

Call for the set-up of a pool of assessors in charge of the evaluation of proposals submitted under the EU-funded Programme “Eastern Partnership Territorial Cooperation” TC Programme Azerbaijan - Georgia

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, acting as **Managing Authority (MA)** for the EU-funded Programme “Eastern Partnership Territorial Cooperation (EaPTC)”, is calling for applications for setting up a pool of assessors’ database.

The **aim of the call** is to identify and select qualified and experienced professionals for establishing a **pool of assessor** experts and thus to ensure a proper technical and quality evaluation of the proposals that will be submitted under the EaPTC Territorial Cooperation Programme Azerbaijan - Georgia.

The experts admitted in the database – following a selection procedure – will provide technical assistance to the Managing Authority and the Joint Decision Making Committee (JDMC) in evaluating the eligible actions. The pool will be set up for the entire programme period and will be functional until terminated.

In order to be eligible, the applicants have to comply with the criteria listed below.

Being an expert in the database does not automatically imply that the Managing Authority will actually award a contract to the expert. This will depend on the number and type of applications submitted in the frame of the different calls.



This Programme is funded by the European Union
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Программа финансируется Европейским союзом
и правительством Германии



This Programme is
implemented by GIZ
Программа выполняется GIZ

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für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

1. Background

With the “Eastern Partnership Territorial Cooperation Programme” the EU has established four territorial cooperation programmes between the border regions of the Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries: Armenia – Georgia, Azerbaijan – Georgia, Belarus – Ukraine, Moldova – Ukraine. The objective is to promote sustainable territorial cooperation between these border regions to support their social and economic development. More specifically, these territorial cooperation programmes aim at strengthening cross border contacts between local authorities, communities and civil society organisations (CSOs) to help develop joint solutions to common social and economic development challenges in the participating border regions of the EaP countries.

The Eastern Partnership Territorial Cooperation Programmes will largely build on the experience of the ENPI cross border cooperation (CBC) programmes implemented along the EU external borders in what concerns focusing on local development needs as well as thematic coverage. A distinctive feature – and novelty for the EaP region – of these programmes lies in the fact that the interventions will support the creation of genuine, effective and operational cooperation between border regions of the EaP countries only, whereas ENPI CBC always include an EU Member State as one of the partners.

The territorial cooperation programme between Azerbaijan and Georgia is carried out in the following **eligible areas**:

- Azerbaijan: Ganja-Qazakh and Sheki-Zagatala economic zones
- Georgia: Kakheti and Kvemo-Kartli (mkhare)

The overall objective of the territorial cooperation programme Azerbaijan – Georgia is to strengthen cross border contacts between local authorities, communities and civil society organisations to help develop joint solutions to common social and economic development challenges.

Thematic coverage: Operational Objectives of territorial cooperation programme Azerbaijan - Georgia addresses local development needs that have been specified in the Joint Operational Programme (JOP). It supports small-scale cross border projects between local partners and focuses on the following three operational objectives and related priority issues:

- I. Improving the living conditions of local communities in the border regions through joint projects supporting economic and social development
- II. Addressing common challenges in the fields of environment, employment, public health and any other field of common interest having a cross border dimension
- III. Culture, education and sports

The expected results of Eastern Partnership territorial cooperation are as follows:

- An established cooperation pattern between the participating countries
- Cooperation between local authorities, communities and CSOs in the eligible border regions of the EaP countries' is increased.
- The capacity of local and regional authorities in the EaP countries to effectively participate in EU-funded programmes is strengthened.

Actions financed under the Programme will be selected through calls for proposals. The evaluation of proposals will be carried out by the Evaluation Committee (EvC). The EvC will be supported by a team of external experts - assessors - recruited by the MA and responsible for the assessment of applications.

Institutional Set-up

Each territorial cooperation programme establishes a **Joint Decision Making Committee (JDMC)**. The JDMC is the body where the participating countries consult each other and take decisions concerning the programme implementation. The JDMC brings together representatives of the central government, local authorities and CSOs of each participating country. The JDMC ensures ownership of the programme by the participating regions. The JDMC develop Joint Operational Programmes under each Territorial Cooperation Programme, defining priority measures and evaluation criteria. The JDMC will also approve the results of the project selection, which becomes valid after endorsement by the European Commission (EC).

The EaPTC Programmes are implemented in indirect centralised management with GIZ assuming the responsibility of the **Managing Authority (MA)**. The tasks of the Managing Authority (MA) comprise the operational and financial management of the TC Programmes.

As such, the MA is responsible for launching calls for proposals as well as evaluating those proposals. It will also act as **Contracting Authority (CA)** concluding and managing contracts, carrying out payments, recovering sums due and cancelling debts that cannot be recovered.

The **Eastern Partnership Territorial Cooperation Support Programme (EaPTC SP)** is a technical assistance programme aiming to create conducive environment for cross-border cooperation programmes along the borders of the EaP countries, and to strengthen the capacity of local and regional state and non-state actors along these borders to develop and implement cross-

border projects. In addition to the capacity building role, the Support Programme carries out communication and visibility activities to raise public awareness of the territorial cooperation programmes in general and of opportunities for stakeholders of joining the different activities.

More information about the programme is available on the programmes' website: www.eaptc.eu.

2. Invitation

The Managing Authority hereby invites applications from individuals with a view to set up a pool of assessors (independent experts) to provide assistance to the Evaluation Committee in the evaluation of proposals submitted under the CfP of the TC Programme Azerbaijan - Georgia. Interested candidates are invited to apply in accordance with the provisions of this notice (see section 6).

3. Description of the assignment

Selected assessors will be asked to assist the EvC in the quality assessment of project proposals (application form with all relevant annexes) line with the Evaluation Grid as well as selection and award criteria.

Assessors will have to complete each section of the Evaluation Grid given in the Guidelines for Applicants (GfA) with clear comments for each sub-section, duly substantiating the score given at each stage. The final evaluation for each proposal shall be determined in an evaluation report and should contain sufficient information to justify the total score assigned.

4. Necessary requirements

To be included in the pool, applicants must fulfil the following requirements:

- be citizen of one of the EU 28 Member States or of one of the EaPTC Programme countries;
- have a university degree or equivalent qualification;
- Minimum 5 years of professional experience in one or more of the competence areas mentioned in section 5;
- have sound professional experience in the regions covered by the EaPTC Programme Azerbaijan - Georgia;
- have proven experience with the technical and financial assessment of proposals under EU-funded calls for proposals (grants);
- have a good knowledge of external aid and/or EU-funded actions/programmes, preferably on cross-border, trans-national or interregional cooperation;

- have a good knowledge of PRAG (Practical Guide to contract procedures for EC external actions);
- have a good knowledge of Project Cycle Management and Logical Framework approach;
- be fluent in speaking and writing in English;
- be computer literate.

5. Competence areas

Applicants are expected to have skills and knowledge appropriate to the field of expertise in which they might be asked to assist in accordance with the operational objectives of the EaPTC Programme Azerbaijan Georgia - Georgia:

Operational Objective 1: Improving the living conditions of local communities

- a. Development of cross-border synergies in agriculture and related economic sectors
- b. Build up cross-border tourism potential

Operational Objective 2: Addressing common challenges

- a. Solving cross-border environmental problems and enhancing emergency preparedness

Operational Objective 3: Culture, education and sports

- a. Enhancing social inclusion through measures in the areas of culture, education and sports
- b. Develop links between youth of the bordering regions

To ensure impartial, professional and smooth assessment process experts will be given proper documentation to get acquainted with the program goals and objectives. The experts will have to follow the instructions provided in the Guidelines for Assessors.

6. Application

Interested applicants shall submit the following documents:

- Detailed CV in English
- One page cover letter (briefly describing relevant experience)
- References proving the experience and knowledge
- A copy of valid ID

Applications should be sent by email to the following address: eaptc-tbilisi@giz.de

7. Selection

The MA will set up a pool of assessors including only those candidates who meet the criteria set out in sections 4 and 5. The MA will pre-select suitable candidates, which will have to be confirmed by the JDMC and approved by the EC. Inclusion in the pool does not guarantee further involvement in the evaluation process. The MA selection will ensure transparency, respecting equality of opportunities and non-discrimination principles.

8. Validity of the pool of assessors

The pool will be set up for the entire programme period and will be functional until terminated. Experts might remain in the pool for the entire programme period. The pool may be up-dated if needed, including with the publication of new calls for expression of interest in case there will be a shortage of experts.

The experts will be free to resign from the pool, as well as the MA will reserve the right to remove experts from the list in case of poor performance, repeated unavailability or if problems rise regarding the impartiality and/or confidentiality of an expert.

9. Contractual arrangements

Experts will be contracted individually by the EaPTC Support Programme following their selection for evaluation tasks. Travel and accommodation costs where applicable will be reimbursed according to standard rules (e.g.: flight tickets in economy class).

10. Conflict of interest

To ensure the independence of proposal evaluation, selected assessors will have to sign a declaration certifying that there is no conflict of interest at the time of appointment and that they undertake to inform the MA of any situation of conflict, even potential, while carrying out their duties. In general the role as an assessors is incompatible with being a member, observer or advisor in the Joint Decision Making Committee, with the quality of applicant in any of the programme's calls for proposals, as well as, with the quality of performing consultancy or any other programme or project related services in the frame of the EaPTC to any third parties.

11. Confidentiality

Assessors will have to observe complete confidentiality of the information and documents brought to their attention during the whole evaluation process.

The deadline for Call for Applications is 18 January 2016.