



Project „Effective protection of and rapid support to media“

Contract No.: 2023/453-002

**Terms of Reference (TOR) for an Evaluation of the results of the project
"Effective protection of and rapid support to media"**

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|---|---|
| Contract title: | Procurement of the external evaluator/researcher |
| Project reference: | Project „Effective protection of and rapid support to media“, Contract No: 2023/453-002 |
| Project duration: | February 1, 2024 – July 31, 2024 |
| Task: | Evaluation (mid-term and final) of the results of the project and the impact of project activities on target groups and beneficiaries |
| Place: | Bosnia and Herzegovina |
| Estimated number of engagement days: | 35 working days (during February/March 2025, and July/August 2025) |

Ovaj projekat finansira Evropska unija.

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Introduction

The European Union (EU) Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina has awarded grant for the project „Effective protection of and rapid support to media “, which is implementing by Association „Center for media development and analysis“(CRM@), based in Sarajevo, as a lead of the project action, and Association „Umbrella“, based in Sarajevo, as a partner. The total eligible cost of the action is EUR 149.234,00, of which 95% of EU contribution (EUR 141.772,00). The project started on February 1, 2024 and will last 18 months, until July 31, 2025.

The project lead CRM@ is a non-governmental organization founded in Sarajevo in 2009. To date, CRM@ have implemented a range of projects in the areas of media production, information and communication activities, networking, lobbying and advocacy campaigns, all with the same goals: combating the corruption that flourishes in Bosnia and Herzegovina and combating the criminalization of society; strengthening independent journalism through the production of high quality, fact-based investigative media reports on crucial problems, such as corruption, organized crime, devastation of public budgets, abuse of public authority, nepotism, and other topics of public interest. CRM@'s portal Žurnal (zurnal.info), is the very first online magazine in BiH to be devoted to fighting corruption. Žurnal's journalists are six-time winner of EU awards for investigative journalism.

The project partner UBA was founded by 13 independent, non-profit media and was conceived as an independent body that, through its members, exerts pressure on the public, informing them of all illegal, corrupt, and other actions that erode social system. The media gathered around the UBA want to oppose in a common, systematic and organized way the increasingly frequent attacks on freedom of expression and the freedom of the media, the suppression of investigative and independent reporting, and to ensure financial self-sustainability and independence. As part of its activities, Umbrella serves as a resource center for non-profit media.

About the Project

The project “Effective protection of and rapid support to media” contributes to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The project aims to reinforce the implementation of priorities from the 2019 European Commission's Opinion on BiH membership application, especially Opinion key priority 12 to guarantee freedom of expression, freedom of the media and the protection of journalists, as well as to follow the granting candidate status to BiH by the European Council in December 2022.

Objectives of the project are as the follows:

Overall objective: Enhance conducive legal and political environment for civil society and media actors, which promotes pluralism, fundamental freedoms and rights, resilience against undue pressure, and strengthens their role in the EU-related reforms.

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Specific objective 1: Empower civil society organizations that are active in the news media landscape and independent media outlets, journalists, content producers, to promote pluralism, fundamental freedoms and rights, with a focus on the freedom of media and expression.

Specific objective 2: Strengthen capacities of independent investigative media to produce professional journalistic content and operate without interference and pressure in a safe environment, including through an online toolkit for a practical and rapid support in threatening or violent situations.

Specific objective 3: Foster participatory democracy by advocating for the effective inclusion of civic actors and the media in decision-making, not only as independent watchdogs, and promote importance of their partnerships and networks to achieve more integrated and collective advocacy efforts.

Specific objective 4: Raise awareness on the need for pluralism, fundamental freedoms, and participatory democracy, as the basic preconditions of any modern, democratic society, that aspires to join EU.

Target groups of the Project are:

Target group 1: Independent investigative media outlets, including non-mainstream media (bloggers, podcast authors, freelance journalist, etc.)

Target group 2: Civil society active in the news media landscape

Target group 3: Decisions and policy makers, law enforcement agencies and institutions

Target group 4: General public

The Purpose of Evaluation

The evaluation of the project should determine the degree of fulfillment of the set objectives and assess the impact of the project on the project target groups and beneficiaries. In addition, the evaluation should identify the strengths and weaknesses of the approaches and methods used, in order to obtain recommendations for further work and continuation of activities in the field of freedom of expression and support to media and journalists.

The specific objective of the evaluation is to assess the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of project activities.

➤ **Relevance**

Assess the mutual compliance and logic of project objectives, methodology and activities - whether the chosen methodology is appropriate to the goals and target groups, what works, which of the activities is most effective, what has no impact on users, etc.

- Is the chosen approach and methodology of action through the project relevant for achieving the objectives?
- Are the defined project activities and expected results appropriate for achieving the project objectives?

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- Do and to what extent do project activities enable the application of EU standards of media freedoms in the BiH media context?
- To what extent have the project partners contributed to the creation of project synergies in the wake of the set project goals?

➤ Effectiveness

Demonstrate the impact of the project on the target group and beneficiaries and assess the extent to which the project has contributed to the set objectives.

- To what extent have project activities addressed needs of target groups?
- What was the direct benefit for the project beneficiaries?
- What are the benefits for the government authorities, and the media community as a whole?
- Has the project affected solutions to problems and priorities in the target groups?
- Has the project influenced other institutions / organizations to support the improvement of freedom of expression, freedom of the media and the protection of journalists?

➤ Efficiency

Conduct an analysis of the implementation of planned activities, structures, procedures and their implementation in practice, cooperation and interactions between project partners, interactions with project beneficiaries, ways in which project participants responded to challenges, etc.

- How did the management structure that led the project work?
- Were the roles and responsibilities of the project manager clearly defined?
- Assess the competencies of the organization and the efficiency of project implementation and measure the quality and coordination of implemented project activities.

The results of the evaluation will be used by project partners, project donors, and will be available to other organizations involved in development and strengthening independent, investigative journalism, as well as the media community.

All deliverables (mid-term Evaluation report and final evaluation report) must be written in English.

Time Plan of Evaluation

| Date | Task | Estimated number of engagement days |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| January 10 - 20, 2025 | Public call for procurement of the external evaluator | 7 working days |
| January 20 - 25, 2025 | Selection of the best offer and contracting | 3 working days |
| February 1 - 5, 2025 | Design, development and finalization of the methodology of evaluation | 2 working days |

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| | | |
|---------------------------|--|-----------------|
| February 5 - Marc 5, 2025 | Data collection, documentation analysis, desk research, interviewing, etc. | 13 working days |
| March 5 -15, 2025 | Prepare and delivery of Mid-Evaluation report | 5 working days |
| July 2025 | Data collection, documentation analysis, desk research, interviewing, etc. | 7 working days |
| August 2025 | Prepare and delivery of final-Evaluation report | 8 working days |

The Scope of work

The evaluation of the project implies:

- **Mid-term evaluation**, which should cover first 12 months of the project duration (February 1, 2024 – January 31, 2025), and
- **Final evaluation**, which should cover the whole 18 months of the project duration (February 1, 2024 – July 31, 2025)

The evaluator is expected to:

- to develop Evaluation plan, including clear indicators that will measure the impact of project activities, and including timeline
- to set Evaluation methodology, including clearly defined tools which will be used (e.g. Questionnaire, Interviews, Focus groups, desk research, etc)
- to define and set areas which evaluation will cover, e.g.
 - Analysis of the impact of results on beneficiaries and target groups
 - Perception of relevant actors and stakeholders about the Project activities;
 - Visibility of Project activities among beneficiaries;
 - Relevance and applicability of the Project products/outputs to beneficiaries;
 - Review of existing project documentation, archived material related to project activities
- to conduct evaluation according to Evaluation Plan and Evaluation Methodology
- to draft mid-term evaluation report (in English) and final evaluation report (in English)
- to inform implementing partner Association CRMA about any issue, risk or obstacle that could arise during the evaluation implementation
- to propose mitigation measures

Evaluation will be a collaborative process with participation of implementing partners Association CRMA and Association UBA. The implementing partners, namely Association CRMA as project lead may assist external evaluators by sharing data used for performance monitoring, providing written responses to an evaluation questionnaire, making staff available to answer questions related to the action, etc.

Qualifications and Requirements

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The evaluator must:

- 1) Be a citizen of Bosnia and Herzegovina and/or Legal Entity registered in accordance with the positive laws of Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- 2) Has at minimum 5 years of experience in Project evaluation;
- 3) Has an excellent knowledge, skills and information in two areas: (a) BiH media scene, particularly investigative journalism and rules and conditions for the functioning of the investigative and independent media; and (b) Civil society sector, with a focus to media related activities and cooperation between media and CSO sector;
- 4) Has an excellent knowledge of EU standards of media freedom and security of journalists
- 5) Has an excellent knowledge of EU projects, standards of their implementation, evaluation standards as well as linking activities with end products and results / achievements;
- 6) Has an excellent knowledge of methodology, different techniques and measurement of achievements within the evaluation process and reporting;
- 7) Must have good communication skills and willingness to work in a team.

Documentation, delivery and deadline

The external evaluator will be engaged based on Procurement procedure i.e. Public call for procurement of the external evaluator. All interested applicants (legal entities or individual experts) must submit the following documentation:

Technical application

The technical application should contain a detailed description of the actions that the evaluator intends to take in order to respond to the requirements of this ToR. The Scope of Work and Time plan of Evaluation should be described especially carefully and comprehensively in the technical application. Also, an integral part of the technical offer should be the staff CV, a list of references and work experience or delivered evaluations confirming the qualifications, and

Financial offer

The financial offer must be in accordance with Scope of work, noting that all tasks listed under points "Scope of work" has been taken into account.

The bid (technical and financial) must be submitted by email to address ugcrma@gmail.com, with Subject "Tender documentation for Public call for Evaluation of the project" within deadline which will be defined in Public call. Any bid submitted after the deadline will be automatically rejected. The bid sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by post mail) or delivered to other addresses will not be considered. Incomplete bids will be rejected.

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Selection of the best bidder

The selection of the best bidder will be done by a three-member commission formed by the project partners Association CRMA and Association UBA, and based on the best evaluated technical and financial bid. After the selection of the best bidder, an Agreement will be made, which will define the obligations, rights, copyright, data protection, etc.

The evaluation commission will evaluate and award contract on the basis of the following evaluation criteria:

- Quality of the Technical offer (criteria weight 50%)
- Value of the Financial offer (criteria weight 20%)
- Experience and qualification (criteria weight 30%)

Bid value and payment

The maximum available value of the contract is 3.700,00 EUR which includes all relevant taxes, contributions and fees on the value of the contract. The financial bid must not exceed this maximum amount. The payment to the Contractor shall be made in instalments:

- I instalment for the conducted mid-term evaluation
- II instalment for the conducted final evaluation

The payments will be made in local i.e. BAM currency.

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