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**EUROPEAN UNION**



**ENI**  
**CBCMED**  
Cooperating across borders  
in the Mediterranean

## **CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

for the set up of 3 rosters of external experts in charge of the evaluation of project proposals

**Autonomous Region of Sardinia**

**Managing Authority of the ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme 2014-2020**

**Authorising Section**

## **Art. 1. Background**

The ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme 2014-2020 is a EU co-financed programme part of the cross-border cooperation component within the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI). It involves the regions of the European Union and those of the Mediterranean Partner Countries placed along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea Basin. The Joint Operational Programme (JOP) has been adopted by the European Commission on 17 December 2015 with decision No C(2015) 9133.

The overall objective of the Programme is to foster fair, equitable and sustainable economic, social and territorial development, which may advance cross-border integration and valorise participating countries' territories and values.

The main management structures are the **Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC)**, which is the decision-making body and is composed by the representatives of the countries participating in the Programme, and the **Managing Authority (MA)**, executive body and contracting authority of the Programme, is responsible for its management and implementation.

The MA is the Autonomous Region of Sardinia and is located in Cagliari (Italy); in its tasks, it is supported by a Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) and two Branch Offices, respectively located in Valencia (Spain) and Aqaba (Jordan) which ensure closer proximity with potential beneficiaries.

More information is available at [www.enicbcmmed.eu](http://www.enicbcmmed.eu).

The Programme aims at financing cross-border cooperation projects focusing on two overarching objectives:

### **A. Promote economic and social development**

### **B. Address common challenges in the environment**

Under the first overarching objective, three thematic objectives have been selected along with eleven the priorities listed under art. 4:

#### **A.1 - Business and SME development;**

#### **A.2 - Support to education, research, technological development and innovation**

#### **A.3 - Promotion of social inclusion and the fight against poverty**

The second overarching objective entails one thematic objective only namely:

#### **B.4 - Environmental protection, climate change adaptation and mitigation**

Projects financed by the Programme are selected through calls for proposals (standard, strategic and capitalisation). Projects evaluation is carried out by the Projects Selection Committee (PSC), which is composed by members appointed by the JMC.

The PSC is supported by a team of external experts recruited by the MA according to the Terms of Reference and the award criteria approved by the JMC, appointed to carry out the quality assessment of the project proposals submitted, to verify their compliance with the State Aid provisions (EC Implementing Regulation 897/2014 art. 12, 31 and 39) as well as their potential effects on the environment according to the European Directive 2001/42/EC.

## Art. 2. Invitation

The MA hereby invites natural persons to submit applications with the aim to set up three rosters of independent experts supporting the PSC in the assessment of the project proposals submitted in the framework of the ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme 2014-2020 under the respective calls for proposals:

***Profile A – External Assessors in charge of the quality assessment of proposals***

***Profile B – State Aid Experts***

***Profile C – Environmental Experts***

Interested candidates are invited to apply in accordance with the procedure of this call (see art. 5).

Please note that it is not allowed to apply for more than one profile. Candidates who apply for more than one roster will be excluded from the whole selection.

## Art. 3. Description of the assignment

**Profile A – External Assessor in charge of the quality assessment of proposals**

The tasks to be accomplished by the external assessor consist of the quality assessment (strategic and operational) of the project proposals, to be carried out under the coordination of the MA in accordance with the Programme rules.

In particular, the tasks of the selected assessors will be the following:

- Acquaintance of relevant Programme documents<sup>1</sup> (e.g. relevant EU regulations, Joint Operational Programme, Guidelines for Applicants and Application Pack of each call for proposals, Guidelines for evaluation and selection of project proposals).
- Strategic Evaluation (STEP 1) of the proposal in order to assess the Relevance and Quality of Design according to the evaluation grids included in the Guidelines for Applicants;

*and/or*

- Operational Evaluation (STEP 2) of the proposals pre-selected (i.e. those having passed STEP 1) in order to assess the Operational and Financial capacity of the Partnership, the Effectiveness, the Sustainability and the Costs effectiveness, according to the evaluation grids included in the Guidelines for Applicants;
- Attendance in meetings and/or specific training session(s) organised by the MA for the execution of the evaluation tasks.

Assessors will have to complete all sections of the Evaluation Grids with clear comments (highlighting the strengths and weaknesses), duly substantiating the given score as well as providing assessment conclusions per criterion and for the project proposal as a whole.

The expert's conclusions must be presented in a clearly structured and comprehensive way, putting the PSC in the position to justify a funding recommendation or rejection by the Programme. The assessor shall define specific suggestions, conditions and/or clarifications for necessary amendments during the contracting phase with the awarded applicants.

If needed, experts have to ensure their availability to discuss the results of their assessment with the MA in order to ensure congruity between the score assigned and related comments.. If the evaluation grid is not

<sup>1</sup> All documents are available at <http://www.enpicbcmec.eu/enicbcmec-2014-2020>

consistently/properly/completely filled in (i.e. under one or more sub-sections, a clear and comprehensive conclusions to justify the scores assigned has not been provided), the Chairperson of the PSC may ask to the assessors to revise and/or integrate their comments. Therefore they have to ensure their availability also after the delivery of the assessments.

Candidates can apply as external assessor for one or more of the Programme thematic objectives as mentioned under article 1 (A.1 - Business and SME development; A.2 - Support to education, research, technological development and innovation; A.3 - Promotion of social inclusion and the fight against poverty; B.4 - Environmental protection, climate change adaptation and mitigation) in accordance with their respective competencies.

### **Profile B – State aid expert**

State aid experts will assist the PSC and the MA in the evaluation of the proposals submitted under the calls for projects and pre-selected after the STEP 1 of the evaluation procedure in the field of state aid.

The assessment will aim at reviewing the project in order to determine if any of the planned activities may be state aid relevant on the basis of the applicant self-assessment.

In addition to the State Aid EU discipline, the provisions of any bilateral agreements between the Mediterranean Partner Countries and the EU (e.g. the aid should not distort or threaten to distort competition and trade between the European Union and that specific Mediterranean Partner Country) shall also be taken into consideration.

The experts will fill in a state aid checklist for each reviewed project. They will be also asked to give justification to their assessment and specific recommendations that may be used while drafting conditions for project's approval.

The tasks of the experts include:

- Acquaintance of relevant Programme documents (e.g. relevant EU regulations, Joint Operational Programme, Guidelines for Applicants and Application Pack of each call for proposals, Informative Note on State Aid).
- Assessment of the project proposals pre-selected and attached documentation (if necessary) with reference to their compliance with State aid rules, through specific check lists provided by the MA;
- Provision of additional comments regarding the evaluation of state aid aspects at the request of the MA, the PSC and the JMC; in exceptional situations, attendance in the meetings of the PSC as observers to present the results of their assessment and answer questions from PSC members.

### **Profile C – Environmental expert**

Environmental experts will assist the PSC and the MA in the evaluation of the proposals submitted under the calls for proposals and pre-selected after the STEP 1 with reference to project output(s) with a potential environmental impact, providing recommendations for ensuring the compliance with the environmental standards of the approved projects.

This information will be part of the mandatory “Environmental sustainability” sections of the Application Form. Those proposals submitted under certain Programme priorities (i.e. 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4) will be requested to provide additional information, by filling in specific check lists, namely **Check list (A)** and, as the case may be, also **Check list (B)**, as they were identified among those which can potentially have an environmental impact.

More specific requirements are expected to be met by those proposals including an infrastructure component of at least 1 million euro and, therefore, needing a more detailed environmental assessment and an additional **Check list (C)** to be filled in. In any case, the MA could require further information also to any proposal submitted under other priorities.

Thus, the expert could be required to assess only the mandatory “Environmental sustainability” sections of the Application Form and the Check list (A), or if needed, also Check list (B) and (C).

In particular, the tasks of the selected environmental experts will be:

- acquaintance of relevant Programme documents (e.g. relevant EU regulations, Joint Operational Programme, Guidelines for Applicants and Application Pack of each call for proposals, Programme Strategic Environmental Assessment).
- assessment of the information provided by the Applicants as regards the environmental impact of the project proposals pre-selected through specific check lists provided by the MA;
- provision of recommendations in order to comply with the environmental standards.

#### **Art. 4. Requirements for application**

To be included in the rosters of experts, applicants **must necessarily fulfil** the following requirements:

##### **General requirements for all profiles:**

- be citizens of Member State of the European Union, a country that is a beneficiary of Regulation (EU) No 232/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council 11 March 2014 establishing a European Neighbourhood Instrument, a country that is a beneficiary of Regulation (EU) of the European Parliament and of the Council No 231/2014 of 11 March 2014, establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II) or a Member State of the EEA or a country that is eligible according to articles 8 and 9 of the Regulation (EU) No 236/2014 laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action;
- have a level of education corresponding to completed university studies attested by a degree;
- have an appropriate knowledge of English or French at least corresponding to level B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (See the self evaluation grid available at <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/LanguageSelfAssessmentGrid/en>);
- have a good knowledge of the basic concepts allowing to the use of personal computers for data entry, word processing, spreadsheets, and electronic communications;
- be independent from any Programme bodies (i.e. Joint Monitoring Committee, Managing Authority, Joint Technical Secretariat, Branch Offices etc.) of both ENPI and ENI CBC MED Programmes;
- be independent from any Applicants or partners involved in the ENI CBC MED calls for proposals.

##### **Specific requirements for each profile:**

###### Profile A

- have a professional experience of at least 5 years in the selected (one or more) Programme thematic objective(s);
- have good knowledge of external aid and/or EU-funded cooperation projects/programmes;

- have a professional experience, in the selected Thematic Objective(s), in at least one of the countries of the Programme cooperation area;
- have at least two prior experiences in technical and financial evaluation - in view of their selection - of project proposals submitted in response to calls for proposals within the framework of international/EU funded programmes.

#### Profile B

- have a proven experience in the application of the state aid discipline as well as knowledge of judgments provided by the European Court of Justice. Experience in the application of the state aid discipline in the framework of European Territorial Cooperation programmes would be an advantage.

#### Profile C

- have a professional experience of at least 5 years, in environmental-related disciplines following the award of a university degree;
- have carried out at least two environmental assessments in any related field covered by the Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA).

**For all profiles, please note that possession of all the requirements must clearly result from the documents submitted by candidates (Request for participation and Curriculum Vitae)<sup>2</sup>.**

The number of experts to be recruited from each roster will depend on the number of projects received and their selection will be based on the following criteria:

- Experts with a better knowledge of both languages (English and French) will be preferred;
- In case of choice among two or more experts having the same knowledge of both languages, the expert(s) with a higher number of years of professional experience will be preferred;
- In case of choice among two or more experts having the same knowledge of both languages and the same years of experience, the MA reserves the right to sort the experts by public lot.

### **Art. 5. Application procedure**

Under penalty of exclusion, applicants shall submit the following documents, completed in English or French:

1. **Request for participation.** Under penalty of exclusion, it must be hand written signed; the format (Attachment A, different for each profile), available on the Programme website [www.enicbcmec.eu](http://www.enicbcmec.eu), must be used (other formats will not be considered).
2. **Curriculum Vitae** dated and signed according to the European format (Attachment B) available on the Programme website [www.enicbcmec.eu](http://www.enicbcmec.eu).
3. A copy of a **valid Identification Document** shall be attached to the application.
4. A **cover letter** dated and signed, describing briefly the experience, qualifications, skills and motivation to perform the tasks for which the application is submitted, shall be attached to the Request for participation (maximum one page in the same language chosen for the drafting of the Request for participation and the CV).

<sup>2</sup> The description of prior experiences and tasks should be in line with the CV that will be used as supporting document to prove what it is stated in the Request for participation.

Documents listed from point 1) to point 3) shall be submitted in original version.

**Applications not including all the above mentioned documents will be rejected.**

Under penalty of exclusion, the envelope shall be closed and it shall indicate the wording **“ENI CBC MED – Call for External Experts – Profile (A, B or C). DO NOT OPEN – NON APRIRE”** - .

Under penalty of exclusion, applications shall be sent by **10/11/2017**, by registered mail with return receipt, private-courier service or delivered by hand (Monday to Friday, from 10.00 to 13.00, and, only on Wednesday, from 16.00 to 18.00), to the following address:

**Regione Autonoma della Sardegna – Presidenza**  
**Autorità di Gestione del Programma “ENI CBC Bacino del Mediterraneo”**  
**Via Bacaredda 184 - 09127 Cagliari (Italy)**

Applications sent or delivered by hand after the above-mentioned deadline will not be taken into consideration. The postmark or international express courier accompanying note is considered proof of postage date.

In any case, under penalty of exclusion, applications duly sent within the deadline of the 10/11/2017, shall be received by the MA **no later than 17/11/2017**. The MA cannot be in any case held responsible for possible late delivery or loss of applications. Applicants shall thus take all measures to ensure the respect of the deadline for receipt.

The declarations contained in the application are subject to controls, as per Italian decree 445/2000 and its modifications and integrations. On top of the penal sanctions foreseen by article 76 of the decree n. 445 of 28.12.2000 in case of false declarations, if the controls reveal that the content of the declarations is false, the concerned person will be excluded.

The non-respect of the terms and modalities for the submission of the applications leads to the immediate exclusion from the selection procedure.

#### **Art. 6. Selection procedure and contracting**

A dedicated commission will be appointed after the deadline for submission in order to check the regularity of the applications. Only experts having the required qualifications will be included in the rosters.

It shall be noted that the inclusion in each roster does not guarantee the selection and the appointment for the assessment of project proposals. It does not foresee the assignment of a score for the quality of the applications and it does not establish any ranking. These rosters will only serve as a database for the identification of the experts having the required qualifications for the assignment of contracts.

The number of experts to be contracted will depend on the specific needs of the MA in consideration of the number of project proposals received.

The selection of the experts and their appointment for the assessment will be based on the criteria set under article 4.

Before signing the contract with the MA, the selected candidates may be requested to submit supporting documents (i.e., copy of university degree, certificates of working experience, etc.). The MA may not sign the contracts with the candidates who will not be able to certify the declarations contained in the application and in the CV.



The assignment of the project proposals procedure will ensure transparency and balanced representation of participating countries, while respecting equality of opportunities and non-discrimination principles.

The indicative number of proposals to be assessed by each expert and the deadline to complete the tasks, as well as the indicative date of the training session (only for Profile A), will be explicitly communicated by the MA before signing the contract in order to enable the expert to verify his/her availability to fulfil all tasks in time.

Once signed the contract, the expert will receive the appointment letter, specifying the timeframe and the total number of project proposals assigned, which must be returned signed for acceptance. Further assignments will be made using the same procedure. The appointment letters shall form an integral part of the contract.

For experts selected in the roster “A” the quality of the assessment carried out under STEP 1 will be considered in the assignment of the project proposals under STEP 2.

Experts will be free to resign from the pool, the MA also reserves the right to remove them from the list in case of insufficient performance, repeated unavailability or if problems arise regarding the impartiality and/or confidentiality.

The contract will be drafted in Italian language and it is subject to the provisions of the relevant Italian fiscal and labour legislation applying to temporary contracts<sup>3</sup>.

#### **Art. 7. Validity of the rosters**

The three rosters of experts, constituted on the basis of the present call, will be valid for 5 years after their publication for the entire Programme Implementation period. Further calls for updating the rosters might be possible.

#### **Art. 8. Fees and payment modalities**

The fixed rate for the evaluation tasks will be:

##### Profile A

- EUR 150,00 (duties and taxes included, excluding those due by the contracting administration) for each proposal assessed under **STEP 1** (i.e. relevance and design);
- EUR 350,00 (duties and taxes included, excluding those due by the contracting administration) for each proposal assessed under **STEP 2** (i.e. Operational and Financial Capacity, Effectiveness, Sustainability, Cost effectiveness).

##### Profile B

The fixed rate for the state aid assessment will be EUR **350,00** (duties and taxes included, excluding those due by the contracting administration) for each project proposal assessed.

##### Profile C

The fixed rate for the environmental assessment will be:

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<sup>3</sup> This selection procedure is ruled in particular by the provisions of article 6 bis, paragraph 2, of the Regional law n. 31 of 13/11/1998.



- **EUR 150,00** (duties and taxes included, excluding those due by the contracting administration) for each project proposal assessed, for the analysis of the **three environmental boxes** and for the assessment of the **Check list (A)** included in the Application Form of;
- **EUR 100,00** (duties and taxes included, excluding those due by the contracting administration) for each project proposal assessed, for the additional analysis of the **Check list (B)** included in the Application Form;
- **EUR 350,00** (duties and taxes included, excluding those due by the contracting administration) for each project proposal assessed, for the additional analysis of the **Check list (C)** included in the Application Form.

For all profiles:

For the attendance to the training session(s) (foreseen and mandatory only for Profile A) as well as for any other meeting(s) organised by the MA, the expert is entitled to an additional fee compensating the time spent at the meeting, estimated as **EUR 500** (duties and taxes included, excluding those due by the contracting administration) for working day. The number of working days is estimated as follows:

- For Italian residents: 1 working day
- For EU States residents: 2 working days
- For Extra UE states residents: 3 working days.

No additional reimbursement for travel and accommodation costs is foreseen.

The payment will be made after the conclusion of the tasks specified in each appointment letter upon submission of the Request for Payment, according to the model provided by the MA, specifying the exact number of proposals assessed, the number of meetings attended and the due total amount. A report including the list of project assessed (specifying reference number and title) and details of the meeting(s) shall be attached to the request.

The bank account details (name of the bank, account holder, IBAN/BIC/SWIFT numbers) are specified in the contract. Any change during the implementation of the contract should be officially communicated to the MA.

The submission of invoices is not foreseen under the present procedure.

In terms of taxes, Italian regulations apply.

For Italian residents withholding taxes will be deducted, equivalent to 20% of the total gross amount.

For non Italian residents, the contracting authority avails itself of the option, provided by the Italian Decree 600/73, articles 24 and 25, not to apply the fiscal conventional regime on double taxation and to deduct a flat tax-rate equivalent to 30% of the total gross amount<sup>4</sup>.

Moreover, mandatory social security contributions are also deductible from the taxable income, under certain conditions<sup>5</sup>.

Before each payment, the MA will check the quality of the work carried out. In case the assessment carried out by the expert is of poor quality, delayed or not in line with the contract and Programme documents, the

<sup>4</sup> A claim for reimbursement of Italian taxes, as provided in the relevant double taxation treaties concluded by Italy, can be submitted to the Pescara Tax Office, within 48 months from the date on which the Italian withholding tax was retained. For more information, please visit the website [http://www1.agenziaentrate.gov.it/english/individuals/double\\_taxation\\_relief\\_individuals/conventions\\_avoidance\\_DT.htm](http://www1.agenziaentrate.gov.it/english/individuals/double_taxation_relief_individuals/conventions_avoidance_DT.htm)

<sup>5</sup> According to the Italian legislation, if, during the year of payment, the expert has received more than EUR 5.000,00 as fees for other temporary contracts, a contribution for the Italian Institute for the Social Welfare (INPS) shall be paid.

MA will ask the expert to revise or complement its assessment. The expert will have two working days to do so. If the expert does not provide satisfactory amendments/supplements, the MA will be allowed to reduce the remuneration for the assessment in question **up to 50%** of the amount due.

#### **Art.9. Working modalities**

Experts will be required to carry out their tasks remotely using their own tools at their habitual working place according to the time schedule as agreed with the MA.

The assessment will be carried through an online platform made available by the MA. In order to ensure confidentiality and secrecy, each expert will be provided with personal log-in information for the access to the platform.

For the experts belonging to the “Profile A” a one-day-training session with the MA will take place in Rome prior to starting the assessment process. Failure to attend the training, if not duly justified, will lead to the termination of the contract by the MA.

#### **Art.10. Conflict of interest**

At the time of the appointment, selected experts are required to sign a declaration of impartiality stating that no conflict of interest exists and that they undertake to inform the MA if any situation of conflict, even potential, or external attempt to interfere occurs while carrying out their duties.

A conflict of interest exists if the impartial and objective function of an expert is jeopardized for reasons involving family, emotional life or political affinity, economic interest or any other shared interest with the project applicants.

Experts must be independent and must not assess applications submitted by institutions or individuals with whom they have a personal link and they shall engage themselves not to offer their services to successful project applicants or partners that they have assessed.

The role of external expert is incompatible with:

- being a voting or a non-voting member of the Projects Selection Committee and of the Joint Monitoring Committee;
- being permanently or temporarily employed by the Managing Authority, the Joint Technical Secretariat or the Branch Offices;
- being national contact point/person in charge of giving general information to potential applicants;
- providing/having provided technical assistance, as officer or external expert, within the ENPI / ENI CBC MED managing structures<sup>6</sup>;
- being/having been employed by or providing/having provided (in the past one year) any services to organizations involved in the project proposals (meaning by/to project applicants, partners or subjects involved in project activities as associates, subcontractors, beneficiaries of sub-grants or other).
- being/having been employed by or providing/having provided (in the past one year from the date of publication of the call for proposals) any services, within organizations involved at different levels in the project proposals (applicants, partners, subcontractors, beneficiaries of sub-grants or other) that may be assessed.

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<sup>6</sup> Being part of the roster of selected assessors for the previous calls for proposals (standard and strategic projects) under the ENPI CBC MED Programme is not considered incompatible.

#### **Art.11. Confidentiality**

Experts will have to observe complete confidentiality of the information and documents brought to their attention during the whole evaluation process as well as on the results of the evaluation. To this regards, they will have to sign a declaration of confidentiality in which they commit not to disclose any information related to the projects evaluation process.

#### **Art.12. Personal data treatment**

Personal data submitted by the experts will be only used for the participation to the selection procedure and for the possible signature of a contract with the Managing Authority, according to the Italian law in force (Legislative Decree N. 196/2003).

#### **Art. 13 Publication of the call and results of the selection**

This call is available, in Italian, English and French, on the official website of the Programme: [www.enicbcmmed.eu](http://www.enicbcmmed.eu) as well as in the official website of the Sardinia Region [www.regione.sardegna.it](http://www.regione.sardegna.it). In case of differences among the three versions, the Italian version prevails.

The results of the procedure will be published on the Programme website [www.enicbcmmed.eu](http://www.enicbcmmed.eu) as well as in the official website of the Sardinia Region [www.regione.sardegna.it](http://www.regione.sardegna.it).

#### **Art.14 Applicable law**

Any dispute arising from the present procedure shall be submitted to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Court of Cagliari.

#### **Art. 15 Various and final provisions**

The MA reserves the right to modify, extend, suspend entirely or partially or revoke this call. The participation in the selection procedure involves the implicit and unconditional acceptance of the provisions of this call.

For any further information, please contact the MA by email: [eni.management@regione.sardegna.it](mailto:eni.management@regione.sardegna.it).

#### **Art.16 Person in charge of the procedure**

The person in charge of the procedure is **Mrs. Daniela Boi**.

**The Director of the Authorising Unit**

Ornella Cauli