**Request for Expressions of Interest (EoI)**

**for Independent Experts**

In accordance with the Law on Innovation Activity (“Official Gazette of Montenegro num. 82/20), the ***Rulebook on criteria for nomination of the independent experts and evaluation procedure for innovation programmes and projects (“Official Gazette of Montenegro num. 107/21”)*** was adopted in 2021.

**Subject of the EoI**

In order to create the **List of Independent Experts**, according to the abovementioned Rulebook, the Ministry invites national and international experts to express their interest to assist in the evaluation of innovation programmes and projects, and reports.

In particular, independent experts will assist in:

* Evaluation of applications for innovation programmes and projects;
* Monitoring of the implementation of the innovation programmes and projects (evaluation of the periodic and final reports).

The Ministry **informs that the main strategic direction in the field is the Smart Specialisation Strategy (S3) 2019-2024. Priority areas** established by the Strategy are the following:

* Sustainable agriculture and food value chain;
* Energy and sustainable environment;
* Sustainable and health tourism; and
* Information and communication technologies as a horizontal priority.

The majority of the innovation programmes and projects are focused on these priorities, but there is also a wide range of intersections with other research and innovation (R&I) areas and also a set of innovation support instruments that cover all R&I areas.

The Ministry of Science and Technological Development of Montenegro currently provides support for the following innovation programme lines:

* Preacceleration of start-aps;
* Support to the initial phase of development of start-aps;
* Support to cluster organizations in S3 priority areas;
* Support for EUREKA projects;
* Stimulating protection and development of inventions;
* Support for innovation culture;
* Educational programmes in S3;
* Support for the participation in EU Programme „Horizon Europe“ – pillar III Innovative Europe.

**2. Conditions for the Request for EoI**

We are looking for experts with a high level of expertise and professional experience in evaluation of innovation programmes and projects.

**Required qualification and criteria for selection of the evaluator will be:**

1) Education level in certain scientific research areas and other areas that are subject of innovation, to be evaluated, as follows:

* VII1 - BSc level of education qualification - one point,
* VII2 - MSc level of education qualification - three points,
* VIII - PhD level of education qualification - five points;

2) Professional experience in the field of applied and/or developmental research and/or in the field of innovation, to be evaluated, as follows:

* up to three years - three points,
* from three to five years - four points,
* over five years - five points;

3) Experience in evaluating of the applied and/or developmental scientific research and/or innovative programmes, and projects or experience in project management, implementation and monitoring of the applied and/or developmental research and/or innovative programmes and projects, to be evaluated, as follows:

 - up to three years - three points,

 - from three to five years - four points,

 - over five years - five points.

A person who, based on the above stated criteria, achieves a minimum 7 points is eligible to be included in the List as an independent expert.

**3. Engagement of the independent experts**

The Ministry appoints independent experts offering them a contract/resolution that defines the rights, obligations, terms and conditions, and they are remunerated for their services.

The statement of no conflict of interest is obligatory precondition before any assignment.

Part of the evaluator’s contract with the Ministry is the obligation of confidentiality.

**4. Submission of the EoI**

Interested candidates must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the evaluation services, as follows:

* CV;
* List of references of similar assignments performed, experience in similar conditions, investment portfolio, and similar;
* Indication of the R&I field of expertise;
* Indication of the preferable support innovation instrument/s; and
* Other relevant information.

The Expressions of Interest is open permanently and should be sent on the following e-mail address: aleksandra.mugosa@mek.gov.me.

Interested candidates may obtain further information at the same e-mail address.