

TENDER FILE / TERMS OF REFERENCE

(Restricted consultation procedure / Framework Contract)

Purchase of Communication and Public Relation Services for HF Actions in Albania



The Council of Europe is currently implementing a **joint European Union/Council of Europe Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey** (Horizontal Facility), which will be due in April 2019. There are 7 Actions implemented under the Horizontal Facility (HF) in Albania. In view of implementing the HF communication and visibility plan, the Council of Europe Office in Albania is looking for Provider(s) for the provision of Communication and Public Relation services to be requested on an as needed basis.

A. TENDER RULES

This tender procedure is a restricted consultation procedure. In accordance with Rule 1333 of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe on the procurement procedures of the Council of Europe¹, the Organisation shall invite to tender at least three potential providers for any purchase between €2,000 (or €5,000 for intellectual services) and €55,000 tax exclusive.

This specific tender procedure aims at concluding a **framework contract** for the provision of deliverables described in the Act of Engagement (See attached). A tender is considered valid for 120 calendar days as from the closing date for submission. The selection of tenderers will be made in the light of the criteria indicated below. All tenderers will be informed in writing of the outcome of the procedure.

The tenderer must be either a natural person, or a legal person except consortia.

Tenders shall be submitted **by email only** (with attachments) **to the email address indicated in the table below, with the following reference in subject: Provision of Communication and Public Relation Services for HF Actions in Albania.** Tenders addressed to another email address **will be rejected**.

The general information and contact details for this procedure are indicated on this page. You are invited to use the CoE Contact details indicated below for any question you may have. **All questions shall be submitted at least 5 (five) working days before the deadline for submission of the tenders and shall be exclusively addressed to the email address indicated below with the following reference in subject: Provision of Communication and Public Relation Services for HF Actions in Albania.**

Type of contract ►	Framework contract
Duration ►	Until 31 December 2018
Deadline for submission of tenders/offers ►	17 March 2018
Email for submission of tenders/offers ►	Tender.tirana@coe.int
Email for questions ►	Tender.tirana@coe.int
Expected starting date of execution ►	03 April 2018

¹ The activities of the Council of Europe are governed by its [Statute](#) and its internal Regulations. Procurement is governed by the Financial Regulations of the Organisation and by [Rule 1333 of 29 June 2011 on the procurement procedures of the Council of Europe](#).

B. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

Background

The Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey (Horizontal Facility) is a joint initiative of the European Union (EU) and the Council of Europe for South East Europe and Turkey, representing a key instrument for promoting joint EU and Council of Europe standards and values to a wider target audience.

The Horizontal Facility is being implemented in six beneficiaries, namely Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, Kosovo*, Montenegro and Serbia, while Turkey will benefit from legal analyses/advice through the Expertise Co-ordination Mechanism. The implementation will take place over three years (May 2016-April 2019) and will focus on three themes:

1. Ensuring justice;
2. Fighting corruption, economic crime and organised crime;
3. Combating discrimination and protecting the rights of vulnerable groups.

The initiative pursues a two-fold approach:

1. Technical cooperation, based on recommendations of the Council of Europe monitoring bodies, which are of importance in the EU enlargement process. The format of the technical cooperation is outlined in operational activity plans called Tri-Annual Plans of Action (hereinafter: TAPAs), which have been designed to reflect the needs in each of the respective beneficiaries, with each TAPAs containing a number of Actions under each of the three themes.
2. The Expertise Co-ordination Mechanism, which foresees the provision of Council of Europe legislative expertise and policy advice in response to requests from the aforementioned beneficiaries.

In the Council of Europe Office in Albania the following Horizontal Facility actions are being implemented:

1. Enhancing the protection of human rights of prisoners in Albania in line with Council of Europe and European Committee for Prevention of Torture (CPT) standards;
2. Supporting effective domestic remedies and facilitating the execution of judgments (D-REX);
3. Strengthening the Quality and Efficiency of Justice (SEJ2);
4. Action against Economic Crime in Albania (AEC);
5. Fighting Bullying and Extremism in the Education System;
6. Preventing and combating discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity in Albania;
7. Strengthening the protection of national minorities in Albania.

The Horizontal Facility has communication guidelines which underpin the effective implementation of the Horizontal Facility through providing the staff engaged in the implementation of the respective actions with a clearly defined framework for ensuring that appropriate information is communicated to appropriate audiences using appropriate communication channels.

The communication guidelines have five objectives:

1. to raise awareness of the actions as well as the Expertise Co-ordination Mechanism;
2. to provide regular and up-to-date information to different target groups;
3. to communicate the results and achievements of the Horizontal Facility to a wider audience;
4. to share good practices in the region for further interventions at regional level ;
5. to increase accountability of relevant institutions and donors toward beneficiaries and citizens.

All communication under the Horizontal Facility will promote the benefits and expected positive effects of the actions and will explain to target groups how and why actions of the Horizontal Facility will improve and enhance their quality of life.

In order to facilitate the implementation of the HF communication guidelines and action plan in Albania, the Council of Europe is looking for one Provider with special expertise on communication and public relation services.

The provider is expected to deliver coordination services related to communication and public relations, in close cooperation with the team of the CoE Office in Albania, for a total of 100 working days, distributed until 31st December 2018. This estimate is for information only and shall not constitute any sort of contractual commitment on the part of the Council of Europe. The contract may potentially represent a higher or lower number of activities, depending on the evolving needs of the Organisation.

Scope of the Framework Contract

Throughout the duration of the Framework Contract, the selected Provider may be asked to, in English and Albanian:

1. Assist the HF actions' staff to develop and implement their respective communication plans in compliance with the Council of Europe 'Communication plan guidelines', communication plan of the CoE Office in Tirana and the Horizontal Facility communication guidelines.

2. Identify project success stories highlighting the impact of the action – to be promoted through media contacts, public relations events, written interviews/stories/short filmed interviews/photos/infographics to be used on website, social media and newsletter.
3. Advise on drafting press releases and web news;
4. Prepare and post items and engage with users on social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook;
5. Facilitate the HF Actions' staff in identifying and preparing relevant public relation events, tools and messages;
6. Arrange press conferences and interviews with journalists, prepare and distribute media releases, and liaise with media as necessary;
7. Collate and analyse media coverage;
8. Manage the public relations aspects of a potential crisis situation;
9. Maintain close contacts and co-ordinate with relevant communication staff at the EUD;
10. Develop contacts with beneficiary communication officers to create channels for multiplication of messages;
11. Maintain close contacts and co-ordinate with the communication officer in ODGP and relevant contacts in the Directorate of Communication.

The above list is not considered exhaustive. The Council reserves the right to request deliverables not explicitly mentioned in the above list of expected services, but related to the field of expertise object of the present Framework Contract.

In terms of **quality requirements**, the pre-selected Service Providers must ensure, *inter alia*, that:

- The services are provided to the highest professional/academic standard;
- Any specific instructions given by the Council – whenever this is the case – are followed.

In addition to the orders requested on an as needed basis, the Provider shall keep regular communication with the Council to ensure continuing exchange of information relevant to the project implementation. Unless otherwise agreed with the Council, written documents produced by the Provider shall be in English (see more on requirements for written documents in Articles 3.2.2 and 3.2.3 of the Legal Conditions in the Act of Engagement).

C. FEES

Tenderers are invited to indicate their fees, by completing and sending the table of fees, as attached in Section A to the Act of Engagement. These fees are final and not subject to review. Tenders proposing fees above the exclusion level indicated in the Table of fees will be **entirely and automatically** excluded from the tender procedure.

D. HOW WILL THIS FRAMEWORK CONTRACT WORK? (ORDERING PROCEDURE)

Once this consultation and the subsequent selection are completed, you will be informed accordingly. Deliverables will then be delivered on the basis of Order Forms submitted by the Council to the selected Provider (s), by post or electronically, on **an as needed basis** (there is therefore no obligation to order on the part of the Council).

Each time an Order Form is sent, the selected Provider undertakes to take all the necessary measures to send it **signed** to the Council within 2 (two) working days after its reception.

The Provider, **if subject to VAT**, shall also send, together with each signed Form, a quote² (Pro Forma invoice) in line with the indications specified on each Order Form, and including:

- the Service Provider's name and address;
- its VAT number;
- the full list of services;
- the fee per type of deliverables (in the currency indicated on the Act of Engagement, tax exclusive);
- the total amount per type of deliverables (in the currency indicated on the Act of Engagement, tax exclusive);
- the total amount (in the currency indicated on the Act of Engagement), tax exclusive, the applicable VAT rate, the amount of VAT and the amount VAT inclusive .

Signature of orders

An Order Form is considered to be legally binding when the Order, signed by the Provider, is approved by the Council, by displaying a Council's Purchase Order number on the Order, as well as by signing and stamping the Order concerned. Copy of each approved Order Form shall be sent to the Provider, to the extent possible on the day of its signature.

E. ASSESSMENT

Exclusion criteria and absence of conflict of interests

² It must strictly respect the fees indicated in the Act of Engagement. In case of non-compliance with these fees, the Council of Europe reserves the right to terminate the Contract with the Provider, in all or in part.

(by signing the Act of Engagement, you declare on your honour not being in any of the below situations)³

Tenderers shall be excluded from participating in the tender procedure if they:

- have been sentenced by final judgment on one or more of the following charges: participation in a criminal organisation, corruption, fraud, money laundering;
- are in a situation of bankruptcy, liquidation, termination of activity, insolvency or arrangement with creditors or any like situation arising from a procedure of the same kind, or are subject to a procedure of the same kind;
- have received a judgment with res judicata force, finding an offence that affects their professional integrity or serious professional misconduct;
- do not comply with their obligations as regards payment of social security contributions, taxes and dues, according to the statutory provisions of their country of incorporation, establishment or residence;
- are or are likely to be in a situation of conflict of interests.

Eligibility criteria

- University degree in public relations, communication, journalism or other related studies;
- 10 years of public and private and/or non-profit sector experience with special focus on communication and public relations, media and visibility or similar.;
- proven experience to produce a wide range of communication supports, including info graphics, images, videos;
- Experience in the use of social media for public information/advocacy;
- Fluent English and Albanian.

Award criteria

- Quality of the offer (70%), including:
 - The methodology proposed;
 - Experience of working with international organisations shall be an advantage;
- Financial offer (30%).

The Council reserves the right to hold interviews with eligible tenderers.

Multiple tendering is not authorised.

F. DOCUMENTS TO BE PROVIDED

- A completed and signed copy of the **Act of Engagement**⁴ (See attached);
- For tenderers subject to VAT only: **a quote, describing their financial offer**, in line with the requirements of section C of the Tender File (see above);
- **2 (two) reference letters** from major clients;
- A detailed CV of the consultant, preferably in Europass Format, demonstrating clearly that the tenderer fulfils the eligibility criteria;
- Registration documents, for legal persons only;
- Certificates of English language;
- A document describing the methodology proposed.

All documents shall be submitted in English, failure to do so will result in the exclusion of the tender.

If any of the documents listed above are missing, the tender will not be considered.

The Council reserves the right to reject a tender if the scanned documents are of such a quality that the documents cannot be read once printed.

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³ The Council of Europe reserves the right to ask tenderers, at a later stage, to supply an extract from the record of convictions or failing that an equivalent document issued by the competent judicial or administrative authority of the country of incorporation, indicating that the first three above listed exclusion criteria are met, and a certificate issued by the competent authority of the country of incorporation indicating that the fourth criterion is met.

⁴ The Act of Engagement must be completed, signed and scanned in its entirety (i.e. including all the pages). The scanned Act of Engagement may be sent page by page (attached to a single email) or as a compiled document, although a compiled document would be preferred. For all scanned documents, .pdf files are preferred.