs for the inter-agency response plans and for a UN Women concept note;
- 4) To support UN Women’s participation in El Niño coordination and reporting to the regional humanitarian team, and to consult on the findings through a consultation workshop.

Description of Responsibilities/ Scope of Work

The consultant will work over the period [1 November 2026 – 31 January 2027] and will be responsible for the tasks and deliverables set out below. The GEDSI specialist leads the assignment and the final report. The consultant will build on, and not duplicate, existing analysis and scenarios, in particular the Viet Nam Multi-Hazard Contingency Plan, the Viet Nam El Niño Readiness and Response Plan and its sector inputs, national forecasts, the Asia and the Pacific Snapshots and the UN Women Gender Alert. All analysis should use sex-, age- and disability-disaggregated data (SADDD) where available.

GEDSI SPECIALIST

Task A1: Inception and GEDSI desk review (November 2026)

- **Joint inception** : together with the DRR Specialist, agree with UN Women and the regional humanitarian team on the scope, GEDSI analytical framework, vulnerable groups to be covered, priority provinces, data sources, consultation plan and report outline; lead the preparation of a joint inception report and workplan.
- **GEDSI desk review** : review the Multi-Hazard Contingency Plan, the Readiness and Response Plan sector inputs, the regional Snapshots, the UN Women Gender Alert, the UNFPA/GBV AoR GBV in Emergencies Update, the Protocol for the Protection of Vulnerable Groups, lessons from the 2015–2016 and 2023–2024 El Niño events, and available SADDD (e.g. census, disability survey, ethnic minority socio-economic survey and sectoral data).

Deliverables A1: Joint inception report and workplan (including GEDSI analytical framework); GEDSI desk review note.

Task A2: Province-level GEDSI analysis (November – December 2026)

- **GEDSI analysis by province and group**: building on the province-level risk profiles prepared by the DRR Specialist, analyse for each priority province and vulnerable group (e.g. women and girls, ethnic minority women, female-headed households, pregnant and lactating women, persons with disabilities, older persons, children, migrants and informal workers): differentiated exposure and impacts; unpaid care and domestic work; access to early warning, anticipatory action, social protection and assistance; protection and GBV risks and negative coping; the effect of rising fuel, fertilizer and food prices; and the capacities and leadership of women and vulnerable groups.

- **Consultations:** consult the Viet Nam Women's Union, organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), ethnic minority and women-led organizations, protection and GBV actors and provincial stakeholders (online or through a short mission to [01–02] high-risk provinces).

Deliverables A2: Province-level GEDSI analysis report with summary of consultations.

Task A3: Viet Nam Gender Alert on El Niño (December 2026 – January 2027)

- **Gender Alert (4 days):** draft a concise Viet Nam Gender Alert (approximately 4–6 pages) on the 2026–2027 El Niño and compounding crises, zooming in on priority provinces and vulnerable groups, with key messages and recommendations for Government, humanitarian and development partners; align it with the format of the UN Women regional Gender Alert, in coordination with the regional humanitarian team; prepare a Vietnamese version and revise it based on UN Women comments.

Deliverables A3: Viet Nam Gender Alert on El Niño 2026–2027 (English and Vietnamese), ready for UN Women clearance and publication.

Task A4: Specific interventions and activity plan (January 2027)

- **Specific interventions for vulnerable groups:** propose specific, practical interventions for each vulnerable group (e.g. accessible and inclusive early warning; cash and livelihood support for women, female-headed households and women-led cooperatives; water access solutions that reduce women's and girls' workload and protection risks; nutrition support for pregnant and lactating women; disability-inclusive and age-sensitive assistance; GBV risk mitigation and referral; women's participation and leadership in local disaster risk management), linked to the windows of action set out in the contingency plan (preparedness, escalation and response).
- **Activity plan and concept note inputs:** develop a prioritized activity plan setting out, for each intervention, the activities, target groups and provinces, timing, responsible and potential partners, indicative costs and indicators, which can be used for a UN Women concept note.
- **GEDSI review of interventions and inputs to inter-agency plans:** review the GEDSI-responsiveness of the interventions mapped by the DRR Specialist and prepare GEDSI inputs for the Readiness and Response Plan and the contingency plan updates.

Deliverables A4: Specific interventions for vulnerable groups and prioritized, costed activity plan; GEDSI review of mapped interventions; GEDSI inputs to inter-agency plans.

Task A5: Coordination and reporting to the regional humanitarian team (November 2026 – January 2027, intermittent)

- **Work with and report to the regional humanitarian team:** work with the UN Women regional humanitarian team (ROAP) and report to it on progress and findings through regular updates (at least monthly); contribute Viet Nam evidence to regional products (e.g. the Asia and the Pacific Snapshots, gender alerts and the gendered socio-economic impact analysis), and apply regional tools and guidance.
- **Attend El Niño meetings where needed:** represent or accompany UN Women in El Niño-related meetings where needed (e.g. DRMT, Readiness and Response Plan technical workshop, protection/GBV sector and GiHA meetings) and prepare short meeting notes with follow-up actions for UN Women.

Deliverables A5: Monthly update notes to the regional humanitarian team; meeting notes and follow-up actions; Viet Nam inputs to regional products as requested.

Task A6: Consultation workshop and final report (January 2027)

- **Consultation workshop:** together with the DRR Specialist, prepare and co-facilitate the consultation workshop, leading the sessions on GEDSI findings, the Gender Alert, interventions and the activity plan; ensure the participation of women's organizations, OPDs and ethnic minority representatives and the accessibility of the workshop.
- **Final report:** finalize the consolidated report in English, integrating the DRR inputs and workshop feedback, with an executive summary.

Deliverables A6: Consultation workshop materials and report; final consolidated report (English).

Consultation workshop: One consultation workshop (in person in Ha Noi or hybrid, indicatively in [mid-January 2027]) will be organized with the participation of relevant government agencies, UN agencies, INGOs, the Viet Nam Red Cross Society, the Viet Nam Women's Union, OPDs and representatives of high-risk provinces, to consult on the province-level GEDSI analysis, the Viet Nam Gender Alert and the proposed interventions and activities. Workshop logistics and costs will be arranged and covered separately by UN Women.

3. Deliverables and deadlines

GEDSI Specialist

No.	Tasks/Activities	Deliverables	Deadline
A1	Task A1: Inception and GEDSI desk review	Joint inception report and workplan (by [13 November 2026]); GEDSI desk review note	[20 November 2026]
A2	Task A2: Province-level GEDSI summary	GEDSI analysis with summary of at least 3 pprovince-level details	[18 December 2026]
A3	Task A3: Viet Nam Gender Alert	Viet Nam Gender Alert on El Niño 2026–2027 (English and Vietnamese)	[8 January 2027]
A4	Task A4: Specific interventions and activity plan	Specific interventions for vulnerable groups; prioritized, costed activity plan; GEDSI review of mapped interventions; GEDSI inputs to inter-agency plans	[22 January 2027]
A5	Task A5: Coordination and reporting to the regional humanitarian team	Monthly update notes to the regional humanitarian team; meeting notes; inputs to regional products	[Monthly, until 31 January 2027]
A6	Task A6: Consultation workshop and final report	Workshop materials and report; final consolidated report	[29 January 2027]

Note: Timelines may be adjusted in consultation with UN Women depending on the evolution of El Niño and the availability of stakeholders. Any change to the scope requires UN Women's written agreement.

4. Timeline for Payment for consultants

The consultant will be paid in three instalments upon submission and approval of the deliverables by the Programme Analyst on DRR & CCA, UN Women Viet Nam, as below:

No.	Expected Deliverables	Time (tentative)
1	Deliverables A1 and A2: Inception report; GEDSI desk review note; province-level GEDSI analysis report	[22 December 2026]
2	Deliverables A3 and A4: Viet Nam Gender Alert; specific interventions and activity plan;	[26 January 2027]
3	Deliverables A5 and A6: Update notes to the regional humanitarian team and meeting notes; consultation workshop; final report	[31 January 2027]

Consultant's Workplace and Official Travel

The consultancies are due to start on [1 November 2026] and end on [31 January 2027].

These are home-based consultancies, with possibility to present at the UN Women Office in Viet Nam (VCO) for meetings, consultations and the consultation workshop (schedule to be agreed with the supervisor). The consultants are required to hold regular update meetings with the Programme Analyst and to coordinate closely with DRR Specialist in the team. The GEDSI Specialist will also hold regular (at least monthly) online check-ins with the UN Women regional humanitarian team.

No international travel is foreseen under this assignment. As part of this assignment, there might be missions to [01–02] high-risk provinces for consultations with provincial authorities and partners. Work related travel of UN Women's consultants are considered as official mission and will be arranged by UN Women, in line with UN Women's Consultant Contract Policy, UN Women Duty Travel Policy and UN-EU cost norm.

III. Competencies

Core Values:

- Respect for Diversity
- Integrity
- Professionalism

Core Competencies:

- Awareness and Sensitivity Regarding Gender Issues
- Accountability
- Creative Problem Solving
- Effective Communication
- Inclusive Collaboration
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Leading by Example

Please visit this link for more information on UN Women's Core Values and Competencies:

https://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/employment/application-process#_Values

FUNCTIONAL COMPETENCIES:

GEDSI analysis and programming

- Applies gender and intersectional analysis in DRR and humanitarian contexts using sex-, age- and disability-disaggregated data.
- Designs practical, targeted and costed interventions and activity plans for women, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities and other vulnerable groups; understands GBV risk mitigation and disability inclusion standards.
- Writes concise advocacy products (e.g. gender alerts, briefs) for humanitarian and development audiences.

Coordination, facilitation and reporting

- Works effectively with Government agencies, UN agencies, INGOs, the Red Cross, mass organizations, OPDs and community organizations, and with regional teams; facilitates participatory consultations.
- Produces clear, concise reports in English and materials in Vietnamese; applies do-no-harm, safeguarding and informed-consent principles.

IV. Required Qualifications

GEDSI Specialist ([VNM3])

- Holds a Master's degree or higher in gender studies, social sciences, development studies, social work, public health or a related field;
- At least 05 years of professional experience in gender equality, disability inclusion and/or social inclusion, including in disaster risk reduction, climate change or humanitarian contexts;
- Proven experience in conducting gender or GEDSI analyses and in designing targeted interventions and activity plans for vulnerable groups; experience in producing gender alerts, policy briefs or similar advocacy products is an asset;
- Experience working with women's organizations, OPDs or ethnic minority communities, and in facilitating participatory consultations;
- Knowledge of Viet Nam's frameworks on gender equality, disability, ethnic minorities and disaster management, and of humanitarian coordination (e.g. GiHA, protection/GBV coordination); experience with UN agencies is an advantage;
- Fluent in Vietnamese and proficient in English, with excellent analytical writing skills.

Technical Evaluation Criteria – GEDSI Specialist	Obtainable Score
Holds a Master's degree or higher in gender studies, social sciences, development studies, social work, public health or a related field	10
At least 05 years of professional experience in gender equality, disability inclusion and/or social inclusion, including in disaster risk reduction, climate change or humanitarian contexts	25
Proven experience in conducting gender or GEDSI analyses and in designing targeted interventions and activity plans for vulnerable groups; experience in producing gender alerts, policy briefs or similar advocacy products is an asset	25
Experience working with women's organizations, OPDs or ethnic minority communities, and in facilitating participatory consultations	15
Knowledge of Viet Nam's frameworks on gender equality, disability, ethnic minorities and disaster management, and of humanitarian coordination (e.g. GiHA, protection/GBV coordination); experience with UN agencies is an advantage	15
Fluent in Vietnamese and proficient in English, with excellent analytical writing skills	10
TOTAL	100

Only shortlisted candidates may be contacted for the interview if required.

VI. How to Apply

Interested candidates are requested to submit electronic applications no later than **28 October** 2026, Hanoi time, via the E-recruitment system of UN Women, clearly indicating the position applied for (**GEDSI Specialist**) and uploading the following required documents.

Submission package includes the documents as follows:

- **Personal CV or P11 (P11 can be downloaded from:**
<https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/About%20Us/Employment/UN-Women-P11-Personal-History-Form.doc>)
- A cover letter (maximum length: 1 page)

*NOTE:

* Documents required before contract signing:

- The medical statement from the physician certifying good health to work and travel. (This is not a requirement for RLA contracts).
- Copy of Health Insurance Card
- Completed UNDSS BSAFE online training course.
EN: <https://agora.unicef.org/course/info.php?id=17891>
- Release letter in case the selected consultant is government official.

* Regarding application submission:

- Applications received incomplete or after the closing date will not be considered.
- Only successful applicants will be contacted to be advised of the next phase of the recruitment process.
- All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.

UN Women is committed to achieving workplace diversity in terms of gender, nationality and culture.

People from minority groups, indigenous groups and people with disabilities are equally encouraged to apply.

At UN Women, we are committed to creating a diverse and inclusive environment of mutual respect. UN Women recruits, employs, trains, compensates, and promotes regardless of race, religion, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ability, national origin, or any other basis covered by appropriate law. All employment is decided on the basis of qualifications, competence, integrity and organizational need.

If you need any reasonable accommodation to support your participation in the recruitment and selection process, please include this information in your application.

UN Women has a zero-tolerance policy on conduct that is incompatible with the aims and objectives of the United Nations and UN Women, including sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment, abuse of authority and discrimination. All selected candidates will be expected to adhere to UN Women's policies and procedures and the standards of conduct expected of UN Women personnel and will therefore undergo rigorous reference and background checks. (Background checks will include the verification of academic credential(s) and employment history. Selected candidates may be required to provide additional information to conduct a background check.)