**Ministry of Education and Research (MoER)**

**Moldova Higher Education Project (MHEP)**

**Procurement Reference:** [**MD-MOED-205754-CS-INDV**](javascript:void(0))

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Individual National Consultant to provide support to the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research (ANACEC Romanian abbreviation) in enhancing the existing QA capacity of higher education institutions’ staff in the internal quality assurance, developing self-evaluation reports and fostering inter-institutional collaboration, based on Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) 2015**

* + - 1. **Background information on the project**

Moldova Higher Education Project (MHEP) is a World Bank-financed Project that is being implemented between May 2020 and December 2025.

The total cost of credit is EUR 35.7 million (US$39.4 million equivalent) financed by the International Development Association (IDA) and is provided to the Republic of Moldova in support of Moldova Higher Education.

The Project Objective is to improve the labor market orientation of selected higher education institutions and the quality assurance mechanisms. The Project is organized around three components and includes systemic interventions in the areas of higher education quality, financing and management, as well as a targeted program to be implemented by selected higher education institutions and pedagogical colleges to address some of their most pressing needs in labor market orientation.

The MHEP components are described below:

1. Improving the Quality Assurance Mechanisms
2. Improving the Labor Market Orientation through Targeted Interventions
3. Project Management

*Component 1* ***–*** Improving the Quality Assurance Mechanisms. This component aims to improve Moldova higher education system’s quality assurance mechanisms, which would also contribute to improve its labor market orientation. It comprises three sub-components that support activities in: (i) National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and Quality Assurance (QA); (ii) System Management and Monitoring; (iii) Higher Education Financing.

*Component 2* – Improving the Labor Market Orientation through Targeted Interventions. This component would finance the design and implementation of a targeted and needs-based program (Higher Education Improvement Program - HEIP) aimed at improving the labor market orientation of Moldova’s higher education institutions, as well as their research capacity.

*Component 3* – Project Management. This component would support the day-to-day management of the Project by the MoECR with assistance of a dedicated team of individual consultants who would provide managerial, fiduciary, and technical support to the implementation of the proposed Project for its full duration.

The Component 1 of the Project will finance relevant activities in higher education quality assurance, including the improvement of the existing QA mechanisms. To address the challenges with the ***Quality Assurance*** ***(QA)*** of Moldova’s higher education system, this sub-component will support activities aimed at strengthening ANACEC’s capacity as the key external QA authority, as well as capacity of higher education institutions in this area.

* + - 1. **Objective(s) of the assignment**

The main objective of the assignment is to support ANACEC to prepare and deliver tailored trainings, elaborate the content and training materials as well as assist MoER/Project Management Team (PMT) and ANACEC in organizing, administering, and facilitating training session to the staff of higher education institutions in the internal quality assurance, developing self-evaluation reports and fostering inter-institutional collaboration, based on Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) 2015. All activities will be delivered under Component 1 in accordance with Project rules of procedures.

* + - 1. **Scope of Work**

The Individual Consultant (IC) to be hired based on these Terms of Reference shall:

**Task 1: Develop objectives, content and methodology of the trainings:**

* In close coordination with the MoER/ PMT and ANACEC, the IC will provide input and advice to determine overall objectives of trainings, key content areas and strategy and methodology for trainings;
* Examine the Training Methodology and Curriculum applied by ANACEC and formulation of proposals for their improvement/strengthening.
* Prepare session Curriculum, draft agendas, training outlines and similar planning materials for the trainings of 200 selected staff of higher education institutions.

**Task 2: Prepare Training Materials:**

* Based on MHEP information coordinated with the MoER/ PMT, ANACEC and other relevant Project documents, IC will prepare trainings’ materials, including PowerPoint slides, audio-visual aids, and training plans for each training;
* Design a range of realistic exercises within practical workshops, simulation exercises on internal quality assurance and developing self-evaluation reports for external QA evaluation to support training objectives;
* Training materials shall be developed with the possibility to be used in the face to face or remote modality of trainings delivery.

**Task 3: Organize trainings and act as facilitator for the workshop:**

* Deliver workshops for 200 selected staff of higher education institutions face to face or in remote modality depending on the pandemic situation;
* As necessary and in coordination with the MoER/PMT and ANACEC, advise on venue requirements and liaise with venue staff to ensure needs are appropriately met;
* Ensure that administrative norms such as schedule, breaks, timelines etc. for the trainings and practical workshops are understood and followed.

**Task 4. Conclude and report on workshops’ results:**

* Conduct the monitoring and evaluation process and submit an assessment report upon completion of each training for internal quality assurance of the training workshops;
* Prepare a final report that includes an assessment of participant evaluations.
  + - 1. **Qualification requirements and basis for evaluation (evaluation criteria)**

**General experience (30 points):**

* + PhD degree;
  + At least 5 years of experience in management within the Quality Assurance Agency that is European Network for Quality Assurance (ENQA) member and registered in the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR);
  + At least five years of experience in external quality evaluation programs/institutional based on European Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance in higher education;
  + At least 5 years of managerial and/or teaching activity in higher education.

**Adequacy for Project (50 points):**

* Strong professional background in management, planning and evaluation capacities of QA;
* Strong professional background in the design of online and offline training at the national level;
* Practical experience in Results Based Management including program development, execution, and training on result frameworks.
* Excellent analytical skills.

**Language and Experience (20 points):**

* Excellent knowledge of Romanian and English languages;
* Excellent writing and communication skills;
* Experience with Microsoft Office package (Word, Excel, Power Point, etc.);
* Proven ability to work under pressure and be flexible, including the ability to cope with the deadline, multiple tasks, and competing and changing demands.
  + - 1. **Workload and duration of the assignment**

This consultancy is expected to begin in November 2021 and be completed by May 2022 with estimated Level of Effort (LoE) of 45 days and the deliverables submitted as follow:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Deliverables | Submission Deadline | Approval by |
| *Inception report,* which will include the description of the Objectives, Content and Methodology of the activities planned. | 4 weeks from starting the contract | MoER  ANACEC |
| *Intermediary Report* that will include final agreed agenda with the MoER and ANACEC for trainings and the full complement of trainings and workshops materials. | 12 weeks from starting the contract | MoER  ANACEC |
| *Final report,* which includes the results of the trainings delivered and a thorough evaluation of the workshop. | 24 weeks from starting the contract | MoER  ANACEC |

All reports shall be submitted in Romanian and English, in electronic format (MS Office) to the MoER and ANACEC. Period of approval of reports will not exceed 10 working days from the submission date to the MoER and ANACEC or returned for further completion. The submission date is considered the date MoER and ANACEC confirms receiving the deliverables.

* + - 1. **Institutional Arrangements**

The Individual Consultant will report to the Project Executive Director, MHEP Project Coordinator, ANACEC and the Higher Education Policies Department. The Project Management Team will oversee the process of consulting services, manage the implementation of the contract.

The MoER and Project team will provide the Consultant the necessary support to complete the assignment: project documents necessary for assignment accomplishment, necessary work conditions.

* + - 1. **Confidentiality statement**

All data and information received from MoER for the purpose of this assignment is to be treated confidentially and are only to be used in connection with the execution of these Terms of Reference. All intellectual property rights arising from the execution of these Terms of Reference are assigned to MoER, and the developed materials will be used in ANACEC activity. The contents of written materials obtained and used in this assignment may not be disclosed to any third parties without the expressed advance written authorization of the MoER.