

## TENDER FILE / TERMS OF REFERENCE (Competitive bidding procedure / Framework Contract)

### Purchase of consultancy services in relation to the project “Promoting equality and non-discrimination in Armenia” Contract N° BH4958-2023-03



The Council of Europe is currently implementing and until 28 February 2026 will implement a Project on “Promoting equality and non-discrimination in Armenia”. In that context, it is looking for Providers for the provision of specialized consultancy activities on combating discrimination, hatred and racism to be requested by the Council 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<sup>1</sup>, the Organisation shall invite to tender at least three potential providers for any purchase between €2,000 (or €6,000 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, a legal person or consortia of legal and/or natural persons.

Tenders shall be submitted **by email only** (with attachments) **to the email address indicated in the table below, with the following reference in subject: Tender – Armenia consultancy on combating discrimination, hatred and racism- 2023.** 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 five (5) 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: Questions - Armenia consultancy on combating discrimination, hatred and racism- 2023**

<b>Type of contract ▶</b>	Framework contract
<b>Duration ▶</b>	Until 28 February 2026
<b>Deadline for submission of tenders/offers ▶</b>	<b>15 June 2023</b>
<b>Email for submission of tenders/offers ▶</b>	tender.armenia-bh4958@coe.int
<b>Email for questions ▶</b>	tender.armenia-bh4958@coe.int
<b>Expected starting date of execution ▶</b>	10 July 2023

<sup>1</sup> 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](#).

## B. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

### Background of the Project

The project "Promoting equality and non-discrimination in Armenia" is currently implemented by the Council of Europe and is funded by the European Union and the Council of Europe in the framework of their Partnership for Good Governance phase III.

The project seeks in specific to support all stakeholders and partners from PGGII phase, providing more in-depth knowledge to all relevant actors and also stimulating their cooperation and networking towards better responses to discrimination and hatred. As a result of the Project implementation, it is anticipated that:

- The legislative framework to combat discrimination, hatred, and racism in Armenia is in line with European standards.
- State institutions and the Human Rights Defender's Office improve their understanding on discrimination and hate speech in line with the European standards.
- State institutions and law enforcement bodies improve their responses to combating discrimination and hatred under their mandate.
- The general public in Armenia raises awareness of the negative effects posed by discrimination and hatred.

The Council of Europe is looking for a maximum of 10 Provider (provided enough tenders meet the criteria indicated below) in order to support the implementation of the project with a particular expertise on combating discrimination, hatred and racism in Armenia.

This Contract is currently estimated to cover up to 34 activities, to be held by 28 February 2023. 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 300.000 Euros and the total amount of the object of 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.

### Scope of the Framework Contract

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

- Draft analytical reports (assessments, gap analysis, proposed modifications, awareness raising materials) and studies on combating discrimination, hatred and racism (including civil, administrative, criminal law provision; development of the mandate of the Human Rights Defender; reinforcing the capacity of legal professionals and law enforcement; improved systems of disaggregated data collection; measures to combat hate speech and discrimination; supporting the role of civil society to offer victim support and advocate for improved practice on discrimination; awareness raising among the general population and specific groups on discrimination, hate speech and racism in Armenia).
- Participate in working and consultation meetings, expert discussions, round tables, workshops, seminars, conferences with national authorities and stakeholders; facilitate and report on the meetings.
- Prepare training modules (both online and offline) or training materials on the mentioned topics or adapt training materials to the needs of the specific groups of professionals.
- Conduct specialised workshops on these topics.

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. 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. Tenders proposing fees above the exclusion level indicated in the Table of fees will be **entirely and automatically** excluded from the tender procedure.

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 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 quote<sup>2</sup> (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**

<sup>2</sup> 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.

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)<sup>3</sup>

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, terrorist financing, terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities, child labour or trafficking in human beings;
- 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 an entity created to circumvent tax, social or other legal obligations (empty shell company), have ever created or are in the process of creation of such an entity;
- have been involved in mismanagement of the Council of Europe funds or public funds;
- are or appear to be in a situation of conflict of interest;
- are retired Council of Europe staff members or are staff members having benefitted from an early departure scheme;
- are or if their owner(s) or executive officer(s), in the case of legal persons, are included in the lists of persons or entities subject to restrictive measures applied by the European Union (available at [www.sanctionsmap.eu](http://www.sanctionsmap.eu)).

### *Eligibility criteria*

- Master's degree in the field of human rights, law, political/social sciences, public relations and other relevant fields;
- At least 5 years of expertise in the field of human rights/anti-discrimination, combating hate speech or racism;
- At least 5 years of experience at the national level in Armenia;
- Very good knowledge of the Armenian political structure, domestic context, legislative framework and implementation in the field of human rights, anti-discrimination, hate speech, anti-racism;
- Knowledge of Armenian (mother tongue level);
- Excellent written and oral English (minimum C1 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

### *Award criteria*

- Quality of the offer (70%), including:
  - Specialised expertise in the field of combating discrimination, hate speech and racism (40%);
  - Relevance of previous expert work to the topics and type of engagement expected (30%).
- Financial offer (30%).

Multiple tendering is not authorised.

<sup>3</sup> The Council of Europe reserves the right to ask tenderers, at a later stage, to supply the following supporting documents:

- 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 and sixth above listed exclusion criteria are met;
- A certificate issued by the competent authority of the country of incorporation indicating that the fourth criterion is met;
- For legal persons, an extract from the companies register or other official document proving ownership and control of the Tenderer;
- For natural persons (including owners and executive officers of legal persons), a scanned copy of a valid photographic proof of identity (e.g. passport).

## 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<sup>4</sup> (See attached);
- A detailed CV, preferably in Europass Format, demonstrating clearly that the tenderer fulfils the eligibility criteria;
- A motivation letter;
- A list of all owners and executive officers, for legal persons only;
- A list of references to written work of the tenderer (with at least 2 titles), with links to the work or the work attached. Written work can be articles, studies, manuals, with relevance to the topics of this tendering.

**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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<sup>4</sup> 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.