

YOUNG RESEARCHERS OF SERBIA OPENS CALL FOR SUBMITTING OFFERS

External Evaluation Consultant of the ECO SYSTEM environmental reforms supporting programme implemented by Young researchers of Serbia

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1. Introduction

In January 2020 YRS started implementing ECO SYSTEM Programme which objective is to enforce the reforms in the environmental sector in Serbia through more active involvement of CSOs in the implementation of EU acquis and constant cooperation of stakeholders.

The Programme is supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), and will last till the end of 2022.

ECO SYSTEM Programme is composed of three main groups of activities (1) Environmental Impact Hub; (2) Grants for Environmental CSOs and (3) Environmental protection campaign and component connected with YRS development.

1.2. Evaluation object: Intervention to be evaluated

Environmental civil society organizations are the main target group of the ECO SYSTEM programme. They need better access to information, possibility to participate in decision-making processes, skills and tools to communicate EU related reforms to citizens, and a mechanism for cooperation with institutions.

Grants for CSOs will be implemented in the second and third year of Programme, and are expected to have positive influence on building capacities of CSOs to develop and implement the project jointly. The grants will give environmental CSOs an opportunity to continue working on EU accession (Chapter 27) and monitoring environmental reforms. During the grants' implementation, cooperation with institutions will be strengthened and visibility of CSOs will be increased. The aim of the grants is also to strengthen existing networks of environmental of CSOs, having balanced geographical coverage on the whole territory of Serbia.

The specific objectives of CSO support are:

- To strengthen the capacity and visibility of CSO networks dealing with the environment;
- To enable CSOs permanent working on environmental reforms and monitoring of Chapter 27;
- To improve the dialogue and cooperation of the CSOs with decision-makers at the national and local level.

The overall indicative amount made available for two-years Programme is EUR 666,000.00.

Additional information about the Eco system programme is on www.ekosistem.mis.org.rs

1.3. Evaluation rationale

The external evaluation will serve to YRS to get deeper insight in changes achieved in environmental CSO sector in Serbia during implementation of granted projects and to plan further support to CSOs.

As part of its contract with Sida, the YRS commissions external evaluation services to be performed throughout the second and third year of the Programme's implementation.

Terms of Reference for External Evaluation Consultant

2. THE ASSIGNMENT

2.1. Evaluation objectives and coordination

Objectives of the evaluation are:

- a) Assessment of progress made towards the achievement of results at the outcome and output levels;
- b) Determination if the results contribute to the Ecosystem Programme's overall goals;
- c) Identification of the important lessons learned in order to understand what has and what has not worked as a guide for future planning.

This evaluation is to be coordinated with the YRS's monitoring of grants and with monitoring of gender mainstreaming. The grant coordinator from YRS, gender experts and the evaluator will compare actual performance with planned performance and suggest corrective action to produce the desired outcome if significant differences exist.

2.2. Financial and human resources

The allocation for External Evaluation Consultant is 9120,00 EUR with value added tax (VAT), which is to cover 10 working days in 2021 and 47 working days in 2022 for fieldwork with representatives of CSO-grantees and for preparatory desk study and reporting. There is no a separate budget for covering the travel-related expenses of the evaluator.

Cooperation between the YRS and selected External Evaluation Consultant in the third year of the implementation of the Ecosystem Programme depends on future allocations by Sida, therefore External Evaluation Consultant will be contracted for the second project year, which ends on 31st December 2021.

2.3. Language, time schedule and deliverables

Working language is Serbian, while reporting language is in Serbian and English.

A near-end (short-term) results' evaluation of granted CSOs' projects of the Ecosystem Programme, is to be carried out from December 2021 to February 2022. The Report should be used as an input for the continuation of CSOs' support and feed into the Sida-YRS annual review meeting in order to strengthen the basis for possible Programme adjustments.

In the third programme year, from November 2022 to February 2023 an ex-post short evaluation of granted CSOs' projects and long-term results' evaluation from all two rounds.

This final evaluation should be undertaken in cooperation with the YRS grant coordinator and lead to the formulation of general lessons and good practices, useful for the Serbian environmental CSO-community within the framework of EU negotiations and Chapter 27.

2.4. Evaluation approach and methods

The evaluations will focus on the results (effectiveness and likely impact) of the Ecosystem Programme partners' (grantee) projects, with special emphasis on:

- CSOs accomplishment of stated objectives and results of the projects supported by the Ecosystem Programme in general;
- Assessment of contribution of CSOs' projects result to Ecosystem Programme's objectives;
- An overall independent assessment of the CSOs projects performance;
- Their involvement in and promotion of the EU related environmental reforms;
- Their cooperation with local communities and authorities;
- Visibility of CSOs in local communities;
- Identification of key lessons and good practice;
- Influence of the CSO's projects on the networks strengthening;
- Lasting benefits and sustainability of CSO projects measured by improved policy frame and structures that can independently carry on the project results.

Moreover, the evaluation shall include gender equality aspects of supported CSO projects. This component should be prepared in cooperation with gender experts and shall include:

- Gender representation within CSOs and their funded projects;
- Gender related capacity development initiated by the Ecosystem Programme;
- Gender sensitive budgeting etc.

In addition, the evaluation may bring up other relevant findings, and particularly in the final evaluation, issues related to grant project relevance and efficiency will be important for the formulation of lessons learned.

Methodology

Evaluation shall conform to OECD/DAC's Quality Standards for Development Evaluation. The evaluators shall use the Sida OECD/DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation.

Evaluations should be utilisation-focused, and shall be designed, conducted and reported to meet the needs of YRS, Sida and environmental CSO community in Serbia.

Type of evaluation required:

- External evaluation

Possible methods for data collection would include:

- Document review;
- Interviews with stakeholders;
- Collection of case stories;
- Participatory approach during data collection;
- Other.

2.5. Deliverables

Deliverables are two Reports covering the:

- 1st round of grants (February 2022);
- Final evaluation including 2nd round of grants in cooperation with the grant coordinator and gender experts (February 2023)

Assignment of the External Evaluation Consultant in the third project year will be separately contracted.

2.6. Evaluator's qualifications

The evaluator should have the following skills:

- University degree in social science or similar;
- Extensive and advanced evaluation skills and experience in project monitoring and evaluation (at least 5 years of general working experience);
- Familiar with OECD/DAC's Quality Standards for Development Evaluation and the Sida OECD/DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation;
- Familiar with participative and qualitative evaluation;
- Experience in project management
- Familiar with participatory and partnership approaches, empowerment and capacity building strategies;
- Advanced knowledge of English and Serbian language;
- Proficiency in writing reports;
- In-depth understanding of the environmental protection context in Serbia.

3. ANNEXES

3.1. Annex A: Ecosystem programme description

3.2. Annex B: Guidelines for Applicants – Ecosystem support for environmental CSO networks

4. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The offer must contain the following elements:

- Up to date Biography.
- Offer price per day expressed in dinars or euros currency.

Important notes: Price offer per working day includes all taxes. There is no a separate budget for covering the travel-related expenses of the evaluator.

If the price offer per working day is expressed in EUR for the purpose of payments set amount will be calculated in RSD at exchange rate defined by the commercial bank on the day of the foreign currency sale made by the YRS.

In case the bidder is an agency, the offer must be signed by the bidder and be on memorandum. In case the bidder is a natural person, the offer must be signed.

Submission of the offer and deadline:

- The bidder is responsible for providing a complete offer, in accordance with all requirements stated in this call;
- The bidder may submit only one offer;
- The offer and following documentation shall be submitted in writing, by post or in personal, with the note "Offer for procurement within the project Eco system" and "Do not open before the official opening by the Committee for the selection of bidders" on the front of the envelope;
- On the back of the envelope it is necessary to indicate: name, address and contact of the bidder;
- The contact person regarding this procurement is Tijana Ljubenić, tijana@mis.org.rs, all questions regarding the procurement can be asked only in writing.

Deadline for receiving offers is 01 December 2021 till 5:00 PM to the following address:

Mladi istraživači Srbije (Tijana Ljubenić)
Bulevar umetnosti 27
11150 Beograd

5. EVALUATION OF OFFERS

Submitted offer will be evaluated by Committee of the Contracting Party, within 5 working days from the day of offers' opening. The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the procurement rules prescribed by the donor.

Young Researchers of Serbia respect gender equality and equal opportunities during engagement of service providers and associates.

Committee will evaluate whether the offers meets all the requirements described in the open call for submitting offer. Only complete offers containing all the required information and documents will be evaluated in accordance with criteria.

Bidders will be informed about the decision of the Committee in writing, within three days from the day of decision.

The offer will be scored with a number between 0 and 100 (with 100 being the maximum score) based on the following criteria:

Criteria	The maximum score
The bidder's biography	80
Offer price	20
Total	100

Belgrade,

November 17, 2021

Tijana Ljubenović
ECO-SYSTEM Project Coordinator