

USAID's Strengthening Resource Mobilization Activity (SRMA)

Consultant's Terms of Reference

Greater External Funding Accessed by Municipalities through Strengthening the Capacities of the LSGUs on Project Identification, Development and Application

Consultant name: the consultant to be selected through public tender

I. Introduction/Background

By advancing the process of North Macedonia's accession to the EU, the availability of financial resources in support of local development managed by LSGUs will increase. LSGUs will need to be prepared to access these funds with well-developed project proposals created in consultation with civil society and the business community. Similar opportunities to access funding come from other donor programs as well as the various conditional capital grants from the GoNM. Unfortunately, many municipalities lack knowledge and skill required to write proposals to access these funds. SRMA will strengthen the skills of and instill confidence in LSGUs to obtain and successfully manage external funding. SRMA will build the capacity of the municipal employees to identify grant opportunities, develop project ideas, and apply where appropriate.

The Consultant will be engaged to provide services for the implementation of the following activities as per SRMA Work Plan:

Objective 2: Greater Amounts of External Funding Accessed:

- Activity 2.1.1 Assist pilot LSGUs to use an inclusive approach for viable project identification involving private sector and local communities. Strengthen their capacities for project development by using consultants/facilitators to help municipalities come up with ready-to-submit projects, and
- Activity 2.1.2. Assess the use of different planning tools for the development of project proposals (Concept Notes or Full project Proposal) across the first cohort of partner LSGUs. Provide ongoing mentoring for their use based on demand.

The provision of consultant's services will be part of the SRMA TA tailor-made packages provided to the first cohort municipalities. The consultant shall take a due attention to the fact that the TA are tailor made with specifically designed activities in order to address concrete issues for each municipality.

II. Objective and Scope of the engagement

The objective of this assignment is to enable the first cohort of LSGUs to follow closely funding opportunities from external sources and to be able to better develop viable project proposals as funding opportunities are available. The LSGU's shall be also better acquainted with the availability of different (donors) tools and is using them for the development of project proposals. The process of idea identification, prioritization, and development of project proposals shall be regularly used.

In order to achieve the above objectives and results, the Project envisage two-fold technical assistance to be provided to the first cohort partner municipalities. Namely, the technical assistance approach shall consist of: (1) provision of strategic guidance for access to external funding and project development, that is to be available for use of all municipalities, as well as (2) assisting those partner municipalities that will show interest, commitment and provide available resources to engage in preparation and application for a concrete project opportunity based on a real open call. This approach will ensure long-term sustainability beyond the operation of the Project as well as providing practical examples of "real projects" identification, development and application with the aim to secure external funding.

Based on the above, the consultant will implement the following tasks:

1. Development of a practical Guide "Getting ready for project development and access to external funding".

This Guide shall include, *inter alia*, the following steps:

- Step one: Internal (LSGU) preparation (expert/team for project identification and development, internal coordination between departments on assessment of needs, data collection, project ideas identification, cross sector project development teams, identification of possible partners, involvement of secondary budget institutions, assessment of the financial capacities, etc.);
 - Step two: Selection and prioritization of projects;
 - Step three: Identification of possible funding (maintaining database of possible sources of funding) This step shall include preparation of a table with most appropriate sources of funding for different types of projects (by sector) to direct LSGUs about opportunities to explore;
 - Step four: Project development and management;
 - Step five: Promotion of project results and spending reports.
2. Delivery of a workshop with partner municipalities presenting the Guide and provision of specific recommendations for its implementation.
 3. Mentoring of interested municipalities on the preparatory steps.
 4. Delivery of a practical training and mentoring on project development for assigned municipal staff and the staff identified by the Regional Development Centers.
 5. Mentoring/facilitation of the process for concrete project development to small municipalities.

The consultant will report directly to SRMA Objective 2 Component Lead. The deliverables should be developed jointly with all engaged consultants (if applicable) and SRMA team, as well as LSGU's representatives.

III. Outputs and deliverables

The consultant will provide the following outputs and deliverables:

1. Development of a practical Guide “Getting ready for project development and access to external funding”.
2. Delivery of a workshop with partner municipalities presenting the Guide and provision of specific recommendations for its implementation.
3. Provision of mentoring to interested municipalities’ teams on the preparatory steps.
4. Practical training and mentoring on project development using a real open call to identified municipalities’ representatives and the representatives identified by the Regional Development Centers. Mentoring/facilitation of the process for concrete project development to interested small partner municipalities.

IV. Period of execution of activities

The overall consultancy engagement will include maximum 25 workdays. The engagement will be implemented in the period October 2021 – June 2022.

The remuneration will be based on the tender procedure as well as negotiation and procurement procedures as prescribed by the contractor and will be determined as part of the consultancy contract.

V. Qualifications

Academic qualifications:

- Master’s degree in project management, economics, law, public administration, or another related field;

Professional experience:

- Professional experience in working in central government or with local authorities with a focus on project development and project cycle management (specifically with IPA funds);

Language:

- Excellent knowledge of English and Macedonian language (knowledge of Albanian language is considered as an asset)

Other criteria:

- Sound understanding and knowledge of international organizations’ funding opportunities, as well as national financial programs and schemes;
- Research, analytical and mentoring skills in project development and implementation;

- Good communication skills and ability to work with local authorities and in teams

Intellectual property: All works created under this assignment, including creations, inventions, ideas, designs, copyrightable materials, trademarks, and other technology and rights, shall be works made for hire. The consultant is not allowed to publish any part of the deliverables.

It is envisaged that only (individual) consultants, will be eligible to apply and to be contracted to perform the activities listed in this SoW.

VI. Application procedure

To be considered, the interested applicant needs to submit the following documents:

- Cover letter,
- CV,
- Comparable reference list with similar assignments with contact details of 2 references.
- The proposed gross daily rate in USD is inclusive of all costs

The requested application documents should be submitted to the following e-mail address: info@ideasdepo.mk no later than September 20, 2021, by 03:00 PM

Incomplete applications will not be considered for evaluation.