

Call for application as external assessors in charge of the evaluation of project proposals submitted under the EU-funded Eastern Partnership Territorial Cooperation Programme Armenia - Georgia

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, acting as **Managing Authority (MA)** for the EU-funded Programme “Eastern Partnership Territorial Cooperation (EaPTC)”, is calling for applications for setting up a pool of assessors.

The **aim of the call** is to identify and select qualified and experienced professionals for establishing a **pool of assessors** and thus to ensure a proper quality evaluation of the proposals submitted under the EaPTC Territorial Cooperation Programme Armenia - Georgia.

The selected assessors will provide technical assistance to the Managing Authority and the Joint Decision Making Committee (JDMC) in evaluating the eligible actions. The pool will be set up for the entire programme period and will be functional until terminated.

In order to be eligible, the applicants have to comply with the criteria listed below.

Being selected as an assessor does not automatically imply that the contract will be actually awarded to the expert. The contract award will depend on the number and type of applications submitted in the frame of the call.



This Programme is funded by the European Union
and the German Government
Программа финансируется Европейским союзом
и правительством Германии



This Programme is
implemented by GIZ
Программа выполняется GIZ

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Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

1. Background

The Joint Communication ‘A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood’¹ highlights cross border cooperation between the EaP countries as one of the instruments to tackle economic disparities between regions and raise the quality of life across the area in a sustainable manner. Territorial cooperation between the EaP countries complements bilateral and regional development programmes (including pilot regional development programmes, PRDPs), which promote a strategy-based, inclusive approach to reduce economic and social regional disparities and realise the regional (hence national) economic potential. In the Joint Declaration of the Warsaw Eastern Partnership (EaP) summit of 29-30 September 2011², the participants acknowledged multilateral cooperation and recalled that the EaP could help develop closer ties between the partner countries themselves.

The ENPI Regional East Programme Strategy Paper 2010-2013 and Indicative Programme 2010-2013 identify territorial cooperation in partner countries as one of the sub-priorities of the Priority Area 2 “Economic Development”. In this context, a total of EUR 17.5 million has been allocated to the EaP Territorial Cooperation Programmes. Two components are envisaged: 1) The Eastern Partnership Territorial Cooperation Support Programme (EAPTC), a technical assistance programme (EUR 5 million) launched in November 2012 to strengthen the capacity of local and regional state and non-state actors along the Ukraine-Belarus, Ukraine-Moldova, Georgia-Armenia, and Georgia-Azerbaijan borders to develop and implement cross-border projects; and 2) The Eastern Partnership Territorial Cooperation Programmes.

The Eastern Partnership Territorial Cooperation Programmes will largely build on the experience of the ENPI cross border cooperation (CBC) programmes implemented along the EU external borders in what concerns focusing on local development needs as well as thematic coverage. A distinctive feature – and novelty for the EaP region – of these programmes lies in the fact that the interventions will support the creation of genuine, effective and operational cooperation between border regions of the EaP countries only, whereas ENPI CBC always include an EU Member State as one of the partners.

The cross-border cooperation programme between Armenia and Georgia is carried out in the following eligible areas:

- Georgia: KvemoKartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti regions
- Armenia: Shirak, Lori and Tavush regions (Marzes)

The **overall objective** of the territorial cooperation programme Armenia – Georgia is to strengthen cross border contacts between local authorities, communities and civil society organisations to help develop joint solutions to common social and economic development challenges.

¹COM(2011) 303 final, 25.5.2011.

²Council of the European Union, 14983/11, 30.09.2011.

Thematic coverage: Operational Objectives

The territorial cooperation programme Armenia - Georgia addresses local development needs that have been specified in the joint operational programme. It supports small-scale cross border projects between local partners and focuses on the following three operational objectives and related priority issues:

- I. Improving the living conditions of local communities in the border regions through joint projects supporting economic and social development
 - a) Enhancing regional competitiveness of agriculture and related economic sectors in the target regions
 - b) Unlocking the potential for development of tourism and related services in the target regions

- II. Addressing common challenges in the fields of environment, employment, public health and any other field of common interest having a cross border dimension
 - a) Solving cross-border environmental problems

- III. Culture, education and sports
 - a) Facilitating multi-cultural dialogue and people-to-people exchange of youth across the border
 - b) Enhancing local self-governance

The implementation of the Programme is overseen by a **Joint Decision Making Committee (JDMC)** composed of representatives of both participating countries' institutions and civil society. The JDMC is also responsible for selecting projects to be financed under the Programme.

The JDMC is assisted by a **Technical Secretariat (TS)** based in Tbilisi and a TS antenna located in Vanadzor (Armenia). The TS is the administrative body responsible for the day-to-day management of the Programme including support and advice to grant beneficiaries.

This action, with the objective of promoting sustainable territorial cooperation between the border regions of the EaP countries to support their social and economic development is implemented in indirect centralised management by a Member States agency, GIZ, in accordance with Article 54(2)(c) of Financial Regulation 1605/2002.

Acting as **Managing Authority for the Eastern Partnership Territorial Programmes**, GIZ is responsible for launching calls for proposals as well as evaluating those proposals. It also acts as Contracting Authority concluding and managing contracts, carrying out payments, and recovering sums due.

The **Eastern Partnership Territorial Cooperation Support Programme (EaPTC SP)** is a technical assistance programme aiming to create a conducive environment for cross-border cooperation programmes along the borders of the EaP countries, and to strengthen the capacity of local and regional state and non-state actors along these borders to develop and implement cross-border projects. In addition to the capacity building role, the Support Programme carries out communication and visibility activities to raise public awareness of the territorial cooperation programmes in general and of opportunities for stakeholders of joining the different activities.

More information about the programme is available on the programmes' website: www.eaptc.eu.

2. OBJECTIVE & EXPECTED RESULTS

The Managing Authority hereby invites applications from individuals to assist the Managing (Contracting) Authority in the selection of the best proposals received under 'Eastern Partnership Territorial Cooperation Programmes – Territorial Cooperation Programme Armenia – Georgia' and to achieve a high-quality, complete and coherent selection process of projects in line with the criteria set in the Guidelines for Applicants.

Interested candidates are invited to apply in accordance with the provisions of this notice (see section 6).

Please note that the consortium implementing the EaPTC SP will conclude the contracts with the assessors.

Results to be achieved by the Contractor

Assessors will carry out the technical and financial assessment of concept notes and full applications in accordance with guidelines to be provided by the Contracting Authority and which are based on the published evaluation grids. 60 numbers of full applications are expected. Each full application has to be assessed individually by 2 assessors.

These assessments will be used by the JDMC and Managing Authority in the process of selecting the best proposals.

3. SCOPE OF THE WORK

General

Selected assessors will be asked to assist the JDMC and Managing Authority in the technical and financial assessment of project proposals (application form with all relevant annexes) in line with the Evaluation Grid as well as selection and award criteria.

Assessors will have to complete each section of the Evaluation Grid given in the Guidelines for Applicants (GfA) with clear comments for each sub-section, duly substantiating the score given at each stage. The final evaluation for each proposal shall be determined in an evaluation report and should contain sufficient information to justify the total score assigned.

Specific Activities

Assessors should provide written technical and financial assessments to the Contracting Authority of concept notes and full applications (this includes the verification of the budget proposed by the applicants for the action, assessing its overall coherence and particularly its cost-effectiveness, with an emphasis on the identification of potential anomalies and/or overpriced items or budget lines).

At least 2 assessors must assess each concept note and each full application, working independently of each other.

The assessments must be undertaken in accordance with the guidelines and instructions provided by the Contracting Authority. These are based on the published evaluation grids in the Guidelines for Applicants. The overall assessment should be based on the scores obtained under each subheading, added up by heading and the final score is the arithmetical average of the scores given by the assessors.

Each application must be assessed on its own merits and not by comparing different applications.

External assessors are expected to bring their own experience of the sector and project implementation to bear in the analysis of each proposal.

The assessors may be invited to the Contracting Authority and / or the Joint Decision Making Committee to justify and discuss his/her assessment of the proposals.

4. Necessary requirements

Assessors are expected to have skills and knowledge appropriate to the field of expertise in which they might be asked to assist in accordance with the operational objectives of the EaPTC Programme Armenia – Georgia (see section 1, *thematic coverage*).

Qualifications and skills

General professional experience

- have a university degree or equivalent qualification;
- be fluent in speaking and writing in English;
- be computer literate.

Specific professional experience

- have a good knowledge of PRAG (Practical Guide to contract procedures for EC external actions);
- have a good knowledge of Project Cycle Management and Logical Framework approach;
- be familiar with assessment of proposals under official development assistance programmes
- have a good knowledge of external aid and/or EU-funded actions/programmes, preferably on cross-border, trans-national or interregional cooperation;
- have minimum 5 years of professional experience in one or more of the competence areas mentioned in section 1, *thematic coverage*;
- have sound professional experience in the regions covered by the EaPTC Programme Armenia - Georgia

5. Logistics and timing

Location

Assessors may work home-based. The Contracting Authority is located in Tbilisi, Georgia.

Start date and period of implementation

Assessors shall perform their tasks within the time frame set out by the Contracting Authority. This frame shall be coordinated with the duration of the Call for Proposals.

Duration of missions

Cumulatively, up to 30 (thirty) working days will be allocated for the assessors under the Armenia-Georgia Territorial Cooperation Programme. Each selected assessor will have to assess 4 (four) full project proposals (applications) per working day.

6. Application

Interested applicants shall submit the following documents:

- CV in English in EU format
- One page cover letter (briefly describing relevant experience)
- References proving the experience and knowledge
- A copy of valid ID

Applications should be sent by email to the following address: eaptc-tbilisi@giz.de

7. Contractual arrangements

Assessors will be contracted individually by the consortium implementing the EaPTC Support Programme following the selection for the evaluation tasks. Travel and accommodation costs, wherever applicable, will be reimbursed according to standard rules applied by the European Commission.

8. Conflict of interest

To ensure the independence of proposal evaluation, selected assessors will have to sign a declaration certifying that there is no conflict of interest at the time of appointment and that they undertake to inform the MA of any situation of conflict, even potential, while carrying out their duties.

In general the role of an assessor is incompatible with being a member, observer or advisor in the Joint Decision Making Committee, with the quality of applicant in any of the programme's calls for proposals, as well as with the quality of performing consultancy or any other programme or project related services in the frame of the EaPTC to any third parties.

9. Confidentiality

Assessors will have to observe complete confidentiality of the information and documents brought to their attention during the whole evaluation process.