Public Call for Vocational Training Activities

CFP 13 -2019

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# Background

“Norwegian Support to Western Balkans Development – Norway for You – Montenegro” (NFY) Project will contribute to a more balanced socio-economic development in Montenegro, by increasing employment opportunities, supporting social cohesion and improving local infrastructure in the least developed municipalities. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) allocated NOK 15 million for this Project, implemented by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) in duration of 24 months.

One of the Project outputs is Improved Access to Employment.

During its lifetime, the Project will support employment, provide vocational training, organise Call for Proposals for projects of local government institutions, civil society organisations (CSOs) and business support organisations (BSOs and support projects for the improvement of living conditions and quality of life.

The key stakeholders and the direct beneficiaries of the Project are local self-governments and their institutions and organisations, along with the Union of Municipalities of Montenegro (UOM), national employment agency and local branches, regional development agencies, national employment agency and local branches, CSOs, BSOs, as well as individuals, particularly the unemployed women and youth, entrepreneurs, micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs).

The final beneficiaries of this project are inhabitants of the 16 Montenegrin municipalities classified as the least developed: Andrijevica, Berane, Bijelo Polje, Cetinje, Danilovgrad, Gusinje, Kolašin, Mojkovac, Nikšić, Petnjica, Plav, Pljevlja, Rožaje, Šavnik, Ulcinj and Žabljak.

# Justification of the Intervention

The skills’ mismatch on the labour market as one of the biggest obstacles to the business development in Montenegro. Montenegro Economic Reform Programme 2019-2021[[1]](#footnote-1) states that priority measures for the forthcoming period should be on vocational training based in companies as one of the key measures to overcome skills gap on the labour market.

According to the Employment Agency of Montenegro (EAM) data[[2]](#footnote-2),the highest number of the unemployed possess high-school diploma, with also significant number of those with higher education. According to different skills mapping analyses referring to Montenegro, most of the deficit occupations belong to the hospitality and tourism sector, although there are some other growing industries in the country, such as: digital industries, construction and crafts, where there is a significant lack of skills referring to specific occupations.

Currently in Montenegro, there are around 100 licensed adult education providers mainly providing trainings related to the key competencies, with much fewer of them providing specific skills’ training. In addition, most of the training is conducted under the simulated work environment in the training rooms, frequently resulting in low level of practical skills and experience.

The Call for Proposals is focused on the on-the-job training format with systematic use of mentoring, whereby unemployed individuals, in particular women and youth, will have a chance to develop job-specific skills. As part of the application process in the framework of this Call, potential employers will have a chance to design and develop on-the-job training programme, relevant to the workforce competencies and skills in demand.

# Objectives of intervention

**The overall objective** of this Call for Proposals (CfP) is to enhance employability of vulnerable groups in underdeveloped areas of Montenegro.

**The specific objective** of this CfP is to improve employability of at least 60 unemployed persons[[3]](#footnote-3) from the underdeveloped municipalities of Montenegro by enhancing their competencies, and to reduce the mismatch between demand and supply on the labour market which will result in employment of at least 30 beneficiaries[[4]](#footnote-4).

# Financial allocation

The overall amount available under this Call for Proposals is EUR 150,000 or USD 165,000.

The award per grantee is:

* up to 5,000 Euros, in case that training is organized for at least two (2) trainees, with requirement that at least 50% of the trainees should get employed at the end of the training.
* up to 10,000 Euros, in case that training is organized for at least four (4) trainees, with requirement that at least 50% of the trainees should get employed at the end of the training.
* up to 15,000 Euros, in case that training is organized for at least six (6) trainees, with requirement that at least 50% of the trainees should get employed at the end of the training.
* up to 20,000 Euros, in case that training is organized for at least eight (8) trainees, with requirement that at least 50% of the trainees should get employed at the end of the training.
* up to 25,000 Euros, in case that training is organized for at least ten (10) trainees, with requirement that at least 50% of the trainees should get employed at the end of the training.
* up to 30,000 Euros, in case that training is organized for at least 12 trainees, with requirement that at least 50% of the trainees should get employed at the end of the training.

The Norway for You Project reserves the right not to award all available funds.

**Co-financing by the applicant**

Co-financing is desirable, but not required.

# Rules for this Call for proposals

**Eligibility criteria**

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

1. the actors:

* the **applicant**, i.e. the entity submitting the application form (5.1),
* if any, their **co-applicant(s)** (**where it is not specified otherwise, the applicant and their co-applicant(s) are hereinafter jointly referred to as the "*applicants***") (5.1);

1. the activities:

* activities for which a grant may be awarded (5.2);

1. the costs:

* types of costs that may be taken into account in setting the amount of the grant (5.3).

## 5.1 Eligibility of applicants (i.e. applicant and co-applicant)

**Applicant & Co-applicant**

(1) In order to be eligible for a grant, the applicant **must:**

* be a legal entity registered in the territory of Montenegro
* be a specific type of organization, such as:
* private company
* licensed adult education and training provider
* non-governmental organisation/association
* local self-government[[5]](#footnote-5)
* professional association, employers organizations, etc.
* Other relevant legal entities supporting employment and/or conducting trainings for unemployed

**Partnership**

**Applications in the form of partnership with co-applicant are preferable, although not mandatory.**

Partner(s) are supporting preparation and implementation of the project.

Partner(s) must comply with the same eligibility criteria as the key applicant.

Partner(s) must sign the Partnership statement, here provided as **Annex 4**

**Number of applications and grants per applicant**

* An applicant may submit **one application** under this CfP as a leading applicant
* An applicant may act as co/applicant in one other application.
* An applicant can be grant recipient in both cases

## 5.2 Eligible activities

**Eligible activities**

* Proposed action should contain at least 65% of activities to be done in the form of work placement experience.
* Remaining 35% can be any other training related activities (such as theoretical classes).

**Duration**

**The duration of action may not exceed six (6) months from the signing of the Grant Support Agreement (GSA), while training period should be in maximum duration of four (4) months**. The action period includes preparatory activities and implementation, as well as delivery of the final report.

**Training participants**

Training participants can only be unemployed individuals from 16 municipalities targeted by the Project “Norway for you – Montenegro”. Project proposal submitted should also contain the employment plan of the trainees on the level of these 16 municipalities.

As mentioned in the above section 4. *Financial allocation*, it is expected that an applicant will employ specific number of trainees at the end of the training period or secure employment for them in other companies. Minimum duration of the employment contract should be no less than six (6) months.

**Sectors or themes**

* Vocational training is open to all sectors and occupations.

## 5.3 Eligibility of costs

Only ‘eligible costs’ can be covered by a grant, which are:

* Procurement of equipment and material will also be eligible as long as this cost does not exceed 20% of the total grant value and only if used for the vocational training activities covered by this project.
* Allowances/ incentives for the trainees, including also mandatory personal job insurance and any kind of logistical and other related costs, in the amount of maximum 222 euros per month[[6]](#footnote-6).
* Cost of staff engaged in the training process (mentorship fee).
* Other costs exclusively related to the training process (rent of space or equipment, expenditures related to any examination process, certification or licensing).

**All expenditures should be reflected exclusively in Annex B – Budget form, and the amount should exclude VAT for any expenditure to be covered from the Grant, and will be considered as maximum amount. Due to its nature, “Norway for You – Montenegro” project cannot pay or compensate any cost related to VAT or any personal contributions. Financial contribution of Applicant and/or partners should be presented separately in the Budget table – here in Annex B (Sources of funding).**

**Note**: Amounts presented in the budget may be subject to further negotiation if they are not presented realistically.

**Ineligible costs**

The following costs are not eligible:

* Cost of staff not involved in any manner in the project implementation and training programme;
* VAT costs of any nature;
* debts and debt service charges (interest);
* bank fees;
* provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
* costs declared by the Beneficiary(-ies) and financed by another project or founding source;
* purchases of land;
* currency exchange losses;
* credit to third parties;
* rent of equipment or/and space of the applicant or partners, for the purpose of the proposed training.

**Indirect costs**

* Indirect costs can be presented in maximum amount of 5% out of the total budget.

**In-kind contributions**

In-kind contributions relate to the provision of goods or services free of charge by the applicant (and possibly partner) or third parties. As in-kind contributions do not include any costs, they are not eligible costs under this Call, but may be presented.

**Cross-cutting issues**

Four cross-cutting issues in the Norwegian development policy are human rights, gender equality, environment and climate and anti-corruption. The applicants should thus consider and elaborate on how their respective project proposals will enhance respect of human rights, gender equality and anti-corruption, while also describing how its implementation will limit potential impacts on environment and climate, with particular emphasis on sustainability and resilience.

**Visibility**

The Applicants must take all necessary steps to promote the Norwegian financial contribution to the Action as advised by the Project.

These activities include but are not limited to clear visual identification of the action on site, partaking in various media activities and events, including activities designed to raise the awareness of specific or general audiences of the overall Norwegian support to Montenegro. These include but are not limited to on-camera and other media interviews, participation in high level events and relevant on-line and in person surveys on Project related topics.

The Project will provide the grantees with adequate guidelines and other information prior to beginning of the project implementation.

# Instructions for application submission process

## 6.1 Application forms and supporting documents

The applicant has to submit the following documents:

* Application Form (Annex 1)
* Budget (Annex 2)
* Statement of the Applicant (Annex 3)
* Statement of the Partner (Annex 4)
* Checklist (Annex 5)
* List of supporting documents (Annex 6)

## 6.2 Instructions for application submission and deadlines

The Application documents must be submitted in the following manner:

* The Application Form **must be submitted exclusively via email in both PDF (signed, stamped and scanned**) and identical editable format, using Word and Excel. In case of discrepancies, signed, stamped and scanned version will prevail;
* All documents listed here in 6.1 must be submitted to the following address: [rsoc.applications@unops.org](mailto:rsoc.applications@unops.org). Automatic notification of the delivery would follow upon successful submission of the email application. One notification is sent to each sender after the first received email only;
* The email application must be submitted with the email subject consisting of the reference number of the Call for Proposals (CFP 13-2019 – Vocational Education Activities), including the name of the applicant;
* The applicant must submit application forms in **Montenegrin or English language**. In case that grant is awarded, the obligation of the applicant will be to translate application form (here in 6.1), as that will become the part of the Grant contract.
* The total email size of the application **should not exceed 15 MB**, due to limitation of the UNOPS server. Applications of larger size should be sent in a series of emails, each not exceeding 15 MB in size. Each part of the application should be numbered in the email subject field;
* **Requests for clarification** should be submitted to the following email address: [rsoc.applications@unops.org](mailto:rsoc.applications@unops.org) by 5 January 2020 at the latest; Clarification points will be posted on the projects website norveskazavas.me.
* **The deadline for the submission of applications is 30 January 2020.** Any application submitted after the deadline will be rejected;
* Applications must be received before midnight local time (CET) on the closing date of the Call for Proposal. Applicants are kindly advised to submit the application timely, as late deliveries due to slow internet connection or other network/hardware/software related problems may lead to disqualification of the application. Only applications received by UNOPS mail server before the deadline would be accepted;
* Applicants must verify completeness of their Application using the Checklist (Annex V). Incomplete applications may be rejected;
* Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by post or by hand delivery) or delivered to other emails different from the stated in CfP will be rejected. Hand-written applications will not be accepted;
* UNOPS reserves the right to request the original versions of submitted documents from applicants where/when original documentation is required by the Evaluation Team.

# Evaluation and contracting

Quality of the applications[[7]](#footnote-7), including the proposed budget and capacity of the applicants, will be assessed by the Evaluation Commission on pre-determined evaluation criteria as set in the Evaluation Grid below. The Evaluation Commission is submitting the evaluation results to the Donor for final approval.

**Evaluation Grid**

*Scoring:* The evaluation criteria are divided into sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 in accordance with the following guidelines: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good, except in sub areas when the result is explicitly defined.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CRITERIA** | **MAX POINTS** |
| **1. Operational Capacity** | **20** |
| 1.1 Does the applicant or co-applicant have **experience** in project management?  *Applicants with references on successful implementation of at least two training programmes will be awarded three (3) points*  *Applicants with references on successful implementation of at least three or more projects (e.g. projects involving training, international donors, etc.) will be awarded a maximum of five (5) points* | 5 |
| 1.2 Does the applicant and co-applicant have **technical expertise and capacity** to conduct vocational education training (VET) training and knowledge of the issues to be addressed?  *Applicants claiming that they have Mentor/s with at least two (2) years of relevant experience, and ensuring appropriate facilities for the training to be conducted, will be awarded five (5) points.*  *Applicants claiming that they have Mentor/s with at least two (2) years of relevant experience, and possess all facilities necessary for the training to be conducted, will be awarded maximum ten (10) points* | 2x5 |
| 1.3. What is the **focus of the applicant** and co-applicant business?  *Applicants focused on production and/or on training will be awarded maximum five (5) points. Those focused on hospitality and services will be awarded three (3) points and otherstwo (2) or less points.* | 5 |
| **2. Relevance of the Action** | **20** |
| 2.1 How **clearly defined and strategically chosen** are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs been clearly assessed and does the proposal address them appropriately?  *Relevance to the particular needs and constraints of the targeted region and municipality and/or relevant sectors (including synergy with other development initiatives and avoidance of duplication)* | 5 |
| 2.2 How clearly is the **need for specific occupation** presented? | 5 |
| 2.3 Are the **cross-cutting iss**ues well defined and elaborated? | 5 |
| 2.4 The proposal clearly target employment of **woman and/or youth** and socially vulnerable categories | 5 |
| **3. Methodology** | **20** |
| 3.1 Are the **proposed activities clear and feasible**, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results? | 5 |
| 3.2 Is the **Training plan** clearly presented with realistic timeline for its implementation?  I) Training programme reflects the activities and learning outcomes in general, presents overall resources necessary for the training programme to be implemented – five (5) points  II) Training programme clearly reflects the activities and learning outcomes, and realistically presents resources necessary for the implementation of the training programme – eight (8) points  On top of i) i II) Training programme for specific occupation is aligned with the national training standards – 10 points | 2x5 |
| 3.3 The activities are clearly reflected in the budget | 5 |
| **4. Impact and sustainability** | **25** |
| 4.1 What is the number of people involved in the vocational training?  *Number of trainees represents minimum number of trainees as per recommendations from section 5. Financial allocation – five (5) points*  *For each additional trainee, in the framework of the existing allocations from section 5. Financial allocation, from one additional point up to a maximum of 10 points will be awarded.* | 2x5 |
| 4.2 How many jobs are expected to be generated after implementation of the project proposal and did the applicant prove valid argumentation for assertion?  *At least 50% of the training participants will be employed at the end of the training period – five (5) points*  *At least 66% of the training participants will be employed at the end of the training period – seven (7) points*  *At least 75% of the training participants will be employed at the end of the training period – ten (10) points* | 2x5 |
| **5. Budget and Cost-effectiveness of the Action** | **10** |
| 5.1 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results favorable? | 10 |
| **6. Partnership** | **10** |
| 6.1 Does the proposal foresee substantial and formalised partnership with a relevant institution/organization? Does the partnership clearly define roles and responsibilities of all parties and are they appropriate for the proposed action? | 10 |
| **TOTAL POINTS** | **100** |

**Remark**

**Only the applications scoring a minimum total score of 65 points will be considered for selection.**

*Preliminary selection*

At the end of the evaluation process, a list of proposals will be prepared in line with number of points and available resources. In addition, a reserve list of the proposals will also be developed should and additional funding opportunity arise.

Project/Contracting authority reserve the right to conduct also additional forms of verification, including request for submission of additional documents as also field visit.

# Decision and timeline

## 8.1 Content of the decision

Applicants will be informed in writing on the Project / Contracting Authority's decision regarding their project proposal with rationale stated behind negative decisions.

A project applicant who believes that he or she has been harmed by an error or irregularity during the grant process may file a complaint to the Project/Contracting Authority.

## 8.2 Indicative Timeframe

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Date and time period** |
| **Launching of the Public Call** | 13 December 2019 |
| **Info Sessions (3 in total)** | Podgorica 20 December 2019  Pljevlja 23 December 2019  Bijelo Polje 24 December 2019 |
| **Deadline for Submission of request for clarification[[8]](#footnote-8)** | 5 January 2020 |
| **Deadline for providing feedback on the request for clarification** | 8 January 2020 |
| **Deadline for Submission of Applications** | 30 January 2020 |
| **Evaluation of the Proposals** | 1 March 2020\* |
| **Notification on the Evaluation Results** | 15 March 2020\* |
| **Signing of the Agreement** | 25 March 2020\* |

\*Indicative dates

This indicative timetable may be updated by the Project / Contracting Authority during the procedure. In this case, the updated schedule will be published on the [Norway for You - Montenegro](https://norveskazavas.me/en) website.

# Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

The grantees must maintain project records and information related to the project, including training, which must be included in all reports.

The grantees will prepare bi-monthly progress reports by the 5th day of each following month starting with the first month and thereafter;

All reports should be in Montenegrin or English language and include narrative and financial aspects. These reports will be considered public information.

Norway for You Project will monitor implementation of the project trough in a structured manner. The payment schedule will be linked to the project milestones and findings from the Project’s audits.

# Financial implementation

The grant recipient must open a separate account for the implementation of the projects in cooperation with the project "Norway for you - Montenegro".

# Additional Considerations

Successful project proposals must focus on the environment and climate changes, gender equality, human rights and anti-corruption as cross-cutting themes relevant to all aspects of the development and of particular interest to the Donor. Equally important, the applicant must clearly indicate how vulnerable and marginalised groups will be involved in and/or benefit from the project.

# Annexes

Annex 1: Application form (Word format)

Annex 2: Budget (Excel format)

Annex 3: Applicant statement

Annex 4: Partnership statement

Annex 5: Check list

Annex 6: List of supporting documents

1. [Montenegro Economic Reform Programme 2019-2021](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/montenegro_erp_2019-2021.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <http://www.zzzcg.me/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/022019-BILTEN.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. **In the context of this CfP, an unemployed person is defined as any person without employment, not only those registered in national registers** [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. **This CfP does not support employment of civil servants, including employment in public companies or institutions**  [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Only in consortium with private sector or NGO sector, as “Norway for You – Montenegro“ project does not support employment in public sector. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. This amount is prescribed by the Decision on minimum wages as also based on the article 10 of the [Law on vocational education of the higher education graduates](http://www.mps.gov.me/ResourceManager/FileDownload.aspx?rid=200940&rType=2&file=Zakon%20o%20stru%C4%8Dnom%20osposobljavanju%20lica%20sa%20ste%C4%8Denim%20visokim%20obrazovanjem.docx) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The applications that didn’t pass administrative check and are not in compliance with the terms and conditions of the Call will not be considered for the evaluation [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. **Requests for clarification** should be submitted exclusively to the following email address: [rsoc.applications@unops.org](mailto:rsoc.applications@unops.org) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)