

Terms of Reference

Expert in Communications and Visibility

Introduction

The Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) is an inter-governmental organisation established to enhance regional cooperation, promote shared learning and support the development of public administration in the Western Balkans. ReSPA Members are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, while public servants from Kosovo*¹ participate in ReSPA activities funded by the European Commission. ReSPA's purpose is to help governments in the Western Balkan region develop better public administration, public services and overall governance systems for their citizens and businesses, and prepare them for membership in the European Union (EU). Since its inception, ReSPA has contributed to the development of human resources and administrative capacities through training programmes and innovative cooperation mechanisms such as the exchange of good practices, peer reviews and development of know-how.

The European Commission (EC) provides directly managed funds for support of ReSPA activities (research, training and networking programmes) in line with the EU accession process. The current EC grant supports the main objective of ReSPA work in 2018: Improve regional cooperation in the field of Public Administration Reform (PAR) and EU integration, and strengthen the beneficiaries' administrative capacities. This objective is being achieved through the following three pillars of ReSPA Programme of Work:

- (1) European Integration Pillar: Increased capacity of the ReSPA Members' public administrations necessary for the successful conducting of the EU integration process;
- (2) Public Administration Reform Pillar: Facilitated and enhanced cooperation and exchange of experience in Public Administration Reform and EU integration activities in ReSPA Members;
- (3) Governance for Growth Pillar: Ensured effective coordination of the implementation of the Governance for Growth pillar of the SEE 2020 Strategy.

Following expressed interest by the ReSPA Members, and needs of the ReSPA Secretariat, it was decided to improve ReSPA Communications and Visibility. This should be achieved by implementing the ReSPA 2018 Communications Action Plan – attached to this Terms of Reference (Annex 1), and aligning ReSPA practices with the new Communication and Visibility in EU-financed External Actions requirements (the document is available on the following link: https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/communication-visibility-requirements-2018_en.pdf).

¹ * This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and ICJ Advisory Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of independence.

Purpose

The purpose of this Assignment is to provide the ReSPA Secretariat with Technical Assistance (TA) in the domain of Communications and Visibility, in order to implement the ReSPA 2018 Communications Action Plan, and align ReSPA practices with the new requirements for Communication and Visibility in EU-financed External Actions. This Assignment has two main overall goals: (i) to increase the public awareness of the importance of the Public Administration Reform (PAR) and its long-term effects, and (2) to recognize ReSPA's contributions to building of strategic foundations and capacities for a developed Western Balkans region.

Objectives and Scope of the Assignment

The Objectives of the Assignment are to:

- Strengthen ReSPA's reputation and influence by highlighting results of ReSPA activities;
- Prepare information and practical illustrations for media about ReSPA results and activities;
- Increase influence on decision and policy makers and implementers to clearly accept, promote, and implement PAR, especially related to the complex thematic areas covered by the PAR Network and all ReSPA regional Working Groups;
- Involve ReSPA staff and Governing Board members in communications and advocacy activities with the purpose of promotion of programmatic results and relevant recommendations for PAR enhancement;
- Boost the visibility and impact of capital projects and flagship reports, such as regional comparative studies;
- Attract wider interests and deepen public awareness related to the importance of having and linking strategic projects with regional practical needs, with cross-cutting and value-added effects.

The Scope of the Assignment is closely related to reaching out to the following target audiences:

- Direct beneficiaries of ReSPA activities (public institutions in ReSPA Members and Kosovo* whose representatives are either involved in ReSPA activities or are directly supported by ReSPA: senior and mid-level public servants working in the ministries and governmental agencies responsible for PAR and European Integration, and in other relevant line ministries);
- High-ranking officials of ReSPA's partner ministries/ regional key decision makers;
- Organizations that ReSPA collaborates with in assisting the governments of Western Balkan countries to introduce and support PAR (European and global change agents committed to social/political change and reform for development, international agencies connected with PAR, relevant agencies in the EU countries, academic and research institutions in the Western Balkans and the EU);
- Promoters of effective PAR and regional cooperation (business associations, professional organizations, and regional organisations);
- National and international media in the Western Balkans;
- Direct and indirect users of public services in ReSPA Members and Kosovo*.

Tasks and Responsibilities

The Expert should use communications and advocacy mechanisms and tools that are the most appropriate in the ReSPA's programme outreach efforts towards the target audiences (especially in ReSPA Members), in order to positively impact the reputation and standing of ReSPA in the region that it covers, as well as among partners, with special emphasis on the European Commission (EC) as the main donor.

The Expert is expected to perform the following tasks, within the estimated Level of Effort (LoE):

1. Provide assistance to ReSPA Secretariat and Governing Board in defining communications goals in line with the new ReSPA Strategy to be developed during 2018; LoE up to 2 full-time equivalent days;
2. Provide assistance to ReSPA Secretariat on communicating organisational priorities and achievements to all stakeholders / target audiences, and other interested parties, in particular through upgrade of the ReSPA website; LoE up to 3 full-time equivalent days;
3. Support ReSPA Secretariat in improving ways on how information, statistics and results are organised so that high-quality data and statistics support ReSPA's key messages, and that information and communication is organised in an appealing manner, in particular through the upgrade of the ReSPA website; LoE up to 4 full-time equivalent days;
4. Assist ReSPA Secretariat in developing stronger relations with partner institutions; in particular: develop contacts with communications and public relations departments in partner institutions, and define joint approach on the occasion of joint events; in collaboration with them, prepare media advisories to announce events to the media and draft media releases to send out after/right at the end of the events; LoE up to 4 full-time equivalent days;
5. Prepare drafts of texts about ReSPA activities and achievements for the ReSPA website; LoE up to 4 full-time equivalent days;
6. Provide support in preparing short video clips containing statements from ReSPA Governing Board members, experts, stakeholders, partners, and members of the ReSPA Secretariat, dedicated to important topics and events, and help in distribution of such video materials through media, social media and other channels; LoE up to 5 full-time equivalent days;
7. Provide support in presenting important ReSPA's results – including ReSPA Members' success stories, using as many communication channels as possible; LoE up to 4 full-time equivalent days;
8. Draft three ReSPA Newsletters (in April, in August, and in November 2018); LoE up to 6 full-time equivalent days;
9. Provide support to ReSPA Secretariat in promoting ReSPA's specific contributions to the Western Balkans's development towards European Integration (events, initiatives and activities envisaged in the ReSPA's Plan of Activities for 2018, including presentations of comparative studies and follow up on their policy recommendations); LoE up to 2 full-time equivalent days;

10. Other tasks in the field of communications and visibility that may occur during the assignment, and are closely related to ReSPA activities, such as providing assistance in preparation of the ReSPA Annual Report for 2018, and/or ReSPA Grant Proposal for the EU, in line with new EU Requirements for Communication and Visibility in EU-financed external actions. LoE up to 2 full-time equivalent days.

Within the above framework, the Expert is expected to liaise directly with the ReSPA Director and Programme Manager in charge for communications and visibility, and to take into consideration the instructions received beforehand.

Necessary Qualifications

The Expert shall possess the following qualifications:

- Advanced degree in media studies/ journalism/ communications/ public relations/ language and literature/ IT or related field;
- Minimum 5 years of experience in dealing with communications in/ for the public-sector institution / organisation in the Western Balkan region;
- Experience in drafting newsletters, managing of information for websites, and/ or drafting annual reports in the English language;
- Excellent written and oral communication skills in English language, and at least one official language of ReSPA Members (Albanian, Bosnian, Croatian, Macedonian, Montenegrin or Serbian);
- Advanced computer literacy; Good understanding of web-design;
- Ability to work with people of different nationalities, religions and cultural backgrounds;
- Excellent organisational skills, proven communication and presentation skills and ability to work in an environment requiring liaison and collaboration with multiple actors including government representatives, international organizations, and other stakeholders.

The expert shall possess the following competencies and core values:

- Demonstrates professional competence to meet responsibilities and task requirements, and is conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results;
- Results orientation: plans and produces quality results to meet established goals, generates innovative and practical solutions to challenging situations;
- Communication: possesses excellent communication skills, including the ability to convey complex concepts and recommendations in a clear and persuasive style tailored to match different audiences;
- Teamwork: is able to interact, establish and maintain effective working relations with a culturally diverse team;
- Client orientation: is able to establish and maintain productive partnerships with regional and national partners and stakeholders, and pro-actively identify and address the needs of beneficiaries and partners;
- Demonstrates integrity and fairness by modelling ReSPA values and ethical standards;
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability.

Time-frame, LoE, and Location

The Assignment, including travel, is to be completed between **20 March and 10 December 2018**. The **LoE is estimated at 36 (thirty-six) full-time equivalent working days**, as listed above.

The Assignment foresees work from home and travel within the Western Balkan region (at least one travel to Mostar for providing support to the Ministerial Conference in June 2018).

Remunerations

The assignment foresees up to **36 working days** for the Expert. The payment will be done in one (1) instalment.

Note: No other costs will be covered apart from the expert cost per day. The expert cost per day comprise of expert's fee per day and lump sum for covering related costs which include, travel, accommodation, local transport, meals and other incidentals.

Deliverables and Final Documentation

The following deliverables shall be produced and transferred to ReSPA during the course of the Assignment:

- Drafts of texts about ReSPA activities and achievements for the ReSPA website;
- Drafts of three ReSPA Newsletters (in April, in August, and in November 2018);
- Time Sheet(s);
- Boarding passes (if applicable).

Quality Control

The Expert should ensure internal quality control during implementing of the Assignment. The quality control should ensure consistency and coherence of information provided to media and other stakeholders. It should also ensure that information provided is duly substantiated and supported by relevant documents.

Application Information

Eligible experts are required to submit an application to ReSPA that includes:

- Curriculum Vitae including information on relevant knowledge and experience, as well as list of relevant publications/ published works, and contact details;
- Cover letter explaining the motivation for the Assignment;
- Financial proposal for the expected daily fee / honoraria.

ANNEX I

ReSPA 2018 Communications Action Plan

15 November 2017

Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) is an inter-governmental organization for enhancing regional cooperation, promoting shared learning and supporting the development of public administration in the Western Balkans. ReSPA activities are financed by a European Commission's Grant and operational costs are covered by contributions of its members. **ReSPA's purpose** is to help governments in the Western Balkan region develop better public administration, public services and overall governance systems for their citizens and businesses, and prepare them for membership in the European Union.

General purpose of this Action Plan is to provide the ReSPA Secretariat and the Governing Board with a framework detailing which communications and advocacy mechanisms and tools should be used as the most appropriate in the ReSPA's programme outreach efforts towards the target audiences (especially in ReSPA Members), in order to positively impact the reputation and standing of ReSPA in the region that it covers, as well as among partners, with special emphasis on the European Commission (EC) as the main donor.

Under the EC Grant Agreement for ReSPA covering the period 2016-2018, **the communications and advocacy activities will be organized around three pillars of the ReSPA Programme of Work:**

- (1) **European Integration Pillar:** Increased capacity of public administration in the ReSPA Members necessary for successful conducting of the European Integration process;
- (2) Special focus is on **Public Administration Reform (PAR) Pillar:** Facilitated and enhanced cooperation and exchange of experience in Public Administration Reform and European Integration activities in the ReSPA Members;
- (3) **Governance for Growth Pillar:** Ensured effective coordination of the implementation of the Dimension N – Effective Public Services of the Governance for Growth pillar of the South East Europe (SEE) 2020 Strategy.

Target audiences¹

- Direct beneficiaries of ReSPA activities (institutions in ReSPA Members and Kosovo* whose representatives are either involved in ReSPA activities or are directly supported by ReSPA: senior and mid-level public servants working in the ministries and governmental agencies responsible for PAR and European Integration, and in other relevant line ministries);
- High-ranking officials of ReSPA's partner ministries/regional key decision makers;

¹ **What is the difference between the audience and stakeholders?** A fundamental technique used in public relations is to identify the target audience, and to tailor every message to appeal to that audience. In addition to audiences, there are usually stakeholders, literally people who have a "stake" in a given issue. **All audiences are stakeholders (or presumptive stakeholders), but not all stakeholders are audiences.**

- Organizations that ReSPA collaborates with in assisting the governments of Western Balkan countries to introduce and support PAR (European and global change agents committed to social/political change and reform for development, international agencies connected with PAR, relevant agencies in the EU countries, academic and research institutions in the Western Balkans and the EU);
- Promoters of effective PAR and regional cooperation (business associations, professional organizations, and regional organisations);
- Potential international donors;
- National and international media in the Western Balkans;
- Direct and indirect users of public services in ReSPA Members and Kosovo*.

Underpinning ReSPA's communications goals

- Organizational clarity: communicate it clearly and repeatedly to all stakeholders and interested parties. Questions always to be answered clearly: What does ReSPA do? Why does ReSPA matter?
- Strengthen brand power reputation and influence by improving the organizational clarity; Highlight results, not processes.
- Prepare information and practical illustrations for media using “plain language” as much as possible – instead of “hermetic language and ‘dry’ official statements”.
- An effective communications strategy in the long term should have two main goals: (i) to increase the public awareness of the importance of PAR and its long-term effects, and (2) to recognize ReSPA's contributions to building of strategic foundations and capacities for a developed Western Balkans region.
- Increase influence on decision and policy makers and implementers to clearly accept, promote, and implement PAR, especially related to the complex thematic areas covering by PAR Network and all ReSPA regional Working Groups.
- Involve ReSPA staff in communications and advocacy activities with the purpose of promotion of programmatic results.
- Boost the visibility and impact of capital strategic projects and flagship reports, such as regional comparative studies.
- Attract wider interests and deepen public awareness related to the importance of having and linking strategic projects with regional practical needs, with cross-cutting and value-added effects.

ReSPA's work will always be more complex than the story that is effective for the general public.

ACTION PLAN

Activity/Channel	Expected results	Implementer/s	Monitoring method	Timeframe/Status
<p>New vision, mission, motto and communications goals defined in line with the new ReSPA Strategy to be developed during 2018. Continuously communicate priorities defined around the PAR. Pay special attention to the key messages, tailor them depending on the messenger(s) and the type of target audiences.</p>	<p>ReSPA's work summarized in a clear and compelling manner; compelling messages amplified and reverberated</p>	<p>Director, programme managers, all ReSPA team and members of the Governing Board, with the communications expert assistance</p>	<p>Feedback from partners and stakeholders</p>	<p>2018, repeat at regular intervals</p>
<p>Strategic conversations about the communications and advocacy involving ReSPA Secretariat (involve members of the Governing Board and EC relevant representatives whenever possible) about</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how we communicate organizational clarity; - how we internalize it within the team; - how to make sure that our partners and audiences properly understand our messages; with an aim to take a fresh look at opportunities for communicating clearly and repeatedly to all stakeholders and other interested parties. 	<p>Maintain a stable and reliable platform for constructive interaction within the team in general (ReSPA Secretariat, Governing Board, partners from EC as the main donor</p>	<p>Director, programme managers, all ReSPA team with the help of the communications expert, Governing Board, counterparts in the EC (DG NEAR)</p>	<p>Regular interaction among the ReSPA team and partners</p>	<p>On a regular basis</p>
<p>Encourage programme managers and assistants to organize information in the way to aim for a better understanding of complex/complicated structures that are often part</p>	<p>Information and communication organised in an appealing manner, rich in data and statistics,</p>	<p>Director, programme managers and assistants with the help of the communications expert</p>	<p>Feedback from the Governing Board, partners and stakeholders and level of their</p>	<p>Use every possible opportunity, encourage ReSPA staff to discuss among each other and to</p>

of their projects (make the process simple, but not simplistic; include high-quality data and statistics that support ReSPA's key messages)	interested audiences that understand better complex aspects of ReSPA's projects and intentions		satisfaction	cross-reference activities
Nourish contacts with PR departments in partner institutions and define joint approach on the occasion of joint events. In collaboration with them, prepare media advisories to announce events to the media and draft media releases to send out after/right at the end of the event.	Stronger relations with partner institutions; avoiding overlapping; better time management	Programme managers and assistants with the help of the communications expert	Feedback from the Governing Board, partner institutions and level of their satisfaction	Joint events
Increase the use of ReSPA's website for showcasing results to target audiences more effectively (post as much material as possible in ReSPA regional languages). Revamp the website and better optimize content for search. -Include invitation to visit the website in all written materials. -Keep the website updated and rich, but not confusing.	Improve the role of the website as a stable and reliable source of information and a platform for interaction with wide audiences	IT, communications expert, programme managers and assistants	Google analytics, feedback from partners and stakeholders, especially remote partners	Permanent activity
Use social media more intensively. Constant presence in social media extends the audience.	Remain in focus and strengthen ReSPA's role as of one of the leaders in the field of communications for PAR	Director, IT, programme managers and assistants	Various analytics tools	Permanent activity
Broadly use fast fact sheets, info sheets, infographics, posters and rollups, in order to keep main messages and goals consistent, clear and understandable and brand	Maximum number of our partners and stakeholders informed about what we do in a	ReSPA Secretariat, with support of communications expert	Feedback from partners and stakeholders	Use every possible opportunity

more visible. Make sure senior management always has these with them in meetings and events. In all ReSPA activities, the funding and support received by the EC will be visible and promoted.	clear and concise manner			
Write brief reports on project activities, events or research recently finished, and keep placing them on the website, sending them to relevant partners, to the regional and international online and print media when appropriate, in order to mobilize public opinion on the importance of ReSPA's themes.	Mobilized public opinion on the importance of ReSPA's themes; increased awareness and understanding of media, partners, academia, NGOs etc. of the purpose of ReSPA's activities	Director, programme managers with the help of the communications expert, partners who will advocate for ReSPA	Feedback from colleagues and partners, the main donor and members of the Governing Board through discussions, meetings and similar	Permanently, following relevant developments and results achieved
Send out media releases/notes/short videos, as well as post them online (invite for RSS feed subscription, Twitter, FB) on specific topics regarding the implementation of projects that sometimes seem not relevant enough to make an event about.	Make ReSPA's target audiences additionally informed about the course of projects	Programme managers with the help of communications expert	Media coverage, reverberations in media/partners' activities	Occasionally, in line with results achieved
In order to mobilize public opinion on the importance of ReSPA's themes, continue to work together with production companies or TV stations on creating of video/ TV programs related to the ReSPA's field of work - in line with the EC guidelines for cooperation with the media.	Increased visibility of ReSPA's activities and results	Programme managers and assistants, with the input from Communications expert	Feedback from target audiences	Occasionally, following strategically framed periods of time
When appropriate, make short video clips containing	Keep ReSPA team	ReSPA Secretariat with the help of the	Number of hits, media	Permanently, following

statements from ReSPA Governing Board members/director/programme managers dedicated to important topics/events/specific days, to be placed on ReSPA's website and in the media.	(internally) and partners and stakeholders (externally) informed; sustain interest in PAR themes	communications expert when possible	coverage, feedback from partners	strategically framed periods of time
Continue direct targeted advocacy towards main and potential future partners through one-on-one meetings, Governing Board, ReSPA working groups and other types of meetings. Have ReSPA representatives keep in mind to always mention ReSPA's results in meetings and events. <u>Use messages and lobbying² - when appropriate - as advocacy tools</u>	Mobilize ownership of sustainable PAR implementation; meld partners and stakeholders into an effective, winning lobbying campaign.	ReSPA Secretariat and members of the Governing Board, supported by the communications expert in the preparatory phase	Feedback from partners and stakeholders, results of projects, media coverage	Permanently
Present important ReSPA's results – including ReSPA members' success stories – using as many messengers and communications channels as possible: - Mechanism for In-country Support - Peer-to-Peer mechanism - ReSPA Open Days - Fast facts page sheet/One pager (regularly updated) - Classic brochure - Newsletter (3 times per year) - Infographic (as needed) - Year-end online/e-greetings	Mobilize ownership of PAR successes; increase the understanding and interest in ReSPA's themes	Governing Board members/ Director/programme managers – supported by programme assistants and the communications expert	Feedback from partners and stakeholders	As needed
Send thank you letters to partners on appropriate	Maintain partners' and	Director/programme managers –	Feedback from partners and	Permanent activity throughout the

² Inside lobbying – all those actions that take place inside the corridors of institutions – suggesting ideas for legislation, proposing amendments, formally registering your support or opposition to proposed laws, etc. Outside lobbying - all those activities carried out beyond the halls of power – letter writing, visiting lawmakers, media work and other tactics.

occasions; inform them about the results and delivery in a concise and compelling way.	stakeholders' ownership of PAR successes	supported by programme assistants	stakeholders	year
Promote ReSPA's specific contributions to the Western Balkans's development towards European Integration (events, initiatives and activities envisaged in the ReSPA's Plan of Activities for 2018 ³ , including presentations of comparative studies and follow up on their policy recommendations)	Maintain and bolster partners' and stakeholders' ownership of positive changes in PAR towards the European Integration	Permanent messaging at the Governing Board and ReSPA Secretariat levels, with the help of communications expert	Feedback from partners, stakeholders and target audiences; practical changes throughout the region within ReSPA's remit	Permanently throughout the year, following strategically framed periods of time

³ **ReSPA's activities planned for 2018 (Media and communications workplans for each of the below listed activities will be prepared depending on specific needs and objective circumstances):**

Within the European Integration Pillar: Seasonal school devoted to EU accession negotiations - chapters 23 and 24; Regional Conference on EU Budget Support; Regional Conference of Secretariat of National Investment Committees; **Within Public Administration Reform (PAR) Pillar, organized in accordance with six main thematic areas of Public Administration principles:** Promotion of Methodological Guide for Costing of PAR strategies, Regional Conference on Measuring Gender Equality in the Western Balkans and roundtables across the region, ReSPA Panel at the NISPAcee 26th Annual Conference "Public Administration for Well-being and Growth", ReSPA's 11th Annual Conference, Publication and translation of the ReSPA Comparative Study on Better Regulation in the Western Balkans; Roundtable for promotion of the recommendations of the ReSPA Comparative Study on Better Regulation in the Western Balkans; In-country support for implementation of Recommendations for improvement of public participation; Meeting of representatives of the Centre of Government (CoG) institutions on linking strategic planning system with the European integration process; Comparative study on Performance evaluation; Training of Trainers on integrity based on the manual Integrity Challenges in the Western Balkans; Publication of translations and dissemination of the ReSPA Comparative Study on Legal Remedies in Administrative Procedures in Western Balkans; Publication, translation and dissemination of the Study on the Case-Law of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) Applicable in Administrative Disputes; Roundtables for promotion of the Study on the Case-Law of the ECtHR Applicable in Administrative Disputes; eGovernment initiatives on: Institutionalization of IT checklist, Open (Government) Data - OGP initiative, e-Participation initiative, Further partnering - with the RCC in particular - in domains of open data, eParticipation and cyber security; Development of the Regional Comparative Study on Service delivery; Internal capacity building in Quality Management (CAF); Development of a detailed roadmap following the Feasibility study on Quality Management regional centre within ReSPA;; Meeting of the Public Procurement working group; **Within the Governance for Growth Pillar** - Through a particular coordination structure established in 2017, ReSPA will continue to support monitoring of the implementation of the SEE 2020 Strategy, especially dimension 'Effective Public Services', and will improve public sector capacities to develop and implement public policies in accordance with the goals of the mentioned strategy.