TERMS OF REFERENCE

for experts (‘assessors’) to assist in the evaluation of grant applications received in the framework of the call for proposals

<insert the call for proposals reference>

<Insert the name of the call for proposals>

TERMS OF REFERENCE

**How to complete these standard terms of reference:The elements within <> brackets must be completed with the information indicated, as appropriate for each tender procedure. The phrases in grey and within [ ] brackets should only be included if appropriate. These parts should only be amended in exceptional cases, depending on the requirements of particular tender procedures. In the final version of each set of terms of reference, please remember to delete this paragraph, any other text with yellow highlighting and all such brackets.**

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# BACKGROUND INFORMATION

<In this section insert the relevant background information, priority or priorities and the objectives of the call.>

# OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE & EXPECTED RESULTS

## Overall objective

To recruit assessors to assist the contracting authority in the selection of the best proposals received under < insert the name of the call for proposals> and to achieve a high-quality, complete and coherent selection process of projects in line with the criteria set in the guidelines for applicants.

## Results to be achieved by the contractor

* [Assessors will carry out the technical assessment of concept notes in accordance with guidelines to be provided by the contracting authority and which are based on the published evaluation grids. < Insert the numbers of concept notes expected > numbers of concept notes are expected. Each concept note has to be assessed individually by <enter number> assessors]
* [Assessors will carry out the technical and financial assessment of full applications in accordance with guidelines to be provided by the contracting authority and which are based on the published evaluation grids. < Insert the numbers of full applications expected > numbers of full applications are expected. Each full application has to be assessed individually by <enter number> assessors]
* [<other tasks, e.g. administrative- and/or eligibility checks>]

These assessments will be used by the evaluation committee in the process of selecting the best proposals.

# SCOPE OF THE WORK

## General

< As appropriate, describe the general content of the work to be provided >

## Specific activities

[The team leader and] assessors are bound by a declaration of impartiality and confidentiality[[1]](#footnote-1) to be signed before starting each phase of the assessment. If an assessor believes there might be a situation of conflict of interests in relation to one or more applicants, he/she must inform the contracting authority immediately. In addition, strict confidentiality is required from the experts involved in the implementation of this contract, notably on the assessments of individual applications.

1. **Role and tasks of assessors**

Provide a clear and detailed list of tasks to be undertaken by the assessors in order to achieve the contract objective and/or assessors' job description.

[Assessors should provide written technical and financial assessments to the contracting authority of concept notes and full applications.( this includes the verification of the budget proposed by the applicants for the action, assessing its overall coherence and particularly its cost-effectiveness, with an emphasis on the identification of potential anomalies and/or overpriced items or budget lines).

At least <enter number> assessors must assess each concept note and each full application, working independently of each other.

The assessments must be undertaken in accordance with the guidelines and instructions provided by the evaluation committee. These are based on the published evaluation grids in the guidelines for applicants. The overall assessment should be based on the scores obtained under each subheading, added up by heading and the final score is the arithmetical average of the scores given by the assessors.

Each application must be assessed on its own merits and not by comparing different applications. External assessors are expected to bring their own experience of the sector and project implementation to bear in the analysis of each proposal.

The assessors may be invited to the evaluation committee to justify and discuss his/her assessment of the proposals.]

If there is a team leader: [Each expert assessor should liaise directly with the team leader only, which afterwards will liaise with the chairperson of the evaluation committee. The assessors are required to submit their evaluations to the team leader, who will provide the completed original paper (not a scanned copy) evaluation grids to the evaluation committee at the end of the evaluation phase]

<Specify time schedule for completion of the tasks>

<Specify if any other reports, other than those referred to in Section 6.1, are required>.

<Specify other tasks as required – to be clearly checked with what is foreseen in Sections 6.4.7. and 6.4.8. of the practical guide.>

<Specify if briefing- and de-briefing meetings are foreseen where the assessors must attend>

1. **[Role and tasks of the team leader]**

<Provide a clear and detailed list of tasks to be undertaken by the team leader in order to achieve the contract objective and/or team leader's job description.>

The team leader is in charge of coordinating the assessments and of undertaking the overall quality checks of the concept notes and full applications, without compromising the principle of individual assessments. Therefore, the team leader may not at the same time be an assessor in the context of this call for proposals.

The team leader should ensure that every assessor is familiar with the relevant working documents provided the contracting authority such as the guidelines for applicants and the guidelines for assessors, which provide for the application of a standard methodology when evaluating the applications.

The team leader is the sole interlocutor between the assessors and the contracting authority /evaluation committee.

The team leader should ensure that the evaluation grids and standard format are strictly followed, agreed deadlines respected and the evaluation reports are in conformity with the evaluation guidelines. The team leader should pay special attention to the fact that the written appraisals are consistent and coherent with the given score under each section of the evaluation grid (i.e. that a high score is not associated to negative comments, and vice), and that they are written in a way that clearly allows the evaluation committee to use them directly in the selection process as well as for communicating the assessment results to the applicants.

The team leader should ensure as well that grids do not contain calculation mistakes and/or spelling and grammatical mistakes.

The team leader should submit all the evaluations of the proposals of each call to the evaluation committee.

The team leader must provide feedback in the form of a report on the evaluation exercise and/or lessons learned.

<Specify if any other reports, other than those referred to in Section 6.1, are required>.

<Specify other tasks as required – to be clearly checked with what is foreseen in Sections 6.4.7. and 6.4.8. of the practical guide.>

<Specify if briefing- and de-briefing meetings are foreseen where the team leader must attend>

<Specify time schedule for completion of the tasks>

1. **Role and tasks of the evaluation committee**

The evaluation committee is appointed by the contracting authority comprising a non-voting chairperson, a non-voting secretary and an odd number of voting members (minimum of three). Its role is to advice the contracting authority on contract award in accordance with pre-established criteria.

The chairperson is responsible for coordinating the evaluation process in accordance with the procedures in the practical guide and for ensuring its impartiality and transparency. The secretary to the committee is responsible for carrying out all administrative tasks connected with the evaluation procedure. These include circulating and collecting the declarations of impartiality and confidentiality and keeping the minutes and any other relevant records and documents.

Where the proposals received are particularly numerous or highly technical, all or part of the detailed examination may be carried out by assessors so that the evaluation committee may conduct its deliberations on the basis of their assessments, including the opinion of the EU delegation in the country where the proposed action will take place.

Assessors work under the supervision of the chairperson of the evaluation committee.

Should the assessments not satisfy the quality expected by the contracting authority, it may return the applications to the contractor and ask for a re-assessment by the same or another expert.

<Specify other details as necessary in view of this particular call>.

# LOGISTICS AND TIMING

## Location

< Identify the location of the assignment if any (i.e. country/city, etc.) for the activity to take place.>

## Start date and period of implementation

< Identify the start date and the period of implementation of the contract, ensuring consistency with the time limits specified under section 3 >

# REQUIREMENTS

## Staff

The skills required may include professional technical skills, team management skills, communication skills, and/or language skills. It is recommended to be as clear as possible to guarantee a fair technical evaluation. Remember to set the scores in the evaluation grid accordingly. It is recommended that the precise time inputs of the experts be left to the discretion of tenderers. However, it may be useful to identify a minimum input. When deciding on the profiles, equal access must be guaranteed and they must not create unjustified obstacles to competitive tendering. The profiles should be clear and non-discriminatory. For example, ‘local expertise’ may be required but not a ‘local expert’ (i.e. a national/resident of a country). Remember that participation in tendering procedures must be open on equal terms to all eligible persons.

The profile of the ‘ideal expert’ should not be described as it sets a threshold for acceptance of the offer. When choosing the criteria, consider the real minimum requirements and the availability of such experts on the market. The criteria should be as broad as possible. Quantifiable criteria should be drafted with vigilance. It is good practise to — where appropriate — add expressions such as ‘a University degree in Economics or a relevant, directly related discipline, or equivalent’ in order not to automatically disqualify offers with experts who have 40 years relevant experience but who lack a formal university degree; or ‘preferably 10 years experience…but a minimum of 5 years required’. The required years of experience should be decided with due care and not inflated. Focus instead on quality rather than on quantitative aspects. Please specify carefully what the minimum requirement is and what the preferred requirement is. Bear in mind that if an expert does not meet the minimum requirements, he/she should be rejected. This means that the entire tender is rejected. Consider carefully the possible consequences of the drafting of the profiles as the more precise and challenging the profiles are the fewer experts will meet the minimum requirements and the result is that competition will be restricted.

Any particular definitions used should be sufficiently clear or explained to avoid any ambiguity.

### Assessors

< Identify the required number and expertise, knowledge, profile, working languages and other skills sought for the assessors. A minimum of five years’ experience of a particular issue should be expected. Please differentiate between minimum and preferred requirements if applicable >

Qualifications and skills

General professional experience

Specific professional experience

### [Team leader

< Identify the expertise, knowledge, profile, working languages and other skills sought for the team leader. Please differentiate between minimum and preferred requirements if applicable >

Qualifications and skills

General professional experience

Specific professional experience]

## Facilities

< State what is required in terms of office accommodation, equipment like computers, supplies, services, documentation, logistical support, etc. for the success of the contract, indicating the source (i.e. contractor / partner country / contracting authority / … ). Provide as much detail as possible, especially for items to be provided by the contractor within the fee rates of its experts.>

## [Incidental expenditure

The provision for incidental expenditure covers ancillary and exceptional eligible expenditure incurred under this contract. It cannot be used for costs that should be covered by the contractor as part of its fee rates, as defined above. Its use is governed by the provisions in the general conditions and the notes in Annex V to the contract. It covers:

* < Item 1, etc. Do not give any financial estimates>
* < Item 2, etc. Do not give any financial estimates >

The provision for incidental expenditure for this contract is EUR <amount>. This amount must be included unchanged in the budget breakdown.

Prior approval by the contracting authority for the use of the incidental expenditure is not needed [with the exception of < specify the item >]. Please note that prior approval should only be requested exceptionally. ]

Guidance notes on estimating the provision for incidental expenditure:

All costs relating to the provision of experts (including travel to/from the normal place of posting and subsistence, apart from missions specified in these terms of reference) must be included in the fee rates.

Remember that the amount given in the terms of reference as the provision for incidental expenditure is simply an upper limit on the incidental costs. It need not be estimated exactly and it does not matter that the actual costs are more or less than the estimated amounts of the components, within a reasonable margin of error.

# REPORTS

## Reporting requirements

< Identify the reporting requirements and the language of the reporting and time limits for submissions >

Adapt as necessary: To summarise, in addition to any documents, reports and output specified under the roles and tasks of the assessors [and the team leader], the contractor shall provide the following reports:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of report** | **Content** | **Time of submission** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

## Submission & approval of reports

< Number (for environmental reasons, request as few paper copies as possible) > copies of the reports referred to above must be submitted to the project manager identified in the contract. The reports must be written in English. The project manager is responsible for approving the reports.

< Please state here any other specific requirements>

\* \* \*

1. A standard document will be made available by the contracting authority. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)