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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Beneficiary country

Albania

Contracting Authority

EuroPartners Development

Country background

Energy, and specifically oil and gas, is the emerging economic sector of the area. Market volatility, production challenges, environmental concerns and the smarter way to address them provide the opportunity for existing SMES to extend their business and for new need-derived business to be created. The bio-economy sector also has a strong innovation potential due to their use of a wide range of sciences (life sciences, agronomy, ecology, fishery, food science), enabling industrial technologies (biotechnology, information and communication technologies, and engineering), as well as local and tacit knowledge. Unique goods such as the agricultural and fishery products are part of Mediterranean diet and a major economic sector in all Adriatic Countries.

Current situation in the sector

Research and innovation in Albania is characterized by low levels of investments and the lack of competitiveness and technological capacity of SMEs. Lack of cooperation among SMEs, as well as, among research institutes and SMEs and the absence of know-how for supporting innovation schemes (start-ups and spin-offs) are the barriers hindering innovation in the area. Universities are not an integral part of the innovation supply chain to business; this chain is multi-dimensional, it has to be sustainable and it has to have quality, strength and resilience. This can only be secured through close collaboration, partnership and understanding between SMEs and RDI performers

Related programmes and other donor activities

The Enterprise Innovation Fund is a venture capital fund focusing on an investment portfolio consisting of innovative SMEs at various stages of business development, from the start-up to expansion phase, in the Western Balkans. ENIF aims at reinforcing the financial structure of innovative SMEs resulting in a strong and bankable balance sheet.



2. OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE & EXPECTED RESULTS

Overall objective

The overall objective of the project of which this contract will be a part is as follows:

Support the SME with RID capacities in their strategy, finance, people through advice, expertise, experience and knowledge of MENTORS thus enabling SMEs figure out how to create sustainable growth and make them competitive on an international scale

Purpose

The purposes of this contract is/are as follows:

Identify the Mentors covering the following areas:

1. Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) issues
2. Strategic Business and Finance Planning (SBFP) ;
3. Marketing (MR) :
4. Information and Technology (IT);
5. Project Management (PM)

and more specifically have in focus :

- Enhancing strategic business initiatives;
- Encouraging innovation and networking introduction;
- Reducing turnover costs;
- Improving productivity;
- Breaking down the "silo" mentality that hinders cooperation among company departments or divisions;
- Elevating knowledge transfer from just getting information and to retaining the practical experience and wisdom gained;
- Enhancing professional development;
- Linking valuable knowledge and information to other businesses in need of such information;
- Using preferably experienced businessmen versus the outside consultants, as internal experts for development.



Results to be achieved by the Contractor

1) Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Mentor

- Provide information to the SME on legislation on Intellectual Property Rights
- Mentor the SME on of the legal procedures of Intellectual Property Rights for registering their innovation as governed by the country legislation, including:
 - i. **Trademarks:** Research, Registration both national as well as international registrations
 - ii. **Patents:** Research, Filings in Albania
 - iii. **Industrial Designs:** Research, Filing and Follow up to Registration
 - iv. **Utility Models:** Research, Filing and Follow up to Registration, conversion to patent applications, assignments, revocation and infringement proceedings.
 - v. **Copyright:** Registration, royalty agreements, infringement actions.
 - vi. **Domain Names:** Registration, dispute resolution (cancellation and transfer).

2) Strategic Business and Finance Planning (SBFP) Mentor

- i. A strategy agreed with the company how to create sustainable growth and competitive advantages
- ii. Mechanisms established to identify of strengths, weaknesses and threats
- iii. Business innovation adopted;
- iv. Sources of funding identified for the new business innovation and application submitted;
- v. Financial management tools adopted;
- vi. Success storied identified and promoted.

3) Marketing (MR) Mentor :

- i. A marketing strategy agreed with the company for innovative products and/or services;
- ii. New links created in foreign markets;
- iii. Assistance to start-ups/ spin off and SMEs provided in marketing and advertising areas;
- iv. Professional development of personnel in marketing enhanced;
- v. Success story identified and promoted.
- vi. Mentor the company with marketing budget setting and control.
- vii. Assist the company to design and to execute a successful communication campaign;



- viii. Assist with carrying out effective research & intelligence into competitor products & other trends;
- ix. Develop partnerships & relationships with business partners to meet strategic objectives;
- x. Mentor the company with marketing budget setting and control.

4) Information and Technology (IT) Mentor :

- i. Mentor on technical analysis and design of new applications;
- ii. Innovative technologies for producing bio-energy introduced to SMEs;
- iii. Mentor on the development of online business solutions such as e-commerce etc.
- iv. Mentor on the adoption of smart technology such as mobile applications for portable devices.
- v. New businesses start-up or spin off created;
- vi. Innovative services introduced;
- vii. Improved productivity and turnover costs reduced;
- viii. New networks established;
- ix. Success storied identified and promoted.

5) Project Management (PM) Mentor

- i. Project proposal supported for start-ups/ spin off and SMEs expansion;
- ii. Enhanced professional development in project management;
- iii. Co-financing for new project identified;
- iv. Information shared with other businesses in need of such information.
- v. Mentor the SME on feasibility of project ideas;
- vi. Advise the SME on costing and budgeting for a project proposal;
- vii. Mentor on developing Project Key Performance Indicators;

3. ASSUMPTIONS & RISKS

Assumptions underlying the project

The reluctance of the successful SME with RDI capacities to cooperate with partners.

Risks

The only slight risk factor that might be considered is the lack of proper match making of the Mentors with the selected SMEs.



4. SCOPE OF THE WORK

General

Mentors are experienced businessmen and businesswomen which can help SMEs executives identify strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats. They also have great networks.

During this activity the framework for establishing this mechanism will be defined, a shortlist of qualifications the mentors should have will be created and during activity 7.4 and for 24 months (M6- M29) mentoring will become a concrete solution through

4.1.1. Description of the assignment

Mentors will work with SMEs on a one-to-one basis and provide support in strategy, finance, technologies, human resources strategy and recruitments, etc.

Mentors provide advice, expertise, experience and knowledge, thus enabling SMEs figure out how to create sustainable growth and competitive advantages for the company even on an international scale.

4.1.2. Geographical area to be covered

Tirana district

4.1.3. Target groups

5 selected SMEs that will be provided to the contractor from the Contracting Authority

4.1.4. Specific work

IPR Mentor

- Train the mentoree about adopting innovation and competitiveness;
- Coach the mentoree on a how to introduce innovation and networking particular skill;
- Facilitate the mentoree's growth by sharing resources and networks;
- Challenge the mentoree to move beyond his or her comfort zone;
- Create a safe learning-implementing environment for assuming the "risk" of introducing innovation and networking in its production process;
- Focus on the mentoree's total development.



SBFP Mentor

Business Development Mentorship

- Analyzing existing business strategy of the select SME;
- Introduce innovation, competitiveness, business networking and collaboration;
- Mentor the SME personnel on adopting the innovation in all business operations;
- Evaluate new business ideas;
- Provide support to SME owner on the development of new business plan reflecting the application of the innovation;
- Advise how to differentiate and develop further competitive advantage in a sustainable manner;
- Facilitate sourcing of new technologies;
- Address issues related with business problems in operation, financing, environment etc.;
- Advise on setting up internal management systems that facilitate decision-making;
- Providing analytical perspectives to important strategic decisions;
- Helps to develop internal business communications.

Financial Management and Investment Mentorship

- Provide assistance to identify and to apply to sources of funding for start-ups/ spin off and SMEs expansion;
- Mentor on investment plan for adopting innovation ideas into the business;
- Mentor on developing a business plan;
- Recommend new corporate financial procedures to ensure best practices in financial management and control;
- Review the financial analysis performed by the company and suggest new financial reports to analyze trends and inform strategic decision-making;
- Recommend tools for measuring financial risks.
- Recommend accounting software for enterprise resource planning purposes.
- Working with various departments of the business to help them plan their budgets.

MR Mentor

- Train the mentoree about adopting innovation and competitiveness;



- Coach the mentoree on a how to introduce innovation and networking particular skill;
- Facilitate the mentoree's growth by sharing resources and networks;
- Challenge the mentoree to move beyond his or her comfort zone;
- Create a safe learning-implementing environment for assuming the "risk" of introducing innovation and networking in its production process;
- Focus on the mentoree's total development.

IT Mentor

- Train the mentoree about adopting innovation and competitiveness;
- Coach the mentoree on a how to introduce innovation and networking particular skill;
- Facilitate the mentoree's growth by sharing resources and networks;
- Challenge the mentoree to move beyond his or her comfort zone;
- Create a safe learning-implementing environment for assuming the "risk" of introducing innovation and networking in its production process;

PM Mentor

- Mentor the SME on feasibility of project ideas;
- Mentor the SME on writing project proposal and completing applications for funding;
- Mentor the SME on developing and implementing a realistic project plan and on evaluating risks;
- Advise the SME on costing and budgeting for a project proposal;
- Mentor on developing Project Key Performance Indicators;
- Mentor on tracking activities against the detailed project plans;

5. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

5.1.1. Responsible body

EuroPartners Development will be the main responsible partner for managing this contract.



5.1.2. Management structure

The Steering Group of the EuroPartners Development: notably the Project Manager; project Financial Manager; the Communication Officer ; the Mentoring Coordinator as well as the project Manager of our partner –FB3 – University of New York Tirana, will participate in the evaluation and selection process of the Mentors.

5.1.3. Facilities to be provided by the Contracting Authority and/or other parties

The EuroPartners Development will offer the Helpdesk premises for the evaluation process.

6. LOGISTICS AND TIMING

Location

The location is mainly in Tirana district. Cost for travel or other expenses for the mentor should be covered from the contractor.

Start date & Period of implementation of tasks

The intended start date is 01 September 2014 and the period of implementation of the contract will be 20 months from this date. Please see Articles 19.1 and 19.2 of the Special Conditions for the actual start date and period of implementation. The estimated cost for this service is 40,000 EUR.

7. REQUIREMENTS

Staff

Note that civil servants and other staff of the public administration of the partner country, or of international/regional organisations based in the country, shall only be approved to work as experts if well justified. The justification should be submitted with the tender and shall include information on the added value the expert will bring as well as proof that the expert is seconded or on personal leave.



7.1.1. Key experts

All mentors who have a crucial role in implementing the contract are referred to as key mentors. The profiles of the mentors for this contract are as follows:

Key Mentor 1 on IPR

Qualifications and skills

- A bachelor's degree in legal sciences correlated field from a reputable institution is a requirement and a higher degree in similar fields or equivalent is preferred.
- At least 5 years of working experience within the expertise field of intellectual property rights field;
- Proven working experience in the fields of intellectual property rights and or contract law and international trade;
- Advanced PC skills and sound knowledge of the MS Office package: MS Word, Excel,
- Outlook, Power Point;
- Strong analytical and inter-personal skills to communicate with people having different backgrounds and positions, as well as with local and national authorities;
- Run a business or has been a member of the Steering Committee in a established successful business;

Key Mentor 2 on SBFP

Qualifications and skills

- A bachelor's degree in accounting, business administration, and finance from a reputable institution is a requirement and a higher degree in similar fields preferred.
- Minimum of 5 years working experience in a similar position and preferably from a financial institution.
- Experience completing and analyzing financial statements including Balance Sheets, Profit and Loss, Cash Flow, financial ratios and others.
- Experience with long, medium, and short term financial planning and with writing business plans;
- Thorough understanding of operational and financial risk of the company in different stages
- Ability to interact with senior management and all levels of staff.



- Proven ability to manage and develop a financial team
- Knowledge of financial sector.
- Run a business or has been a member of the Steering Committee in a established successful business

Key Mentor 3 on MR

- Qualifications and skills
- A bachelor's degree in marketing, business administration or related field from a reputable institution is a requirement and a higher degree in similar fields preferred.
- Minimum of 5 years of relevant experience in commercial or marketing positions;
- Experience with developing and implementing marketing plan for private companies
- Experience with developing promotional materials;
- Experience with assisting private companies to attend foreign trade fairs and searching for buyers;
- Strong communication, conceptual and analytical skills;
- Able to quickly understand customer needs and to develop timely and cost-effective solutions;
- Run a business or has been a member of the Steering Committee in a established successful business

Key Mentor 4 on IT

Qualifications and skills

- Master's degree (with 5 years' relevant experience)or a Bachelor'sdegree (with 5 years' relevant experience) in the IT field
- At least 5years'experienceindeveloping and implementation of IT projects;
- Professional training and/or certifications in IT services;
- Extensive experience with developing innovative IT solutions;
- Advanced skills in various programming languages and excellent working



knowledge of IT methodologies and tools.

- Run a business or has been a member of the Steering Committee in a established successful business

Key Mentor 5 on PM

Qualifications and skills

- Master's degree (with 5 years' relevant experience) or a Bachelor's degree (with 5 years' relevant experience) in the Social Sciences (management studies, business administration, environmental economics); natural resource, environmental management or a related discipline;
- At least 5 years' experience in project management and implementation;
- Training or certifications in project management;
- Strong analytical and inter-personal skills to communicate with people having different backgrounds and positions, as well as with local and national authorities;
- Good working knowledge of PM methodologies and tools.
- Run a business or has been a member of the Steering Committee in a established successful business

All experts must be independent and free from conflicts of interest in the responsibilities they take on.

7.1.2. Other experts, support staff & backstopping

CVs for other experts other than the key experts should not be submitted in the tender but the tenderer will have to demonstrate in their offer that they have access to experts with the required profiles. The Contractor shall select and hire other experts as required according to the needs. The selection procedures used by the Contractor to select these other experts shall be transparent, and shall be based on pre-defined criteria, including professional qualifications, language skills and work experience.

The costs for backstopping and support staff, as needed, are considered to be included in the tenderer's financial offer.

Office accommodation



Office accommodation for each expert working on the contract is to be provided by EuroPartners Development.

Facilities to be provided by the Contractor

The Contractor shall ensure that experts are adequately supported and equipped. In particular it must ensure that there is sufficient administrative, secretarial and interpreting provision to enable experts to concentrate on their primary responsibilities. It must also transfer funds as necessary to support their work under the contract and to ensure that its employees are paid regularly and in a timely fashion.<

The Mentors will be provided by the EuroPartners Development with the detailed information on the selected SMEs their filled up questionnaire which clearly identifies their needs, challenges and requirements. The Mentors will have a free access on any documents collected by Helpdesk officers to the benefit of the SMEs and start ups.

Equipment

Existing basic office equipment will be provided in the facilities of EuroPartners Development to all experts upon demand. Any other equipment or software required by the proposed methodology of the contractor should be provided by the contractor in its premises or in EuroPartners Development premises (laptops, software for statistical analysis, software for financial analysis, etc.)

8. REPORTS

The Contractor will submit the following reports in English language in one original.

- **Draft final report** of maximum 7 pages (main text, excluding annexes This report shall be submitted no later than one month before the end of the period of implementation of tasks.
- **Final report** with the same specifications as the draft final report, incorporating any comments received from the parties on the draft report. The deadline for sending the final report is 15 days after receipt of comments on the draft final report. The report shall contain a sufficiently detailed description of the different options to support an informed decision on implemented practices. The detailed analyses underpinning the recommendations will be presented in annexes to the main report. The final report must be provided along with the corresponding invoice.



Produced documents and /or presentations should be attached to the final report.

Submission and approval of reports

The report referred to above must be submitted to the Project Manager identified in the contract. The Project Manager is responsible for approving the reports.

In the absence of comments or approval by the project Manager within 10 days upon receipt of the final reports , the reports are deemed to be approved.

9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Definition of indicators

The Mentors will provide periodic indicators on their performance.

Special requirements

N/A