Terms of Reference
Request for Services

Expert for the database adaptation and data analytics for PA Award 2024

Background

The Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) is an inter-governmental organization for enhancing regional cooperation, promoting shared learning and supporting the development of public administration in the Western Balkans. ReSPA Members are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, while Kosovo*[1] is a beneficiary. ReSPA's purpose is to help governments in the region develop and anchor solid and better public administration, public services and overall governance systems for their citizens and businesses, and prepare for the membership of the European Union.

ReSPA establishes close co-operation with ministers, senior public servants and heads of function in Member countries. ReSPA also works in partnership with the European Union, specifically Directorate-General for Neighborhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), other regional players such as OECD/SIGMA and Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), as well as agencies and civil society organizations. Since its inception, ReSPA has contributed to capacity-building and networking activities through in-country support mechanisms, peering and the production of regional research material.

The European Commission (EC) provides directly managed funds for the support of ReSPA activities (research, training and networking programmes) in line with the EU accession process.

ReSPA works primarily through regional networks which operate at three levels: Ministerial, Senior Officials, and networks/working groups of experts and practitioners.

1. Context and description of the assignment

At the global level, in 2015, the International Community adopted a new Sustainable Development Agenda, through 17 SDGs and 169 targets, including the SDG 16 https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg16, which aims to promote peace, justice and strong institutions at all levels and that insist on the responsibility of states and governments to implement this engagements, but also on innovative approaches and positive change. In parallel, the Principles of Public Administration http://www.sigmaweb.org/publications/principles-public-administration-eu-candidate-countries-and-potential-candidates.htm have been developed by SIGMA in close co-operation with the European Commission to define detailed requirements for a well-functioning public administration in each of defined areas. ReSPA has also contributed to

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[1] This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and ICJ Advisory opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of independence

benchmarking and bench learning in the Western Balkan region with numerous analytical papers / comparative studies https://www.respaweb.eu/11/library#respa-publications-and-research-18. The European Union has made innovation and excellence as the cornerstone of its mission and mandate. If the Western Balkans need to be part of European Union and meet its vision and mandate, there are numerous reforms that need to be implemented in this Region, in particular building strong, effective and sustainable Public Institutions, Public Administration and Public Services which are among the vision, mandate and activities of the ReSPA.

This is the main reason why the ReSPA implements PA Awards in the Western Balkan, that aims to identify, evaluate, reward and promote innovative and best practices of Public Institutions in the Western Balkans that have contributed significantly and concretely to improving Public Institutions, Public Administration, Public Services, and Public Service Delivery.

ReSPA together with SIGMA/OECD has successfully run the Western Balkans PA Award in 2020 and 2022. The purpose of the PA Award 2020 was to recognize and award initiatives, projects in the public administration in the WB region which have proven to be unique, effective, innovative and adaptive in the service delivery. The outbreak of Covid 19 pandemic had shift the focus towards innovative and good responses in service delivery in the context of crisis situation. As the result of effects in public administrations caused by COVID 19 and associated changes in the societies the public service delivery changed. Public institutions not only from the health sector had to adopt actions that shown continuity of operations in service delivery despite disruptions, commitment in making digital services a larger piece of their delivery, identified alternative employment modes or started using proactive methods of user's engagement-all in the situation of diminished funding and instable workforce. These exceptional practices that entail not only the element of innovativeness in the times of crises but also of sustained care for the users and predictable sustainability were in focus of the PA Award 2022 within overarching theme of *Better services for better lives of citizens.* Within the overarching theme there are three main categories: Digitalization of public services*,* Quality management for bettering the services *and* Enhanced accessibility to services.

The 2024 PA Awards are the continuation of the initiative to reward and recognize outstanding efforts in the Western Balkans in public service delivery under the provisional title of *Building Better Public Administration for users and with users!* The Western Balkans Public Administration Awards is on the lookout for applications that demonstrate measurable results in public service delivery. We are searching for initiatives that embrace digital transformation, administrative simplification, innovation, inclusiveness, community impact and user involvement/engagement while showcasing clear and tangible outcomes for users. The applications can come from a wide range of areas, policy sectors and any field of public governance as long as the focus is on demonstrating positive impact on the users and contribute to the improvement of public service delivery (citizens, service users, targeted groups of beneficiaries, businesses and other stakeholders). Regardless of the area, we encourage initiatives that meet all or any of the following:
- developed with users or based on user need assessment;
- involve citizens in decision-making processes, foster participatory democracy, and em-power local communities to address their own needs;
- adopt user-centred design principles and usability testing in the development of services and solutions;
- ensure that interfaces are intuitive, accessible, and tailored to the needs of diverse user groups;
- foster innovation and are developed using innovative solutions;

- secure inclusiveness and stakeholder engagement;
- reduce administrative burden;
- contribute to resilience and adaptability of public service delivery;
- contribute to building transparency, integrity and accountability;
- improve exchange of information and facilitate effective communication between stakeholders;
- ensure that the collection, storage, and use of data comply with relevant privacy regulations and standards;
- implement security measures to protect sensitive information and mitigate cybersecurity risks.
- allows data to scale up to serve larger populations or be replicated in other contexts or regions;
- implement mechanisms for gathering feedback from users and stakeholders and use the feedback to improve the services and adapt to evolving needs and preferences.

We particularly encourage:

- Initiatives that promote online service delivery and digital transformation (such as eGovernment and other digital platforms, secure digital identity solutions, the use of emerging technologies, cyber security solutions, data protection models etc.);
- Initiatives that promote simplification and efficiency in administrative procedures (such as improved administrative procedures, enhanced accessibility, cost reduction etc.);
- Initiatives that promote transparency and accountability (projects enabling transparency and accountability, integrity in governance, the use of open data etc.);
- Initiatives that promote citizen engagement and participation (such as eParticipation platforms, participatory budgeting, personalized services in healthcare, participation in environmental protection, increased transparency in the fight against corruption, etc.);
- Initiatives that promote innovation, creativity and strategic foresight (such as projects based on science and innovation, projects developed in cooperation with academic and scientific organisations and private entities etc.);
- Initiatives that promote cross border cooperation and community impact (projects developed together with other organisations from the region);
- Initiatives that promote inclusiveness (such as youth, gender, vulnerable and marginalised groups and other groups at risk of exclusion);
- Initiatives that promote green transition and sustainability (such as climate change mitigation, clean and affordable energy, zero pollution, shift to sustainable mobility, circular economy etc.)

In order to receive applications and process the received data and secure transparent and efficient evaluation, ReSPA needs to make use of data management system that will allow for applicants to submit their applications and ReSPA staff and evaluators to examine them in the process of selecting the contestants. Based on previous PA Awards contests, ReSPA is expected to receive between 60 and 70 applications, that need to be processed, shortlisted and evaluated against the set evaluation criteria.

2. Tasks and responsibilities

In order to ensure smooth application process of the PA Award 2024 it is needed to make the adaptation of the database and data analytics developed for the PA Award 2022 and redesign the management of the application and evaluation process.

Expert assigned for designing the management of the application and evaluation process for the PA Awards 2024 should perform the following tasks and responsibilities:

Preparatory activities - up to one and a half days (1.5) days

- Meet in a video conference call with ReSPA staff and obtain additional input/clarifications for development of the designing the technical solution for PA Awards application and evaluation process (0.5 working day);
- Prepare the draft structure of technical solution for PA Awards application and evaluation process management based on the methodology submitted by ReSPA; (1 working day)

Database adaptation and data analytics for the PA Award application and evaluation process - up to nine and half (9,5) days

- Adaptation of the most appropriate database (best case) solution for the PA Awards application processing and evaluation according to ReSPA and SIGMA´s needs by changing the necessary elements of the code based on the methodology submitted by ReSPA;
- Front-end development of the database and back-end development of the database for application and evaluation process management;
- Implementation of the application form according to PA awards 2024 requirements and methodology;
- Implementation of the nomination and application tool;
- Adaptation of the database to the Corporate Identity of PA awards 2024;
- Implementation of the evaluation and jury (evaluators) function and logic of PA awards 2024 including a brief online meeting with evaluators;
- Adaptation of the evaluation and jury function and logic of PA awards 2024. The engaged Expert will liaise directly with ReSPA and take into consideration the instructions received beforehand;
- Assistance in issues in relation to the technical aspect of the application process that ReSPA cannot address due to complexity and/or pertaining to the functioning of the proposed technical solution;
- Submission of the final product to ReSPA for approval before the execution of payment.

Total number of days is up to fifteen (11) working days.

3.Necessary Qualifications

The Expert shall possess the following profile:

Qualifications:
- University degree in Public Administration, Social Sciences or Natural Sciences, appropriate for the execution of the assignment.

General professional experience:
- At least 8 (eight) years of relevant professional experience in working with or in the public sector, academia, civil society, and/or consultancy;

Specific professional experience:
- At least 5 (five) years of specific professional experience in positions, tasks,assignments and/or projects related to public awards competitions,

- Previous assignments in designing the database for competitions with number of applicants and evaluators

Skills:
- Teamwork;
- Ability to write clear and coherent documents;
- Excellent presentation skills;
- Ability to organise and plan effectively;
- Excellent written and oral communication skills in English;
- Familiarity with Zoom Platform;

4.Timing and Location

The assignment foresees work from home. The assignment will start in April 2024 and will be completed with the last session of the Jury, which is planned to be held at the beginning of July. The possibility to use the platform until the Ceremony of the PA Award 2024 will be assured.

5.Remunerations

The remuneration envisaged for this assignment is **up to 6050 EUR** for a total of up to **11 working days** (1.5 days for preparation and 9.5 days for delivery).

The payment will be done in on installment upon the completion of the assignment and the submission of invoices, timesheets and the approved report.

Note: No other costs will be covered apart from the expert cost per day. The expert cost per day comprises of expert's fee per day and a lump sum for covering related costs and other incidentals.

ReSPA reserves the right to change the timing and volume of the assignment and will timely inform the assigned expert if such changes occur.

6.Reporting and Final Documentation

The Expert will be requested to deliver the following documents before the payment is conducted:

Outputs
- Report on the performance of assignment for PA Awards 2024 application and evaluation process

Documents required for payment
- Invoices (original and signed);
- Timesheets (original and signed);
- Approved Report on the performance of assignment for PA Awards 2024 application and evaluation process