Serbia Accelerating Innovation and Growth Entrepreneurship Project (SAIGE)

Analytics and Policy Implementation Specialist

Terms of Reference

1. Background

Serbia has received a loan from the World Bank Group for the **Serbia Accelerating Innovation and Growth Entrepreneurship (SAIGE) Project**[1] (Project) to support the strengthening of the Serbian Innovation and Entrepreneurship ecosystem. The main objective of the Project is to improve (i) the relevance and excellence of scientific research; and (ii) innovative entrepreneurship and access to finance for enterprise growth, as a way of contributing to Serbia's growth and competitiveness. The European Union Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA-II) is also providing complimentary financing support for the SAIGE Project. The Project includes the following three components:

Component 1: Research Sector Reforms
Component 2: Enterprise Acceleration
Component 3: Project Implementation, Monitoring, Capacity Building.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MoESTD) is responsible for the overall Project coordination and implementation, as well as execution of Component 1.2 - Research and Development Institutes (RDI) Reforms. Implementation of the Project is carried out by the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) team at the MoESTD comprising of PIU Project Manager, and technical and administrative staff.

Under the Project, the MoESTD is providing incentives, financial and technical support to a number of RDIs that have opted to increase excellence and relevance of their research and perform institutional transformation. Moreover, the Project is improving policy management in the field of science, technology and innovation (STI field) which, among other activities, includes support to the implementation of the Smart Specialization Strategy of the Republic of Serbia[2] (4S) and its Action Plan for the period 2021-2022[3], that have emerged as a link between research, economy and innovation. The implementation of 4S is based on the adopted Action plan and in line with recommendations and the Smart Specialization implementation framework of the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission (JRC). The continuation of the Entrepreneurial discovery process (EDP) safeguards continuous public dialogue with representatives of the quadruple helix and ensures that the common needs and commitments of all stakeholders in the system are considered at further development of the ecosystem, including emerging local, regional and global trends and challenges. The MoESTD is closely cooperating with other relevant ministries in order to provide the framework for 4S effective implementation, including broader measures and covering all relevant areas through continuation of consultative process.

[1] https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P170185
[2] https://pametnaspecijalizacija.mpn.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Strategija-pametne-specijalizacije_EN_WEB.pdf
[3] https://pametnaspecijalizacija.mpn.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Akcioni-plan_en_web.pdf

2. Objectives of the Assignment

The objectives of this assignment are to provide local support and facilitate the sustainable implementation of the RDI reform (Component 1.2) and the Smart Specialization process by safeguarding evidence-based decision making and expanding the stakeholders' consultation process in order to obtain comprehensive and grass-roots-inspired inputs bringing together representatives of the quadruple helix: national, regional and local authorities, academia, business sector and civil society to identify and exploit a country's own specific competitive advantages and needs.

The Analytics and Policy Implementation Specialist (hereinafter: Consultant) will provide the evidence-based support for the transformation process of the selected RDIs, as well as for the continuation of EDP workshops and consultations with stakeholders. The Consultant will facilitate obtaining and analysis of relevant data from various resources that may serve as inputs for the RDIs transformation process, EDP and 4S monitoring, with a view of contributing to Serbia's growth and competitiveness. Moreover, the Consultant will get engaged in providing technical support to RDIs in implementation of their transformation plans, including but not limited to needs assessment, coordination with consultants and reporting.

During the course of the assignment, the Consultant will closely work with the PIU Manager, MoESTD Project Officer and other PIU members involved in RDI reform implementation and support actions to 4S, who will serve as contact points. Likewise, in conducting tasks related to the 4S process the Consultant is expected to maintain regular communication with the international and local specialists engaged in 4S in order to obtain their feedback for the EDP process, to propose improvements and adjustments of the process, as well as recommendations for changing or revising the measures of the 4S and defining future measures during the upcoming iteration of the Action Plan.

3. Scope of Work and Deliverables

During the course of the engagement, the Consultant is expected to provide the following services:

1. Contribution to effective coordination of external support and harmonization of the work the SAIGE consultants with RDIs to match their needs in terms of scope and timing of the support, as well as monitoring of the obtained outcomes;
2. Prepare brief needs assessment reports for initiation of procurement of specific consulting services on the PIU level to support transformation process of a group of RDIs. It should include objectives of assignment, scope of work, expected experience and qualifications, and expected time effort;
3. Assist PIU in communications on Project Component 1.2 - RDI Reforms, stakeholders' expectations and any scope implications with the RDIs, diagnose issues with in-progress reporting on transformation of RDIs and propose recommended solutions;
4. Support the RDIs' reporting procedures by contributing to the evidence-based assessment of their achievements and transformation process outcomes;

5. Under the supervision of MoESTD/PIU, provide support to the overall 4S implementation activities in order to ensure efficient and timely achievement of the expected outcomes, in compliance with the adopted Strategy and related Action Plans;
6. Cooperate with the MoESTD and other relevant ministries, Government officials and other public authorities on collection and interpretation of relevant data for monitoring and evaluation of the 4S implementation, including analytical support to implementation of 4S and continuous EDP in terms of evidence-based governance;
7. Encourage effective and efficient 4S governance structure and system and continual EDP, including support to a team of international and local 4S specialists in planning and organization of meetings materials and inputs, gauging group consultations and capacity building activities and maintenance of stakeholders' active engagement;
8. Participate in Smart Specialization macroregional networking and exchange of best practice between 4S and S3 of relevant regions that have developed and/or adopted approaches, methods and tools which may enhance 4S implementation, future planning and overall impact in Serbia;
9. Ensure data integrity by investigating inconsistencies in reported numbers from 4S implementing entities, including working with IT to understand any system issues or changes investigating templates and adjustments;
10. Provide technical support to the PIU in implementation of relevant policies in STI field, participation at relevant meetings, preparation of regular and ad-hoc reports as required by PIU/MoESTD and World Bank, and other duties as required by the Project Manager.

4. Experience and Qualifications of the Consultant

- Master's degree or equivalent in engineering, management or statistics;
- At least 5 years of relevant professional experience in providing scientific support to evidence-based policy making, public policy processes and organisations;
- Experience in public policies in the area of research, innovation, entrepreneurship and collaboration in quadruple helix;
- Previous experience with RDIs and Innovation ecosystem;
- Previous experience in Smart specialization process in Serbia is considered an advantage;
- Experience in public-private dialog;
- Excellent spoken and written English, communication, organisation and teamwork skills.

<u>Selection of consultant</u>

The candidates will be evaluated applying the following evaluation criteria:

- General experience (40 Points)
- Specific Experience relevant to the Assignment (60 Points)

5. Timeframe and Duration

The Consultant is expected to be engaged on a part-time basis for one year with a probation period of 3 months. The engagement could be subject to appropriate extension and increase of the time effort depending on the Project need and performance. The expected time effort for the assignment is approximately 100 working days.

6. Reporting obligations

The Consultant will be accountable and report to the PIU Manager. The Consultant should provide/submit monthly timesheets to the 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.

The Consultant shall proactively prepare ad-hoc reports on any major issues arising during Project implementation, at the PIU/MoESTD 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. Input by the MoESTD

The Consultant is expected to perform assigned tasks in his/her own premises. Moreover, the Consultant may occasionally use PIU office infrastructure and telecommunications systems for the purpose of the assignment execution.

Overall coordination of the work of the Consultant is carried out by the MoESTD/PIU. The MoESTD will announce the start of the work of the Consultant to all participating institutions and facilitate direct contact of the Consultant with the local 4S specialists and the RDIs under transformation.

8. Terms of Payment

The contract, in the form of the Standard World Bank Time-Based Contract for Small Assignments, will be entered into between the Consultant and the MoESTD as a Client. Payment for services rendered will be made monthly, based on the timesheets approved by the Project Manager. Monthly timesheets must be submitted within 5 (five) days after the end of month for which the report is due. In case of breach of a deadline, monthly remuneration may be carried over into the following month.

The PIU will administer the Contract and make payments.