

Terms of Reference

Request for Services

PA Awards Applications Assessor – Senior EU Expert in Public Administration and Digital Transformation

1. Background

The Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) is a regional organization established in 2010 as a joint initiative financed by European Commission and Western Balkans (WB) administrations. It is managed and governed by five ReSPA Members: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, while Kosovo*¹ is beneficiary. ReSPA's purpose is to help governments in the region to develop better public administration, public services and overall governance systems for their citizens and businesses, and prepare for the membership to European Union.

ReSPA establishes close co-operation with Ministers, senior public servants and heads of units in Member countries' administrations. ReSPA also works in partnership with the European Union, specifically Directorate General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), other regional actors such as OECD/SIGMA and Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), as well as agencies and civil society organizations. Since its inception, ReSPA, as an international organization and a key regional endeavour in Public Administration Reform, has contributed to capacity-building and networking activities through in-country support mechanisms, peering and the production of regional research materials. The European Commission (EC) provides directly managed funds for the support of the ReSPA activities (research, training and networking programmes) in line with the EU accession process. The current EC grant supports the implementation of the activities required for contribution to the achievement of the three strategic objectives during the period 2019-2022.

ReSPA works primarily through regional networks which operate at three levels: Ministerial, Senior Officials, and networks/working groups of experts and senior practitioners. There is one network – Programme Committee composed of the representatives of institutions in charge of PAR, Public Financial Management (PFM) and government policy planning and the European Integration (EI) co-ordination process and five Working groups: (1) Centre-of-Government Institutions; 2) Better Regulation; 3) Human Resource Management and Development; 4) E-Governance; and 5) Quality Management.

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

2. Description of the assignment

ReSPA and OECD-SIGMA jointly organize the Public Administration Awards in the Western Balkans with the aim to identify, recognize, and reward efforts that advance, promote and anchor effective, efficient, transparent, accountable, innovative and citizen-centered public governance, administration and services in Western Balkan countries. This is crucial for the stability, the sustainable development and the resilience of the countries in the region. They are also fundamental paths and enablers for the European Union membership.

The focus of the 2022 PA Awards is on recognising the provision of better public services to improve the lives of citizens in the Western Balkans. More specifically, the Awards will recognise the efforts of governments to apply the lessons learned from tackling the challenges of the pandemic, including strengthening the capacities of governments and public administrations to cope with the wide-ranging socio-economic consequences of such unprecedented grand challenges.

This is why the 2022 PA Awards will recognise efforts in three thematic areas: (i) Digital transformation of the public sector and its services; (ii) Quality management for improving public services; and (iii) A public administration for all. To encourage diverse approaches and perspectives, the PA Awards 2022 will be especially sensitive to initiatives that ensure continuity, foster innovativeness, promote and tackle green, gender, services for marginalised groups, and foster youth empowerment.

For purpose of conducting independent assessment of the received applications, there is a need to assign PA Award 2022 Applications Assessors.

3. Tasks and Responsibilities

In close collaboration with the PA Award Committee, composed of ReSPA and SIGMA/OECD representatives, the selected Assessor will be responsible for the following tasks:

Preparatory phase – up to one and a half (1,5) working day

1. Getting familiar with PA Award Methodology and Guideline for Assessors and Jury members, as well as background information on ReSPA and SIGMA/OECD organizations (0,5 working day).
2. Online consultations with PA Award Committee including introductory video call with other assessors and award secretariat (*Explaining the methodology, process and platform functionality to the assessors.* (up to 1 working day)

Implementation of the assessment process – up to eight and half (8,5) working days

1. Evaluation of the eligible applications using the award platform, according to the criteria set up in the PA Award 2022 Methodology, particularly from the perspective of digital transformation in public service delivery. Writing a note for each application evaluated. The applications will be assessed in tandem with another Assessor as defined in the Guidelines for Assessors and Jury members. (up to 5,5 working days).
2. Attending the Consensus meeting to reach commonly agreed list of ranked projects and agree on the list of projects for interviews. (up to 1 day working day)

3. Conduct the interview with the applicant representative in the case of the need for obtaining certain clarifications / additional information: telephone / online communication with the applicants. (up to 1 working day)
4. Presentation of the results of the evaluation to Jury members (up to 1 working day)

The assignment foresees up to 10 (ten) working days for the Assessor.

The engaged Assessor will liaise directly with ReSPA Programme Manager in charge of the assignment and will take into consideration the instructions received beforehand.

The final product will be subject to approval from ReSPA before the payment is executed.

4. Necessary Qualifications

The Expert shall possess the following profile:

Qualifications and skills:

- At least B.Sc. degree in Social Sciences, Public Administration, Computer Science or other related fields;

General professional experience:

- Minimum 7 years of experience in dealing with Public Administration Reform and the EU integration;

Specific professional experience:

- Minimum 5 years of experience in assessment of the project proposals preferably funded by the EU or awards applications;
- Minimum 5 years of experience in assessment of the PAR strategies;
- Knowledge about the public administration reform processes in the public administrations in Western Balkans will be an asset;
- Experience of working in the Western Balkans (desirable).

Skills:

- Excellent analytical skills;
- Excellent presentation skills;
- Excellent written and oral communication skills in English;
- Team work.

5. Timing and Location

The assignment foresees work from home including online meetings and consultations. The assignment will be realized in the period of June-July within following timelines:

- Assessor will receive the eligible applications via We Transfer by 19th June midnight CET.
- Assessor will conduct individual evaluation between 20th June and 29th June.
- Assessor will attend Consensus meeting on 30th June to reach commonly agreed list of ranked projects and agree on the list of projects for interviews.
- Assessor will conduct telephone/zoom interview for verification purposes related to gathering additional information he/she believes are needed to be obtained for individual application, between 07th and 08th July .
- Assessor will present results of the evaluation to Jury members on 13th of July.

The Assessor needs to confirm the availability and attendance at the above listed meetings and events.

6. Remunerations

The assignment foresees **up to 10 (ten) working days** for the Assessor.

The daily fee will be defined in accordance with the ReSPA expert selection procedure, based on assessed and evaluated expert's capacity. The payment will be done in one installment after the completion of all envisaged tasks as described in the Tasks and Responsibilities.

Activity	Max. No. of working days
Preparation	1,5
Implementation of the assessment process	8,5
TOTAL:	10

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

ReSPA reserves the right to change the timing and volume of the assignment and will timely inform assigned expert if such changes occur.

7. Reporting and Final Documentation

The Expert will be requested to deliver the following documents before the payment is conducted:

Outputs

- All documents related to envisaged activities and outputs as described in the Tasks and responsibilities.

Documents required for payment

- Invoices (original and signed);
- Timesheets (original and signed);
- Brief Report on deliverables (up to 1.5 page)