

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR ENGAGEMENT OF TRAINERS**

### **1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

#### **1.1 Contracting Authority**

The contracting authority is the Balkan Civil Society Development Network (BCSDN) Executive Office, Skopje.

#### **1.2. Legal Basis**

The legal basis for this assignment derives from the Grant Agreement No. 12715 01 signed between the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the Balkan Civil Society Development Network (BCSDN), where Sida has agreed to provide financial support to the project “Protecting Civic Space - Regional Civil Society Development Hub”.

#### **1.3. Relevant Background**

Balkan Civil Society Development Network (BCSDN) is a network of civil society organizations from countries in southeast Europe (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia, Romania, Slovenia, Serbia, and Turkey). Our mission is to empower civil society and influence European and national policies towards a more enabling environment for civil society development to ensure sustainable and functioning democracies in the Balkans.

Our goals and objectives are the following:

1. To increase the role of civil society by strengthening its voice in policy- and decision-making at the national, regional and EU levels;
2. To promote the civil dialogue between the civil society actors, state institutions and the European Union to influence public policies;
3. To develop advocacy knowledge and skills among civil society actors as a base for greater impact;
4. To strengthen communication, coordination, and cooperation between the civil society actors in the Balkan region.

Following BCSDN’s and its members’ common vision to strengthen a vibrant, pluralistic and rights-based civil society in the Balkans, Sida has granted significant financial support to BCSDN for the implementation of the project “Protecting Civic Space - Regional Civil Society Development Hub” (hereinafter referred to as “the Project”) which was initiated in September 2019.

BCSDN through this Project established a Regional Civil Society Development Hub (hereinafter referred to as the “Regional Hub”) as a regional center with a global impact that will create and share knowledge and innovation on CSOs’ role in promoting democracy and supporting the development of civil society in the Western Balkans in the long term. The Regional Hub supports effective, transparent, and accountable CSOs that contribute to protecting and promoting civic space for a vibrant, pluralistic, and rights-based civil society in the Balkans. The Regional Hub’s main aim is to strengthen regional cooperation in promoting the civic space in the Western Balkan.

Over the course of two and a half years, the Regional Hub supported the implementation of 38 various projects that contributed to the empowerment of CSOs and promotion of civic space in the Western

Balkans and supported the establishment of numerous partnerships among CSOs in the region. The Regional Hub's funding has been provided to projects addressing two specific objectives:

- CSOs contributed to a conducive environment for civil society development by addressing the deterioration of the state of fundamental freedoms, improving the policy dialogue among CSOs and authorities at different levels and fostering the citizens' engagement in decision-making processes, supporting resource mobilization and alternative funding sources for promoting civic space, conducting advocacy in different contexts, etc.
- CSOs contributed towards effective, transparent and accountable work by supporting CSO constituency and trust-building, like innovative outreach activities, CSO rebranding, encouraging meaningful participation of stakeholders at all levels, introducing new dynamic accountability practices, etc.

## **2. DESCRIPTION OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

Through this activity, BCSDN aims to strengthen the communication and advocacy capacities of the Regional Hub's grantees. Thus, BCSDN will organize a workshop that will bring together the representatives of the Regional Hub's grantees (regional networks of CSOs operating in the Western Balkan region) with communication experts, and journalists to provide mentorship and capacity building to the participating CSOs.

BCSDN is looking to engage trainer(s)/ facilitator(s) (an individual or a team of a maximum of two people) to deliver a two-day workshop in North Macedonia in the last week of June 2022.

The topic of the workshop is training on communication skills for the Regional Hub's grantees for better presenting their work and results achieved to their target groups and stakeholders. The focus should be put on the need for closer cooperation with journalists and mainstream and/or traditional media, as a way for CSOs to improve their communications, as well as accountability, especially towards their main constituencies- the citizens.

The expert(s) should consider the following topics for the training: public relations and cooperation with the media; communication (including traditional and innovative communications channels and practices); constituency-building and community mobilization; accountability, etc.

The specific aims of the training are:

- To improve the communication skills of participating CSOs,
- To increase the journalists' understanding of the CSOs' work, and
- To strengthen the relationship between the participating CSO/network representatives and journalists/ media representatives through joint actions.

The overall aim of the workshop is to improve the CSOs' accountability, resilience, trust, and impact.

## **3. EXPECTED OUTPUTS**

The trainer(s)/facilitator(s) are expected to develop the workshop methodology and finalize it in consultation with the BCSDN team. In addition, the trainer(s)/facilitator(s) should assess the group's knowledge and preparedness on the topic prior to the workshop, and implement a follow-up assessment of the knowledge and practical skills gained at the workshop.

The main output of the workshop delivered should be the creation of communication strategies/plans of the CSOs and joint action plan of the CSOs and journalists, or a similar output proposed by the trainer(s)/facilitator(s) methodology, in line with the specific and overall aims of the workshop.

A 3-5 pages workshop report should be delivered within 2 weeks after the end of the workshop.

#### **4. SELECTION CRITERIA**

- Extensive experience (at least 5 years) in delivery of trainings/workshops for CSOs for the topics of interest listed in section 2 of this call (preferably in the Western Balkans);
- Excellent communication and written skills in English;
- Financial offer.

The selection shall be made respecting the principle “best value for money”. Thus, the technical evaluation can bring a maximum of 60 points for the offer, while the financial evaluation a maximum of 40 points.

#### **5. DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

The expert(s) should perform the assignment in the last week of June 2022. The start day will be officially notified by the contracting authority.

#### **6. HOW TO APPLY**

Interested parties are invited to provide the following documents:

- Expression of interest outlining how the trainer(s)/facilitator(s) (team) meets the selection criteria, including a portfolio of similar work completed, and their understanding of the ToR;
- A summarized description of the scope of work and the intended methodology to be used;
- Three recent professional recommendation letters from clients for whom similar work has been conducted;
- Curriculum vitae (CV) outlining relevant qualifications and experience;
- Financial proposal (in EUR).

The applicants shall submit the required documents no later than the **15<sup>th</sup> of June 2022** on the following e-mail: **[executiveoffice@balkanbsd.net](mailto:executiveoffice@balkanbsd.net)** with the **subject line: Offer for training delivery.**