The Malta Council for Science and Technology

INTERNATIONALISATION PARTNERSHIP AWARDS SCHEME PLUS

IPAS+

Call for Expressions of Interest for three (3) Evaluators

The Malta Council for Science and Technology is seeking the project Evaluation for Internationalisation Partnership Awards Scheme+ (IPAS+)

DEADLINE: Midnight on 11th May 2020

his measure falls under the Evaluators category under the IPAS+ Programme. IPAS+ is supported through Malta Government funds and is managed by the Malta Council for Science and Technology, on behalf of the Foundation for Science and Technology.

1.0 General

This is a Call for Expressions of Interest for Evaluators to provide advisory support to the Malta Council for Science and Technology (hereinafter referred to as the Council) in the systematic and objective assessment of submitted project proposals in Internationalisation Partnership Awards Scheme Plus (IPAS+). The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, suitability, effectiveness, impact and sustainability as per guidelines stipulated by the Council for projects. Evaluators are expected to provide information that is credible and useful, and will be expected to determine the worth or significance of the relevant activity or project based on the guidelines provided. Upon selection, the Council will provide a defined set of criteria upon which projects or reports should be evaluated.

This Call is open to Evaluators with at least three (3) years expertise in Research and Innovation and Internationalisation funding opportunities. Experience in evaluating projects before in relation to internationalisation opportunities and/or experience on national/international funding programmes will be considered an asset.

The purpose for evaluations and the main aim of this call is to ensure that the proposal is of:

High level projects in one of the following areas for IPAS+ Option A

➢ the development of joint teaching curricula for Masters or PhD students.

➢ placements for local researchers in foreign institutions for the purposes of furthering research & innovation collaboration.

➢ the arrangement of strategic and targeted visits by local academics/researchers and representatives of private entities to foreign entities in order to participate in research & innovation activities of an exploratory and developmental nature.

➢ the organisation of seminars or workshops on a particular research and innovation area held in Malta that would benefit from the participation of foreign experts.

➢ the development of transnational research & innovation proposals for submission to third party-funders, e.g. AGRIP, EASME - COSME, EPLUS, Horizon 2020, Horizon Europe, Life Programme, etc...

High level projects in the following criteria's for Option B

➢ Excellence of the proposed project idea (project's brief) and relevance to the pre-identified call topic.

➢ Proven track record of the proposed consultancy individuals/firms, including a list of other Horizon 2020 projects that have been supported in the past.

➢ Quality of the proposed consortium partners, makeup, distribution, diversity (academic, public, private).

2.0 Background to IPAS+

IPAS+ is a funding programme that supports the Internationalisation of Research and Innovation projects with the ultimate goal of improving Research and Innovation in Malta. The programme is divided in two Options. This is an overview of the two options.

Option A: will support opportunities for collaborative initiatives between Maltese entities as listed in the eligibility criteria and at least one foreign counterpart of proven track record of excellence. Proposals should describe the nature of the joint activities that would be funded through the Award. Applicants are to demonstrate how the proposed activities contribute towards and align with achieving the goals of the National R&I Strategy 2020, and to describe the potential of any activities to become self-sustaining or generate longer-term outcomes.

Option B: will support opportunities for Maltese entities intending to submit a Horizon 2020 (H2020)/Horizon Europe proposal as a coordinator to engage a service provider (local or foreign) who will be supporting the applicant through proposal writing and submission.

3.0 Service Requirements

The Council requests that interested Evaluators may assist in the following activities:

1. Evaluation of project proposals submitted in response to calls for proposals in line with IPAS+ policies, criteria and related information packages.

2. Any consensus meetings required

4.0 Budget and Finances

In line with legislative measures, all Evaluators engaged on IPAS+ should have a valid VAT number. It is essential that applicants either provide a copy of their VAT certificate or if this has not yet been provided by the VAT department, declaration that it has been applied for.

Please note that the Council will require an invoice for any work carried out and an official receipt for all payments affected.

The remuneration for each application successfully evaluated is that of €30 excluding VAT. In case that an applicant applies for both parts of the scheme in the same application the remuneration is €60 excluding VAT. The remuneration includes the consensus meeting that is held when all the evaluations of each deadline are evaluated. Unless instructed differently by the Council the consensus meeting will be held at the Council premises.

5.0 Duration of Contract and Conditions

Evaluators shall bind themselves to conduct such assignments in accordance with the terms of this Call. Any additional information or clarification, as may be requested by the Council, shall be deemed to form an integral part of the original assignment.

Applicants must have a proven and successful track record.

The selected Evaluators will be expected to sign a formal contractual undertaking for the provision of services within one week from being notified of the conclusion of the adjudication process.

With the exception of information that is already in the public domain, evaluators shall not divulge to third parties any of the information obtained in the course of this Call; or, in the event of a service allocation, during the course of evaluation, without the prior written consent of the Council. Information must be protected and used in accordance to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2001.

The agreement shall run until 31st December 2021 and be of a maximum value of five thousand Euro (€5000) (excl. VAT). The place of work will be the place where the evaluator has his official (permanent) address or at the Council Premises. Evaluators will also be excepted to sign a Non-disclosure Agreement.

Consensus meetings are mandatory and inclusive in the evaluation fee of €30 (€60 in case applicant applied for both options) per application successfully evaluated.

Evaluation sheets with set criteria and guidelines will be provided once the call is closed and all applications administratively evaluated by the Council.

Decisions taken by the Council with regards to the allocation of assignments to the selected Evaluators shall be binding and shall not be the subject of negotiation and/or discussion.

Evaluators must refuse work in the case of potential conflict of interest, and may refuse work by providing reasonable justification.

The selected Evaluators shall ensure that all services are delivered within the time frames stipulated by the Council. Payment will be effected following the completion of the allotted assignment and upon presentation of an invoice. Evaluators are to produce an official receipt of payment within 5 working days. Failure to do so may lead to the termination of the contract.

If any disagreement or dispute arises out of the contract signed between the selected Evaluators and the Council, such matter may be referred to arbitration under the Arbitration Rules and Procedures established by the Laws of Malta.

The Council reserves the right to terminate the contract at any time without the need to provide justification.

6.0 Evaluation Guidelines

Evaluators should be guided by the following principles:

- *Independence:* Evaluation should be completed in one's own personal capacity.
- *Impartiality:* All proposals and stage reports should be treated equally and evaluated impartially on their merits, irrespective of their origin or the identity of the applicant or service provider.

- *Objectivity:* Each proposal and stage report should be evaluated as submitted and not based on potential changes and/or alterations.
- *Accuracy:* Judgements should be taken against the official evaluation criteria and the proposal in question.
- *Consistency:* The same standard of judgment should apply to all proposals reports.
- *Confidentiality*: It is essential that:
  - ✓ Evaluation matters, such as: the content of proposals/stage reports, the evaluation results or the opinions of fellow experts, are not discussed with anyone.
  - ✓ Applicants and Partners in the project or any third parties are not contacted.
  - ✓ Confidentiality of documents is maintained at all times.

Upon completion of the evaluation, all documents should be deleted or destroyed.

6.2 Conflicts of Interest (COI)

A COI exists if the Evaluator:

- was involved in the preparation of the proposal or provision of service;
- stands to benefit directly / indirectly if the proposal is positively evaluated;
- has a family / personal relationship with any person representing an applicant or partner;
- is a director / trustee / partner of an applicant/partner or involved in the management of either;
- is employed or contracted by an applicant or partner for the purpose of IPAS+ or a subcontractor for the same.
- involved in proposal writing with a beneficiary – in this case he/she has to immediately let the Council know so that his/her contract is terminated.

Any breach of the above will lead to the termination of the Evaluator's contract. In such cases the evaluation will also be declared null and void and any invoices / expenses will also be

rejected. It is the Evaluator's responsibility to declare an actual or potential conflict of interest prior to commencing any assigned work.

6.3 Exclusion Criteria

Evaluators shall be excluded from application and participation if:

- they are currently beneficiaries of a project under the IPAS+ programme.
- they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- they have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgement which has the force of *res judicata*;
- they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the Council may justify;
- they have been the subject of a judgement which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity;
- they are currently subject to an administrative penalty referred to in Article 16(8) of the Malta Financial Services Authority Act.

7.0 Instruction and Application

Evaluators are to submit one (1) copy of their application by electronic mail clearly marked "Call for Evaluators IPAS+" to voucher.mcst@gov.mt

Applicants are to ensure that confirmation of receipt is provided in writing.

In the preparation, submission and any other process relevant to the submission and adjudication of this Call, potential Evaluators shall be guided by the following:

Each application should include the following items:

1. A covering letter ;
2. A detailed Europass Curriculum Vitae;
3. A professional Profile (include proof of experience);
4. A profile of the Entity (if applying as part on an entity);
5. Copy of the VAT certificate.
6. Company registration number (if applying as part of an entity);
7. Annex 01;
8. Annex 02 (Enterprises only).

Notes:

- ✓ Evaluators must, at minimum, hold a tertiary level of education.
- ✓ Evaluators must show proof of at least three years of professional experience in Research and Innovation and Internationalisation funding opportunities
- ✓ Preference will be given to Evaluators who had experience in evaluating projects before in relation to internationalisation opportunities and/or experience on national/international funding programmes will be taken into consideration.
- ✓ If the evaluation services are being provided under the auspices of an entity, a profile of the entity should be provided in addition to the professional profile and Curriculum Vitae of the person designated as the Evaluator within that entity.
- ✓ If the evaluation services are being provided under the auspices of an entity, the company's registration and VAT number should be provided. With exception to this clause, if the Evaluator is self-employed, then only the VAT number is required.

- ✓ **Only the best 3 ranked applicants will be chosen to evaluate IPAS+ applications. If one of the chosen will refuse or become ineligible the next in line will be chosen.**

Any requests for information or clarifications related to this Call are to be submitted via email at: voucher.mcst@gov.mt

Interested Evaluators are requested to submit their response and all relevant documents by not later than midnight on 11th May 2020. All documents should be initialised on each page.

Data Protection Clause: The information collected through this Call shall be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2001. The contents remain confidential and intended solely for the use of this purpose, and will not be disclosed or copied without your consent to anyone outside the Ministry for Employment and Education unless the law permits us to.

Annex 01 – Submission Checklist

This checklist is intended to facilitate submission. Candidates are requested to submit a copy of the checklist together with all relevant documents in sequence.

- ✓ Evaluators should hold at least three years of professional experience in Research and Innovation and Internationalisation areas
- ✓ Preference will be given to Evaluators who had experience in evaluating projects before in relation to internationalisation opportunities and/or experience on national/international funding programmes will be taken into consideration

Ref	Submission Task	Submission Check Box
1	A covering letter	
2	A detailed Europass Curriculum Vitae	
3	A professional Profile (include proof of experience)	
4	A profile of the Entity (if applying as part on an entity)	
5	Copy of the VAT certificate.	
6	Company registration number (if applying as part on an entity)	
7	Annex 01;	
8	Annex 02 (Enterprises only);	

Note: An inability to provide any of the above will lead to categorical exclusion.

Annex 02 – Statement on Conditions of Employment

1. It is hereby declared that all employees engaged with the company shall enjoy working conditions including wages, salaries, vacation and sick leave, maternity and parental leave as provided for in the relative Employment Legislation. Furthermore, we shall comply with Chapter 424 of the Laws of Malta (Occupational Health and Safety Authority Act) as well as any other national legislation, regulations, standards and/or codes of practice or any amendment thereto in effect during the provision of services under this contract.

2. It is hereby declared that the service being provided under this Call will be carried out by the bidding entity employees or *bona fide* self-employed individuals or subcontracted third parties. No work will be carried out by persons designated as self-employed where their actual employment status in terms of the Employment Status National Standard Order LN 44/2012 is that of an employee without prior notification to the Council. Such notification must reach the Council with 2 days of allocation of an assignment.

3. It is hereby declared that all the employees of the bidder, whether providing services to the Council or not, have a written contract of service and are registered with the competent authority of Malta which is the Employment and Training Corporation. Copies of the written contracts of service of the employees or sub-contracted parties will be available at any time for inspection.

4. It is hereby declared that if the bidder is found in breach of any of the above declarations it is accepted that this application will be nullified and that we will have no right to be compensated for any damage we may have suffered or will suffer in the future in respect to this termination.

5. The Evaluator or legal representative agrees to all the conditions listed in this statement.

Signature.....

Name of Signatory.....

I.D. No. .....

Name of bidder/contractor.....