

Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI)

ROSTER OF EXPERTS

Reference No. 21 – 17 - S4J

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Submission Deadline: 29 October 2021

1. Background

'Skills for Jobs' (S4J) is a project of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and implemented by Swisscontact Albania. It is part of the Economic Development Domain of the Swiss Cooperation Strategy for Albania (2018-2021), with specific focus on promotion of employment opportunities and skills development.

S4J was designed to address main Vocational Education and Training (VET) challenges, such as: low quality and status, insufficient financing, weak labour market orientation, and poor private sector engagement. The project addresses these challenges by focusing on ensuring systemic change, capacity development and empowerment of key actors in VET.

The project is in its second phase, S4J2, which started in May 2019 and will last until June 2023. During this phase, the project aims at supporting 10 000 students (6 360 more compared to S4J1) and 6 000 trainees (1 500 more compared to S4J1). It aims for improved access to gainful employment and income for young women and men by offering them relevant training opportunities based on new ways of inclusive learning and in cooperation with the private sector.

10 VET providers (9 vocational education schools and 1 vocational training center) in six selected regions benefit from the project, namely: the vocational 'Hamdi Bushati' school in Shkodra; the vocational 'Kolin Gjoka' school in Lezha; the electro-technical 'Gjergj Canco' school in Tirana; the Technical-Economic school in Tirana; the vocational 'Ali Myftiu' school in Elbasan; the vocational 'Salih Ceka' school in Elbasan; the vocational 'Kristo Isak' school in Berat; the Commercial school in Vlora; the industrial 'Pavarësia' school in Vlora; and the Vocational Training Centre in Vlora.

S4J supports partner VET providers in Albania in terms of:

1. Employers' and partners relations

S4J1 promoted a new approach to employers' relations and partners' relations through creating a network around each VET provider. VET providers assumed their role as network focal points, and under S4J2 they will strengthen this network by structuring and formalizing it, and by adding non-company partners including the organized private sector, local and national governmental actors, and parents. Furthermore,

the 1:1 approach will be further developed at the regional level by establishing regional VET platforms that shall bring together all relevant stakeholders to further develop VET in the region.

2. Diversification of VET offer

S4J2 will facilitate the development of VET offers that are labour-market oriented and gender-sensitized. Such offers will be developed in close collaboration with local and regional employers. Apart from directions, profiles or courses, the project will also support VET providers in adding other relevant elements to their offer, namely streamlining entrepreneurship and soft skills learning packages and labour market-relevant extra-curricular activities.

3. New Ways of Inclusive Learning and Quality

S4J supports VET providers in shifting towards 'doing school' the new ways, using a combination of new IT-based learning methods – including use of smartphones, tablets, internet-resources where most

appropriate – in combination with up-to-date non-digitized learning. This translates into a blended learning approach that contributes to the attractiveness of VET offers and makes VET offers more accessible at the same time. Furthermore, it promotes and supports industry-led re-skilling trainings for VET teachers.

4. Work-Based Learning (WBL) in cooperation with employers

S4J project will continue to strengthen and broaden its successful WBL initiatives, supporting the partner providers to consolidate, grow and streamline the chosen WBL approach including gradual skills development schemes, internships, and apprenticeship solutions. Companies will also receive the needed support – training and instruments – to provide quality intern- and apprenticeships, including in-company mentors training.

5. Provider management / organizational development (OD)

S4J will support VET providers to perform better internally, to be organized and prepared for the new functions as defined by the VET law and developed with project support in S4J1. Important elements include strategic planning, IT-based management functionalities, implementation of all seven functions attributed to the Development Units, and provider-wide and specific quality assurance and development.

2. Purpose

The project will extend its support to more VET providers throughout Albania during the second phase (until June 2023). To ensure a smooth implementation of the strategy and the main activities envisaged in the project document, we are looking for collaborators who could help us. This time we are looking for individuals with some expertise in a variety of expertise fields. If you think you don't have a link to skills development, trust us, you may be surprised. Read through and then take a decision. Apply 😊

Our Roster of Experts will be refreshed frequently to make sure we enrich it with the best experts that become available in the market. If you are interested to work with the project management team to support the design, implementation and monitoring of interventions and/or directly with the providers to support the customization and proficiency of processes and instruments, Apply!

Keep in mind: inclusion in this list entails no obligation on the part of Swisscontact concerning contracting.

*Location: Swisscontact applies a regional approach for the implementation of the Skills for Jobs project focusing in the regions of Tirana, Vlora, Lezha, Shkodra, Berat and Elbasan. Hence, **we are interested to seek for service providers who operate in these regions** and are willing to travel to these regions for specific assignments.*

3. Requirements on qualifications and experience

3.1 Education

We believe in people who pursue self-development. We are looking for people who have an interesting educational journey that can add value to the project, its stakeholders and beneficiaries. The most important message we want to deploy is that someone's education is always relevant to the development work we do. Make sure you emphasize the relevance, so you make our job to spot you easier.

3.2 Experience and skills

Please keep in mind that if you express your interest to collaborate with us, you need to indicate the areas to which you could contribute. When you do that you need to make sure that you clearly emphasize the link between your experience and skills you have with the area of expertise you suggest you could contribute to. We expect many people expressing their interest to collaborate with us. Please make sure you help us spot you easily.

Our roster is open to everyone. We are looking for juniors professionals to fill in for several tasks and areas of activity that don't require necessarily previous work experience but a good education. In some other cases, we are looking for motivated young professionals who have spiked in previous jobs no matter the length of their qualifications list. Since we have quite a complicated job to promote transformative processes in VET institutions and promote systemic change in the VET system we need as many senior inspiring experts with local, national and international experience. Show up!

3.3 Language proficiency

Some of the work we do requires moderate knowledge of Albanian. Same applies for English and/or German languages. Lots of our work though requires PROFICIENT level of speaking and writing in Albanian. In some cases, proficiency in English is a must. In those cases when we need the individual collaborator to write reports and other forms of documents, we will only go for those who are top level in writing and presenting skills.

4. Demonstrated areas of expertise

Below we provide you some information on the areas of expertise the project is seeking.

4.1 Employers' and partner's relations

The S4J project in Phase I successfully promoted a new approach to employers' relations and partners' relations, applying a 1:1 approach and, creating a network around each VET provider. The 1:1 approach is tailored to the economic realities in Albania and accepts learning from many poor-performing attempts from other projects to build relationships with the organized private sector. VET providers assume their role as network focal points, and under phase II will strengthen this network by structuring and formalizing it, and by adding non-company partners including the organized private sector (where genuine interest in VET is given), local and national governmental actors, parents, to the network applying the same 1:1 approach. Where providers are active in a region with other VET providers, they will join forces in establishing, expanding and/or consolidating the respective networks. However, the

1:1 approach will now be developed further on regional level by establishing regional VET platforms that shall bring together all relevant stakeholders to further develop VET in the region.

Field of Expertise:

- Business Relations know how and in related fields, expertise in B2B environment, Albanian Regional/ local business acumen;
- Expertise in creating and maintaining business relations driven by targets and indicators
- Experienced professionals in Market research
- Experienced in maintaining and nurturing relations with Private Sector / Local Businesses, Partners and Community actors
- Should be an excellent communicator, able to work with all related intervention lines and communication team and build relationships with partners, and clients.
- Strategical thinker with an analytical mind and strong problem-solving skills.

4.2 Diversification of providers offers

S4J will facilitate the development of quality labour-market oriented and gender-sensitized formal and non-formal, long and short VET offers in sectors that have a high demand in the regions the providers cater for. Such offers will be developed in close collaboration with local and regional employers and NES offices. Offers might include Hospitality and Tourism, Construction, Textile and ICT, or go beyond these initial key sectors of S4J. The offers shall be developed on relevant levels of qualification. They apply delivery modalities – where relevant including modularized approaches – that meet the target groups needs and possibilities. The supported VE schools will therefore turn into multifunctional providers, which fundamentally changes the nature of their functioning. Apart from directions, profiles or courses, the project will also support VET providers in adding other relevant elements to their offer, namely streamlining entrepreneurship and soft skills learning packages and labour market-relevant extra-curricular activities.

Fields of expertise:

- Legal expertise in the field of vocational education and training with a focus on VET offer
- Curriculum development
- Anticipation and matching of skills supply and demand
- Labor market forecasts and analysis
- Skills needs identification
- Skills needs assessment
- Training in soft skills, including entrepreneurship skills
- Career orientation and counseling
- Stakeholder engagement
- Capacity development in formal and nonformal curriculum design

4.3 New ways of inclusive learning

During the second phase, a variety of models to implement blended learning will be further developed, focusing on those which require low access to IT infrastructure. This translates into a blended learning approach that contributes to the attractiveness of VET offers and makes VET offers more accessible, also

for special needs groups. In combination with industry-led re-skilling trainings for VET teachers, the new approach also makes VET trainings more labour market relevant as this new learning approach supports the development of soft-skills such as problem solving, team work, and creative and innovative thinking, which are key for labour market success and support Albania in being competitive on the international level.

Fields of expertise:

- Teacher Training & professional development
- Student centered teaching methods (e.g. gamification, project-based learning)
- Teaching and learning materials development
- New technologies supporting teaching & learning
- Training facilitator
- Students' competitions and extracurricular activities
- Action research in education
- Instructional design
- Digital learning materials development (web and media)
- Virtual Learning Platform (Moodle) Administration (specialist level)
- Virtual Learning Platform Developer (specialist level)
- IT support for equipment and systems (specialist/assistant level)
- IT (network) assessment (expert level)
- BYOD (Bring your own device) and other models of access to IT to support learning
- Education infrastructure
- Gender in Education
- Inclusive Education

4.4 Work-based learning with employers (IL4)

Under intervention line 4, the S4J project will continue to strengthen and broaden its successful Work Based Learning (WBL) initiatives, supporting the Albanian partners in close collaboration with the GoA and the UNDP-implemented SD4E project to consolidate, grow and streamline the chosen WBL approach including gradual skills development schemes, internships and apprenticeship solutions. The apprenticeship schemes shall continue to meet international quality standards, namely ILO and EU framework for *quality apprenticeships*. Companies will receive the needed support – training and instruments – to provide quality intern- and apprenticeships, including in-company mentors training. The project supports the Albanian partners in developing quality assurance mechanisms and instruments for assuring good quality apprenticeships, guaranteeing quality standards once the approach will be streamlined beyond project-controlled realities.

Fields of expertise:

- Business Relations | B2B | Sales & Marketing;
- Human resources and Recruiting;
- Labor Market know- how and Employment;

- Design experience in work-based learning modalities as per industries for young and adults;
- Experienced in Market Research with Insights in education industry;
- Expertise in Research: Assessment and Reviews of different sets of work-based learning instruments and processes;
- Expertise in Educational Development field and specifically in Vocational Education and Training with focus in the Labour Market;
- Training and facilitation.

4.5 Organizational development (OD)

Results developed under intervention line 5 primarily enable VET providers to *internally* perform better, to be organized and prepared for the new functions as defined by the new VET law and developed with project support in phase I partner providers. Important elements include the strategic orientation of the VET providers including their strategic organizational setup (provider strategy, board composition, new and changed functions and processes), IT-based management functionalities, all seven functions given to the so-called “Development Units”, and provider-wide and specific quality assurance and development, making sure that quality becomes a common concern and an every-day business including all members of the providers. In support of the Development Unit functions, the project will also facilitate the development of innovative labour market insertion facilities and instruments at VET providers, especially regarding career development and learner support measures for women and men with special needs. They shall benefit from early interventions for assuring their successful integration into the labour market; targeted coaching schemes and easy to use guiding instruments for trainees for developing their competencies and for successfully making their pathway to jobs.

Fields of expertise:

- Organizational working processes (re)design
- Governance in education institutions
- Change Management
- Institutional and Financial Autonomy of Public Institutions
- Institutional Marketing and Promotion
- Education Leadership Mentoring and Coaching
- Designing internal regulations and procedures
- Quality management
- Evidence based management
- Career guidance and counselling
- Project proposal writing
- Project cycle management
- Strategic and annual Planning
- Inclusive education

4.6 Monitoring and Results Measurement

Swisscontact regards Monitoring and Results Measurement (MRM) as a core function in project management, which enables steering, learning and renders accountability to donors and partners. MRM

includes performance monitoring, outcome evaluation as well as impact assessment. To this end, MRM is comprised of management processes, elements, tools and quality assurance. Swisscontact has established expertise with the DCED standards, which is increasingly being recognized as international good practice. This will contribute to a high quality in S4J implementation and maintain credibility and recognition from partners. During the second phase S4J, as part of its scaling up strategy, will establish a sound Knowledge and Content Management (KCM) system. The scaling up process of S4J significantly depends upon evolution of project products and processes facilitated through action and peer learning, identification of best practices and the scalability of these best practices through documentation and dissemination.

Fields of Expertise:

- Research and/or results measurement
- Research design supporting project management
- Data collection and analysis (both quantitative and qualitative)
- Data management softwares
- Action Research
- Knowledge and Content Management
- Planning and organizing survey logistics, including the design and implementation of protocols to ensure high quality data
- Interviewing techniques
- Database design, data management, and statistics.
- Statistical computer software programs
- Development of policy papers and recommendations
- Reporting and communication

4.7 Communications for Development & Digital Marketing

During the S4J's second phase increasing efforts are focused on 'Awareness Raising' both at a horizontal and vertical level. The aim is to involve, through a proactive and participatory approach, an increasing number of actors and stakeholders at different levels to be the promoters and supporters of VET. This would aid and endorse the facilitation approach of the project. To boost awareness rising, the project will shift from institutional communication (an approach followed during the first phase) towards communication for development (C4D). C4D, is a form of communication which enables people and actors to have voice, participate and develop a sense of ownership of the project and strengthen regional and national capabilities

Fields of expertise:

- Communication strategy design
- Media coverage
 - a. journalist, press release, interviews, distribution in media
 - b. Livestreaming in social media
- Creative & Multimedia Services
 - a. Design
 - b. Photographer

- c. Video production
- d. Copywriting, Interviewing, Proofreading, Translating
- e. Journalist to conduct field interviews for communication purposes

5. Eligibility

This “Call for Expression of Interest” is open for Individual Service Provider.

6. Submission of expression of interest

All submissions shall be delivered in signed electronic copy to al.info@swisscontact.org by **October 29th, 2021 @ 15h**. The interested applicants can send their questions to al.info@swisscontact.org by October 15, 2021, 17:00. The deadline for submitting responses will be October 18, 2021, 17:00. The subject line of the application e-mails to be sent to the above e-mail account MUST contain the reference of the applied area(s) of expertise (ref. 4.1 to 4.7). All applicants will be replied back for the confirmation of submission received.

Education and relevant files could be provided in English or Albanian. Documents in languages other than English or Albanian will be automatically eliminated by Swisscontact without a further request for clarification and/or completion.

6.1 Documents to be included

Interested individual service providers must submit the following documents/information to demonstrate their qualifications:

- (i) CV
- (ii) Expression of Interest letter explaining why you are a suitable candidate for the Roster, including the area of interest and relevant sub-areas.
- (iii) Daily consultancy fee in CHF, gross value (withholding tax included)

7. Selection process

The applications (Expression of Interest) will be reviewed by an evaluation committee against minimum qualification requirements. Applicants meeting the minimum technical qualification requirements (pass/fail) will be shortlisted. Shortlisted candidates will be ranked in each pool based on a score taking into consideration the technical profile and the financial offer. Negotiation of daily rates may apply. Selected candidates will be notified and if an agreement is reached a Framework Agreement will be signed by both parties. Individual collaborators will be notified at different times, according to project needs. Signature of the Framework Agreement does not guarantee a consultancy engagement.

8. Assessment Criteria

The assessment will be done based on the following criteria:

- Technical Profile
- Relevance to the respective areas of intervention of the project
- Financial proposal (daily fee)