

TC ABSTRACT

I. Basic Project Data

▪ Country/Region:	TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO/CCB - Caribbean Group
▪ TC Name:	Capacity Building and Skills Development for Artificial Intelligence in Trinidad and Tobago
▪ TC Number:	TT-T1188
▪ Team Leader/Members:	CATHLES, ALISON REGAN (PTI/CTI) Team Leader; DOHNERT DE LASCURAIN, SYLVIA EVA (PTI/CTI) Alternate Team Leader; MORALES REINA, GENESIS DEL CARMEN (PTI/CTI); PRADA, ELIANA (PTI/CTI); LEWIS, ALIX (CCB/CTT); DESMORNES, JEAN EMMANUEL (LAB/EBA); CASTILLO MARTINEZ, PAULA; MUENTE KUNIGAMI, ARTURO (IFD/ICS); GRANT, KAYLA SHAREE (PTI/CTI)
▪ Taxonomy:	Client Support
▪ Number and name of operation supported by the TC:	N/A
▪ Date of TC Abstract:	12 Jun 2026
▪ Beneficiary:	Trinidad and Tobago
▪ Executing Agency:	INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK
▪ IDB funding requested:	US\$150,000.00
▪ Local counterpart funding:	US\$0.00
▪ Disbursement period:	36 months
▪ Types of consultants:	Individuals; Firms
▪ Prepared by Unit:	PTI/CTI - Competitiveness, Technology, and Innovation Division
▪ Unit of Disbursement Responsibility:	CCB/CTT - Ctry Off Trinidad & Tobago
▪ TC included in Country Strategy (y/n):	Yes
▪ TC included in CPD (y/n):	Yes
▪ Alignment to IDBStrategy+ 2024-2030:	Productive development and innovation through the private sector; Supports sustainable economic growth; Supports digital transformation; Institutional capacity, rule of law, and citizen security; Digital government

II. Objective and Justification

- 2.1 The general objective of the technical cooperation is to support capacity building in the Ministry of Public Administration and Artificial Intelligence (MPAAI) so that it can play a catalytic role in helping the private sector—especially SMEs—adopt, develop and scale AI in ways that are responsible, inclusive and aligned with national development goals.
- 2.2 Trinidad and Tobago stands at a critical juncture in its digital transformation journey. As artificial intelligence (AI) technologies reshape global production systems, countries that successfully develop the institutional capacity to support AI adoption and innovation will be better positioned. For Trinidad and Tobago, where economic diversification remains a national priority, AI presents a significant opportunity to strengthen public sector capacity to support competitiveness, accelerate private-sector innovation, and foster new growth sectors beyond traditional industries.
- 2.3 While awareness of AI and digital technologies is increasing among businesses, particularly among entrepreneurs and digital technology-oriented firms, significant barriers continue to constrain adoption. According to the Network Readiness Index

(NRI, 2025), Trinidad and Tobago ranks 107 out of 127 countries in the technology pillar, and 116 out of 127 in the future technologies pillar, scoring well below other economies in income group, and ranked 17th out of 21 countries in the Americas. In 2025, an indicative analysis of the 73 firms in Trinidad and Tobago that used the Digital Check-up auto-diagnostic tool, showed low levels of digital maturity. Around two-thirds are beginners or novices, 30% are proficient, and around 7% are advanced. Entrepreneurs report limited access to specialized digital expertise, and tailored business support services. International experience shows that successful digital technology adoption depends on technical expertise and on leadership understanding of how AI can transform business models. It's the two together (digital technology adoption and organizational change) that lead to increased productivity (Brynjolfsson et al., 2021). Building strategic awareness among business leaders is particularly important for smaller firms, which often lack dedicated innovation teams and require targeted support to identify and implement AI-enabled growth opportunities. Trinidad and Tobago possesses a vibrant creative economy that includes audiovisual production, music, gaming, animation, design, and digital content creation (Nurse, 2025). Creative industries have considerable potential to contribute to economic diversification through innovation. Advances in AI technologies have immediate implications for creative industries and intellectual property protection (WIPO, 2025). As such, some of the activities in the TC will explore support particularly for entrepreneurs/innovators in the creative industries.

- 2.4 Given the transition in 2025 from the MPAAI, the ministry has a unique opportunity to play a catalytic role in addressing these constraints by strengthening the enabling environment for AI-driven entrepreneurship and innovation. The Government, with support from the IDB, has committed US\$42 million via a Digital Transformation Loan program (5841/OC-TT, approved in 2023) to accelerate digital transformation, strengthen innovation ecosystems, and enhance the digital capabilities of firms and entrepreneurs. However, to effectively fulfill this role, the MPAAI requires enhanced institutional capacity, strategic frameworks, and practical tools that can increased coordinated support for the private sector, and the broader innovation ecosystem. The MPAAI's current mission is to 'modernize public administration through digital systems, data governance, and AI solutions that improve lives and unlock opportunity'.

III. Description of Activities and Outputs

- 3.1 **Component I: Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Building to support digital and AI transformation of businesses.** Aims to support the development inputs for a national strategy to strengthen the country's digital entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem, including AI adoption and innovation by businesses. Drawing on international best practices, these inputs will assess existing strengths and gaps in the country's innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystems and identify opportunities to accelerate AI adoption and innovation.
- 3.2 **Component II: Leadership-level AI skills development among entrepreneurs, CEOs, business associations, and private-sector decision-makers.** This component will support at least one pilot program on AI-focused skills development targeted at entrepreneurs and CEOs of firms. The pilot may be conducted within a priority sector, for example, creative industries. It is anticipated that there will be collaboration with IDB-Lab and IDB-Invest on this component. With IDB-invest, part of the component will seek to pilot a digital skills training program that facilitates financial literacy for smaller firms.
- 3.3 **Component III: Diagnostics to inform the design of a prototype AI-powered digital tool aimed at improving the business environment for innovative and entrepreneurial firms.** Diagnostics will identify key bottlenecks and redundancies faced by entrepreneurs when interacting with government services. The focus will be

on weaknesses highlighted in TT's B-Ready (WB, 2025). On this basis, a prototype digital tool will be designed to (a) increase transparency and reduce information asymmetry; and (b) perform analytics on key metrics. The prototype tool will be tested with users to observe UX perceptions of reduced administrative burdens.

IV. Budget

Indicative Budget

Activity/Component	IDB/Fund Funding	Counterpart Funding	Total Funding
Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Building to support digital and AI transformation of businesses	US\$30,000.00	US\$0.00	US\$30,000.00
Leadership-level AI skills development among entrepreneurs, CEOs, business associations, and private-sector decision-makers	US\$70,000.00	US\$0.00	US\$70,000.00
Diagnostics to inform the design of a prototype AI-powered digital tool aimed at improving the business environment for innovative and entrepreneurial firms	US\$50,000.00	US\$0.00	US\$50,000.00
Total	US\$150,000.00	US\$0.00	US\$150,000.00

V. Executing Agency and Execution Structure

- 5.1 Following the request from the government, the Bank will serve as the executing agency for this TC through the Competitiveness, Technology, and Innovation division (PTI/CTI) and the Country Office in Trinidad and Tobago (CCB/CTT). In adherence to the Bank's Technical Cooperation Policy (GN-2470-2) and the Procedures for the Processing of Technical Cooperation Operations and Related Matters (OP-619-4).
- 5.2 The beneficiary has requested that the Bank serve as the executing agency for this TC.

VI. Project Risks and Issues

- 6.1 A key risk to the TC will be the limited bandwidth among participating government officers to absorb the outputs of this project. To mitigate this, consultants will work hand in hand with team members of the MPAAI being supported.

VII. Environmental and Social Aspects

- 7.1 This TC does not have applicable requirements of the Bank's Environmental and Social Policy Framework (ESPF).