

TERMS OF REFERENCE

for the Black Sea Basin Joint Operational Programme 2014-2020

PROJECT ASSESSORS

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Joint Operational Programme “Black Sea Basin 2014-2020” is one of the four maritime basin programmes established in the framework of the *European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) 2014-2020 - Programming document for EU support to ENI Cross-Border Cooperation (2014-2020)*.

The Programme eligible area involves eight countries, some of them including their whole national territory (Armenia, Georgia and R. Moldova), while the others include those regions closest to the Basin (Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Turkey and Ukraine). The eight countries include three states (Armenia, Greece and R. Moldova) that are not physically on the coast of the Black Sea, but are clearly integrated or connected to the Black Sea Basin in terms of historical, economic, cultural, social and environmental factors. The other five countries (Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Turkey, and Ukraine) have direct access to the Black Sea.

The Programme’s **wider objective is to** “improve the welfare of the people in the Black Sea Basin regions through sustainable growth and joint environmental protection”.

Its goal is to establish long-lasting cross-border links within the Black Sea Basin by financing projects which should deliver clear cross-border cooperation impact and benefits, and which demonstrate sustainability of their actions, and synergies and complementarities with other actions in the same field.

The Programme’s **specific objectives** are to:

1. Promote business and entrepreneurship within the Black Sea Basin
2. Promote coordination of environmental protection and joint reduction of marine litter in the Black Sea Basin

These two specific objectives will be pursued by means of priorities, which will be implemented as described below:

Specific Objective 1 - Promote business and entrepreneurship within the Black Sea Basin

Priority 1.1 Jointly promote business and entrepreneurship in the tourism and cultural sectors

Priority 1.2 Increase cross-border trade opportunities and modernisation in the agricultural and connected sectors

Specific Objective 2 - Promote coordination of environmental protection and joint reduction of marine litter in the Black Sea Basin

Priority 2.1 Improve joint environmental monitoring

Priority 2.2 Promote common awareness-raising and joint actions to reduce river and marine litter.

Detailed information about the Programme is available at the following link <http://blacksea-cbc.net/>.

The implementation of the programme is coordinated by the following structures:

Managing Authority (MA) - the Romanian Ministry of Regional Development, Public Administration and European Funds is responsible for managing and implementing the Programme in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and for ensuring that the decisions of the Joint Monitoring Committee comply with the applicable laws and requirements.

National Authority (NA) - is the entity appointed by each participating country bearing the ultimate responsibility for supporting the Management Authority in the implementation of the programme in its own territory. The list of the NAs can be found under section 6 - Programme structures and national bodies in the Joint Operational Programme.

Audit Authority (AA) - within the Court of Accounts of Romania. The main responsibilities of the AA consist of ensuring that audits are carried out on the programme management and control systems, on an appropriate sample of projects and on the annual accounts of the programme.

The Audit Authority for the programme will be assisted by a Group of Auditors comprising a representative from each country participating in the programme.

Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) - is the joint decision-making structure for the programme. The JMC shall follow the programme implementation and progress towards its priorities using the objectively verifiable indicators and related target values defined in the programme and it shall examine all issues affecting the programme performance.

Control Contact Points (CCPs) - Each participating country has appointed one CCP which will support the MA in the control tasks linked to project expenditure verification. The list of the CCPs can be found under section 6 - Programme structures and national bodies in the Joint Operational Programme.

Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) - is located in Constanta in the South East region of Romania within the South East Regional Development Agency (SERDA). The JTS is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the Programme according to the provisions of the implementing Framework Agreement concluded between the Managing Authority and the South East Regional Development Agency and according to the provisions of national and EU legislation. The JTS is responsible for fulfilling all the tasks delegated by the MA for the implementation of the Programme to the JMC secretariat, project generation, **evaluation and selection of the projects**, technical, economic and financial monitoring of the projects, information and publicity.

2. PURPOSE

According to the provisions of the Framework Agreement concluded between the Managing Authority (MA) and the Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS), the JTS is responsible for the quality assessment (technical and financial evaluation) and selection of all projects submitted in the framework of 2014-2020 Black Sea Basin Joint Operational Programme.

The 1st Call for Proposals was launched in January 2017 and the deadline for submission of project proposals/applications was May 31st, 2017.

In order to support the JTS in performing the quality assessment (technical and financial evaluation) of project proposals submitted in the framework of the 1st Call for Proposals, according to the evaluation and selection criteria set out in the Guidelines for Grant Applicants, it is envisaged to set up a pool of 16 experts.

The following number of experts having corresponding expertise in one or more of the programme thematic fields (entrepreneurship, tourism, culture, agriculture, environment, fisheries and aquaculture) will be selected:

Programme priority	Number of experts to be selected	Areas of thematic expertise required
Priority 1.1 - Jointly promote business and entrepreneurship in the tourism and cultural sectors	7	entrepreneurship, tourism, culture
Priority 1.2 - Increase cross-border trade opportunities and modernisation in the agricultural and connected sectors	4	entrepreneurship, fisheries, aquaculture, food industry, agro-industry
Priority 2.1 - Improve joint environmental monitoring	3	environment, entrepreneurship
Priority 2.2 - Promote common awareness-raising and joint actions to reduce river and marine litter	2	environment, entrepreneurship
Total	16	

In this respect, the JTS invites the interested candidates to submit their applications in compliance with the requirements mentioned below. The candidates shall indicate in the email with their application, the priority in each they are interested to be involved during quality assessment, **according to their area of expertise**. In case a candidate is interested and has expertise in more priorities they should specify the priorities in descending order.

Labour contracts with a 3-month duration shall be concluded between the JTS - SE RDA and the selected assessors according to the Romanian legislation into force needed, according with the workload, the contract duration may be extended with a number of days necessary for finalizing the quality assessment. The indicative timeline for performing the project assessment is September - December 2017.

3. TASKS

The main task of each assessor is to undertake a quality assessment (technical and financial evaluation) of applications submitted under the 1st call for proposals of the BSB 2014-2020 JOP and to fill in the assessment Grids, accordingly.

Assessment of applications shall be made exclusively by using the electronic monitoring system

of the programme (eMS). eMS is a web application built by the Interact Programme where project applications are submitted, assessed, contracted and monitored.

A briefing meeting including a training session on how to use the eMS during the quality assessment process shall be provided to all selected assessors by the MA/JTS before starting the assessment.

The quality assessment of each application will be carried out by two external assessors, in English language, in accordance with the evaluation criteria set out in the Quality Assessment Grid (Annex 9 to the Guidelines for Grant Applicants: <http://blacksea-cbc.net/black-sea-basin-2014-2020/calls-for-proposals/>) and each criteria will be evaluated according to the scores specified in the Grid. In carrying out the evaluation, the assessors must strictly use the eMS Quality Assessment grid. Detailed instructions on how to undertake an evaluation using eMS can also be found in the extract from Interact eMS Manual available on the ENI CBC BSB website: <http://blacksea-cbc.net>. Based on the eMS access rights, each external assessor will carry out its assigned duties independently, making cross checks of the information included in the application (correlation between different sections and its annexes, as applicable) and the correctness of the information provided in the declarations and in the application.

Assessors have to appraise each sub-criterion with a score, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the project proposal, strongly and clearly justifying the score awarded and providing assessment conclusions per each criterion. Assessors are expected to give comments on each criterion and, in their comments, explicitly refer to the elements of analysis under the relevant criteria. The comments on each criterion have to reflect and justify the score given for it. In the comments, experts must provide a thorough analysis of the application highlighting its relative strengths and weaknesses and indicating what improvements could be made.

As their comments could be used to provide feedback to applicants, assessors must pay particular attention to clarity, consistency and appropriate level of detailing.

Assessors must draft their comments in English.

In case of recommending a project proposal for funding, also conditions/ recommendations for necessary amendments during the contracting phase should be provided.

If needed, assessors have to ensure their availability to review their assessments with the JTS / Selection Committee (in case of failure to apply the assessment rules established in the Guidelines for Evaluation and/or Guidelines for Grant Applicants, in case of numerical inconsistencies, if comments do not correspond to scores given in evaluation grid (incoherence), if they are of low quality showing superficial consideration of proposal, if the comments and recommendations do not sufficiently justify the awarded score, in case of discrepancies, including contradictory comments between the two evaluation grids of the same application).

As the result of this discussion, the experts are expected to improve/modify their assessment according to the criteria/additional aspects agreed with the JTS / Selection Committee.

State Aid Compliance Assessment

After filling in the Quality Assessment Grid, the state aid compliance shall be performed according to the questions listed in the eMS Grid, which are identical to those presented in Annex 7 (State Aid Assessment Grid) of the Guidelines for Applicants. To identify the direct

and/or indirect state aid relevant activities, the state-aid compliance assessment will be performed based on the information provided in the application and in Annex 4 - State Aid Self-Assessment Declaration attached to the application. Also, it is recommended that assessors should carefully consult section 2.7. of the Guidelines for Applicants.

In carrying out the evaluation, the assessors must:

- Have good knowledge of the ENI CBC Black Sea Basin 2014-2020 Joint Operational Programme (<http://blacksea-cbc.net/black-sea-basin-2014-2020/eu-regulations/>), the Guidelines for Grant Applicants (<http://blacksea-cbc.net/black-sea-basin-2014-2020/calls-for-proposals/>) and the Guidelines for Evaluation and Selection of Applications which shall be provided by the JTS at the beginning of the project evaluation process.
- Strictly use the eMS Quality Assessment grid, as annexed to the Guidelines for Grant Applicants;
- Know the content and structure of the application form;
- Strictly comply with the rules defined by the Programme for ensuring the impartiality and the confidentiality of the evaluation process. Assessors must be aware that failure to comply with these rules shall result in exclusion from the evaluation processes;
- Immediately inform the SC Chairperson if during the evaluation, she/he discovers being directly or indirectly connected with an application, which she/he has been asked to evaluate and which impairs her/his impartiality;
- Strictly follow the deadlines for finalising the evaluation of the assigned applications;
- Be available for the Selection Committee meetings should the Selection Committee require further explanation on their work.

Experts must ensure reliability and commitment to deliver high quality outputs in due time. Each candidate shall submit, together with their CVs and supporting documents, **a Declaration of availability** stating that the tasks to be performed have been understood by the candidate and that he/she is available for the job and committed to deliver the tasks in time. The number of project proposals which will be assigned to the selected assessor may vary depending on the thematic scope and number of project proposals received.

4. ASSESSORS' PROFILE

Experts are required to have:

- ✓ a university level degree certified by a diploma or other document with the same legal value issued by the authorities of the State of domicile or residence (university degree of architecture and/or engineering is required for evaluation of investment/works infrastructure projects);
- ✓ experience in performing quality assessment/technical and financial evaluation of at least 30 projects, including grant applications for funding;
- ✓ experience in quality assessment of projects submitted under European Territorial Cooperation/cross border/transnational/interregional cooperation programmes) and Instrument for Pre-accession assistance (IPA)/European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)/European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) programmes;
- ✓ general knowledge on State Aid;

- ✓ experience in one or more thematic fields of 2014-2020 Black Sea Basin Programme (entrepreneurship, tourism, culture, agriculture, environment, fisheries and aquaculture etc);
- ✓ good command of English language, especially in writing.

The above requirements shall be proved by professional experience and/or studies, as presented in the CV and supporting documents.

The following criteria shall be considered assets in the selection process:

- ✓ good knowledge of European Neighborhood Policy;
- ✓ experience in assessing projects financed from European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)/ European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI);
- ✓ experience in assessing the state aid relevance of project proposals' activities;
- ✓ experience in assessing investment/works infrastructure projects.

The above criteria shall be proved by professional experience and/or studies, as presented in the CV and supporting documents.

5. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Interested applicants shall submit the following documents (PDF format) via e-mail:

- ✓ Resume (CV) (using the Europass format) - in English language, signed (PDF format)
- ✓ Proof of education, professional experience and language knowledge (diplomas, recommendation letters, certificates, work contracts, job descriptions etc) - copies of original documents and unofficial translation in English);
- ✓ Declaration of Availability, signed - (PDF format) -See attached template

Applications consisting of CVs and supporting documents (proof of education, professional experience, language knowledge) and the Declaration of Availability should be sent by email to the following email addresses: recruitment@adrse.ro.

Original documents shall be presented by successful candidates when concluding the labour contract.

Please make sure you send all the requested documents in order to allow a proper evaluation of your professional experience, knowledge, skills and availability and to avoid any delays generated by additional clarifications that might occur during the recruitment process.

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS IS 11th of August.

In case the deadline will be extended, the information will be posted on the programme website. Nevertheless, please consider 11th of August as deadline for submitting the applications.

Only applications received by the closing date of this vacancy announcement will be further evaluated.

Please note that the applications shall be submitted online, via e-mail. You must ensure that the e-mail with your application is received in due time, otherwise the application shall not be further evaluated.

6. SELECTION CRITERIA

Experts will be selected on the basis of the following award criteria:

1. The number of projects over 30 assessed by the expert;
2. The number of projects assessed by the expert in a transnational/interregional/cross border cooperation programme.

For the 1st criterion, the experts must include in their CVs and recommendation letter must prove the number of projects assessed. The number of projects over 30 will be scored by using the following method: for 31 projects - 1 point; for 32 projects - 2 points; for 33 projects - 3 points etc.

For the 2nd criterion, the experts must include in their CVs and recommendation letter must prove the number of projects assessed in a transnational/interregional/cross border cooperation programme by the expert. The number of projects will be scored by using the following method: for 1 project - 1 point; for 2 projects - 2 points; for 3 projects - 3 points etc.

The final score will be calculated by adding the total number of points received for criteria 1 and 2.

In case of equal final scores, the following three criteria will be considered:

- number of assessed projects financed from European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)/ European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) by counting them and ranking the applicants in descending order;
- number of projects which involved state aid assessment of activities¹, by counting them and ranking the applicants in descending order;
- number of years of professional experience in the thematic fields of the Programme, by counting them and ranking the applicants in descending order.

The experts who will receive the highest number of points and in case of equality the expert who will get the highest ranking, will be contacted by the JTS. In case one expert is not available, the next in line will be contacted.

Please note that minimum 1 expert who has a university degree of architecture and/or engineering and has experience in assessing investment/works infrastructure projects may be selected for each priority, depending on the final list of applications to be assessed in the second evaluation stage.

¹ Within the projects assessed (30 or more) as above-mentioned

The successful candidates will be allocated on one of the priorities according to their ranking, the order of their option (as regards the priorities) and the total number of experts required per each priority.

All candidates will be informed on the results of the evaluation by e-mail, according to the indicative timetable. Following the announcement of the results, any rejected candidate may submit a written complaint, by e-mail, to the address mentioned above, within 2 working days from the date of the email with the official announcement of the results.

The project assessment phase shall start on September 2017 and shall end on December 2017. Please note that the above-mentioned timeline is indicative and the assessment may start later, once the recruitment and hiring processes have been finalized.

7. CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND CONFIDENTIALITY

To ensure the independence of the quality assessment performed in their capacity as assessors, selected experts will have to sign a declaration certifying that there is no conflict of interest and that she/he commits to inform the Chairperson of the Selection Committee if any conflict should arise during the assessment phase. A conflict of interest exists if the impartial and objective function of an assessor is jeopardized due to reasons involving family, economic interest or any other pecuniary interest shared with the project applicants. Throughout the assessment process the assessors must ensure the confidentiality of the information and documents as provided by the MA/JTS. This shall be certified by the selected expert by signing a declaration - **see template attached.**

8. LOCATION AND DURATION

A briefing meeting with the MA/JTS representatives will take place in Bucharest or Constanta (Romania) prior to starting the project evaluation process. Indicatively, the **briefing meeting** will be held in **September 2017**.

The work shall be performed in Romania, at JTS's headquarters which is located in Constanta, 48 Tomis Blvd or in another location from Romania agreed with the JTS.

Assessors must use functional laptops/desktops of their own, while adequate Internet connection, printers and office materials, consumables shall be ensured by the JTS.

The laptops/desktops used by the assessors must be functional in order to allow them to carry out the required tasks.

The assessment of the assigned applications will have to be performed and finalized (submission of filled-in assessment grids by EMS) according to a time schedule agreed with JTS. Indicatively, the entire evaluation process shall last until December 2017.

9. TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

a. Type of contract

Assessors shall perform their tasks in the framework of full-time - flexible hours labour contracts concluded with SE RDA, as Joint Technical Secretariat, under the Romanian law. The labour contracts will have 3-month duration, starting September 2017 (indicatively). If needed, according with the workload, the contract duration may be extended with a number of days necessary for finalizing the quality assessment.

b. Location

Assessors shall perform their tasks at the JTS headquarters or in another location from Romania established by the JTS.

c. Monthly salary and installment payment

The monthly net amount paid according to the labour contract, after deduction of all common charges (taxes, social charges), shall be 1.500 Euro paid in Romanian lei at the exchange rate of the Commission applicable in the month the labour contract is concluded (the monthly exchange rates of the Commission are published on: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/inforeuro/inforeuro_en.cfm). The amount is fixed and is not subject to any negotiation with the Employer.

A fixed installment payment of 1.200 Euro shall be paid once to non-residents in order to facilitate their relocation to Romania. The installment shall be paid with the first salary payment, after obtaining the work permit and the individual identification code.

d. Specific terms of employment

d.1) The selected assessors from EU shall undertake the following steps:

- The own statement as concerns the residency in Romania shall be submitted to the General Inspectorate for Immigration Constanta;
- A certificate for recognition of studies shall be issued by the National Ministry of Education. If the case may be, selected assessors should prepare a set of documents to be submitted to the National Ministry of Education. SE RDA shall assist them in submitting the documents and getting the certificate of recognition of studies. Please note that the procedures of recognition and equivalence of bachelor diplomas does not apply to diplomas obtained in well-known, prestigious universities (please consult the list of well-known, prestigious universities, attached herewith);
- The individual labour contract shall be signed with the respective assessor. The execution of tasks may start immediately after the signature of the labour contract;
- A registration certificate is needed for getting the individual identification code. The needed documents shall be submitted to the General Inspectorate for Immigration Constanta. after signature of the labour contract in Romania.

IMPORTANT!!

In the absence of the individual identification code, no payments can be made by SE RDA to the assessors.

d2) The selected assessors from non-EU shall undertake the following steps:

- A letter for confirming the employment of the non-EU citizens according with the Order no 25/26.08.2014, art. 3 (2c) (with no mandatory condition of obtaining the employment notice) shall be issued by the General Inspectorate for Immigration Constanta;
- The long stay visa for employment purposes shall be obtained. In order to get the long stay visa for employment, selected assessors shall submit to the Romanian Embassies/Consular Offices from their country of origin/residence an application file. It is mandatory to make proof of the renting contract in order to demonstrate the residency in Romania;
- A certificate for recognition of studies shall be issued by the National Ministry of Education. If the case may be, selected assessors should prepare a set of documents to be submitted to the National Ministry of Education. SE RDA shall assist them in submitting the documents and getting the certificate of recognition of studies. Please note that the procedures of recognition and equivalence of bachelor diplomas does not apply to diplomas obtained in well-known, prestigious universities (please consult the list of well-known, prestigious universities, attached herewith);
- The individual labour contract shall be signed with the respective assessor. The execution of tasks may start immediately after the signature of the labour contract;
- The work permit shall be obtained by submitting the necessary documents to the General Inspectorate for Immigration Constanta. The issuance of the work permit is done in Romania, by Romanian authorities. Based on the work permit, the assessors will obtain individual identification codes which will be used for labour contract taxation purposes.

IMPORTANT!!

In the absence of the individual identification code, no payments can be made by SE RDA to the assessors.

d.3) For Romanian citizens or for other citizens with legal working rights in Romania, the labour contract shall be signed after the submission of the following documents:

- Identity Card - in copy;
- Work certificate proving length of service starting 01.01.2011 until present;
- Medical certificate issued by an occupational health medical practitioner stating that the respective person is clinically healthy and capable of work and has no record of chronic and neuropsychological diseases.
- Criminal record.

10. INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

	DATE	TIME
Deadline for submission of job applications (CVs and supporting documents) by email	11 th of August 2017	0:00 (Romania's hour)
Information to applicants regarding the results of selection of submitted job applications (by email)	24 th of August 2017	
Submission of complaints regarding the results of the selection procedure	2 working days from the date of the email with the official announcement of the results.	0:00 (Romania's hour)
Analysis of complaints and communication of results	2 working days from the date of receiving the complaints	0:00 (Romania's hour)
Signing of individual labour contracts	September 2017	n/a