



Call for Assessors

in the frame of the

Call for Proposals “A BETTER REGION STARTS WITH YOUTH”

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Preface

Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO) is an independently functioning institutional mechanism, founded by the Western Balkans 6 participants (WB 6): Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, Macedonia and Serbia, aiming to promote the spirit of reconciliation and cooperation between the youth in the region through youth exchange programs.

RYCO is launching the 1st Call for Assessors to identify and select qualified and experienced professionals to join the RYCO Pool of Assessors set up for project assessment. The Assessors selected within the framework of this Call will be involved in the assessment process for the project applications submitted under the First Call for Proposals – “BETTER REGION STARTS WITH YOUTH” and will remain on RYCO’s database for the future Call for Proposals to be launched in 2018.

The Pool of Assessors created based on this Call will include only the candidates fulfilling the requested minimum requirements and meeting the selection criteria. Only the assessors registered in the Pool of Assessors can take part in the assessment process as external experts. Please note that being registered in the Pool of Assessors does not imply any obligations to award a contract to the successful candidates.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Introduction

RYCO is seeking proposals of CSOs and secondary schools for supporting projects in the fields of promoting the reconciliation in the region of the Western Balkans by increasing youth mobility, cooperation and activism.

Through this **PILOT Open Call for Proposals**, RYCO is establishing itself as a leading regional initiative for supporting young people in the Western Balkan. RYCO wants to empower youth for setting the course to a better society in the Western Balkans and for ensuring further progress towards European integration of the region.

The exchange of experiences between young people from regional contracting parties will help form new ideas for the future of the region, contribute to the better understanding of human rights, initiate intraregional exchange and cooperation, and help foster trust building between youth from different ethnic groups. In piloting this regional Open Call, RYCO will provide necessary regional perspective and support a regional approach to continuous sectoral development in WB6. RYCO believes that this is the only possible path to sustainable and peaceful development of the region.

The **General Objective** of this Call for Proposals is to contribute to the process of reconciliation in the region of the Western Balkans through increasing youth mobility, cooperation and activism. To contribute to the global and specific objectives (SO) of this Call for Proposals, actions should fall into the one of the following priority areas (PA):

Priority Area 1: INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

- SO1: Ensuring a safe environment for young people for constructively dealing with the past
- SO2: Providing opportunities for intercultural learning and enhancing intercultural competences
- SO3: Enabling intercultural dialogue and tolerance through decreasing the level of hate speech, negative stereotypes and prejudice among young people in the region

Priority Area 2: ACTIVE PARTICIPATION AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

- SO4: Fostering active citizenship and participation in decision-making processes by young people
- SO5: Strengthening capacities of key actors¹ working for and with young people for civic participation and social inclusion
- SO6: Promoting social inclusion of young people through mobility, cooperation and shared projects

The eligible area of the RYCO comprises of the Western Balkans 6 contracting parties (WB 6): Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Macedonia and Serbia. The RYCO support for financing projects within the First CfP is 900.000,00 EUR.

More information about the First CfP “BETTER REGION STARTS WITH YOUth” should be found at www.rycowb.org

¹ KEY ACTORS from both the youth and the education sectors active in the region: governmental departments/agencies responsible for “international” work in school education, governmental departments/ministries responsible for youth, associations of key workers that will promote youth and school exchanges in the contracting parties and the region - youth workers, school principals/directors, other potential promoters of youth and schools exchange - youth/community/cultural centres (municipal/ NGO), etc.

Aim of the Call

The aim of the 1st Call for assessors is to invite interested candidates possessing adequate experience and knowledge in the areas of reconciliation, intercultural cooperation, youth and cooperation between the youth in the region, learning, democracy, culture and interculturalism, as well as specificities of the WB 6 region and establish the Pool of Assessors. By creation of the Pool of Assessors a tool for professional and equitable handling of the assessment process will be introduced. The selected assessors will perform the quality assessment of application forms submitted under the respective Call for Proposals.

Experts will be contracted depending on the publication of the calls for proposals and the need of expertise by the RYCO. Experts will be free to resign from the pool, as well as the RYCO also reserves the right to remove experts from database in case of insufficient performance or if problems rise regarding the impartiality and/or confidentiality of an expert. The pool will be valid until it is not terminated by the RYCO but till the 31st December 2018 the latest.

Task of Assessors

The Assessors will perform quality assessment and scoring of project applications in accordance with the assessment grids and related RYCO documents and procedures. The documents are available at the www.rycowb.org.

Selection procedure

Assessors shall be selected on the basis of their professional and technical ability to perform the assessment tasks.

Application process

Interested candidates are requested to submit the following documents:

- Curriculum Vitae in English (Europass format) with detailed information on relevant experience;
- Copies of diplomas and/or certificates;
- Further documents proving their skills and expertise if available e.g. reference letters, extract from employment contract, etc.
- Financial offer, stating assessor's fee per diem or/and per application form

In the documents, candidates must provide evidence that they possess the required skills, sufficient professional experience and sectoral expertise in the areas identified by RYCO. Further information on application process is described in section *Submission of application, deadline* of this Call.

Requirements regarding the profiles of the experts

In order to establish a pool of external experts, the RYCO is looking for experienced specialists who will form the external assessment team. Prospective independent experts are expected to have the high level of professional experience in the area of projects that can be supported by the Priority Axes and the respective Specific Objectives.

Minimum requirements

Only the candidates fulfilling the following minimum requirements will be taken into consideration:

1. Have college and/or university degree (at least Bachelor's degree, completed with a diploma) or have at least 3 years of experience in the technical and financial assessment of projects co-financed by the donors above 20.000 EUR in the framework of grant schemes;
2. Have college and/or university degree or at least 3 years of professional experience related to at least one of the thematic fields covered by the CfP (youth, youth mobility, education, intercultural exchange, interregional mobility, intercultural learning – please see Guidelines for Applicants under CfP on RYCO's website;
3. Proficiency in English (fluent in speaking, reading and writing) - project proposals are prepared in English and assessors will be asked to write their observations in English;
4. Have adequate computer literacy (MS Office);
5. Have extensive knowledge on project management and have sound professional experience in the regions covered by the WB 6 and/or other programmes co-financed by the European Union.

Planning and development of local/regional documents and strategies are an asset. Experience in the fields of cross-border cooperation, project management, regional development, evaluation of projects and skills for compiling a financial and budgetary analysis of proposals will be considered as additional assets.

Selection criteria

Assessors will be selected by the Selection committee composed by the RYCO. Selection process will be conducted based on the criteria set by the current Call for Assessors.

The application submitted after deadline will not be considered for evaluation and selection.

RYCO reserves the right to ask the candidates fulfilling the minimal requirements for participating in personal interviews as well.

Afterwards the RYCO will inform candidates whether they have been registered in the Pool of Assessors or whether they have been unsuccessful. The decision of the Selection committee is final and no appeal shall apply. The Pool of Assessors comprises of the candidates who successfully passed the selection process.

Each candidate application will be judged according to the above mentioned criteria.

Also, candidates can be required to attend meeting organised by the RYCO on the assessment methods and specific requirements before carrying out their assessments for the Call for Proposals. The first meeting will take place on the 24th November 2017 in Tirana, Albania.

Performance of Assessment

RYCO will ensure that project applications are assigned to assessors in a balanced manner with an appropriate rotation. Account shall also be taken on the geographical balance within WB 6 contracting parties and the field of intervention. Whilst maintaining the principle of choosing the most qualified experts, where appropriate, a balance between men and women will be ensured.

Service contracts will be signed between RYCO and the assessors or, if employed by a legal person, by an authorised representatives of this entity. The remuneration of selected assessors will be decided when the contracts are signed taking into account complexness and extent of the assessed project application.

Assessors must familiarise themselves with the documents related to the call for proposals (e.g. the Guidelines for grant applicants, their annexes and the FAQs published for the call). Guidelines for assessment will be provided with the purpose to guide assessors on how to conduct their evaluations so that all assessments are made in a coherent and consistent way. All assessors should independently from each other carry out the assessment of the proposals assigned to them in a consistent manner by applying the same methodology, interpretation and understanding of the objectives and criteria described in the Guidelines for grant applicants. This does not necessarily mean that the scores of two different assessors are expected to be identical, but rather that each assessor applies the same standards and provides a well substantiated opinion supporting his/her individual scores.

Conflict of Interest

In order to ensure the impartiality of assessors, the assessors should be independent from the institutional structure of the RYCO. They will be required to sign a Declaration of confidentiality and impartiality proving that there is no conflict of interest between their work and performing the duties of assessor. The Declaration of confidentiality and impartiality will be an annex to the contract concluded between the assessor and RYCO.

For each task performed, the assessor selected must demonstrate appropriate ethical conduct and must respect the confidentiality of the information and documents to which they will have access. Furthermore, assessors may not be personally involved in project elaboration or coordination or linked to another projects or activities implemented by the entities submitting project application under the relevant CfP.

Submission of applications

Candidates must send the following documents to prove that they possess the required skills, sufficient professional experience and sectoral expertise in the areas identified:

- Curriculum Vitae in English (Europass format) with detailed information on relevant experience;
- Copies of diplomas and/or certificates
- Further documents proving their skills and expertise if available e.g. reference letter, extract from employment contract, etc.
- Financial offer, stating assessor's fee per diem or/and per application form.

Deadline for sending applications to the present Call for Proposals is **7th November 2017 23:59 CET**. The documents shall be sent to the office@rycowb.org

Please indicate in the subject the following text: **Application for Call for Assessors**

INDICATIVE TIMETABLE OF THE CALL

ACTIVITY	DEADLINE	TIME
Opening the Call	26 October, 2017	12:00 CET
The deadline for submission of applications	07 November, 2017	23:59 CET
Information to the applicants on the selection	17 November 2017	12:00 CET
Contract signature	20 November 2017	
Training on evaluation process	23/24 November	TBC
Distribution of Guidelines for Assessment	2017	
Assessment of project applications	from 24 November to 22 December 2017	

This indicative timetable may be updated by RYCO during the procedure. In such cases, the updated timetable will be published on the RYCO website: www.rycowb.org