REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

(CONSULTING SERVICES – FIRMS SELECTION)

**Republic of Serbia**

**Serbia Agriculture Competitive Project (SCAP)**

Project ID No.: P167634

**Assignment Title:**

**Capacity Building of SCAP Beneficiaries - Increasing competitiveness, resilience and sustainability of agriculture production and market**

Reference No.: SER-SCAP-CQS-CS-23-53

The Republic of Serbia has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Serbia Agriculture Competitive Project (SCAP) and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services. The main objective of this project task is to define the roadmap for improving the agri-climate infrastructure in selected regions of Serbia by establishing more efficient and effective anti-hail protection.

**Scope of Services**

**Capacity building 2023**

**Services to be provided by the Consultant under the Contract include:**

Development of the training program as a document outlining how capacity building activities will be carried out. This document shall describe the strategic goals and steps, as well as the completion timeline and list of activities. A detailed education program with training modules should be included in the implementation plan.

The following are the most important parameters for developing this implementation plan:

a) Beneficiaries of the First Call for proposals, Fruits, vegetables, grapes and flower growers.

The consultant should create a training modules and plan that includes areas that will contribute to the set of goals to improve our users' market orientation. We anticipate receiving an implementation plan that includes a detailed description of each training module, such as targeted communication development, negotiation, association, standards and qualifications for market participation, and so on. We also expect the consultant to make recommendations on how the user can make the best use of their investment.

b) Other project partners, such as external consultants, Ministry members, DAP members, and other parties who are directly or indirectly interested. The consultant should present a detailed implementation plan that includes both the Education Program for external consultants and the Education Program for Ministry project collaborators.

The expected training modules, which can be modified based on the needs, should include but not be limited on:

* Business planning and implementation of a business plan
* Marketing, branding and management
* Entrepreneurship skills development
* Development of agricultural entrepreneurship, with a particular emphasis on the expansion of female entrepreneurship
* Identifying and responding to agricultural challenges by sector
* Identifying and responding to market opportunities in the user's sector
* Required agricultural standardization for inclusion in bigger trade chains

Soft skills:

* Focused communication and negotiation
* Encouraging creativity and flexibility
* Assertiveness, resilience, and flexibility
* Teamwork and association

Training program should be discussed and accepted by the Project Management Team (PMT).

Training program should foresee 3 (three) program related sessions consisting of certified modules, workshops, trainings and capacity building activities, preferably on the 3 (three) different, separate locations, across Serbia, in order to cover the whole or the majority of country geography.

The consultant shall perform selection of users for a capacity building program for the year 2023 among 817 beneficiaries of the First call for proposals, supporting Fruits and vegetable growers. These beneficiaries are all in the later stage of the implementation of their business plans, and having the activities under this ToR will enhance their skills, update their knowledge and provide additional information for the competitiveness of their agriculture production. The selected beneficiaries will also represent a statistically relevant sample of SCAP beneficiaries under the 1st Call for proposals upon which the SCAP PMT will report on achieving PDO targets related to financial and production increase.

Contract duration: 180 days

**Required consultant’s (company) qualifications**

The following criteria will be applied to all consulting firms that have submitted their expression of interest:

* The Consultant shall be registered as a legal entity;
* The Consultant shall have appropriate professional, organizational and logistical capacities necessary for carrying out the assignment on the territory of the Republic of Serbia;
* The Consultant must have at least 30 full time employees, 10 or more employees with PhD level of education related to the assignment will be considered a strong asset;
* Experience in organization of agricultural related, small business development or entrepreneurship trainings;
* Minimum of 10 trainings (modules) with at least 150 participants per year in the previous three years,
* Organization and implementation of workshops, seminars, trainings or other relevant capacity building events supporting farmers, farmers associations, extensions services or agriculture related organizations, with more than 500 participants per year in the past 2 years, will be considered a strong asset;
* The Consultant should be accredited to provide at least 2 training/teaching modules custom made for the farmers needs;
* Experience in EU related educational, transfer of knowledge and scientific platforms, such as Erasmus and Horizont 2020 projects, as well as donor funded projects aiming rural development, capacity building of agricultural education, digitalization and innovation, will be considered an advantage.

The Consultant can be a joint venture (JV) between maximum two legal entities.

To substantiate the above qualifications, the Consultant must prepare a table containing the following information: project title or relevant assignment; description of the work performed; year of project implementation; country/region; client’s contact (first and last name, e-mail address); and contract value (contract as proof of performance may be required).

The Consultant is expected to establish a core team that shall consist of the following key experts, with the qualifications and skills defined in the Terms of References:

• Key expert 1 – Team leader

• Key expert 2 - Branding, Marketing and Management Expert

• Key expert 3 - Agriculture and Rural Development Expert

Expressions of interest will be evaluated by applying the following criteria with allocated points:

Consultant’s specific experience related to the assignment – 40 points

Relevance of the proposed key staff to the assignment – 60 points

The detailed Terms of Reference for the above referenced assignment is posted on the website of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management (MAFWM): <http://www.minpolj.gov.rs/category/javni-pozivi/javni-pozivi-u-2023-godini/>.

The Consultant will be selected in accordance with Consultant`s Qualifications Based Selection (CQS) as set out in the **World Bank’s Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers – Procurement in Investment Project Financing Goods, World, Non-Consulting and Consulting Services, July 2016, revised November 2017 and August 2018** (“the Regulations”). The Consultant that obtains the highest score during evaluation of expressions of interest will be invited to submit technical and financial proposals.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraphs 3.14, 3.16 and 3.17 of the Regulations setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest.

The Central Fiduciary Unit of the Ministry of Finance now invites eligible Consultants to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

Expressions of interest in English language must be delivered in a written form to the **e-mail** below by **September 6, 2023, 12:00 hrs, noon,** local time.

When submitting Expressions of interest please indicate assignment and reference number for which you are applying.

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| **Contact:** | **E–mail:** | **Address:** |
| To: | [dejan.jeremic@mfin.gov.rs](mailto:dejan.jeremic@mfin.gov.rs)  Mr. Dejan Jeremić  Procurement Specialist | Ministry of Finance  Central Fiduciary Unit  3-5 Sremska St  11000 Belgrade, Serbia  Tel: +381 11 765-25-65 |
| Cc: | [ljiljana.dzuver@mfin.gov.rs](mailto:ljiljana.dzuver@mfin.gov.rs)  [milan.stevanovic@scap.rs](mailto:milan.stevanovic@scap.rs)  [djordje.perisic@mfin.gov.rs](mailto:djordje.perisic@mfin.gov.rs) |