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Support to the promotion of Civil Society regional actions in the Western Balkans (Phase II)

WBF Western Balkans Fund
Supporting Common Projects

TERMS OF REFERENCE

for experts ('External Expertise") to assist in the development of Application, Evaluation, and Implementation Guidelines (Rules and Procedures)

for ERC Grants

The Contracting Authority

Western Balkans Fund

TERMS OF REFERENCE

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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Western Balkans Fund (WBF) was established in 2015 upon the "Agreement for the Establishment of the WBF" and was signed by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of WB6 in the Western Balkans Region. The Fund's main objective is to boost cooperation between its members, to strengthen relations and regional cohesion, to advance integration into the European Union. WBF's mission is to promote the development of closer cooperation between the Western Balkans Fund Contracting Parties, strengthen ties between the Western Balkans Fund Contracting Parties and support the integration of the Contracting Parties into the European Union.

WBF strives to contribute to cross border and inter-regional cooperation and strengthen regional cohesion. For further information please visit:

www.westernbalkansfund.org and our social media channels.

The EU/WBF Joint Action (Phase II) directly addresses the goal of strengthening regional cooperation and participatory democracies in the WB Region by directly supporting Civil Society Organizations and grassroots organizations in Joint Initiatives (Regional Projects) that bring the people of our region together and enhancing CSOs capacities in donor funded projects.

WBF within the EU/WBF Joint Action (Phase II) introduced the new grant scheme called "Empowering Regional Cooperation (ERC) Grant", aiming to continue building an ecosystem where regional cooperation is one of the key demands, focusing on the establishment of skills among Civil Society Organisations, Academia, media, local authorities, and other partners leading towards the shift of the mindset about peacebuilding, reconciliation, and regional cooperation.

Following Western Balkans Fund mission, ERC Grant Scheme allows the Fund to better support a wide range of regional stakeholders that have the will and skills to make a positive change in their communities locally and regionally. Responsiveness is fundamental approach to building a Regional Cooperation movement.

WBF is looking for exceptional applicants to lead the ERC initiatives to the benefit of Western Balkan region.

2. OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE & EXPECTED RESULTS

2.1. Overall objective

To recruit an expert to assist the Contracting Authority in the preparation and development of Application, Evaluation, and Implementation Guidelines (Rules and Procedures) for ERC Grants and to achieve a high-quality, complete, coherent and efficient Call for Proposals.

2.2. Results to be achieved by the expert.

- Collaborate with WBF's team to develop and shape the full framework of the new type of Grant mechanism (ERC).
- Perform research, in collaboration with WBF Team, to identify the state of play in the region vis-a-vis the ERC Grants mechanism and to best interlink it with the needs of the CSO sector.
- Co-Design the Grant mechanism to unleash compelling insights coming from the research and taking into consideration the WBF's mission.
- Deliver all documentation required for the ERC Grant Mechanism as stated in paragraph 6.1.

3. SCOPE OF THE WORK

3.1. General

The expert shall bring specialised knowledge and experience in grant management, regional cooperation, and project cycle implementation. Her/his role involves crafting comprehensive Guidelines that outline the criteria for applicants, the evaluation process, and the procedures implementing and monitoring funded projects. This external perspective is expected to help to ensure that the Guidelines are thorough, transparent and align with the best practices in the grant administration. Additionally, the expert may provide valuable insights into tailoring the guidelines to address the unique needs and challenges of the WB Region, ultimately contributing to the success of the Grant Program in fostering regional cooperation and facilitating impactful projects.

4. LOGISTICS AND TIMING

4.1. Location

The location of the assignment will be in the Secretariat Premises in Tirana, Albania.

4.2. Start date and period of implementation.

The start date of the assignment is 19th of February 2024 and the level of engagement foreseen for the assignment is up to 20 days.

5. REQUIREMENTS

5.1. External Expert for ERC Grants

- The ERC Expert should have a track record of creating and implementing ideas in a holistic approach where everybody is part of it.
- The ERC Expert should be able to introduce new ideas that may impact changes.
- The ERC Expert should deeply believe in the power of regional cooperation and understand WBF's vision.
- The ERC Expert shall have experience working with and/or managing programs centered around furthering regional cooperation and/or changemaking.
- The ERC Expert shall have established networks which cut across sectors (such as education, NGO, government, etc.)
- The ERC Expert shall have a track record of innovating solutions and successfully bringing them to completion.
- The ERC Expert shall have experience in scaling the social impact of organizations with proven ability to lead through influence, ideas, and excellent communication skills.
- The ERC Expert shall demonstrate its experience implementing projects in partnership, fundraising, resource mobilization, and balanced budget management.
- The ERC Expert shall come from Western Balkan Region (WB6).
- The ERC Expert shall have fluency in English language.
- The ERC Expert shall have minimum five (5) years of experience in donor funded project implementation.
- The ERC Expert shall have at least two (2) project experiences demonstrated in developing the application, evaluation and implementation guidelines and procedures with recognized international/regional Donors.

5.2. Applying

The ERC Expert is required to apply through info@westernbalkansfund.org within 9th of February 2024 (COB).

Required documents to be provided:

1) Curriculum Vitae in English (Euro-Pass format) with detailed information on relevant experience.

2) Proof of record for the affirmation expertise (i.e., experience in working on programs on Regional Cooperation, creating or implementing Grant Packet, etc.)

3) Cover Letter

4) Technical (Methodology of work) Financial Offer defining the LoE of the Task, unit price and total price in EUR, Gross Value. (Taxes or any other expenses will be deducted from the gross value according to the Host Country Law of WBF. (Albania))

**Remuneration for the External Evaluators depends on the qualifications and experience of candidates as well as the proposed offer to be agreed upon, which will be based on the current WBF consultancy rates.*

5.3. Selection

WBF ensures a transparent and non-discriminatory approach to selection of the applicants. All personal data will be treated with discretion. WBF will use the principle of Best Value for Money in the selection process while evaluating the experience of the candidate and the financial offer presented.

Evaluation:

1) Provided all Required documents (YES/NO) ***Eligibility Condition***

2) Relevant Experience (50/100 points)
3) Technical and Financial Offer (50/100 points)

**Total Combined and Final Rating of the Proposal: The higher combined score is recommended.*
**Please note that only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.*

6. DELIVERABLES

6.1. Reporting requirements

The expert shall provide the following deliverables:

Name of report	Content	Time of submission
Application Package	Application Guidelines, Application Form including (Narrative Form, Financial Form, and other documentations.)	Agreed upon contract signature following the starting date and the number of days allocated.
Evaluation Package	Grant Evaluation Form	

	Grant Evaluation Guidelines	
Grant Awarding Package	Grant Contract Relevant Contractual Annexes (i.e., narrative, and financial reporting templates, administrative templates, etc.)	

6.2. Submission & approval of reports

All deliverables must be consulted while preparing with the EU/WBF Project Manager (PM) and WBF Senior Program Manager (SPM)

Final approval of the deliverables will be granted by the Executive Director of WBF upon no further comments from EU/WBF PM and WBF SPM.

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