

REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND EDUCATION
Donje Svetice 38, Zagreb 10000, Croatia

DIGITAL INNOVATION AND GREEN TECHNOLOGY (DIGIT)
9558-HR

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICES

SOCIAL AND COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST

1. Background

The Government of Croatia and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) have signed the Loan Agreement (Loan No. 9558-HR) for the Digital Innovation and Green Technology Project (DIGIT) in the amount of EUR 106 million. The Project seeks to advance research and innovation with a digital and green focus through enhancing institutional infrastructure and research performance of research organizations and firms. The Project will be managed by the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Croatia.

The Project comprises two components over a duration of 5 years. Component 1 (*Enabling institutional conditions for digital and green research and innovation*) provides technical assistance and financing to strengthen institutional capacities and support the efficient use of EU funds. Component 2 (Programs for digital and green research and innovation) provides sub-financing to cover the gaps in EU funding and improve the targeting of research and innovation support to digital and green technology.

Within the Project the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) is established which assists the Ministry of Science and Education with day-to-day Project implementation, and is responsible for (i) planning, coordination implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of Project activities, (ii) procurement and financial management, (iii) social and environmental standards compliance, and (iv) reporting. The PIU also undertakes responsibility for implementation of Project activities in accordance with the Project Operations Manual, Croatian legislation and regulation, and relevant World Bank procedures. It will also prepare and submit reports and information on the project to the Ministry of Science and Education, Steering Committee, World Bank, and potential auditors, as well as keep the business documentation of the Project and all other duties connected to the Project. Furthermore, the PIU will provide support to the Croatian Science Foundation related to the Foundation's obligations and activities stemming from the DIGIT Project.

2. Objectives

As a part of the Project Management Team, Social and Communication Specialist will be responsible for facilitation and overseeing the implementation of the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) and all the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (WB ESF), policies and procedures relating to social due diligence, as outlined in the Project Operations Manual.

3. Scope of Work

Specific roles and responsibilities of the Social and Communication Specialist in the PIU regarding social policies and communication standards are, but are not limited, to:

- closely cooperate with Environmental Specialist to carry out all project tasks and monitor compliance with the required Environmental and Social Standards (ESSs) in accordance with the provisions of the loan agreement, ESCP and Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) and the national requirements;
- supervise and provide support to PIU and beneficiaries in social risk management, including preparation, updating, disclosure and consultations, adoption and implementation of the environmental and social instruments, including but not limited to risk screening and scoping, development of Terms of References (ToRs) for consultancy services, site-specific ESMPs, ESMP checklists, site-specific SEPs, Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMP), in line with WB requirements of public disclosure and inclusive public consultations;
- promptly notify the World Bank of any incident or accident related to the Project which has, or is likely to have, a significant adverse effect on the affected communities, the public or workers, including, inter alia, cases of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), sexual harassment (SH), and accidents that result in death, serious or multiple injury;
- develop internal incidents and accidents reporting procedures, oversee social incident/non-compliance investigations, prepare a report on the incident or accident, and propose any measures to address it and prevent its recurrence;
- Participate in the procurement process to ensure:
 - TORs, bidding, and contracts documents for contractors are consistent with the social aspects of the ESMF and sub-project social instruments requirements; and specify contractors' social responsibilities,
 - Verification that sub-contractors are compliant with social requirements;
- provide technical support to the PIU and beneficiaries in overseeing and enforcing environmental, social, health and safety (ESHS) requirements across contractors and service providers and develop an internal system to ensure timely submission of monthly monitoring reports on performance in accordance with the metrics specified in the respective bidding documents and contracts. Document the overall ESHS performance and remedial actions as part of the project's progress report and at the request of the World Bank, provide relevant information of the contractors' performance with regards to ESHS;
- ensure that the consultancies, studies (including feasibility studies), designs, capacity building, training, and any other technical assistance (TA) activities under the Project are carried out in accordance with terms of reference acceptable to the Bank, that are consistent with the ESSs, ensure that the outputs of such activities comply with the TORs;
- facilitate capacity building and on-the-job training to beneficiaries and contractors and service providers on specific ESS topics such as Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM), occupational health and safety (OHS), community health and safety, labour management, stakeholder engagement, and other thematic areas based on business needs;

- establish, maintain, and manage required procedures and technical capacity to ensure proper functioning and accessibility of the project-level GRM(s)¹ in accordance with the ES MF and SEP. This includes adjustment of the GRM to accommodate SEA/SH reporting based on a survivor-centred approach ([link](#)) and ensuring availability and accessibility of GRM for project workers;
- collaborate with the technical, environmental, communication and legal experts on project-level communication and stakeholder engagement on the project's activities, particularly dissemination of research opportunities and innovations, including their adoption to promote development benefits, including amongst vulnerable populations. This includes technical support for the development of inclusive public outreach activities that are sufficiently nuanced and targeted effectively towards vulnerable groups (e.g. men/women, disabled, youth/elderly etc.);
- supervise sub-projects stakeholder engagement action plans preparation and as necessary actively organize, participate, and coordinate implementation of defined activities;
- in collaboration with the environment specialist, develop a monitoring system and relevant tools for ESHS compliance monitoring across sub-projects to enable an informed approach and proportionality for risk management;
- in cooperation with environmental specialist prepare and submit to the World Bank regular monitoring and compliance reports on the environmental, social, health and safety (ESHS) performance of the Project, the implementation of social and communication instruments required, stakeholder engagement activities, and functioning of the grievance mechanism(s) as defined in the ESCP and ESMF;
- support stakeholder engagement and dissemination of information, including outreach to vulnerable groups considering the nature of the investment;
- participate in all project meetings between PIU, contractors, and WB representatives, which is crucial to keep social standards in the daily information flow and decision-making processes;
- maintain contact with environmental and social specialists of the World Bank and seek guidance on emerging challenges.

4. Deliverables

The Social and Communication Specialist works under the supervision of the Project Manager. The Social and Communication Specialist will prepare and provide the following reports on a monthly basis:

- time sheets - short description of work undertaken for each day of the reporting period.
- monthly report - a brief summary of work undertaken in the reporting period, including submission of deliverables.
- monthly work plan - a brief summary of work that is planned for the next reporting period.

¹ This includes: i) collecting logging and analysing information from the field, ii) following up on any questions, comments, and complaints, as necessary, iii) monitoring the closure of grievances and providing feedback to PIU/Beneficiary/WB and stakeholders.

5. Qualifications and Experience Required

Potential candidate shall possess the following qualifications, skills, and experience:

- i. An advanced degree (master's or PhD) or equivalent in social sciences, communication, social development, or other relevant disciplines.
- ii. A minimum of five years' in social development and social risk management, particularly on aspects related to stakeholder engagement and outreach to vulnerable groups.
- iii. Familiarity with the country's contexts and related social development challenges.
- iv. Demonstrate leadership and teamwork skills.
- v. Willingness to travel to project's sites.
- vi. Excellent writing skills and fluency in English and Croatian language.
- vii. Operational experience with the World Bank (especially under ESF), EU and other institutions (IFOs) applying Safeguards is considered as an advantage.

6. Rights

The Social and Communication Specialist will have the following rights:

- Work as an equal partner in the Team (PIU), having access to necessary information, resources, documentation, IT, administrative and other support, including support of other Team members in order to ensure due performance of his/her tasks, responsibilities, and duties.
- Receive timely remuneration and benefit packages as per the contract.
- Presentation to the World Bank, Project manager, MSE staff attributable to the duties under this job description for their consideration.
- Informing the Project Manager/MSE/World Bank of all operational shortcomings of contractors and sub-contractors identified during the performance of his / her official duties and making suggestions for corrective actions.

7. Duration of the Contract

The Social and Communication Specialist will be hired under a time-based contract, for period of 1 year (which includes 3 months of probation period) with possible extensions until the end of the project (presumably December 28, 2028), depending on business needs and satisfactory consultants' performance.

The assignment will be part time with a possibility to extend to full time depending on the workload. One working day consists of eight (8) working hours a day.