

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

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Digital, Innovation, and Green Technology Project (DIGIT)
9558-HR

Project Implementation Unit (PIU)

Procurement Specialist

1. Background

The Government of the Republic of Croatia and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) have signed a Loan Agreement (Loan Number 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, Education and Youth 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.

The Project envisages the formation of the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) which will assist the Ministry of Science, Education and Youth with day-to-day Project implementation, and shall be 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 will also undertake 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, Education and Youth, 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

The main objective of the Procurement Specialist is to implement and coordinate all procurement procedures for procurement activities under the Project. The Procurement Specialist shall be responsible for the efficient and timely procurement of works, goods and services, as outlined in the Procurement Plan of the Project.

The procurement activities under the Project shall be conducted in accordance with “The World Bank Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers: Procurement in Investment Project Financing Goods, Works, Non-Consulting and Consulting Services“ Fourth Edition, November 2020 (Procurement Regulations).

The Procurement Specialist should become familiar with all project related documents, including and not limited to the Loan Agreement, Project Appraisal Document, Project Procurement Strategy for Development, Project Operations Manual, Procurement Plan, and the above referenced Procurement Regulations.

3. Scope of Work

Specific responsibilities of the Procurement Specialist will include, but are not limited to:

- Overall management and coordination of procurement activities under the Project, including cooperation and coordination with relevant departments within the Ministry of Science, Education and Youth and Croatian Science Foundation;
- Preparation and updating, as relevant, of the Procurement Plan in the Systemic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement (STEP) portal in accordance with the provisions of the applicable Procurement Regulations and as required by the Project Operations Manual;
- Maintenance of permanent contact with the World Bank procurement team to inform and seek advice on any procurement-related issue;
- Assistance and cooperation with the PIU regarding implementation of procurement procedures and procurement processes of procurement activities under the Project
- Assistance and cooperation with the PIU and Evaluation Committees in each step of procurement/selection process, including drafting TORs for the selection of consultants and helping with the formulation of appropriate qualification and evaluation criteria for selection of consultants/suppliers/contractors;
- Coordination of bidding and selection procedures, as well as receipt of bids and project proposals;
- Preparation of procurement related documents, such as procurement notices, bidding/proposal documents, bid opening, evaluation reports, notifications of award, draft contracts, etc. according to the World Bank standard forms, as relevant;
- Assistance to the PIU, Croatian Science Foundation, and Evaluation Committees during contract negotiations;
- Administration and tracking of implementation of the signed contracts;

- Preparation and/or updating of other procurement-related documents for the project, such as the Procurement Plan, Project Operations Manual, Project Procurement Strategy for Development, etc.;
- Maintaining an efficient procurement and contract tracking system and proper filing of procurement related documents, to ensure quick retrieval of procurement information by the PIU, visiting World Bank Missions, Annual Auditors, etc.;
- Collaboration with the Financial Specialist regarding budgeting, disbursement projections and financial aspects of project procurement, including contracts;
- Collaboration with the Project Manager regarding the Annual Work Plan and Budget;
- As relevant, collaboration with the M&E Expert to develop contract tracking charts;
- Submission of all relevant documents for review and no-objection to the World Bank, and assistance to World Bank staff during procurement post-review Missions;
- Contribution to preparation of any required procurement related aspects of project reports.
- Any other procurement related activities as assigned by the Project Manager.

4. Deliverables

The Procurement Specialist will report to Project Manager at PIU. The Procurement Specialist will submit monthly reports that will include:

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

Other reports to be prepared by the Procurement Specialist, as relevant, include, but are not limited to:

- inputs to procurement-related aspects of project reports;
- any other **ad-hoc reports** on specific issues on project procurement implementation status at the request of the Project Coordinator in the Ministry of Science, Education and Youth, the Project Steering Committee, or the World Bank team.

The reports will be submitted in Croatian and in English (as relevant) in two (2) copies to be approved by the Project Manager at the PIU. Two weeks before the scheduled close of the assignment, the Procurement Specialist will prepare a Final Report, summarizing their work during project implementation, and if relevant, provide details of any future procurement related-work under the project. The report will be prepared in English and Croatian in two (2) copies.

5. Length of assignment

The administrative associate will be hired under a time-based contract, which includes a 3-month probation period, until December 29, 2028, depending on business needs and satisfactory consultants' performance.

The assignment will be full-time. One working day consists of eight (8) working hours a day.

6. Qualifications

The Procurement Specialist should have the following qualifications:

- Hold a Bachelor degree or specialist degree in economics, sciences, law, management, or arts, and possess relevant experience in procurement;
- Minimum 7 years of proven general working experience;
- Minimum of 5 years of professional experience in procurement.
- Experience in managing procurement under World Bank financed projects, or projects financed by other international financial institutions would be considered as an advantage.
- Understanding of and experience with World Bank Procurement Regulations, procurement procedures and Systematic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement (STEP) portal, will be considered an advantage;
- Experience in working with government bodies will be considered an advantage;
- Proven teamwork mindset and successful experience working within multi-disciplinary teams and with international consultants;
- Knowledge of public procurement regulations and procedures, as well as EU Funding Rules and Regulations will be considered an advantage;
- Be fluent in Croatian, and have excellent knowledge of spoken and written English;
- Have excellent digital literacy and command of computer tools and applications (MS Office and Internet Software are a must);
- Strong interpersonal, analytical and communication skills,

7. Input to be provided by the Ministry of Science, Education and Youth

The Ministry of Science, Education and Youth will provide the PIU with office space, facilities, and essential working materials such as computers, stationery, and related fixtures.

8. Reporting

The Procurement Specialist will report to the PIU's Project Manager as well as to Hrvoje Meštrić, authorized to perform the duties of the Director-General for Science and Technology, Ministry of Science, Education and Youth, and Ana Varjačić, Head of Sector for Programs and European Union Projects, Ministry of Science, Education and Youth.

The Procurement Specialist will be charged with producing regular reports through the STEP platform, including reports related to Project procurement progress, bid evaluation, contracting, and other reports as required by the PIU Project Manager, Ministry of Science, Education and Youth, the World Bank, and the Croatian Science Foundation.

9. Communications

The Contact person for the consultant is Ana Varjačić, Head of Sector for Programs and European Union Projects, Ministry of Science, Education and Youth, Donje Svetice 38, Zagreb, 10000, Croatia; phone: +385 1 4594 325; email: Ana.Varjacic@mzom.hr.