

Serbia Accelerating Innovation and Growth Entrepreneurship Project

Strategy Advisory Services for RDIs Terms of Reference

1. Background

Serbia has received a loan from the World Bank Group for the **Serbia Accelerating Innovation and Growth Entrepreneurship (SAIGE) Project**¹ (Project) to support the strengthening of the Serbian Innovation and Entrepreneurship ecosystem. The main objective of the Project is to improve (i) the relevance and excellence of scientific research; and (ii) innovative entrepreneurship and access to finance for enterprise growth, as a way of contributing to Serbia's growth and competitiveness. The European Union Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA-II) is also providing complimentary financing support for the SAIGE Project. The Project includes the following three components:

Component 1: Research Sector Reforms

Component 2: Enterprise Acceleration

Component 3: Project Implementation, Monitoring, Capacity Building

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MoESTD) is responsible for the overall Project coordination and implementation, as well as execution of Component 1.2 RDI Reforms. Implementation of the Project is carried out by the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) team at the MoESTD comprising of PIU Project Manager, and technical and administrative staff.

The MoESTD manages the process of improving the Serbian public research and development (R&D) sector, including a revised policy and legal framework, reform of public R&D Institutions (RDIs), R&D financing model, establishment of the Science Fund, etc. In this context, in October 2020, the MoESTD engaged a consultancy firm for conducting independent external assessments of a number of RDIs, including preparing their transformation plans. In December 2021 MoESTD has signed the Memorandum of Understanding with the 6 RDIs defining the roadmap for process of transformation for each RDI. More RDIs are undergoing a similar process. Important part of the transformation process is capacity building which includes institutional policies, strategies, procedures and regulations.

2. Objective of the Assignment

The MoESTD now plans to receive consulting services to assist up to 12 RDIs under transformation to review existing strategic documents and/or to develop a new set of strategic documents. The Consulting firm should develop and apply tailored based approach to each of RDIs based on the needs and current status of the strategic orientation.

¹ <https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P170185>

The Consultant should provide advisory service and effective support for the selected RDIs under transformation in development of their strategies, action plans, and/or business plans, if needed. Consultant is also expected to assist active involvement of staff and external stakeholders in the process of strategic planning to ensure the ownership of the process, and likewise propose improvements and support RDIs in building their internal institutional capacities, procedures and practices for successful monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the strategic documents. The output of the consulting service should be RDIs' strategic documents complemented with action plans for effective implementation and monitoring of progress toward desired outcomes.

In the implementation of the assignment the Consultant may combine approaches and tools including SWOT and PEST analysis, strategic SMART goals setting, design thinking, portfolio strategy design, balanced scorecard, strategic map design, etc. The consulting service should not duplicate the work already done under the development of Transformation Plans of RDIs, but stay in line with the theory of change agreed in the Transformation Plans. Strategic documents should take into account Serbia's Smart Specialization Strategy² as well as the recent changes and developments in the national and global context, ensuring that the strategic orientation of RDIs is also in view of the mission areas of the Horizon Europe and targets multidisciplinary research, commercialization and socio-economic impact creation.

The Consultant should work closely with the management and transformation teams of the RDIs, and high-level institutional consultants and advisors who are already appointed to provide strategic support to RDIs.

3. Scope of Work and expected outputs

The scope of work for the Consulting firm includes the following:

1. For each RDI prepare a brief and focused Needs Assessment Report based on kick-off meeting with RDI staff and collection of available documents, including analysis of core activities, vision, mission, strategic goals, and recent activities. It should include plan of action with measures in place, timeline and manpower resources needed.
2. Conduct introductory sessions to prepare RDIs for the strategic planning process and cover relevant topics.
3. Providing guidance and support to RDIs in development of new or improvement of existing strategic documents, including:
 - Strategic analysis (internal and external)
 - Mapping of strategic areas of business in terms of product and services, technology, human resources
 - Setting strategic goals and strategy design
 - Stakeholder analysis and engagement plan
 - Strategy design, development/update of vision, mission and principles, and setting key performance indicators

² <https://pametnaspecijalizacija.mpn.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Smart-Specialization-Strategy-of-the-RS-for-the-period-2020-to-2027.pdf>

- Action plan design
 - Monitoring plan design.
4. Review of developed documents and provide feedback for defining final strategic documents.
 5. Provide support to RDIs in presentation of the adopted final strategic direction and the developed strategic documents to their internal communities.
 6. Preparation of short and focused final assignment report summarizing the process, methodology, and support provided to the RDIs, with lessons learned and recommendations for further improvements. The final report should be submitted to PIU/MoESTD at the end of the assignment.

4. Experience and Qualifications of the Consulting firm and the staff of the Consulting firm

The Consulting firm must possess the following qualifications:

- Be a legal entity registered in the Republic of Serbia,
- At least 10 years of general experience in providing expert support in consulting services for public and private sectors in strategic planning and business development,
- Proven record in support to research organizations, academia and private sector in development of the strategies, action plans and business plans,
- Proven record with references on supporting process for strategy development for research organizations is considered strong advantage,
- Capacity to assign a qualified and experienced team that will work on this assignment: 2 Key Experts with adequate qualifications for this contract (qualifications of key personnel will be jointly taken into consideration i.e. qualifications of key personnel as a group will be evaluated).

Required qualifications of the Key Experts:

- At least Master's degree in organizational sciences, management or equivalent;
- At least 7 years of experience in providing consulting services in the field of strategic planning and organizational development;
- Experience as Key Expert in at least 5 successful assignments for clients in development of strategies, action plans and business plans in the last 3 years;
- Experience in providing expert support to RDIs in strategic planning will be considered a very strong advantage;
- Extensive knowledge of strategic planning methodologies and approaches, including monitoring of strategic plans implementation,
- Excellent written and verbal communications skills, both Serbian and English;
- Excellent organizational, team leadership and time management skills.

The consulting firm is required to provide personnel who are qualified and competent for the project's tasks.

Selection of Consulting firm

The Consulting firm will be evaluated applying the following evaluation criteria:

#	Criteria	Weight
1	General experience in the field of the assignment	10
2	Specific experience relevant to the assignment	40
3	<p>Key Experts' qualifications and competence for the assignment</p> <p>The Key Experts' qualifications shall be evaluated according to the following sub-criteria and their belonging weights:</p> <p>a) General qualifications (general education and experience) 20%</p> <p>b) Adequacy for the Assignment (relevant experience in similar assignments). 80%</p>	50

Any changes in the team of key experts or additional expert engagements during the assignment should be subject of prior approval by the PIU/MoESTD.

5. Timing and duration

The Consulting firm is expected to be engaged for a period of 12 months, and with a possibility of extension subject to performance and project needs. The firm will ensure that Key Experts are allocated with sufficient number of days to accomplish their tasks with required quality. The expected time effort is approximately 120 working days. The assignment is envisaged to start in June 2022.

6. Reporting obligations

The Consultant shall:

- Prepare monthly activity reports (timesheets), within 5 (five) days after the end of month for which the report is due. Activity reports must contain a brief description of the assignments performed during this period, an update of progress and key findings, a summary of key training, coaching, consulting activities and meetings, key issues, as well as outstanding and resolved tasks and any other relevant information along with time spent on each issue and task. The timesheets will be supported by relevant documentation developed in the relevant month period. The timesheets need to be submitted by each of the Key Experts.
- Prepare inception report and final report, and ad-hoc reports and documents when needed, at the PIU/MoESTD request.

The Consultant will be accountable and report to the PIU Project Manager. The reports will be provided on paper (when necessary) and in electronic version in English and Serbian language.

7. Input by the Client and the MoESTD

The PIU/MoESTD will help with the access to relevant data and information as well as communication with the RDIs and other stakeholders when needed.

8. Terms of Payment

The Contract, in the form of the Standard World Bank Time-Based Contract for Small Assignments (covering fee and reimbursable expenses related to the assignment), will be entered into between the Consultant and the MoESTD as a Client. Payment for services rendered will be made monthly, based on monthly invoice and monthly activity reports with timesheets submitted and on compliance with the Project's envisaged timeframe. Each monthly report with timesheets must be approved by the Project Manager.

The SAIGE PIU will administer the Contract and make payments.

9. Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest

The Consultant undertakes to maintain confidentiality on all information that is not in the public domain and shall not be involved in another assignment that represents a conflict of interest to the prevailing assignment.