

REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND EDUCATION
Donje Svetice 38, Zagreb 10000, Croatia

DIGITAL INNOVATION AND GREEN TECHNOLOGY (DIGIT)
9558-HR

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICES

EXPERT ASSOCIATE FOR PERFORMANCE BASED FUNDING

1. Background

The Government of Croatia and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) have signed the Loan Agreement (Loan No. 9558-HR) for the Digital Innovation and Green Technology Project (DIGIT) in the amount of EUR 106 million. The Project seeks to advance research and innovation with a digital and green focus through enhancing institutional infrastructure and research performance of research organizations and firms. The Project is managed by the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Croatia.

The Project comprises two components over a duration of 5 years. Component 1 (*Enabling institutional conditions for digital and green research and innovation*) provides technical assistance and financing to strengthen institutional capacities and support the efficient use of EU funds. Component 2 (*Programs for digital and green research and innovation*) provides sub-financing to cover the gaps in EU funding and improve the targeting of research and innovation support to digital and green technology.

Within the Project, Project Implementation Unit (PIU) is established which assists the Ministry of Science and Education with day-to-day Project implementation and is responsible for (i) planning, coordination implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of Project activities, (ii) procurement and financial management, (iii) social and environmental standards compliance, and (iv) reporting. The PIU also undertakes responsibility for implementation of Project activities in accordance with the Project Operations Manual, Croatian legislation and regulation, and relevant World Bank procedures. It also prepares and submits reports and information on the project to the Ministry of Science and Education, Steering Committee, World Bank, and potential auditors, as well as keep the business documentation of the Project and all other duties connected to the Project. Furthermore, the PIU provides support to the Croatian Science Foundation related to the Foundation's obligations and activities stemming from the DIGIT Project.

2. Objectives

The activity of institutional support for performance-based funding reform in public research organizations includes establishing a team within the PIU dedicated to this topic. Under this reform, the project will provide technical assistance to set up a system to assess the quality of research and innovation plans of the public research organizations, monitor their implementation and guide the research organizations through this process. The team will help to establish operational processes and practices that will continue to be used after project completion.

Performance-based funding is based on a dialogue between the Ministry of Science and Education and public research organizations. The Ministry is in the process of negotiating program agreements based on proposals of the public research organizations (which needs to be in accordance to their strategies and activities).

To support this process, the Expert associate for performance based funding (further named as Expert associate) will closely cooperate with the Team Coordinator and other team members to facilitate the process of negotiation, conclusion and implementation of the program agreements.

3. Scope of Work

Specific responsibilities of the Expert associate in the PIU regarding performance-based funding are to:

- Work alongside the Team coordinator to facilitate the communication with public research organizations;
- Support the preparation of documentation necessary for the initiation of negotiations with public research organizations;
- Provide support and advice to public research organizations regarding the preparation of draft program agreement;
- Closely cooperate with internal and external experts;
- Oversee the drafting, evaluation and implementation of program agreements;
- Report to Team Coordinator and PIU Manager on the progress and results of negotiations and implementation;
- Control that all aspects of negotiations and implementation of program agreements are aligned with the policies of the Ministry and the requirements of the regulations on performance-based funding;
- Assist in coordinating the work of the entire team in charge of implementation of program agreements;
- In agreement with the Team Coordinator in charge of the component on program agreements, continuously communicate with public research organizations, competent authorities and institutions;
- Assists with data collection and data analysis related to the conclusion and implementation of the program agreements;
- Performs other appropriate tasks assigned by the Team Coordinator and PIU Manager.

4. Deliverables

The Expert associate works under the supervision of the Team Coordinator for program agreements and is obliged to prepare and provide the following:

- monthly report - a brief summary of work undertaken in the reporting period.

5. Qualifications and Experience Required

Required professional requirements:

- Completed graduate university study or graduate professional study (European Qualification Framework Level 7 or higher)
- at least seven (7) years of general work experience, four (4) years of work experience in project management or management in the system of science and higher education;
- knowledge of at least one world language (English is an advantage);
- Excellent digital literacy and command of computer tools and applications (MS Office and Internet Software are a must).

Candidates with the following experience will have an advantage:

- Experience in working on projects related to the development of science and higher education, financed from public sources at the national level (state and local budget) and/or EU level and/or international level, which include: strategic planning, development of new models, creation study or analysis, making recommendations, consultations and other similar activities related to public investments and public policies in science and higher education;
- Experience in working on expert analyses, reports, etc. related to public investments in science and higher education.
- Experience in working on projects specifically related to performance-based financing of higher education or science.

6. Rights

The Expert associate will have the following rights:

- Work as an equal partner in the Team (PIU), having access to necessary information, resources, documentation, IT, administrative and other support, including support of other Team members to ensure the due performance of his/her tasks, responsibilities and duties;
- Informing the Project Manager/MSE/World Bank of all operational shortcomings identified during the performance of his / her official duties and making suggestions for corrective actions.

7. Duration of the Contract

The Expert associate will be hired under a time-based contract, for a period of 1 year (which includes 3 months of probation period) with possible extensions until the end of the project (presumably December 28, 2028), depending on business needs and satisfactory consultants' performance.

The assignment will be part-time, up to 12 working days per month. One working day consists of eight (8) working hours a day.