

TERMS OF REFERENCE

for the selection of an international expert who will provide technical support in the planning and development process of Smart Villages strategies in five localities

Services: Consultancy for the implementation team, partners and beneficiaries who will implement the Smart Villages concept

Organization: Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova

Type of contract: Provision of services

Contract duration: August 2024 – December 2024

Level of involvement: 10-15 working days between August and December 2024

Application deadline: 09/08/2024, 12:00 PM (EET)

Organizational Context: Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova is the Chisinau Branch of Fundacja Solidarności Międzynarodowej, Warsaw, a state foundation, managed and co-financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, created to contribute to the development of neighbouring countries. In 2023, Solidarity Fund PL successfully completed the EU certification process „Pillar Assessment”, joining the group of entities with higher capabilities to access European funds. You can read more about the activity of Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova [here](#).

Project Context: EU4 Moldova Resilience - Secure States, Resilient Communities (EU4MR) is a 1.5 year project funded by the European Commission through the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI) and implemented by Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova (SFPL in Moldova). It is launched as part of the European Union's support for the Republic of Moldova in the context of the country's intensified integration process into the EU and the decreasing geopolitical security in the region, exacerbated by Russia's aggression against Ukraine. The general objective and expected outcome of the EU4MR project is to increase the Republic of Moldova's resilience to emergencies and potential security threats. To this end, the capacities of state institutions will be strengthened to detect and counter potential emergencies and security threats. Additionally, the resilience of local communities will be enhanced by fostering local development opportunities that maintain social cohesion and increase confidence in the European path of the Republic of Moldova as a perspective for modernization and development of the country.

The expected results of the project implementation are:

Result 1: State institutions have enhanced their capacity to protect critical infrastructure, identify, detect, and counter threats, and inform the population about threats.

Result 2: The resilience of society to security threats is improved through various local opportunities and initiatives that maintain and promote social cohesion, thereby increasing confidence in the European integration process.

Together, these results will contribute to increasing the resilience of the Republic of Moldova to security threats.

As part of the efforts to increase society's resilience to security threats, the concept of Smart Villages will be implemented. The complexity of the challenges that rural Moldova faces, requires innovative solutions to streamline the socio-economic development process, and Smart Villages represent a relatively new and modern concept in EU policies for the sustainable development of rural areas. Smart villages apply a participatory approach to develop and implement their strategies to improve economic, social and environmental conditions, in particular by mobilising the solutions offered by digital technologies.

Five Smart Village initiatives will be supported within the project in five rural localities. In order to adapt the concept to the local context and facilitate dialogue with rural communities, the activity will be implemented in close collaboration with the National Rural Development LEADER Network (NRDLN).

Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova invites you to submit an offer for the execution of the services.

Description of the acquisition:

Acquisition of consultancy services on the planning and development of Smart Village Strategies in 5 localities. The international expert will provide technical support to the implementation team (SFPL in Moldova), partners

(NRDLN) and project beneficiaries (Local Public Authorities and local communities) in the process of planning and developing Smart Villages strategies in five localities.

Planned activities:

- Participation as an SFPL expert in Moldova in specific working meetings with the project team, local experts, partners and/or other relevant parties – at least 2 days;
- Providing consultancy and support to the project team in planning the activities for the implementation of the actions on Smart Villages, as well as other undertakings necessary for the efficient piloting of the concept – at least 2 days;
- Delivery of trainings on the EU methodology on Smart Villages and other relevant topics to the local team of experts and/or beneficiaries (including delivery of model documents) – at least 3 days;
- Contribution to the development of Smart Village Strategies – at least 2 days;
- Supporting the project team in organising training activities and a study visit for beneficiaries and other relevant stakeholders – at least 2 days;
- Provide recommendations on aligning the pilot process in Moldova with EU practices (if applicable).

Expected deliverables:

- At least 5 working meetings with the project team, local experts, partners and/or other relevant parties carried out;
- A detailed plan of activities drawn up;
- At least 2 workshops for the local team of experts and/or project beneficiaries organized, including templates of documents necessary for the implementation of the concept offered;
- 5 revised smart village strategies and recommendations provided;
- A co-organised study visit;
- A set of recommendations on alignment with the European concept delivered (if applicable).

Requirements for applicants:

Within the purchase call may apply legal entities and/or individuals who possess:

- (i) Practical experience in implementing the Smart Villages concept in at least one EU member country;
- (ii) Previous experience in working with communities in the Republic of Moldova in the field of local development and/or digitalization;
- (iii) Experience in delivering trainings and working with local communities;
- (iv) The experience of working with Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova will be an advantage.

Ineligible applicants:

- (i) Have not fulfilled their obligations in previous contractual relationships with Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova;
- (ii) Have active collaboration relationships with Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova and/or an ongoing contract for the same type of service or similar service;
- (iii) Are listed on the governmental sanction lists of the EU and/or the USA.

Estimated term for preparation and provision of the requested services: 10-15 days during a period of 5 months from the moment of signing the contract.

The dossier will contain the following documents:

1. For legal entities:

- 1.1. CV of the expert(s)¹ to be involved in the activity concerned;
- 1.2. Letter of intent where it will be described:
 - 1.2.1. the team's previous experience in implementing the Smart Villages concept in the EU,

¹ The work team cannot be changed by the bidder after the file submission stage and/or the stage of presenting the results of the procurement process. Otherwise, Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova reserves the right to terminate any collaborative relationship with the bidder, without any obligations.

- 1.2.2. the team's previous experience in collaborating with communities in the Republic of Moldova in the field of local development and/or digitalization;
 - 1.2.3. the team's experience in delivering trainings on topics relevant to Smart Villages.
 - 1.3. Price offer per day, in EUR, personalized, and which will include:
 - (i) *the fixed price, indicating the amount without VAT and mentioning whether or not it is a VAT payer,*
 - (ii) *contact details (company, e-mail address, contact details, telephone number).*
 - 1.4. [The declaration of conformity with the following annexes:](#)
 - (i) *extract from the state register with a term of no more than 3 years from the date of its issuance,*
 - (ii) *certificate regarding the absence of debts to the national budget on the date of submission of the file.*
2. For individuals:
- 2.1. Updated CV with experience description;
 - 2.2. Letter of intent where it will be described:
 - 2.2.1. previous experience in implementing the Smart Villages concept in the EU;
 - 2.2.2. previous experience in working with communities in the Republic of Moldova in the field of local development and/or digitalization;
 - 2.2.3. experience in delivering trainings on topics relevant to Smart Villages.
 - 2.3. price offer per day, in EUR, personalized, and which will include:
 - (i) *the fixed price, indicating the net amount;*
 - (ii) *contact details, telephone number, e-mail address;*
 - 2.4. [The declaration of conformity.](#)

Evaluation Criteria:

The files are evaluated according to the evaluation criteria reflected in the Evaluation Form that can be accessed [here](#).

Evaluation procedure:

The applications are evaluated individually by the members of the evaluation committee. Afterward, the individual results are merged, and the average score obtained per application is determined.

Incomplete applications or those submitted after the deadline are not evaluated.

Following the evaluation, the evaluation committee may decide to conduct an interview stage with the pre-selected applicant(s) from the previous stage to identify the most suitable applicant for providing the service.

During the interview stage, the evaluation committee may request additional relevant documents if necessary. Once the selection process is completed, all applicants will be informed of the procurement call results.

Exclusion of the applicants from the Procurement Process:

1. Applicants are excluded from the procurement procedure if a final judgment or administrative act has been issued against the individual, entity, or their representative, who has control/decision power, or against any member of the executive, management/supervisory bodies for any of the following reasons:
 - a. Bankruptcy, insolvency, or liquidation procedures;
 - b. Breach of tax obligations or social security contributions;
 - c. Commission of serious professional misconduct, including false statements;
 - d. Fraud;
 - e. Corruption;
 - f. An action associated with a criminal organization;
 - g. Money laundering and financing of terrorism;
 - h. Terrorism offenses or crimes related to terrorist activities;
 - i. Child labor or any other crime related to human trafficking;
 - j. Establishment and performance of the front company function;
 - k. Establishment of a cover company;
 - l. Engagement in or participation in discrimination or harassment, including sexual harassment;

- m. Exclusion may also occur in the absence of a final court ruling or administrative act if proven through means available to the Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova or development partners.
2. The applicant is excluded from the procurement procedure if according to the legislation of the Republic of Moldova, the Republic of Poland, the European Union, international law, or the donor's country, restrictions are applied in respect of the entity or person representing it, has power of control/decision or against any member of the executive, management/supervisory bodies.
3. The applicant is excluded from the procurement procedure if the application is incomplete or sent after the deadline.
4. SFPL in Moldova reserves the right not to be limited to the above-mentioned exclusion criteria.

The dossier must be sent to the email address: procurements@solidarityfund.md, with the title of the message **Services - Smart Villages International Expert Offer**.

Note: Questions regarding the procurement process can be sent to the email address: procurement@solidarityfund.md no later than 5 days before the application submission deadline. Answers will be published in the Q&A category, 3 days before the submission deadline.

** The applicant has the right to establish independently the confidentiality limits of the provided data and to mention which of the attached documents to the offer are confidential.*

*** Personal data will be processed by Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova for the purposes of the procurement process, in accordance with the provisions of the legislation in force and internal rules. The provision of personal data is voluntary. Refusal to provide data will result in the impossibility to conclude a contract with Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova. Individuals have the right to obtain information about the purpose, scope and manner of processing personal data, the right to access their personal data, and the rights to data portability and rectification. Personal data may be disclosed to development partners, auditors, public law bodies, lawyers - for the purposes of Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova control, protection of rights, dispute resolution. Personal data will not be transmitted to other third parties without prior consent of the applicant. Any questions regarding personal data can be directed to Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova by e-mail info@solidarityfund.md.*

**** For the transparency purpose of the procurement process, the results of the auction with information on the selected provider (name/ surname, service, price, period) will be published on the Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova website. Participation in the auction by sending documents signifies acceptance of the publication of the procurement results, except for information marked as confidential.*

***** Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova reserves the right to cancel the procurement process at any time without any obligation to the bidders.*