



TERMS OF REFERENCE

for experts ("assessors") to assist in the evaluation of grant applications received in the framework of the call for proposals

1st call for proposals

**Eastern Partnership Territorial Cooperation
Programmes**

**Territorial Cooperation Programme
Azerbaijan - Georgia**

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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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 territorial cooperation programme between Azerbaijan and Georgia is carried out in the following eligible areas:

- Azerbaijan: Ganja-Qazakh and Sheki-Zagatala economic zones
- Georgia: Kakheti and Kvemo-Kartli (mkhare)

The overall objective of the territorial cooperation programme Azerbaijan – 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.

Thematic coverage: Operational Objectives of the territorial cooperation programme Azerbaijan - Georgia addresses local development needs that have been specified in the Joint Operational

¹ COM(2011) 303 final, 25.5.2011.

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

Programme (JOP). 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) Development of cross-border synergies in agriculture and related economic sectors
 - b) Build up cross-border tourism potential
- 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 and enhancing emergency preparedness
- III. Culture, education and sports
 - a) Enhancing social inclusion through measures in the areas of culture, education and sports
 - b) Develop links between youth of the bordering regions

The expected results of Eastern Partnership territorial cooperation are as follows:

- An established cooperation pattern between the participating countries;
- Cooperation between local authorities, communities and CSOs in the eligible border regions of the EaP countries' is increased;
- The capacity of local and regional authorities in the EaP countries to effectively participate in EU-funded programmes is strengthened.

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 (Georgia) and a TS antenna located in Ganja (Azerbaijan). 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.

2. OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE & EXPECTED RESULTS

2.1. Overall objective

To recruit assessors to assist the Contracting Authority in the selection of the best proposals received under Eastern Partnership Territorial Cooperation Programmes – Territorial Cooperation Programme Azerbaijan - 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.

2.2. 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. 40 full applications are expected. Each full application has to be assessed individually by 2 assessors.

These assessments will be used by the Evaluation committee and Joint Decision Making Committee in the process of selecting the best proposals.

3. SCOPE OF THE WORK

3.1. 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.

3.2. Specific Activities

Assessors are bound by a Declaration of Impartiality and Confidentiality³ to be signed before starting each phase of the assessment. If an assessor believes there might be a situation of conflict of interests in relation to one or more applicants, he/she must inform the Contracting Authority immediately. In addition, strict confidentiality is required from the experts involved in the implementation of this Contract, notably on the assessments of individual applications.

(1) Role and tasks of assessors

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).

³ A standard document will be made available by the Contracting Authority

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 Evaluation committee and/or Joint Decision Making Committee to justify and discuss his/her assessment of the proposals.

(2) Role and tasks of the Contracting Authority

Based on the assessments, the Contracting Authority takes Decision on contract award in accordance with pre-established criteria. It then reports the results of selection to the JDMC.

The Team Leader of the Contracting Authority, in his/her role of Chairperson of the Evaluation Committee, is responsible for coordinating the evaluation process in accordance with the procedures in the Practical Guide and for ensuring its impartiality and transparency. The secretary to the committee is responsible for carrying out all administrative tasks connected with the evaluation procedure. These include circulating and collecting the Declarations of Impartiality and Confidentiality and keeping the minutes and any other relevant records and documents.

Where the proposals received are particularly numerous or highly technical, all or part of the detailed examination may be carried out by assessors so that the Contracting Authority may conduct its deliberations on the basis of their assessments, including the opinion of the EU delegation in the country where the proposed action will take place.

Assessors work under the supervision of the Team Leader of the Contracting Authority.

Should the assessments not satisfy the quality expected by the Contracting Authority, it may return the applications to the contractor and ask for a re-assessment by the same or another expert.

4. LOGISTICS AND TIMING

4.1. Location

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

4.2. 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.

4.3. Duration of Missions

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

5. 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 Azerbaijan-Georgia (*see: thematic coverage under the section 1*).

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;
- have experience with the technical and financial assessment of proposals under EU-funded calls for proposals (grants);
- 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 (five) 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 Azerbaijan-Georgia

6. REPORTS

6.1. Reporting Requirements

Assessors shall provide the following reports:

Name of report	Content	Time of submission	
Evaluation Report	Technical and financial assessments of concept notes and full applications	(Depending on the deadline of the CfP)	Contracting Authority, GIZ
Mission Report	Description of activities performed during the mission as well as	Together with the evaluation report	EaPTC Support Programme, European

	conclusions and recommendations		Commission
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6.2. Submission & approval of reports

Reports must be submitted as specified above in the electronic form. The reports must be written in English. The Contracting Authority and EaPTC support Programme are responsible for approving, respectively, the evaluation and mission reports.

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