



Invitation to tender for the provision of services

Title: *Regional Technical Assistance to Build Civil Society Capacities*
EU Contract: *NDICI-GEO/2021/425-150*
Contracting Authority: *GDSI Limited, leader of the consortium*

Specifications for a service provider to design and deliver a Policy Entrepreneurship course

1. Background

The services for the design and delivery of a Policy Entrepreneurship course are requested within the *Regional Technical Assistance to Build Civil Society Capacities* project (<https://eapcivilsociety.eu/>), aiming to strengthen participatory and inclusive democracy in the Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine). The purpose of this project is to strengthen the role and increase the capacity of civil society organisations (CSOs) and activists in the Eastern Partnership to engage in the policy-making processes and policy dialogue, promote reforms and public accountability, foster local democracy, local development and engage citizens in public debate, through a Regional Technical Assistance project. The project runs from 2021 to 2028.

The project is structured around the following activities:

- **Capacity Building Activities**, including e-learning
- Civil Society Hackathons and Civic Tech Activities
- Civil Society Fellowships (240 new civil society activists will be supported throughout the duration of our project)
- Civil Society Networking and Ad-hoc Support, including to EU Delegations and DG ENEST Headquarters
- Communication Activities meant to increase the public awareness of CSOs, improve their public image and promote EU support to civil society.
- Studies and Research on Civil Society Issues across the Region at the request of the EU.

Following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine, the Project has tended to design activities that combine elements of 'remote' learning (whereby beneficiaries of learning courses participate online) and face-to-face activities. This hybrid approach is preferred for the design and delivery of the Policy Entrepreneurship course.



2. Course Objective, Target Group, and Outline

Learning course: An Introduction to Policy Entrepreneurship

Objective

A group of 20 representatives of CSOs and proven activists will be **equipped with tools and ideas for taking a new approach to influencing policy-making in their countries**. This may be at the national level in reforming for EU integration or being opportunistic in contexts where civic space is restricted, or at the local level, where public service provision needs a shake-up. The course will also provide a framework for how any policy change might be monitored.

Target Group

Participants for the course will be selected from an 'open call' with selection criteria as described below. The intention is to identify participants from CSOs that have a proven interest in influencing policy, but that require strengthened capacity to be more effective. The course is not designed for experienced think tanks or research-based institutions.

The course will be advertised across the region, with participants selected on a competitive basis. It is expected that there will be up to 20 participants, with a deliberate 'weighting' of at least 8 participants from Moldova, 6 from Ukraine, and others from Armenia/ Azerbaijan/ Belarus/ Georgia.

The selection and eligibility criteria will indicatively be as follows:

- Member/staff of a registered CSO with at least 3 years of experience working with the organisation, or activist with a proven track record of at least 3 years in policy influencing;
- Citizen of one of the EaP countries;
- Proven working knowledge of English;
- Demonstrable knowledge and interest in at least one specific area of public policy in their country;
- Presentation of a desired policy change or clear objective for policy development and/or monitoring;
- Commitment to fully participate in the course and to undertake a post-course assignment.

Course Outline & Delivery

The proposed course will be made up of 3 modules:

1. A series of introductory webinars wherein the concept of policy entrepreneurship and the skills needed to be a successful policy entrepreneur are explored;
2. A 2-day residential workshop, with a lead trainer running a range of exercises to demonstrate key practices for effective policy entrepreneurship and monitoring;



3. Follow-up 'remote' coaching, to support participants as they embark on planning their policy enterprises and monitoring.

It is expected that the design and delivery of the course will be led by an international expert, supported by two or three facilitators/co-trainers mobilised from within the EaP. For the webinars and/or residential workshops contractors may also propose inputs from guest speakers. Delivery will be in English.

It is expected that the residential workshop will be held in Moldova.

3. Required Services and Outputs

To achieve the objectives of the assignment, the contractor will need to provide the following services and outputs:

Services

1. Preparation

- 1.1 Review existing data and analysis about the capacity needs and weaknesses of the target group in terms of civil society contributions to policy development, reform, and policy monitoring, and formulate a set of learning objectives that will address the capacity needs and which can be achieved through a Policy Entrepreneurship approach.
- 1.2 Following the learning objectives, design a Policy Entrepreneurship course curriculum which can be delivered through the means outlined above (i.e. A series of introductory webinars, a 2-day residential workshop, and follow-up 'remote' coaching).
- 1.3 Develop a set of materials and exercises that will be used to deliver the course. Upon completion of the course, the materials will be edited and made available on the Project's e-learning hub.

2. Course Delivery

- 2.1 Support the Project to promote the course, with promotional materials, an application form/process, and a set of selection criteria agreed upon with the Project team.
- 2.2 Assist the Project team with the selection of participants (approximately 20 participants are expected to take the course) and inform them of the course agenda, timeframe, and any pre-course preparation that they need to complete.
- 2.3 Deliver the course webinars and residential workshop, and support participants with homework assignments after the workshop. (This 'support' is further explained in the section below on coaching).
- 2.4 At the conclusion of the course, the contractor will work with the Project Team to ensure that all suitable materials/recordings from the course can be edited/packaged and uploaded to the Project's dedicated e-learning hub.



3. Coaching

- 3.1 After the delivery of the residential workshop, participants will be required to undertake homework assignments and should have access to the trainers and/or other experts to provide coaching support on a limited basis.
- 3.2 The training team will discuss with participants during the workshop potential homework assignments and thereafter be in contact with the participants in order to schedule follow-up coaching support. This coaching is expected to be provided during the two months after the workshop. Overall, a 'draw-down' facility of 10 working days will be used to resource the coaching requirements. The choice of coach for each participant will depend on their needs and the topic of their homework assignment. It is expected that participants will require different levels of coaching input. Some may not ask for any coaching, some may need just one 1-hour phone call/Zoom meeting, whereas others may need up to 8 hours of support spread out over a series of e-meetings, emails and other communication. The contractor will be required to draft a schedule of coaching to be agreed with the Project Team.
- 3.3 Delivery of the coaching during the two months after the workshop.

4. Evaluation & Follow-Up

- 4.1 At the conclusion of the Policy Entrepreneurship homework assignments, there will be an online workshop with all participants to explore the experiences of being trained and applying their skills and knowledge as policy entrepreneurs. The workshop will be used to make a qualitative evaluation of the course and to collect 'good practice' stories and ideas to include in a 'good practice' paper.
- 4.2 The trainer/experts will draft a final report on the course, with evaluation feedback and a dedicated section, which can be separately published, to present the 'good practices' for the region.

Outputs

Activity	Services/Outputs	Timeframe
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs assessment brief and proposed learning objectives for the course 	Month 1
1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy Entrepreneurship course curriculum and proposed methodology 	Month 1
1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft set of course materials 	Month 2
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement on participants' selection criteria 	Month 1
2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments on the selection of participants 	Month 2
2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of at least two webinars and one 2- 	Month 4-5



	day residential workshop	
2.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Package of digital course materials for uploading to the e-learning hub 	Month 5
3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of participants' homework assignments 	Month 5
3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coaching plan 	Month 5
3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of coaching sessions 	Month 5-6
4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online evaluation workshop 	Month 7
4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final report 	Month 7

4. Tender documents

GDSI Limited, the leader of the consortium implementing the project, is inviting interested service providers to submit their offers for the provision of the stated services. Specifically, offers should include the following:

Technical offer:

- A. Brief description of the experience in the design and delivery of similar courses in the EaP or IPA countries
- B. Brief description of the course, with indicative learning objectives and an outline of the number and duration of sessions
- C. Description of the course delivery methodology, including the proposed online platform to host the webinars
- D. Description of options for 'coaching' support
- E. CVs/profiles* of proposed expert(s) to deliver activities (training and coaching), and locations from which they may need to travel from/to in order to deliver any inputs to the residential workshop.
- F. Timetable for the preparation, delivery and reporting for the course

Financial offer:

The required inputs should be presented broken down into hours/working days of experts, materials, equipment, etc. The estimated budget for the inputs should be provided in euros.

Please note that the logistics and costs related to travel/accommodation of participants for the residential workshop do NOT need to be included in the budget, as the Project will make arrangements for these inputs.



However, the budget should include a breakdown of travel costs and per diems for the proposed training team to deliver the residential workshop.

Tenderers are bound by their tenders for 50 days after the deadline for submitting tenders.

5. Required expertise

*Proposed experts should satisfy the minimum criteria below:

The lead trainer will have:

- A post-graduate level of education in the field of Policy Development;
- Fluent English (and knowledge of one of the languages of the EaP countries will be an asset);
- At least 10 years of proven experience in influencing and monitoring policy change in an EU Member State or at the level of the EU;
- Experience in supporting the capacity development of CSOs;
- Experience of the policy environment in the EaP countries and/or of the context of candidate countries (in W. Balkans and/or EaP);
- Experience in delivering both online and offline workshops;

The co-trainers/facilitators will have:

- Working knowledge of English and at least one local language of the region;
- A university degree and experience in research and analysis in at least one area of public policy;
- At least 3 years' experience in policy development and/or monitoring in at least one of the EaP countries;
- Experience in supporting the capacity development of CSOs;
- At least 5 experiences of making an input as a trainer/facilitator to a training activity;
- Experience in providing 'remote' or face-to-face coaching.

If the proposed training team of the contractor does not cover all the requirements or has insufficient international experience, the Project reserves the right to propose additions or modifications in consultation with the contractor.

6. Tender submission

Proposals should be received at EaPCivilSociety@gdsi.ie as 2 attachments (one PDF file for the technical offer and one PDF file for the financial offer) by 18.00.00 CET on 17 October 2025.



Interested tenderers may submit questions to simon.forrester@eapcivilsociety.eu **no later than October 6, 2025 @15.00 CET**. All tenderers' questions will be answered no later than **October 13, 2025**. The contracting authority has no obligation to provide clarification on questions received after the date referred above.

7. Selection Procedure

The offers will be evaluated to identify the best value for money.

Evaluation of the technical offers:

Sections	Evaluation Score
A. Demonstrated specific experience in the design and delivery of activities, including the use of online learning platforms	/10
B. Overall description of the course, with indicative learning objectives and an outline of the number and duration of sessions	/20
C. Description of the course delivery methodology, including the proposed online platform to host the webinars	/20
D. Description of 'coaching' support	/15
E. Profiles of proposed expert(s) to deliver activities (training and coaching)	/30
F. Timetable for the preparation, delivery and reporting for the course	/5
	Total out of a possible total of 100

The tenders' minimum threshold to be considered technically acceptable and qualify for the financial evaluation is the following:

- An overall total score of at least 75 points

Out of the tenders reaching the 75-point threshold, the weighted technical score of each offer is calculated using the following formula:

Weighted technical score = (average technical score of the offer in question/average technical score of the best technical offer) x 100.

The weighted technical score of the best technical offer must always be 100 points.



Evaluation of the financial offers:

The evaluation committee checks that the financial offers contain no obvious arithmetical errors. Any obvious arithmetical errors are corrected without penalty to the tenderer.

The total offer value consists of the fees, lumps (if applicable) and the provision for incidental expenditure, as per Section 4 above. Only the price without VAT/indirect taxes should be taken into consideration for the financial evaluation.

The evaluation committee then proceeds with the financial comparison of the total price offers.

For abnormally low tenders, please refer to Section 2.6.10.1 of the EU PRAG.

The tender with the lowest price receives 100 points. The others are awarded points by means of the following formula: Financial score = (lowest price/ price of the tender being considered) x 100.

The evaluation committee's conclusions:

The best value for money is established by weighting technical quality against price on an 80/20 basis. This is done by multiplying:

- the scores awarded to the technical offers by 0.80
- the scores awarded to the financial offers by 0.20.

The contracting authority will make every attempt to notify the successful tenderer by November 8, 2025.

GDSI will not disclose the evaluation of the various proposals, nor will the evaluation be subject to appeal.

GDSI reserves the right to cancel this tender if no technically or financially acceptable tenders are received.

8. Confidentiality

The entire evaluation procedure is confidential, subject to EU rules. The evaluation committee's decisions are collective, and its deliberations are held in closed session. The members of the evaluation committee are bound to secrecy. The evaluation reports and written records are for official use only and may be communicated neither to the tenderers nor to any party other than the contracting authority, the European Commission, the Early Detection and Exclusion panel, the European Anti-Fraud Office, the European Public Prosecutor's Office and the European Court of Auditors.



9. Ethics, values and code of conduct

a) Absence of conflict of interest and of professional conflicting interest

The tenderer must not be affected by any professional conflicting interest nor any conflict of interest and must have no equivalent relation in that respect with other tenderers or parties involved in the project. Any undue influence or attempt to unduly influence the evaluation committee or the contracting authority during the process of examining, clarifying, evaluating and comparing tenders, any attempt to obtain confidential information or entering into unlawful agreements with competitors will lead to the rejection of its tender and may result in exclusion from future award procedures and/or financial penalties according to the Financial Regulation in force.

b) Respect for human rights and EU values as well as environmental legislation and core labour standards

The tenderer must respect environmental legislation and core labour standards: participants that are awarded the contract must comply with the environmental legislation including multilateral environmental agreements, and with the core labour standards as applicable and as defined in the relevant International Labour Organisation conventions (such as the conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining; elimination of forced and compulsory labour; abolition of child labour).

The tenderer and its personnel must commit to and ensure the respect of basic EU values, the tenderer and its personnel must comply with basic EU values such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of minorities.

The tenderer and its personnel must comply with applicable data protection rules and environmental legislation. In particular, tenderers who have been awarded the contract must also comply with multilateral environmental agreements, and with the core labour standards as applicable and as defined in the relevant International Labour Organisation conventions (such as the conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining; elimination of forced and compulsory labour; and abolition of child labour).

The tenderer and its personnel must comply with EU values, such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of minorities.

Zero tolerance for sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment:

The European Commission applies a policy of 'zero tolerance' in relation to all wrongful conduct which has an impact on the professional credibility of the tenderer.

Physical abuse or punishment, or threats of physical abuse, sexual abuse or exploitation, harassment and verbal abuse, as well as other forms of intimidation, shall be prohibited.



c) Anti-corruption and anti-bribery

The tenderer shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations and codes relating to anti-bribery and anti-corruption. The contracting authority reserves the right to suspend or cancel the service financing if corrupt practices of any kind are discovered at any stage of the award process or during the execution of a contract. For the purposes of this provision, 'corrupt practices' are the offer of a bribe, gift, gratuity or commission to any person as an inducement or reward for performing or refraining from any act relating to the award of a contract or execution of a contract already concluded with the contracting authority.

d) Unusual commercial expenses

Tenders will be rejected or contracts terminated if it emerges that the award or execution of a contract has given rise to unusual commercial expenses. Such unusual commercial expenses are commissions not mentioned in the main contract or not stemming from a properly concluded contract referring to the main contract, commissions not paid in return for any actual and legitimate service, commissions remitted to a tax haven, commissions paid to a payee who is not clearly identified or commissions paid to a company which has every appearance of being a front company.

e) Breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud

The contracting authority reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the award procedure proves to have been subject to breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud. If breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the award of the contract, the contracting authority may refrain from concluding the contract.