

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
(CONSULTING SERVICES- FIRMS SELECTION)**

**REPUBLIC OF SERBIA
COMPETITIVENESS AND JOBS PROJECT
Loan No. 8528 YF**

Assignment Title: DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF RDIs EXTERNAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Reference No. (as per Procurement Plan): 3A.3.1.

Serbia has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (Bank) in the amount of EUR 89,500,000 to improve the competitiveness and employment toward the cost of the Competitiveness and Jobs Project (Project) and intends to apply part of the proceeds to for consulting services.

The scope of the assignment for consulting services includes:

Background: The Project involves three ministries— the Ministry of Economy (MoE) (plus its development agencies), Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MoESTD), and Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs (MoLEVSA) and the Public Policy Secretariat (PPS) in the implementation and coordination role. Under Project framework, the three Ministries and participating agencies, with leadership and support from the PPS, are responsible to set performance targets on competitiveness and jobs, monitor and evaluate progress, conduct analysis, and contribute to policy development in the Republic of Serbia. The Project is expected to lead to better designed and coordinated policies, since it is anticipated that, through the Project implementation, they will become part of a clear, strategic framework with a robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system.

The Public Policy Secretariat is responsible, in close cooperation with participating institutions, for coordinating the Project implementation including gathering and processing of results of the monitoring, reporting, fiduciary functions and safeguard procedures. The Project Implementation Unit (PIU) is established in the PPS as a technical coordination unit of the Project.

Subject assignment belongs to the Part B of the Project as technical support for implementation of the Component "A2. Innovation" for which the MoESTD is responsible. This component supports programs for innovation through:

- a) Supporting operations of the Innovation Fund and its Grants Programs;
- b) Supporting Technology Transfer Facility service lines at the Innovation Fund; and
- c) Strategic planning and institutional reform of the public research and development sector.

Objective: The MoESTD is currently in the process of reforming the Serbian public research and development (R&D) sector including a revised policy and legal framework. The model of financing R&D activities is a key lever for implementing institutional reforms in the public R&D sector and is vital to improving the impact of research on economic and societal development of the Republic of Serbia. The MoESTD is planning to switch from an entirely project-based financing model to a combination of performance-based institutional funding for the public R&D Institutions (RDIs) and competitive project-based funding for research. Establishment of a Science Fund is seen as a key step in the implementation of competitive project-based funding to ensure professional and independent decision-making, improved program design and enhanced monitoring and evaluation and impact assessments of R&D financing programs. At the same time, performance-based institutional funding will require better understanding of individual RDI capabilities, potential and performance levels, and reforms that will ensure the RDI's research excellence and relevance.

In this context, the MoESTD is starting the process of evaluating individual RDIs by undertaking independent external assessments of RDIs. The MoESTD is now seeking services (through the PPS who will serve as a Client) of a Consulting firm who will develop the methodology for the assessments and **conduct assessments of five RDIs (this number of RDIs (and the associated costs) may be expanded with mutual agreement between the Client and the Consulting firm).**

Activities and Deliverables:

Deliverable 1. Detailed methodology for the independent external assessment (to be submitted within 4 weeks upon contract signing). The Consulting firm will prepare a detailed methodology for the external assessment of RDIs that is based on international best practices and modelled against similar assessment conducted primarily in EU economies. The methodology should develop clear criteria. Even though the specific targets of the assessment will be developed by the Consulting firm, it is advised that the following areas are included in the scope of the assessment:

1. Mission and vision of the RDI;
2. Research and academic capabilities and quality (excellence) – as compared to EU peers;
3. Economical and societal relevance;
4. Viability of the RDI in relation to their strategic targets;
5. Institutional governance, management and HR policies, practices and systems;
6. Collaborations across RDIs, universities and private sectors as well as international;
7. Resource base including current public and private funding levels and potential;
8. Development of future researchers (e.g., quality and relevance of PhD programs);
9. Research infrastructure, equipment, access to relevant databases and others.

Each assessment should also produce a set of detailed recommendations for each RDI on how to improve the excellence and relevance of the RDI in the above-listed areas. The draft methodology will be discussed with the MoESTD and PPS before finalization.

The developed methodology will be approved by the MoESTD and the PPS prior to initiating work on Deliverable 2.

Deliverable 2. External assessment report of RDIs (each RDI) (to be completed within 12 weeks upon completion of Deliverable 1). The Consulting firm will receive the results of RDI self-assessments and other documentation from the MoESTD and RDIs to help prepare their analysis and on-site visits to the RDIs.

The Consulting firm will engage a team of Sector Experts to spend several (e.g., 4-7) working days in each of the RDIs being assessed. Each RDI should be assessed by a team of 2-3 Sector Experts. During the on-site visits, the team should interview at least the following stakeholders:

1. RDI management (including representatives of the managerial board and scientific council);
2. Management of all research units and other organisational units such as technology transfer offices;
3. Relevant select external stakeholders- in public and private sectors as well as international;
4. A selection of research/academic staff working in the research units;
5. A selection of young researchers and PhD candidates;
6. Several support function units.

At the end of the site visit, the Consulting firm team should discuss on the draft of the external assessment report with RDI management (and MoESTD and PPS) including the result of the interviews, the feedback and agree on next steps for preparation of the external assessment report.

The Consulting firm will produce an external assessment report for each RDI. These reports will be structured according to the methodology developed in Deliverable 1 and should include a set of near term and longer-term recommendations for improved RDI capabilities and performance.

Deliverable 3. RDI Transformation plans (to be submitted within 8 weeks of completion of Deliverable 2)

The Team Leader will discuss the results of the external assessment reports with the management of the RDIs (and MoESTD and the PPS) and develop a tailor-made transformation plan for each RDI which is based on the recommendations of the assessment but also takes into account the priorities/concerns/suggestions of the institution's management, MoESTD and PPS.

Team Leader will take a lead role on Deliverables 1 and 3 and on coordination of activities of all Sector Experts for Deliverable 2.

Duration: The Consulting firm is expected to be engaged a period of 6 months. The Team Leader will be engaged for approximately 60-man days during six months. The Sector Experts will be engaged for approximately 20-man days each for 3-4 months. The Sector Experts will be required to travel to Serbia on at

least one occasion – for on-site visits (Deliverable 2). The Team Leader will also travel to Serbia to present the draft assessment methodology, draft RDI assessments and develop the RDI transformation plans with the RDIs' management. The cost of travel to Serbia including economy class airfare, hotel and subsistence will be covered.

The estimated budget for this assignment is EUR 350,000 for five RDIs (this number of RDIs (and the associated costs) may be expanded with mutual agreement between the Client and the Consulting firm).

The Terms of Reference for this assignment can be found at the following link: <https://bit.ly/2PaPTJY>

For the purpose of this assignment, the PPS wishes to engage the **services of a Consulting firm.**

The PIU of the PPS now invites eligible Consulting firms to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested Consulting firms should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services.

The shortlisting criteria are:

The Consulting firm must possess following qualifications:

- Be a legal entity
- At least 5 years of general experience in conducting institutional evaluations is required
- Experience in performing evaluations in R&D sector in at least two countries is required
- Proven record on successful completion of at least 2 assignments in conducting assessments of RDIs in last five years is required
- The Consulting firm should have capacity to assign a qualified and experienced team that will work on this assignment including one Team Leader and 2-3 Sector Experts for each RDI assessment who have relevant research expertise in the RDI's fields of science and technology.

#	Criteria	Weight
1	General experience in the field of the assignment	20
2	Specific experience relevant to the assignment	50
3	Capacity to assign a qualified and experienced team, including Team Leader and 2-3 Sector Experts for each RDI assessment *.	30

*The required qualifications and experience of the team is indicated in the Terms of Reference.

Consulting firms may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub consultancy to enhance their qualifications, but should indicate clearly whether the association is in the form of joint venture and/or sub consultancy. In the case of a joint venture, all the partners in the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract, if selected.

Expressions of Interest should contain following information: **1.** Profile of the firm including expertise available for the assignment (CVs are not required on this time); **2.** Information on general experience (in conducting institutional evaluations.) **3.** Specific experience relevant for the assignment and supportive material indicating qualification and competence of the firm to perform the services (in performing evaluations in R&D sector in at least two countries (table listing following information: name of the relevant assignments, short scope of work, year of contract's implementation, country/region, contact reference (name, e-mail, phone number)); Proven record on successful completion of at least 2 assignments in conducting assessments of RDIs in last five years)

The attention of interested Consulting firms is drawn to paragraph 1.9 of the World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers January 2011 (Revised July 2014)., setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

A Consulting firm will be selected in accordance with the **Quality and Cost-Based Selection as set out in the Consultant Guidelines (QCBS) method** set out in set out in the Section II of the World Bank's [Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers January 2011 Revised July 2014.](#)

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours: 9:00 -15.00h

Expressions of interest in English language must be sent in a written form by November 26, 2019 15:00 h, local time, in electronic format to the following e-mail: piu@rsjp.gov.rs (cc: milena.kostadinovic@rsjp.gov.rs, snezana.djordjevic@piu.rsjp.gov.rs) with the exact title of the assignment in the "Subject" of the e-mail.

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