**Terms of Reference**

**Request for Services**

**Call for Applications for Design and creation of the RYCO digital youth platform**

**General information about the assignment:**

**Organization:** Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO)​

**Type of Services Required:** Design and creation of the RYCO digital youth platform

**Title of the project:** A better Region starts with Youth

**Duration of the project:** November 2020 – 31/12/2020

**Expected launch of the platform:**  December 31st 2020​

**Starting date of the contract:** Within November 2020​

**Background about RYCO**

Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO) is an intergovernmental organization that stewards and promotes regional, cross- border and intercultural cooperation within and among its six Western Balkan Contracting Parties: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo[[1]](#footnote-1), Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia, aiming to promote the spirit of reconciliation and cooperation between the youth in the region through youth exchange programs. RYCO’s program focuses on creating opportunities for young people to engage in activities that build mutual understanding and reconciliation in the civic, social, educational, cultural, and sports domains. RYCO initiates and participates in policy making and advocates for reform. It supports the development of a political and social environment that empowers and facilitates youth exchange. A key instrument enabling RYCO to fulfil its mission is grant-making; developing tailored calls for proposals that enable CSOs and schools to engage in initiatives that contribute to mutual understanding of youth from various communities across RYCO’s Contracting Parties, thus contributing to reconciliation and youth participation.

**Objective**

New RYCO digital youth platform for daily promotion of regional youth cooperation and youth experiences and storytelling and for sharing concrete opportunities for youth in WB6.

1. **Scope of Work**

We are seeking for a specialized service provider which is experienced in developing web applications and/or web based platforms. The main objective of this assignment is to develop and build RYCO digital youth platform. The platform’s main functions will be to promote the spirit of reconciliation and cooperation between the youth in the region through youth exchange programs; showcasing and disseminating RYCO’s activities and advocacy promote interaction and collaboration among key users of the site, promoting the work to stakeholders. The platform should be in English language and have so called sub-directories for each contracting party of this project, with the possibility of introducing multilingual functions in the later stage which includes being accessible in different languages. If needed, the accessibility in above mentioned languages will be part of a separate procedure. Under the guidance of RYCO Team, the service provider will be expected to undertake the following tasks:

* Collaborate and participate in the co-designing process of the web platform, where layout, tools, content structures and functionalities to meet the needs of the project and follow the structure of the newly developed RYCO digital youth platform. Based on mentioned above and this TOR, the contractor will develop a design concept for the site and app. The provider will share two proposals: one for site and one for app, and the contractor will decide about final product and which solution will be pursued. The solution enhanced to provide a better experience to youth users will be chosen. The company will adjust final concept based on feedback and comments from the RYCO team.
* Design of website structure based on the requirements from project team: clear categories, SEO friendly, documents & folders for data & page storage, clean site & page layout (both on the front and back end), easy to use, flexible navigation & search functions, etc. Standard page elements including header, footer, tabs, persistent navigation, contact us, email and page print options should be included in the templates. Signup for latest news. Develop six web subsections. The subsections webpages should incorporate functionalities to guarantee the latest information on that subsection is displayed (news, resources, publication/guidance, contracting party stories, events) - all including strong visual language and a responsive design for the website by following an iterative development process
* Creating platform: website structure, database structure, content management, user interfaces, easily accessible, quality of content, user-friendliness, easy maintenance/update, information retrieval; Proposition of web technologies for web development - the most advanced Java I / or WordPress technologies or alternative modern scalable
* Incorporating all data based on the needs of this project, like designs, website guidelines, documents, content; and adapt them based on the custom needs;
* Updates of website applications, tools and plugins; Configuration/setup of firewalls, anti-hacker tools, spam and antivirus plan for the website, along with the hosting plan; Quality assurance;
* Configuration of data types and implementation of security structures and firewalls to ensure privacy policies and of data protection (GDPR);
* Integrate effective search and aggregate functions that interact with social media platforms, a RYCO discussion board, and linkages to an easily managed e-mail newsletter as well as a way to manage visitors and those interested in receiving updates about RYCO. (Search function by news, type of publication/guidance, type of resource, events, contracting party story and issue; search resources by free text); Implement a basic “blog” function with social sharing features
* Browser compatibility. The site must be compatible with the current versions of the following browsers (Firefox, Safari, and Chrome).
* Test the platform before official launch.

**Additional Request for Offer (RFO): Design and creation of an MOBILE APP**

Develop Hybrid and Native Mobile Applications for Phones and Tablets (Android & IOS) based on the specifications:

1. Simplicity for the user. Convenient user interface/ user friendly interface. Must adhere to platform specific UI standards provided by Apple and Google respectively.
2. Administration Panel: A web admin panel with options to manage the Apps data must be developed using latest combination of technologies.
3. Gather requirements, specifications and analyze, and produce prototypes
4. Test, debug and improve applications optimization for better performance
5. Search. It must have a system of search and filters
6. Suggestion for Native Apps, Web Apps or Hybrid Apps.
7. Quality assurance
8. **Technical Specifications**

RYCO digital youth platform should use/support the following web and infrastructure technologies:

* Latest PHP version or equivalent technology;
* Latest MySQL version or equivalent database to support the solution;
* Use of latest frameworks and open source platforms;
* Support of different cache levels;
* Open source framework of server side to run the application;
* Enough space to handle all data of the E-services and user requests;
* Unlimited databases and records;
* Unlimited bandwidth;
* Latest techniques on creation of front end applications: Markup-languages like HTML, CSS and JavaScript’s applied;
* Mobile friendly;
* Latest encryption technologies of sensitive data and passwords;
* Dynamic pages and SEO friendly;
* Web application and its functionalities to be managed within a Content Management System (CMS);
* The possibility to integrate video and audio materials in standard format (FLV, SWF, MP4, AVI, MP3, H.264, and WMA) and other well-known media formats. Possibility to integrate photo, video or audio materials from external pages, hyperlinks, etc.
* Warranty and maintenance services including post-service maintenance and support (duration will be agreed)
* Ability to scale based on the requests
* Provide data durability (at least 9.99%)

**Search Engine Optimization and site analysis**

The contracted web development company will ensure the search engine optimization. The SEO work will include:

1. Keyword research & analysis
2. Site analysis
3. Competitive analysis
4. Site content optimization
5. HTML code optimization
6. Search Engine submission (free search engines)
7. Link exchange
8. Web ranking report

**Knowledge transfer**

* Develop a user manual and deliver a webinar for the support staff and system administrators to perform content upload, system maintenance and administration.
* Train a minimum of three RYCO staff on how to manage the new website/app and CMS and easy to read user guide/training guide.
* Provide guidance on web hosting needs and security setups and administration privileges and controls.

The service provider must provide all necessary documentation after the successful completion of tasks, as below:

* Usage manual of the platforms and tutorials;
* Installation manual;
* Configuration manual;
* Clear documentation in written of coding and its structure;

**Security requirements**

The application foresees to have high level of security, encryption of sensitive data, use of SSL certificates, and prevent unauthorized access to its infrastructure. Therefore, the service provider must provide and take in consideration to prove and take action on developing the following categories of security issues by prevent/handle unauthorized access and ensure data protection:

* Risk Assessment;
* Authentication;
* Authorization and Access Control;
* Session Management;
* Data and input Validation;
* Cross Site Scripting;
* Command Injections Flaws;
* Buffer Overflows;
* Error Handling;
* Logging;
* Remote Administration;
* Web Application and;
* Server Configuration.

1. **Deliverables**

* Final methodology and Wireframe​ (Layout Design) for the web platform is finalized and approved by Contracting Authority;
* A full functional web portal is designed, code and relevant documents delivered to RYCO and web portal launched.

The service provider must demonstrate a mock-up of the application with all functionalities throughout the development phase. All products will be considered completed at the time when the Contracting Authority declares satisfaction with the results.

1. **Methodology**

The service provider must provide the methodology to be used for developing the web platform, the details for each stage, together with a preliminary working plan and milestones of completion of task. A **wireframe**​ **(**​**Layout Design)** is needed to be developed in order to demonstrate the design and functionalities of the platform.

1. **Duration/Time Frame**

The intended start date is November 2020 and the period to complete the overall task will be December 31st 2020.

RYCO digital youth platform is planned to be launched before December 31st 2020.

**Profile of providers:**

* Service provider must be a legal entity registered in the WB6 region;
* Service provider must have adequate capacities with prior rich experience in the field;
* Excellent knowledge on website security, website hosting services and development of website applications;
* Demonstrated abilities to create and design visual and digital content that is clear, concise and able to convey and present products in an engaging manner for varied audiences;
* Work experience and demonstrated abilities to create content for a variety of audiences on internet (provide links to previous work/portfolios as examples​) ​;
* Work experience in creation of visual identity and branding of web platforms;
* Proven experience in creation of E-tools;
* The selected service provider must provide a track record of at least four (4) years of work expertise on developing web applications.
* At least three (3) assignments/ services conducted within the previous 3 years’ period;

**Human Resource Capacities:**

In order to implement this assignment, the service provider should be composed of at least three members of the team, with the following profiles:

**Key personnel 1: Project Manager**

* At least 3 years of experience in the field of web project management. Bachelor Degree Academic Level is considered an asset.
* Fluency in English language, both spoken and written.
* Managing at least one project in the last two years that includes web content management systems and large, complex web platforms.

**Key personnel 2: Programmer**

* At least 5 years of experience in the field of Computer Sciences and Programing of Web platforms.
* Fluency in English language, both spoken and written.

**Key personnel 3: User Interface (UI) and User Experience (UX) designer**

* At least 3 years of experience in the field of Graphic Design and User Experience.
* At least two projects realized in production of web graphic design.
* Fluency in English language, both spoken and written.

6. **Indicative budget and payment modality**

The selected company will be invited to sign a service contract with RYCO. The Contract will be realized in Euro and the Payment will be conducted in three instalments:

* First instalment of 20% of total fee, after the Final methodology and Wireframe (Layout Design) for the web platform is finalized and approved by Contracting Authority.
* Second instalment in the amount of 80% of total fee, after a full functional web portal is designed, code and relevant documents delivered to Contracting Authority and web portal launched.

For payment of each installment the company will be requested to deliver the reports/documents which should be submitted in English with the invoice supporting the rendering of services. Invoices should be prepared in accordance with laws stipulating the place of origin.

The expert is responsible for paying all the taxes related to this assignment.

Maximum limit budget is Eur 36.000 (including applicable VAT).

7. **Applications process**

Applications should be submitted via email containing the following information:

- Title Subject: Provision​ of services Design and creation of the RYCO digital youth platform to [ligjore@net-sfs.al](mailto:ligjore@net-sfs.al) not later than the deadline specified in “Instructions to tender”.

Interested and qualified service providers need to enclose following documents to the application:

* Technical offer (including methodology and working plan);
* CV/Portfolio of the service provider (I.e.: ​ demonstration of previous work in the relevant field including the presentation and links of online applications and any other relevant work to this assignment)
* Curriculum vitae (CVs) of 3 key personnel;
* Financial offer
* Copy of legal registration;
* Bank account details to which the payments shall be made (mandatory).

1. *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* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)