



Innovation Fund
Republic of Serbia
Belgrade, August 10, 2023

NOTICE FOR

CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST FOR EXTERNAL EXPERTS Members of Investment Committee for Mini Grants Programme

under IPA 2019 Direct Grant No. 48-00-00120/2021-28

1. Contracting authority

Innovation Fund, Nemanjina 22-26, 11000 Belgrade

2. Reference Number:

19SER01/01/51-05-EC-MINI

3. Registration procedure

The objective of this call for expressions of interest is to set up a list of external experts for the Investment Committee (IC) members for the evaluation of the project proposals (Applications) received under the **Mini Grants Programme** financed through IPA 2019 Direct Grant “Annual Action Programme for the Republic of Serbia for the year 2019, Grant contract “Increased Innovation Capacity and Growth of SMEs”, no. 48-00-00120/2021-28.

The interested candidates are invited to submit documentation set in the point 4 below in English language to the following e-mail address: ic@inovacionifond.rs by **12.00 CET on September 11, 2023**.

Inclusion on the list entails no obligation on the part of the contracting authority concerning the conclusion of contracts.

Please note that two calls for expression of interest are open at the same time:

- (1) IC for Matching Grants Programme and Collaborative Grant Scheme Programme
- (2) IC for the Mini Grants Programme

Candidates are eligible to apply **ONLY FOR ONE** of the aforementioned ICs, by placing reference number of the procedure in the Subject of the e-mail.

4. Information and documents to be provided

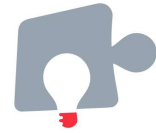
The interested candidates should provide the following:

- (1) **Expression of Interest (EOI)** letter indicating full contact details in e-mail form indicating the fields of specialization set in point 7 below, that the candidate applies for. The **reference number of this procedure** should be placed in the “Subject” of the e-mail.
- (2) **CV** attached to the expression of interest e-mail.

INNOVATION FUND

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- (3) A signed **Declaration on honour on exclusion criteria and selection criteria** stating that they are not in one of the situations of exclusion listed at point 9 and that they fulfil the selection criteria listed at point 10. The form is available on the following link: http://www.inovacionifond.rs/cms/files//ostale-nabavke/Declaration_on_honour_on_exclusion_criteria_and_selection_criteria.docx

In case of doubt, supporting evidence of non-exclusion may be requested.

The Contracting Authority reserves the right to request interview before concluding the evaluation and selection process. The date and time of these interviews will be confirmed or notified to the candidate at least 2 days in advance. If a candidate is prevented from attending an interview by force majeure, a mutually convenient alternative appointment is arranged with the candidate. If the candidate is unable to attend this second appointment, it will be eliminated from the evaluation process.

Candidates are reminded that the provision of false information in this procedure may lead to the rejection of their application and to their exclusion from EU-funded procedures and contracts.

5. General description of the procedure

Natural persons and sole traders¹ are invited to submit expression of interest in accordance with the rules set out in this notice. The candidates can apply for one or several fields of specialization set out in the point 7. The Contracting Authority will set up a list of candidates who meet the criteria set in the point 10. The candidates will be ranked in line with the scoring methodology set in the point 11 and the final list will be set up.

The Contracting Authority will propose to sign the contract with the five best ranked candidates from final list. The candidates will be asked to confirm their exclusivity and availability before signing the contract. In case that the candidate doesn't confirm exclusivity and availability or refuses to sign the contract, the Contracting Authority will ask the next ranked candidate from the final list in descending order.

6. Use of the list resulting from this notice

The list resulting from this notice will be used exclusively for tasks to be carried out in accordance with requirements stipulated in the Terms of Reference for Investment Committee members for the Matching Grants Programme and Collaborative Grant Scheme Programme.

The interested candidate can find the respective Terms of Reference on the following link: https://www.inovacionifond.rs/cms/files//ostale-nabavke/ToR_IC_Mini.pdf

7. Full description of the fields covered by the call for expressions of interest

The Contracting Authority will launch two Calls for Proposals (CfP), each covering the following three programmes: Mini Grants, Matching Grants and Collaborative Grant Scheme Programme, as follows:

- First CfP for Mini Grants, Matching Grants and Collaborative Grant Scheme – value EUR 10.3 million, indicatively expected 325 project applications, launched in June 2023 and
- Second CfP for Mini Grants, Matching Grants and Collaborative Grant Scheme – value EUR 10.3 million, indicatively expected 325 project applications, tentatively to be launched at the end of 2023

¹ Eligible sole trader is a legally capable natural person who is registered in an official special register in order to conduct a business activity in order to gain profit. A sole trader is liable for all his obligations arising from performing his activity with all of his personal assets, including the assets acquired with regard to the performance of the activity.



*Number of Call for Proposals may increase depending on the status of the IPA 2019 Action and the possibility of the Action's duration extension.

The submitted project applications under the CfPs will be classified under different industry areas based on the project's field of science and technology and sector of the economy.

The Investment Committee under the **Mini Grants Programme** will be composed of 5 members (external experts) covering the following areas of expertise:

- Private Industry
- International Entrepreneurship
- International Finance and Venture Capital / Private Equity
- Business Development

Each candidate shall clearly **state only one (1) primary area of expertise** in the EOI letter from the aforementioned 4 areas.

The Investment Committee will be composed of members from each area of primary expertise.

Please note that evaluation process of the applications and documentation submitted under Mini Grant Programme which is the subject of the evaluation by the Investment Committee is in English language, due to international evaluation process. Therefore, external experts as members of Investment Committee are conducting their work in English.

8. Place of delivery

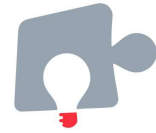
Republic of Serbia.

The services by the external experts will be rendered online i.e., IC members' work will be performed remotely through the IF online portal and via Zoom. At the discretion of the IF, the Investment Committee members may be required to come to Belgrade for approximately 5 days (per Call for Proposals), during the pitch event and the final decision meeting.

9. Exclusion criteria

External experts shall be excluded from participation if:

- a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b) they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment of a competent authority of a Member State which has the force of res judicata;
- c) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify including by decisions of the European Investment Bank and international organisations;
- d) they are not in compliance with their obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- e) they or persons having powers of representation, decision making or control over them have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering or any other illegal activity, where such an illegal activity is detrimental to the Union's financial interests;



- f) they are subject to an administrative penalty for being guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in a procurement procedure or failing to supply information, or being declared to be in serious breach of their obligation under a contract covered by the budget;
- g) they have a conflict of interest in connection with the contract; a conflict of interest could arise in particular as a result of economic interests, political or national affinities, family or emotional ties or any other relevant connection or shared interest.

10. Selection criteria

All experts included in the list should possess:

- **Education:** University degree – Bachelor’s;
- English written and spoken proficiency;
- Computer literacy.

Minimum required qualifications of the external expert for member of Investment Committee:

General work experience:

- At least 10 years on a managing/director position in a private sector company, AND/OR
- At least 10 years of experience in establishing and growing new companies and/or fundraising from private or public sector (e.g., venture capital) sources of financing, AND/OR
- At least 10 years of high-level international work experience in the field of international finance with venture capital or private equity, AND/OR
- At least 10 years of relevant work experience at a high-level executive or investment position in an internationally recognized private organization/corporation.

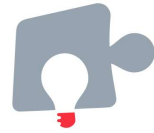
Specific work experience:

- Experience in providing business support services (business development strategies, product/service commercialization strategies, investment counselling, market research and positioning, financial planning and investment execution, business model design and implementation) to at least 5 clients (private/public) in the last 5 years; AND/OR
- In the last 5 years of business and product development experience including project management in one or more of the following technical fields: energy and energy efficiency, life sciences, civil engineering and construction materials, machines and mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, information and communication technologies, food science and agriculture, environmental science and new materials and nanotechnologies; AND/OR
- In the last 5 years in a leadership role designing and implementing international go-to market strategies for products/services/technologies in one or more of the following technical fields: energy and energy efficiency, life sciences, civil engineering and construction materials, machines and mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, information and communication technologies, food science and agriculture, environmental science and new materials and nanotechnologies.

Investment experience:

- In the last 5 years of evaluating and/or investing and/or serving in the role of investment advisor in startups (including angel investor, Venture Capital, Private Equity, grants, and other similar investments).

At this stage there is no need to submit evidence documents for the above criteria. Please note that at the later stage you may be requested to provide documentary evidence attesting the qualifications, skills and experience stated in your CV i.e., copies of diplomas and copies of employer certificates or



references, or signed copies of consultancy or labour contracts, proving the professional experience indicated in your CVs.

11. Scoring methodology for ranking of the candidates

GENERAL WORK EXPERIENCE	Max. score 30
= 10 years	15
> 10 years ≤ 15 years	20
> 15 years	30
SPECIFIC WORK EXPERIENCE	Max. score 60
INVESTMENT EXPERIENCE	Max. score 10

12. Conditions of remuneration and reimbursement of experts

The maximum budget for this procedure is € 297.500,00 of total payments (€59.500 per IC member contract).

The remuneration shall be calculated based on the number of working days spent by the external expert and fixed price of € 700 per man day (8 hours, including costs for travel and accommodation in Belgrade, as necessary). Indicative workload will be up to 85 working days (45 days for pre-selection phase and 40 days for final-selection phase).

The payments for services provided will be made after the final decision phase of each CfP, indicating the completion of that particular CfP evaluation.