

## SERVICE CONTRACT NOTICE

### Information and communication support for the EU Delegation in Tirana Location – Albania

1. **Publication reference:** EuropeAid/138919/DH/SER/AL
  2. **Procedure:** Restricted
  3. **Programme title:** *IPA Information and Communication Programme*
  4. **Financing:** Budget line
  5. **Contracting Authority:** European Union, represented by the European Commission on behalf of and for the account of Albania
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## CONTRACT SPECIFICATION

5. **Nature of contract:** Fee-based
  
7. **Contract description:** The purpose of the contract is to provide assistance to the EU Delegation in Albania in its information and communication activities, aimed at increasing the level of public awareness about the European Union, its policies and programmes and their impact on citizens' daily lives in Albania, and at increasing the public understanding of the accession process based on well-informed expectations.  
The contract will include, but should not be limited to, the following information and communication activities:
  1. Communication planning, design and implementation, including on reform areas supported by EU assistance. This should entail the development of political messaging strategies and visibility campaigns.
  2. Outreach activities, public diplomacy and stakeholder engagement, including through the management of events and visits, press and media relations, capacity building of journalists, coordination with EU desks in municipalities, and the management of EU centres.
  3. Research and analysis, including media analysis, media monitoring and public opinion analysis.
  4. Issue management, risk management and crisis communication.
  5. Management of content on all media channels, including online presence of the EU Delegation (social media, web page development and update, photography, production of publications and promotional materials...)

8. **Number and titles of lots:** One lot only
  9. **Maximum budget:** 1,500,000.00 EUR
  10. **Scope for additional services:** The Contracting Authority may, at its own discretion, extend the project in duration and/or scope subject to the availability of funding up to the estimated amount of approximately 7,500,000.00 EUR. Any extension of the contract would be subject to satisfactory performance by the Contractor.
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### CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

11. **Eligibility:** Participation is open to all natural persons who are nationals of and legal persons (participating either individually or in a grouping – consortium - of tenderers) which are effectively established in a Member State of the European Union or in a eligible country or territory as defined under the Regulation (EU) N°236/2014 establishing common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for external action (CIR) for the applicable Instrument under which the contract is financed (see also heading 29 below) . Participation is also open to international organisations.
12. **Candidature:** All eligible natural and legal persons (as per item 11 above) or groupings of such persons (consortia) may apply.  
A consortium may be a permanent, legally-established grouping or a grouping which has been constituted informally for a specific tender procedure. All members of a consortium (i.e., the leader and all other members) are jointly and severally liable to the Contracting Authority.  
The participation of an ineligible natural or legal person (as per item 11) will result in the automatic exclusion of that person. In particular, if that ineligible person belongs to a consortium, the whole consortium will be excluded.
13. **Number of applications:** No more than one application can be submitted by a natural or legal person whatever the form of participation (as an individual legal entity or as leader or member of a consortium submitting an application). In the event that a natural or legal person submits more than one application, all applications in which that person has participated will be excluded.
14. **Shortlist alliances prohibited:** Any tenders received from tenderers comprising firms other than those mentioned in the short-listed application forms will be excluded from this restricted tender procedure unless prior approval from the Contracting Authority has been obtained (see Practical Guide – PRAG - 2.4.3.). Short-listed candidates may not form alliances or subcontract to each other for the contract in question.

- 15. Grounds for exclusion:** As part of the application form, candidates must submit a signed declaration, included in the standard application form, to the effect that they are not in any of the exclusion situations listed in Section 2.3.3 of the PRAG.
- 16. Sub-contracting:** Subcontracting is allowed.
- 17. Number of candidates to be short-listed:** On the basis of the applications received, between 4 and 8 candidates will be invited to submit detailed tenders for this contract. If the number of eligible candidates meeting the selection criteria is less than the minimum of 4, the Contracting Authority may invite the candidates who satisfy the criteria to submit a tender.

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### PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

- 18. Provisional date of invitation to tender:** August 2017
- 19. Provisional commencement date of the contract:** January 2018
- 20. Initial period of implementation of tasks:** 12 months
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### SELECTION AND AWARD CRITERIA

**21. Selection criteria:** The following selection criteria will be applied to candidates. In the case of applications submitted by a consortium, these selection criteria will be applied to the consortium as a whole unless specified otherwise. The selection criteria will not be applied to natural persons and single-member companies when they are sub-contractors.

- 1) Economic and financial capacity of candidate** (based on item 3 of the application form). In case of candidate being a public body, equivalent information should be provided. The reference period which will be taken into account will be the last three years for which accounts have been closed.
- The average annual turnover of the candidate must exceed 1,000,000 EUR for the last 3 years for which the candidate's accounts are closed.
- 2) Professional capacity of candidate** (based on items 4 and 5 of the application form). The reference period which will be taken into account will be the last three years from submission deadline.
- Has at least 10 permanent staff working in fields related to this contract.

**3) Technical capacity of candidate** (based on items 5 and 6 of the application form). The reference period which will be taken into account will be the last five years from submission deadline.

- The candidate has provided services under at least 3 contracts each with a budget (or the candidate's proportion of the budget) of at least 800,000 EUR in the fields of expertise mentioned below; such contracts were implemented at any moment during the reference period. This means that the projects the candidate refers to could have been started or completed at any time during the indicated period but it does not necessarily have to be started and completed during that period, nor implemented during the entire period.

a) at least one project/contract assignment in development and implementation of information & communication campaigns (development of targeted political messaging or visibility strategy, organisation of events, production of publications & promotional materials, web presence, etc.).

b) At least one project/contract assignment focusing on implementation of communication strategy to increase the level of information and public awareness about EU activities, policies and programmes.

Previous experience which caused breach of contract and termination by a Contracting Authority shall not be used as reference.

An economic operator may, where appropriate and for a particular contract, rely on the capacities of other entities, regardless of the legal nature of the links which it has with them. It must in that case prove to the Contracting Authority that it will have at its disposal the resources necessary for performance of the contract, for example by producing a commitment on the part of those entities to place those resources at its disposal. Such entities, for instance the parent company of the economic operator, must respect the same rules of eligibility - notably that of nationality – and must fulfil the same relevant selection criteria as the economic operator. With regard to technical and professional criteria, an economic operator may only rely on the capacities of other entities where the latter will perform the works or services for which these capacities are required. With regard to economic and financial criteria, the entities upon whose capacity the tenderer relies, become jointly and severally liable for the performance of the contract.

If more than 8 eligible candidates meet the above selection criteria, the relative strengths and weaknesses of the applications of these candidates must be re-examined to identify the eight best candidates. The only factors which will be taken into consideration during this re-examination are:

a) the highest combined value of the candidate's contribution (proportion carried out by the candidate) in the projects eligible as per criterion 21.3.

b) In case of equality after the first re-examination factor (a), the following factor will be used for the candidates remaining at the end of the list with the same number of projects:

- c) the highest number of the projects eligible as per criterion 21.3.

**22. Award criteria:** Best price-quality ratio.

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## APPLICATION

**23. Deadline for receipt of applications:** 14/07/2017, 17.00 CET

Any application received by the Contracting Authority after this deadline will not be considered.

**24. Application format and details to be provided:** Applications must be submitted using the standard application form, the format and instructions of which must be strictly observed. The application form is available from the following Internet address:

<http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/annexes.do?chapterTitleCode=B>

The application must be accompanied by a declaration of honour on exclusion and selection criteria using the template available from the following Internet address:

<http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/annexes.do?chapterTitleCode=A>

Any additional documentation (brochure, letter, etc.) sent with an application will not be taken into consideration.

**25. How applications may be submitted:** Applications must be submitted in English exclusively to the Contracting Authority in a sealed envelope:

- EITHER by recorded delivery (official postal service) to :  
Delegation of the European Union to Albania,  
Contracts, Finance and Audit Section,  
ABA Business Center – k. 17,  
Rruga Gjon Pali II,  
Tirana, Albania  
Opening hours: 09:30 am until 17:30 pm

In this case, the delivery record makes proof of compliance with the time-limit for receipt.

- OR hand delivered (including courier services) directly to the Contracting Authority in return for a signed and dated receipt to:  
Delegation of the European Union to Albania,  
Contracts, Finance and Audit Section,  
ABA Business Center – k. 17,  
Rruga Gjon Pali II,

Tirana, Albania

Opening hours: 09:30 am until 17:30 pm

In this case, the acknowledgment of receipt makes proof of compliance with the time-limit for receipt.

The Contract title and the Publication reference (see item 1 above) must be clearly marked on the envelope containing the application and must always be mentioned in all subsequent correspondence with the Contracting Authority.

Applications submitted by any other means will not be considered.

By submitting an application candidates accept to receive notification of the outcome of the procedure by electronic means. Such notification shall be deemed to have been received on the date upon which the contracting authority sends it to the electronic address referred to in the application.

**26. Alteration or withdrawal of applications:** Candidates may alter or withdraw their applications by written notification prior to the deadline for submission of applications. No application may be altered after this deadline.

Any such notification of alteration or withdrawal shall be prepared and submitted in accordance with Item 25. The outer envelope (and the relevant inner envelope if used) must be marked 'Alteration' or 'Withdrawal' as appropriate.

**27. Operational language:** All written communications for this tender procedure and contract must be in English.

**28. Date of publication of prior information notice:** 03/05/2017 – OJ 2017/S 085-164926  
<http://ted.europa.eu/udl?uri=TED:NOTICE:164926-2017:TEXT:EN:HTML&src=0>

**29. Legal basis<sup>1</sup>:** Regulation (EU) N°236/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action and Regulation (EU) No 231/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II) (OJ L 77/11 15.03.2014)

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<sup>1</sup> Please state any specificity that might have an impact on rules on participation (such as geographic or thematic or long/short term).