

TENDER FILE / TERMS OF REFERENCE

(Competitive bidding procedure / Framework Contract)

Purchase of consultancy service

[Contract N° 8573/2019/55]



The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (the Congress) is currently implementing the project "Strengthening democracy and building trust at local level in Ukraine" within the Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine 2018-2021. In this context, it is looking for a maximum of nine Providers (see below) for the provision of consultancy services to support selected municipalities in implementing sustainable and replicable ethical, innovative and inclusive policies and practices, in compliance with the ordering procedure defined in the Framework Contract, to be requested by the Congress on an as-needed basis.

A. TENDER RULES

This tender procedure is a competitive bidding procedure. In accordance with Rule 1395 of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe on the procurement procedures of the Council of Europe,¹ 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.

Tenders shall be submitted **by email only** (with attachments) **to the email address indicated in the table below, with the following reference in subject: Application: Local initiatives support 8573/2019/55.** 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 Council of Europe 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: Application: Local initiatives support 8573/2019/55.**

Type of contract ▶	Framework contract
Duration ▶	Until 28 February 2021, renewable until 31 December 2021
Deadline for submission of tenders/offers ▶	07 January 2020
Email for submission of tenders/offers ▶	congress.cooperation@coe.int
Email for questions ▶	congress.cooperation@coe.int
Expected starting date of execution ▶	15 January 2020

B. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

Background of the Project

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (the Congress) is currently implementing the project "Strengthening democracy and building trust at local level in Ukraine", which aims to improve the quality of local democracy in Ukraine by strengthening institutional frameworks and by supporting local authorities and their national associations in their efforts to promote ethical decision-making and more citizen-oriented, inclusive and transparent local governance. The project is implemented within the Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine 2018-2021.

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 1395 of 20 June 2019 on the procurement procedures of the Council of Europe](#).

The Council of Europe is looking for a maximum of nine Providers (provided enough tenders meet the criteria indicated below) in order to support the implementation of the project with a particular expertise on:

- Ethical, transparent and participatory decision-making at local level;
- Engagement of under-represented groups (in particular, Roma, other ethnic minorities, IDPs);
- Gender equality and equal opportunities for women and men to participate in local political life.

The tenderer must be either a natural person, or a legal person except consortia. Legal persons will be required to assign individual employees to perform tasks under the contract and may not subcontract or replace any employees without the explicit written acceptance of the Council of Europe. Should the requested deliverables be performed by a person other than the pre-approved employees or consultants, the Council of Europe reserves the right to terminate the contract.

This Contract is currently estimated to cover up to four on-site visits to selected municipalities in Ukraine, up to three meetings with partner municipalities, including peer reviews, and up to 25 days of home-based work, until 28 February 2021. 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.

For information purposes only, the total budget of the project amounts to 1,600,000 Euros and the total amount of the object of the present tender **shall not exceed 55,000 Euros tax exclusive** for the whole duration of the Framework Contract. This information does not constitute any sort of contractual commitment or obligation on the part of the Council of Europe.

Lot

The present tendering procedure aims to select Provider(s) to support the implementation of the project and includes the following sublots:

Sublots	Maximum number of Providers to be selected
National consultant on:	
Sublot 1 Strengthening ethical, transparent and participatory decision-making at local level	3
Sublot 2: Fostering the engagement of under-represented groups (in particular, Roma, other ethnic minorities, IDPs)	3
Sublot 3: Promoting a gender perspective in local political action and equal opportunities for women and men to participate in local political life	3

The lot concerns practical support, guidance and coaching in the process of the implementation of local initiatives in the field of ethical, innovative and inclusive policies and practices taking into consideration legislative frameworks, Ukrainian context and ongoing reforms.

The Council of Europe will select the above-mentioned number of Providers per subplot, provided enough tenders meet the criteria indicated below. Tenderers are invited to indicate which subplot they are tendering for (see Section A of the Act of Engagement).

Scope of the Framework Contract

Throughout the duration of the Framework Contract, pre-selected Providers may be asked to:

- 1) Provide expert support, guidance and coaching of the implementation of local initiatives in the selected municipalities in the development and implementation of their local initiatives;
- 2) In coordination with an international consultant provide recommendations and assistance to the selected municipalities in developing regulations; policies; strategies, and/or any other documents to be approved by the city council in the framework of the local initiatives;
- 3) Undertake field visits to the selected municipalities and submit a report following each visit, highlighting the main achievements of the selected municipalities and possible suggestions for improvements;

- 4) Provide support to the selected municipalities in developing a monitoring and evaluation plan of the local initiatives, in close coordination with other consultant(s) and the project team;
- 5) Contribute to the assessment report to be prepared jointly with the international consultant on the results achieved in the framework of local initiatives and recommendations on replication of the policies and practices implemented in the selected municipalities.
- 1) Participate and contribute to the workshops and peer exchange meetings on ethical, innovative and inclusive policies and practices at local level, including:
 - a. develop handouts and deliver presentations on ethical, innovative and inclusive policies and practices;
 - b. moderate/facilitate discussions in close co-ordination with fellow consultants;
 - c. prepare reports and/or summary papers with recommendations to enhance the process.

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 for the lot concerned.

Tentative timeframe

Expected start date is 15 January 2020. The tasks shall be undertaken as per an agreed work-plan between the consultant and the project team and be concluded no later than 28 February 2021. The tentative workplan is outlined below for information purposes only; it will be updated upon the evaluation of project proposals and selection of beneficiary municipalities, taking into consideration the proposed duration of each initiative. It will be confirmed between the project team and selected consultants prior to each assignment:

- Expert guidance to local authorities via technical means – (one working day per municipality) – 15 – 22 January 2020
- First round of coaching visits to three municipalities (one working day per municipality) – 27 - 31 January 2020
- Second round of coaching visits to three municipalities (one working day per municipality) – April-May 2020
- Peer exchange meeting (Community of practice on local democracy in Ukraine) – May 2020
- Third round of coaching visits to three municipalities (one working day per municipality) – July-September 2020
- Peer reviews – November 2020.

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.

If contracted by the Council of Europe, the deliverables shall be provided personally by the persons identified in the offer of the Provider whose CVs have been presented to the Council of Europe (See section E. below), in accordance with the terms as provided in the present Tender File and Act of Engagement

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. This involves, among others, to inform the Council as soon as it becomes aware, during the execution of the Contract, of any initiatives and/or adopted laws and regulations, policies, strategies or action plans or any other development related to the object of the Contract (see more on general obligations of the Provider in Article 3.1.2 of the Legal Conditions in the Act of Engagement).

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.

The Council will indicate on each Order Form (see Section D below) the global fee corresponding to each deliverable, calculated on the basis of the unit fees, as agreed by this Contract.

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

Once the selection procedure is 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).

Pooling

For each Order, the Council will choose from the pool of pre-selected tenderers for the relevant lot the Provider who demonstrably offers best value for money for its requirement when assessed – for the Order concerned – against the criteria of:

- quality (including as appropriate: capability, expertise, past performance, availability of resources and proposed methods of undertaking the work);
- availability (including, without limitation, capacity to meet required deadlines and, where relevant, geographical location); and
- price.

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. If a Provider is unable to take an Order or if no reply is given on his behalf within that deadline, the Council may call on another Provider using the same criteria, and so on until a suitable Provider is contracted.

Providers subject to VAT

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

(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.

² It must strictly respect the fees indicated in the Financial Offer attached to the original Provider's tender as recorded by the Council of Europe. In case of non-compliance with the fees as indicated in the original Provider's tender, the Council of Europe reserves the right to terminate the Contract with the Provider, in all or in part.

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.

Eligibility criteria

- Master's Degree in social sciences, political sciences, law, business administration or relevant disciplines;
- Minimum five years of relevant experience in one of the thematic fields:
 - Local governance and citizen participation;
 - Anti-discrimination and the engagement of under-represented groups;
 - Gender equality;
- Excellent communication and reporting skills;
- Full professional proficiency in English.

Award criteria

- Quality of the offer (80%), including:
 - Thematic knowledge and expertise (30%), including:
 - Good knowledge of local context and good practices in ethical and transparent decision-making, citizens' engagement, inclusion of underrepresented groups in local policies, gender equality and mainstreaming;
 - Good understanding of the local self-government in Ukraine and the process of the decentralisation reform ;
 - Relevant experience (30%), including:
 - Proven relevant experience in relation to ethical and transparent government, citizens' engagement, inclusion of underrepresented group in local policies, gender equality and mainstreaming;
 - Experience in coaching and providing expert guidance and consultancy services to local authorities;
 - Specific skills and capacities (20%), including:
 - Research, analysis, writing and reporting skills;
 - Communication and public presentation skills;
 - Adaptability and teamwork skills;
- Financial offer (20%).

The Council reserves the right to hold interviews with eligible tenderers.
Multiple tendering is not authorised.

F. NEGOTIATIONS

The Council reserves the right to hold negotiations with the bidders in accordance with Article 20 of Rule 1395.

G. DOCUMENTS TO BE PROVIDED

- A completed and signed copy of the **Act of Engagement**⁴ (see attached);
- A detailed CV, preferably in Europass Format, demonstrating clearly that the tenderer fulfils the eligibility criteria;
- Motivation letter in English, highlighting the specific area of expertise of the tenderer;
- Samples of previous work relevant to the lot for which the tenderer is applying (in English);
- Three referees' contact details (including phone number and e-mail address);
- Registration documents, for legal persons only.

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 Council of Europe reserves the right to reject the tender.

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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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.