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# Call for expression of interest for the set up of a pool of independent assessors in charge of supporting the evaluation of proposals submitted under the Joint Operational Programme “Black Sea 2007-2013”

The **Romanian Ministry of Regional Development and Housing**, acting as **Joint Managing Authority (JMA)** for the Joint Operational Programme “Black Sea 2007-2013”, is calling for applications for setting up a pool of independent assessors’ database.

The **aim of the call** is to identify and select qualified and experienced professionals for establishing a **pool of assessors** and thus to ensure a proper technical and quality evaluation of the proposals that will be submitted under the Joint Operational Programme “Black Sea 2007-2013”, and by this to contribute to the efficient use of the funds available within the programme.

The independent assessors admitted in the database - following the submission of the applications - will provide technical assistance to the **Selection Committee (SC)** in evaluating the eligible proposals. The pool will be set up for the entire programme period and will be functional until terminated in 2013.

In order to be eligible, the applicants have to comply with the criteria listed that also contain other important details related to the tasks to be performed.

It is important to note that being an independent assessor in the database does not automatically imply the obligations of the Joint Managing Authority to award a contract to the assessor, this being influenced by the number and type of applications submitted in the frame of different calls.



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## 1. Background



The Joint Operational Programme Black Sea 2007-2013 is an EU co-financed programme part of the cross-border cooperation component within the new European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). The Programme has been approved by European Commission decision C (2008) 7406 of November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

It involves ten countries, some of them including their whole national territory (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and R. Moldova), while some others including those regions closest to the Basin (Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine). The ten countries include four states (Greece, Armenia, Azerbaijan and R. Moldova) that are not physically on the coast of the Black Sea, but clearly integrated or connected to the Black Sea Basin in terms of historical, economic, cultural, social and environmental factors. The other six countries (Bulgaria, Romania, Russia, Turkey, Georgia and Ukraine) have direct access to the Black Sea.

The global objective of the programme is to achieve stronger regional partnerships and cooperation. By doing so, the programme aims to contribute to its key wider objective: “a stronger and more sustainable economic and social development of the regions of the Black Sea Basin”. The Joint Managing Authority (JMA) of the Programme is the Ministry of Regional Development and Housing, located in Bucharest (Romania). More information is available at [www.blacksea-cbc.net](http://www.blacksea-cbc.net).

The Programme aims at financing cross-border cooperation actions focusing on three priorities:

1. Supporting cross border partnerships for economic development based on combined resources
2. Sharing resources and competencies for environmental protection and conservation
3. Supporting cultural and educational initiatives for the establishment of a common cultural environment in the Basin

Actions financed under the Programme will be selected through calls for proposals. The evaluation of proposals will be carried out by the Selection Committee (SC): this joint structure, chaired by the JMA, is composed by five voting members - representing five participating countries to the Programme, selected on the basis of a rotation mechanism. The SC will be supported by a team of independent assessors - engaged by the JMA and responsible for the assessment of applications.

More information about the programme and application pack for the first call for proposals is available on the programmes' website: [www.blacksea-cbc.net](http://www.blacksea-cbc.net).



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## 2. Invitation

The Joint Managing Authority hereby invites applications from individuals with a view to set up a pool of independent assessors to provide assistance to the SC in the evaluation of proposals. Interested candidates are invited to apply in accordance with the provisions of this notice (see section 6).

## 3. Description of the assignment

Selected assessors will be asked to assist the SC in the technical and financial evaluation of the proposals submitted under the different calls in line with the Evaluation Grid approved by the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC).

Assessors will have to complete each section of the Evaluation Grid (see below) with clear comments for each sub-section, duly substantiating the score given at each stage. The final evaluation for each proposal should contain sufficient information to justify the total score assigned.

### Evaluation Grid

Section	Maximum Score
<b>Selection criteria</b>	
<b>1. Technical, financial and operational capacity of the partnership</b>	<b>20</b>
1.1 Do the Applicant and its partners have sufficient and proven <b>experience in project management</b> ?	5
1.2 What is the level of <b>technical expertise</b> of the Applicant and partners? (notably knowledge of the issues to be addressed)	5
1.3 Do the Applicant and its partners have sufficient <b>management capacity</b> ? (including staff, equipment and ability to handle the Budget for the Action)	5
1.4 Do the Applicant and its partners have stable and sufficient <b>financial resources</b> ?	5
<b>Award criteria</b>	
<b>2. Relevance</b>	<b>25</b>
2.1 How relevant is the proposal to the chosen programme's and Call for Proposals' <b>objective and priority</b> ?	5
2.2 How relevant to the particular <b>needs and constraints</b> of the target country/countries and/or region(s) is the proposal? In particular, does the proposal demonstrate a real <b>cross-border impact</b> ? (e.g. fulfils at least two of the following criteria: (1) joint development; (2) joint implementation; (3) joint staffing; and/or (4) joint financing)	5x2



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2.3 Does the Action have any links with any of the BSB-specific policies implemented in the region, or complementarity or synergies with various actions implemented in the region? (including synergy with other EC initiatives and avoidance of duplication, without overlapping with the actions)	5
2.4 How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved ( <b>final beneficiaries, target groups</b> )? Have their <b>needs</b> been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5
<b>3. Methodology</b>	<b>25</b>
3.1 Are the proposed <b>activities</b> appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected <b>outputs and results</b> ? How coherent is the overall design of the Action? (in particular, does it reflect the analysis of the <b>problems</b> involved, take into account external factors and anticipate an evaluation?)	5
3.2 Is the proposed partnership appropriate in terms of <b>number of partners, relevance of partners for the implementation of the Action and their level of involvement</b> satisfactory? (maximum score will only be allocated if the proposal cumulates the following requirements: it involves minimum 3 partners from minimum 3 different countries, the partnership proves to be coherent and it involves the appropriate partners to implement the proposed solution)	5x2
3.3 Is the <b>action plan</b> clear, realistic and feasible?	5
3.4 Does the proposal contain <b>objectively verifiable, measurable and appropriate indicators</b> for measuring the outcome of the Action?	5
<b>4. Sustainability</b>	<b>15</b>
4.1 Is the Action likely to have a tangible <b>impact</b> on the target groups? Is the <b>communication strategy</b> clearly defined in order to ensure an efficient and well-targeted dissemination and capitalisation of the Action results?	5
4.2 Is the proposal likely to have <b>springboard or multiplier effects</b> ? (including scope for replication and extension of the deliverables, dissemination of information, distribution of publications and maintenance of the project website after the end of the Action)	5
4.3 Are the expected results of the proposed Action <b>sustainable</b> : - financially ( <i>how will the activities be financed after the funding ends?</i> ) - institutionally ( <i>will structures allowing the activities to continue be in place at the end of the Action? Will there be local "ownership" of the results of the Action?</i> ) - at policy level (where applicable) ( <i>what will be the structural impact of the Action – e.g. will it lead to improved legislation, regulations, planning methods, etc?</i> ) - environmentally ( <i>will the Action have a negative/positive environmental impact?</i> ) (maximum score will only be allocated if the proposal contains specific added-value elements, such as promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities)	5
<b>5. Budget and cost-effectiveness</b>	<b>10</b>
5.1 Is the <b>ratio</b> between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory? (in accordance with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness)	5
5.2 Is the proposed <b>expenditure necessary</b> for the implementation of the Action?	5
<b>Additional criteria</b>	



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<b>6. Priority for the programme</b>	<b>5</b>
6.1 The Action is an <b>integrated</b> project	5
<b>Maximum total score</b>	<b>100</b>

Also, at the end of each evaluation session, the experts should propose recommendations for improving the Guidelines for Evaluators (technical and financial evaluation section).

#### 4. Requirements

To be included in the pool, applicants must fulfil the following compulsory requirements:

- be citizen of one of the EU - EEA (European Economic Area) - ENPI - IPA countries;
- have a university degree or equivalent qualification relevant for the lot where they apply;
- be fluent in speaking and writing in English, proved through studies and activities previously undertaken and presented in the CV;
- have a good knowledge of Project Cycle Management and Logical Framework approach, proved through studies and/or activities previously undertaken and presented in the CV;
- have a good knowledge of PraG (Practical Guide to Contract procedures for EC external actions) procedures and its annexes (Grant Contract, Guidelines for Applicants, Application Form and Budget), proved through activities previously undertaken and presented in the CV;
- be computer literate (Microsoft Office, Microsoft Project Management, Internet), proved through studies and/or activities previously undertaken and presented in the CV.

#### 5. Lots and fields of expertise

**Lot 1 - Economic and Social Development - relevant fields of expertise for this lot are:**

- SMEs and cluster development;
- technologic and scientific transfer;
- research, development and innovation incentive mechanisms;
- support to competitiveness policies;
- public-private partnership;
- investment incentives;
- territorial and spatial planning;
- socio-economic development;
- socio-economic aspects of migration and migration policies;
- transports and logistics;



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- circulation and movement of goods and capitals;
- international trade;
- tourism development strategies;
- information and communication technologies;
- local governance processes and public services.

**Lot 2 - Environment - relevant fields of expertise for this lot are:**

- environment protection;
- water cycle management and fighting against sea and river pollution;
- natural and technological environmental risk protection and management (fires, drought, chemical and hazardous contamination, earthquakes, floods);
- management of natural and protected areas;
- preservation of biodiversity and vulnerable ecosystems;
- energy efficiency and renewable energy sources (hydropower, solar, wind, geothermic, biomass, etc.);
- waste management and recycling ;
- sustainable tourism development strategies.

**Lot 3 - Culture and Education - relevant fields of expertise for this lot are:**

- labour and training policies;
- preservation of cultural, scientific and artistic heritage, and promotion of local identities;
- intercultural dialogue.

## **6. Application**

Interested applicants shall submit the following documents:

- 1 Detailed CV in English (EU format);
- 2 One page cover letter (briefly describing appropriate experience, fields of expertise, qualifications, skills and motivation);
- 3 Copies of diplomas, certificates, references proving the experience and knowledge in the one of the fields of professional expertise relevant for the lot where they apply, as well as other documents considered as relevant, like proof of language skills, etc. (If the document doesn't include the English version, it should be submitted as unofficial translation into English; official translation into English certified as true by an authorised legal translation agency will be required before the contract signature);
- 4 A copy of valid ID or passport (If the document doesn't include the English version, it should be submitted as official translation into English; official translation into English certified as true by an authorised legal translation agency will be required before the contract signature);





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5 For civil servant - if they can apply based on their national legislation - necessary permits/authorisation will be requested if they are selected.

6 The form provided in [Annex 1](#) completed for each of the following:

1. Relevant professional experience for the lot where they apply;
2. Previous experience in technical and financial assessment of proposals under international/EU funded programmes
3. Relevant professional experience in the Black Sea participating countries;
4. Experience in designing and/or implementing projects/actions under international/EU funded programmes.

7. Letters of recommendations from employers and for the experience described in the CV, if possible.

Applications should be sent by certified mail (with return receipt) or delivered by hand, in a closed envelope indicating name and surname of the sender, country and city of the sender and wordings “Joint Operational Programme Black Sea 2007-2013 - Call for expression of interest for the set up of a pool of independent assessors in charge of supporting the evaluation of proposals” and “A se deschide numai în cadrul sesiunii de evaluare” (“To be opened only during evaluation session”), to the following address:

**MINISTERUL DEZVOLTĂRII REGIONALE ȘI LOCUINȚEI  
AUTORITATEA COMUNĂ DE MANAGEMENT - PROGRAMUL MAREA NEAGRĂ  
DIRECȚIA GENERALĂ COOPERARE TERITORIALĂ EUROPEANĂ  
BLVD. LIBERTATII NR.12, SECTOR 5  
040129 - BUCHAREST  
ROMANIA**

**Note:** Each application should be officially registered at the Ministry of Regional Development and Housing registry, Libertatii Blvd. no. 12 (4<sup>th</sup> floor, room 405), mentioning the date of submission. All applications shall be opened simultaneously during the process of evaluation.

## 7. Selection and contracting process

### 7.1 Management of the pool of assessors

The JMA will set up a pool of independent assessors including only those candidates who meet the minimum criteria set out in sections 4, sorted by lots and according with the fields of expertise mentioned in section 5.

There isn't a limited number for the independent assessors to be included in the pool. All experts that fulfil the requirements of these ToRs shall be included in the pool, and the JMA shall conclude a framework contract with each expert valid until 2013. In addition, for completing the pool with a sufficient number of independent assessors, the JMA shall update the pool when necessary by launching additional calls.



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The JMA manages the pool of independent assessors and shall be in permanent contact with the assessors included in the pool. The JMA shall communicate to the independent assessors the imminent opportunities of engagement from the pool and shall collect information on their availability.



Being included in the pool does not guarantee further involvement in projects evaluation, this being determined on the number of projects that enter the technical and financial evaluation sessions, the fields of expertise, the professional experience of the assessors and their availability. Depending on each session of technical and financial evaluation and on the basis of the criteria mentioned before, the JMA shall engage a number of independent assessors from the pool with which it shall conclude individual service contracts for a specific session of evaluation.

The independent assessors included in the pool shall be able to update the documents submitted (by adding new experience, additional references, and new diplomas, skills) anytime after the conclusion of the framework contract, but before the selection of the assessors who will assist each Selection Committee. Therefore, the initial scores awarded for the technical offer will be recalculated whenever this kind of situation appears.

An assessor can be excluded from the pool under the following conditions:

1. Not declaring a situation of [conflict of interests](#);
2. Breach of [confidentiality and impartiality](#) during an evaluation session;
3. Refusing to participate to evaluation sessions (more than 2 refusals) upon request of the JMA (which has the obligation to send timely notifications of assessment sessions), except in cases of force majeure.
4. Unsatisfactory assessment performance (incorrect and/or incomplete assessment and/or not complying with the evaluation and selection procedure, established by the Selection Committee during the evaluation process).
5. Upon request of the assessor of termination of the framework contract.

## **7.2 Engagement of the independent assessors from the pool**

The independent assessors shall be asked to support the Selection Committee in the evaluation process after the conclusion of the administrative and eligibility checks of the applications submitted under each call for proposals. Only the JMA is entitled to engage the independent assessors from the pool.

Inclusion in the pool does not guarantee further involvement in the evaluation processes, the selection of the assessors being done according with the number of projects to be evaluated, necessary fields of expertise, professional experience and availability of experts.

Whenever the support of an independent assessor is considered as necessary, the JMA shall select the assessors from the pool according with their scores and conclude individual service contracts with them.

The JMA selection will ensure transparency and balanced representation of participating countries, while respecting equality of opportunities and non-discrimination principles.





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## 8. Validity of the pool of assessors

The pool will be set up for the entire programme period and will be functional until terminated. Independent assessors might remain in the pool for the entire programme period. The pool may be up-dated if needed, including with the publication of new calls for expression of interest in case there will be a shortage of independent assessors.

## 9. Fees

The independent assessors will be contracted individually by the JMA following their selection for evaluation tasks, according with the Romanian public procurements legislation.

The maximum rate for the evaluation will be EUR 100 (including VAT) per proposal evaluation grid. The proposals exceeding this amount shall be excluded.

The exact fee will be set up following the conclusion of individual service contracts with each assessor, taking into consideration the price offered by each expert.

The payment shall be made on the basis of the evaluation grids prepared by the independent assessor. The evaluation grids shall be filled in and submitted to the JMA after each evaluation session to which the independent expert has participated to.

When necessary the travel and accommodation expenditure shall be reimbursed to the independent assessor in accordance with normal standards imposed by Romanian legislation (e.g. flight tickets at economic class).

## 10. Conflict of interest

To ensure the independence of proposal evaluation, selected assessors will have to sign a declaration certifying that there is no conflict of interest at the time of appointment and that they undertake to inform the JMA of any situation of conflict, even potential, while carrying out their duties.

In general, the role as independent assessor is incompatible with being:

- member, observer or their deputy in the Joint Monitoring Committee,
- employer of an applicant or partner in any of the programme's calls for proposals,
- consultant for designing projects in the frame of the Black Sea JOP calls for proposals.

Also, the role as independent assessor is incompatible with an expert who:

- was involved in writing a project proposal - or project/study related with the grant application form - which is going to be evaluated within the call for proposals for which he is selected from the pool of assessors;
- is holding shares of the consultancy company which wrote the proposal to be evaluated, or shares of the applicant and/or his partners;



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- is member of the management board or steering committee of the consultancy company which wrote the proposal to be evaluated, or of the management board or steering committee of the applicant and/or his partners;
- is husband/wife, relative or in-law relative, including the fourth degree, of people who are members of the management board or steering committee or hold shares of the applicant and/or his partners;
- is husband/wife, relative or in-law relative, including the fourth degree, of people who occupies management positions within the authorities playing the role of applicant or partners, or of people who are members of the team which implements the project.

### 11. Confidentiality and impartiality

Assessors will have to observe complete confidentiality of the information and documents brought to their attention during the whole evaluation process. If selected, before starting the evaluation, the assessors will be requested to submit the “Declaration of Impartiality and Confidentiality”.

Failing to declare a conflict of interest or failing to respect the confidentiality and impartiality during the evaluation process where an assessor is involved may lead to the cancelling of both the framework and service contracts, and to the exclusion from the pool of assessors as well. Also, the respective assessor will bear any other consequences and sanctions provided by the legislation or by the above mentioned contracts.

In cases where, after the conclusion of the service contract, an assessor selected from the pool is founded to be in conflict of interest, the service contract is cancelled.

### 12. Evaluation grid of the applications

**Note:** The applications failing to comply with the minimum requirements set up in section 4 of this document will be rejected.

Nr. crt	Criteria	Maximum score
1	<i>Financial offer</i>	<i>30 points</i>
2	<i>Technical offer</i>	<i>70 points</i>
2.1	Ability of understanding the specificity of one	20 pct. (S1)



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	or more fields of expertise of the lot where an assessor applies, ability proved by the activities undertaken and presented in the CV and in Annex 1.	<p><b>20 pct.</b> for the specific activity in the fields of expertise of one of the lots where an assessor applies for <b>more than 10 years</b></p> <p><b>15 pct.</b> for the specific activity in the fields of expertise of one of the lots where an assessor applies for <b>more than 8 years until 10 years</b></p> <p><b>10 pct.</b> for the specific activity in the fields of expertise of one of the lots where an assessor applies for <b>more than 5 years until 8 years</b></p> <p><b>5 pct.</b> for the specific activity in the fields of expertise of one of the lots where an assessor applies for <b>more than 3 years until 5 years</b></p>
2.2	Ability of assessing, from the technical and financial points of view, proposals submitted under international/EU funded programmes, ability proved by the activities undertaken and presented in the CV and in Annex 1.	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>20 pct. (S2)</b></p> <p><b>20 pct.</b> for <b>minimum 30</b> projects assessed in relevant fields</p> <p><b>15 pct.</b> for <b>20-29</b> projects assessed in relevant fields</p> <p><b>10 pct.</b> for <b>11-19</b> projects assessed in relevant fields</p> <p><b>5 pct.</b> for <b>4-10</b> projects assessed in relevant fields</p>
2.3	Ability of understanding the specificity of one or more participating countries in the Black Sea Programme, ability proved by the activities undertaken and presented in the CV and in Annex 1.	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>10 pct. (S3)</b></p> <p><b>10 pct.</b> for the specific activity in one or more participating countries in the Black Sea Programme for <b>more than 5 years</b></p> <p><b>5 pct.</b> for the specific activity in one or more participating countries in the Black Sea Programme for <b>more than 3 years until 5 years</b></p>
2.4	Ability of developing and/or implementing projects submitted under international/EU funded programmes, ability proved by the activities undertaken and presented in the CV and in Annex 1.	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>20 pct. (S4)</b></p> <p><b>20 pct.</b> for <b>minimum 30</b> projects developed/ implemented in relevant fields</p> <p><b>15 pct.</b> for <b>20-29</b> projects developed/ implemented in relevant fields</p> <p><b>10 pct.</b> for <b>11-19</b> projects developed/ implemented in relevant fields</p> <p><b>5 pct.</b> for <b>4-10</b> projects developed/ implemented in relevant fields</p>



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### 13. Calculation algorithm

Only the offers which fulfilled the minimum requirements mentioned in section 4 will be further evaluated.

The objective of the evaluation mechanism is the ranking of the qualified offers according with their total score.

The evaluation of each offer will be done taking into consideration the following characteristics:

- Financial characteristic (price), acronym (**F**)
- Technical characteristic, acronym (**T**)

The financial characteristic (**F**) weight in the total score of the offer is **30 %**; the technical characteristic (**T**) weight in the total score of the offer is **70 %**.

#### Calculation algorithm for the technical score of the offer ( $P_T$ ):

The technical scoring of the offer is calculated as follows:  $P_T = \sum_{i=1}^4 S_i$ ,

where  $S_i$  represents the scoring for the respective subsection from the technical offer.

#### Calculation algorithm for the financial score of the offer ( $P_{Fi}$ ):

The financial scoring of the offer is calculated as follows:

- a) 30 points are awarded for the lowest financial offer ( $P_{F0}$ );
- b) the other financial offers are scored based on the following formula:

$$P_{Fi} = P_{\text{minimum}} / P_{\text{offered}} \times 30$$

where  $P_{\text{minimum}}$  represents the minimum price offered within a qualified offer and  $P_{\text{offered}}$  represents the price of the evaluated offer.

#### Calculation algorithm for the total score of the offer ( $P_0$ ):

The total score of an offer is calculated based on the following formula:

$$P_0 = P_F + P_T,$$

where  $P_F$  represents the financial score of the offer, and  $P_T$  represents the technical score of the offer.



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**Annex 1**

Experience in .....X.....

No.	Period		Name of employer	Job	Responsibilities carried out in the ....X... field
	From (dd/mm/yy)	To (dd/mm/yy)			
1					
2					
....					