

Serbia Accelerating Innovation and Growth Entrepreneurship

TERMS OF REFERENCE

ENVIRONMENTAL & SOCIAL SPECIALIST

1. BACKGROUND

Serbia has received a loan from the World Bank (Bank), through the “Serbia Accelerating Innovation and Growth Entrepreneurship Project” (Project), to contribute to the country’s growth and competitiveness by improving (i) relevance and excellence of scientific research and (ii) innovative entrepreneurship and access to finance for enterprise growth.

The Project will support reforms of the research sector, through supporting operations of the Serbia Science Fund, reform of selected group of individual Research and Development Institutions (RDIs) and specific interventions promoting researchers skills. The Project will also allow for the large Serbian diaspora to be engaged through a Diaspora Facility, aimed at strengthening the Serbian innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem by providing scientific excellence, financial networks, knowledge, and new market opportunities. Finally, the Project will also provide needed support to innovative SMEs through an enterprise acceleration program that will extend co-investment grants and technical assistance to enterprises.

The Project includes the following three components:

- **Component 1 / Research Sector Reforms**/ will support Research Sector Reforms. **Sub-component 1.1** (Serbia Science Fund) will finance the operationalization of the Serbia Science Fund (SF), established in 2018, reporting formally to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MoESTD). Project support includes Technical Assistance (TA) for strengthening of the SF organizational architecture (i.e., governance, operational structure, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), etc.); and financing for grants - both basic science grants and applied research grants aimed at improved academia-private sector linkages, collaboration with diaspora researchers, EU researchers, and others. This component will be an addition to Government budget resources allocated for this purpose. **Sub-component 1.2** (RDI Reforms) will support institutional reform of selected RDIs, through improvements in governance systems, strategic planning, HR development, accounting, monitoring, marketing, upgrading laboratory infrastructure and facilities, and more. **Subcomponent 1.3** (Serbian Diaspora Facility) will support a Serbian Diaspora Facility (SDF) within SF to leverage the strengths and desire of Serbian diaspora community and benefit from this immense potential in the development of research, innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem in Serbia.
- **Component 2 / Enterprise Acceleration**/ will support development of Enterprise Acceleration program, building on existing programs of the Innovation Fund (IF). The component will involve a co-financing investment grant program and training and mentorship program for innovative early- and growth-stage firms aimed at facilitating their growth.
- **Component 3 / Project Implementation and Monitoring**/ will finance activities related to project implementation and monitoring including operations of a Project Implementation Unit (PIU). This will include operational and fiduciary (procurement,

financial), environmental and social safeguards, M&E, Project audits, studies, policy/program design and capacity building support to the MoESTD, SF, IF and selected RDIs.

Overall, the environmental and social risks of the Project are classified as Moderate, taking into account the impact and predictable nature of the interventions, and the experience of the MoESTD (IF in particular) in managing similar activities. The Project will not fund civil works and no adverse impacts such as involuntary land acquisition, impacts on biodiversity, on cultural heritage, are expected. The environmental risks will be small in magnitude, of temporary nature and directly associated with the listed investments and TA activities under the Project.

The main activities that could have environmental and social (E&S) impacts are the research and firm grant programs described under Sub-component 1.1 (Serbia Science Fund), Sub-component 1.2 (RDI reforms) and component 2 (Enterprise Acceleration). Such impacts are related to investments and/or products that are expected to be small, not requiring major civil works and developed using new and energy efficient technologies.

Any activities that may have moderate and significant environmental and social impacts will be deemed ineligible through the Project's Environmental and Social Screening Procedure to be used for defining grant eligibility. Any minor impacts will be identified by the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) and addressed in activity-specific Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs). There is very limited risk of the project having negative impacts on vulnerable groups. Project beneficiaries are new and established scientists and owners of innovative firms.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MoESTD) will be responsible for the overall Project coordination and implementation with specific entities responsible for the implementation of their respective components, as defined in the Project Appraisal Document¹. A single Project Implementation Unit (PIU) will be established at the MoESTD reporting to the MoESTD State Secretary (Research and Technology) who as Project Coordinator will be responsible for coordination of the Project with all Project implementing entities (PIEs), namely the Science Fund and the Innovation Fund. The PIU will be responsible for all Project implementation related activities including technical, operational, environmental and social safeguards, reporting, monitoring and evaluation, audits, studies, and capacity building, etc.

The PIU is responsible for implementation of environmental and social measures in accordance with the procedures set forth in the ESMF prepared for SAIGE and available at the following link:

<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/285281578531214552/Environmental-and-Social-Management-Framework-ESMF-Serbia-Accelerating-Innovation-and-Growth-Entrepreneurship-P170185>

For the purpose of implementation of the Banks' Environmental & Social requirements and their related measures the MoESTD needs to engage a qualified Environmental and Social Expert (Consultant) as a member of PIU. S/he should ensure that environmental and social considerations are integrated into subprojects designs and implementation, and that actions taken fully comply with the Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) policies and standards.

¹ Available here: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/645591574699140484/pdf/Serbia-Accelerating-Innovation-and-Growth-Entrepreneurship-Project.pdf>

This Terms of Reference (TOR) is developed to provide an overview of the generic tasks for which the Consultant is responsible. The TOR focuses on responsibilities related to ensuring compliance with the Bank's ESF policies; however, the Consultant's responsibilities may go beyond these.

The Consultant will work closely with the MoESTD and other relevant stakeholders to ensure that the Project and selected subprojects are managed efficiently and in compliance with the approved overall objective, the approved Project's Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), the Project's Legal Agreements and Financing Agreements, and the Project Operating Manual (POM). Consultant, always aligned with the Project Implementation Unit Manager (Project Manager) and in collaboration with the other Project Officers shall interact, liaise and cooperate with other Project Officers, shall interact and liaise with other relevant ministries and stakeholders, a number of other external bodies, Bank, partners, and other agencies in Serbia.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The main objective is to plan, implement, monitor and control all Project's environmental and social activities by components, in close cooperation with the PIU's staff and other stakeholder agencies as described in the POM.

The Consultant will support the MoESTD in preparation of environmental and social due diligence documentation for the overall Project, as per Project's ESMF. This basic document facilitates screening, assessment, and management of environmental and social issues for activities / subprojects during Project implementation, while taking into account and ensuring compliance with the national regulation and relevant ESF Environmental and Social Standards (ESSs) for this Project. These include:

- ESS1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts;
- ESS2 Labor and Working Conditions;
- ESS3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management;
- ESS4 Community Health and Safety;
- ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure.

All subprojects to be financed under Project must undergo an environmental and social screening in the manner described in the ESMF. The Consultant would perform this process when reviewing and evaluating sub-projects and inform potential applicants on environmental and social requirements for sub-projects evaluation, in order to be able to implement them in an environmentally and socially acceptable manner.

Screening is the first step in the process of thorough analysis of sub-projects, and its purpose is to identify potential impacts of the proposed sub-projects and define measures aimed to prevent or minimize negative impacts. Specifically, the screening would identify environmental and social risks related to the proposed sub-project and determine type of impact assessment documentation needed for sub-project implementation. Sub-projects unacceptable due to the nature of the proposed activities would be rejected.

The main task of the Consultant is to ensure compliance with the environmental policies triggered under the Project. In the sense of wide consultations, compliance should be ensured and the issues of possible environmental and social impacts at the level of measures should be streamlined at the beginning of policy development process. This is why the involvement

of the Consultant is to provide inputs/comments to these documents to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the Project.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

The specific functions and responsibilities of the Consultant will be:

- As part of the ESMF, the Consultant will conduct the whole environmental and social (E&S) screening process and determine the E&S impacts and vulnerabilities, assess an environment/social risk category/level, and identify risk management opportunities/strategies as to determine the adequate ESS instrument to be applied for the received applications (subproject proposals). This will be done to:
 - Ensure compliance with the Bank exclusion list,
 - Ensure that no subproject with substantial or high risks (impacts) type will be supported, but only those with moderate or low risks (impacts).
 - Ensure that subprojects/grants will not necessitate involuntary land acquisition or any form of resettlement, and
 - Ensure that no Bank Safeguard standards other than ESS1, ESS2, ESS3, ESS4 and ESS10 are relevant for proposed sub-project, any activities corresponding to the Bank Projects with Moderate risk will be required to have an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) in place prior to approval that would identify potential environmental impacts and provide adequate mitigation measures.
 - Any activities corresponding to the Bank Category 2 (“Moderate Risk”) Projects will be required to have an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) in place prior to approval that would identify potential environmental impacts and provide adequate mitigation measures.
- Evaluate the subproject based on the Environmental and Social Checklist (ESMF – Annex 02) and Ethic Self-Assessment provided by Applicant (ESMF – Annex 01C). The Checklist presents simple tool for identification of Project-related potential environmental and social impacts. This would also help simplify decision-making process whether the subproject can be financed or it is on Exclusion Lists (ESMF-Annex 01), as well as whether a site-specific ESMP is needed.
- Determine the category of subprojects – depending on subproject type, location, sensitivity and scope, nature and intensity of environmental and social risks and impacts.
- Advise applicants on the content and scope of the Environmental and Social Checklist (ESMF – Annex 02) and Ethic Self-Assessment provided by Applicant (ESMF – Annex 01C), as needed;
- Advise applicants on the content and scope of site-specific ESMPs, as needed;
- Assist the MoESTD and the applicants in information dissemination and conducting public consultations of draft ESMP/ESMP Checklist, preparation of minutes of the meetings and finalization of the documents;
- Conduct quality control of ESS instruments in line with ESF requirements prior to Bank submission and dealing with the comments as may be received from the Bank;

- Carry out, during the upgrading of laboratory infrastructure and existing facilities, that could potentially include some office space renovation activities and before, preliminary assessment and management of E&S risks and impacts, labor and working conditions, pollution prevention, community health and safety.
- Carry out stakeholder engagement and information disclosure;
- Evaluate the monitoring reports of grantees to ensure compliance with the ESMP;
- Undertake site visits and reviewing grantees' compliance with site-specific ESMPs, including determining and suggesting remedial actions; preparation of non-compliance reports and keeping track of respective responses/actions undertaken;
- Keep records of supervision of Project activities in a systemic manner that allows easy search-and-find of all documents upon request;
- Provide recommendation to amend environmental management procedures for the purpose of the implementation of the Bank's E&S requirements;
- Ensure that any Technical Assistance (TA) outputs supported under the Project are consistent with Bank ESF policies;
- Provide support and coordinate with the analytical and M&E experts in analysis of the environment and social impact related topics;
- Provide support to the PIU in preparing regular reports on Project implementation;
- Monitor social and environmental parameters as per the instructions provided in the Project's ESMF;
- Participate in regular Bank's supervision missions;
- Semi-annual reporting on compliance with ESMF, as part of Project semiannual reports;
- Other actions to enable the Project to meet the environmental and social requirements within the legal framework of the Republic of Serbia and in accordance with the Bank's environmental and social policies and procedures.

4. EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

The Consultant suitable for this position should have the following qualifications:

- Graduate/advanced degree in environmental sciences, social, natural resources management, environmental or civil engineering, or related discipline;
- Minimum of 5 years of relevant professional experience, including applied experience in Environmental & Social risk management in investment projects (international and local);
- Experience in at least 2 international funded projects related to grants for research and/or commercial activities would be an advantage;
- Experience in at least 2 internationally funded projects in the field of environmental and/or social protection;

- Knowledge of international good practice for management of E&S risks, including World Bank ESF/Safeguards policies and International Finance Corporation (IFC) Sustainability Framework and supporting documents such as Guidance Notes, EHS Guidelines;
- Previous experience with World Bank-funded projects as environmental and social reviewer and an understanding of its requirements would be an advantage;
- No obstacles for traveling within Serbia for various field trips;
- Good analytical skills, ability to think strategically, analyze and synthesize diverse qualitative and quantitative environmentally/socially-related data and information.
- Excellent spoken and written Serbian and English;
- Computer skills, including word processing and spreadsheets.

5. TIMING AND DURATION

The Consultant will be engaged on part time basis for the duration of the Project with a probation period of 6 months. The current Closing Date of the Project is September 30, 2024.

The expected time effort for the assignment is up to 10 working days (80 hours) per month.

6. REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

The Consultant will be primarily required to report, at least once per month (monthly) or as necessary according to Project activities and timeline, to the Project Manager for approval.

The Consultant should provide/submit monthly Time Sheets to Project Manager, summarizing key issues and emerging and day-to-day tasks undertaken, as well as working days/hours spent on each issue and task, within 10 (ten) days after the end of month for which the report is due.

The Consultant shall proactively prepare ad-hoc reports on any major environmental and social issues arising during Projects implementation, at the MoESTD or Bank's request.

The Consultant will provide hard and/or electronic copies of any documents and technical materials developed during the Project in their original electronic format. The reports will be provided in the English/Serbian language.

7. SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED BY THE CLIENT

The MoESTD will be responsible for provision of the following:

- Fully equipped office space, with access to Internet, local telephone line, printing, photocopying and document binding;
- Access to necessary documents; and
- Where the Consultant is required to travel, to site or elsewhere in accordance with the MoESTD instruction, all transportation costs.

8. TERMS OF PAYMENT

The contract, in the form of the Standard World Bank Time-Based Contract for Small Assignments covering all fees costs and expenses, will be entered into between the Consultant and the MoESTD. Each monthly timesheet must be firstly approved by the Project Coordinator from the MoESTD and the Project Manager.