

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Capacity Building and Destination Promotion of Albania's GBS and ICT Sectors

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1. Overview of DSAA e.V.

The Digital Skills Accelerator Africa e.V. (DSAA) is an independent non-profit association of ITO and BPO companies. In collaboration with member companies and funding partners, the DSAA implements programs that foster job creation across the African continent in the ITO and BPO sectors. In its current projects, the association collaborates with the Special Initiative “Decent Work for a Just Transition” of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Corporation and Development (BMZ), which is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) among others.

The DSAA functions as a catalyst for emerging digital markets, supporting skill development with a focus on future-oriented IT and Global Business Services (GBS). Training formats vary in duration and scope, designed to address the evolving needs of the digital economy and enhance employment opportunities with the members of the DSAA or their local hiring partners. A major focus of the DSAA's projects co-funded by the Special Initiative is strengthening inclusive work environments for all.

2. Context

Building upon extensive experience in Africa, the DSAA is expanding its efforts to the Western Balkans.

The region has great potential for positioning itself as a global business service destination. The high level of education offers the opportunity to support technically sophisticated projects and counteract the brain drain. The high demand for IT services in Germany and Europe, coupled with existing links through a well-established diaspora, offer promising preconditions and points of contact.

To harness these opportunities, the DSAA invites qualified organizations to submit proposals for the implementation of a comprehensive program aimed at strengthening the capacity of local GBS and ICT firms and promoting the country as a reliable outsourcing destination in international markets. The project partners of this proposal are GIZ, “Partners in Transformation”, “ProSEED 2.0” and the EU co-financing programme “EU4Innovation”.

The project will involve both skill-building for local companies and international marketing efforts to promote Albania as a premier outsourcing destination for German companies. This initiative is part of the DSAA's broader effort to support economic development and international market access of Albania's GBS and ICT industry.

While the procurement notice refers to Tirana (AL022, 1001) as the indicative location for statistical purposes, the services under this contract may be carried out in multiple international locations, depending on the requirements of the promotional campaign. The contractor is not required to be based in Albania. However, the promotional and training activities must directly support the visibility and international positioning of Albania's GBS and ICT sectors, as outlined in this Terms of Reference. Any in-person workshops, if

included, are expected to be held in Albania, whereas promotional and communication activities may take place as indicated.

3. Scope of Work

The assignment consists of two primary components:

3.1 Capacity Building for Albanian GBS/ICT Companies

The contractor will design and implement a training program to prepare SMEs for international market expansion. The program should address the following thematic areas:

1. Development of globally attractive company culture
2. International marketing and online presence building
3. Effective project management and client communication
4. Legal and regulatory frameworks for cross-border operations
5. Financial planning and scaling strategies
6. International sales and pitching techniques

The training should include:

- Online, self-paced content
- In-person workshops in Albania
- Supporting materials and toolkits
- Follow-up assessments to provide individual feedback

The primary target group are top management teams of Albanian small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the ICT/GBS sector.

3.2 Destination Promotion for Albania's GBS/ICT Sectors

The contractor will execute a strategic marketing campaign aimed at raising international awareness of Albania as a credible and competitive outsourcing destination. Activities should include:

1. Design and maintenance of a dedicated landing page hosted on a reputable international platform (with focus on Central and Southeastern Europe)
2. Development and publication of analytical articles and case studies, featuring industry insights and testimonials from existing clients of Albanian firms, published in an international, reputable resource (with a focus on Central and Southeastern Europe)
3. Conduct media outreach to promote the location's visibility in Western Europe and North America

4. Expected Deliverables

The following deliverables are expected to be completed within the contract duration and in line with agreed milestones:

Capacity Building:

1. Online modules (on-demand), introducing the six thematic areas outlined above for up to 250 participants.

2. In-person workshops in Albania focusing on each of the six thematic areas, tailored to the specific needs of Albanian companies for up to 100 participants.
3. Post-workshop assessments and feedback reports for all in-person workshop participants.

Destination Promotion:

1. Interactive landing page showcasing Albania's strength as a GBS destination, hosted on an international, reputable resource (with a focus on Central and Southeastern Europe).
2. Two analytical articles on Albania's GBS sector and one interview published in an international, reputable resource (with a focus on Central and Southeastern Europe).
3. A press release and media outreach to at least 300 media representatives in Western Europe and North America.

5. Contractor Requirements

Interested organizations must demonstrate:

- Proven experience in capacity building for service companies in Central and Eastern Europe.
- Expertise in international destination marketing for outsourcing or ICT sectors.
- Ability to tailor content and training materials to Albanian SME's needs.

6. Reporting and Responsibilities

The contractor shall ensure high-quality service delivery and maintain regular communication with DSAA and relevant stakeholders. Progress and impact reporting will be required at key project stages.

7. Period of Performance

The assignment is expected to commence upon contract award and be completed by 31 March 2026.

The total funding available is up to 29.411,00€, disbursed against proof of expenditure as follows:

- 30% upon initiation of capacity building activities
- 40% upon completion of capacity building activities
- 30% upon verified delivery of destination promotion components

8. Concept and Evaluation Criteria

The proposal must follow the weighted criteria structure used in the evaluation process:

8.1 8.1 Capacity Building Component

Training Concept (1.1): Clear structure and content tailored to preparing Albanian companies for global market expansion.

Practical Relevance (1.2): The proposal should align with project objectives and participants' needs.

Global Applicability (1.3): The proposal shall outline how the capacity building training prepares Albanian companies for global market expansion.

Target Achievement (1.4): The proposal explains in detail the methods and tools used for achieving outcomes.

Monitoring and Communications (1.5): The proposal presents the general approach and approach to steering the activities with project partners. It outlines a plan for the transmission of status updates and materials for communication.

8.2 8.2 Destination Promotion Component

Campaign Concept (2.1): The proposal clearly defines the objectives and core messaging.

Strategic Fit (2.2): The proposal clearly outlines the component's contribution to overall project goals.

International Visibility (2.3): The proposal outlines the outreach and engagement strategies. It explains how these activities lead to an increase in Albania's visibility as a dynamic GBS service location.

Target Achievement (2.4): The proposal explains in detail how the set targets for destination promotion are achieved.

Monitoring and Communication (2.5): The proposal explains the approach to tracking and stakeholder coordination. It further outlines a plan for the transmission of status updates and materials for communication (images, project progress, statistics).

9. Proposal Requirements

Bidders are requested to submit a comprehensive proposal including:

- A detailed technical and methodological concept addressing both capacity building and destination promotion
- A timeline aligned with the deliverables
- A budget outline

Proposals should not exceed 15 pages and must follow the structure of these ToRs. All submissions must be clearly legible (minimum font size 11) and written in English. There is no contractual entitlement to fully exhaust the days, trips, workshops or budgets. The number of days/travel/workshops and the budget amount shall be agreed in the contract as "up to" amounts. The structure of the concept (Chapter 4) should correspond to the structure of the weighted (and not set to zero) criteria of the evaluation scheme.

Please submit your proposal by 2 June 2025. Late submissions will not be considered.

10. Exclusion Criteria

In accordance with Directive 2014/24/EU, the contracting authority will exclude any applicant or tenderer who is in one of the situations referred to in Article 57(1) and (4) of the Directive. Applicants shall be excluded from participation in the procurement procedure if:

1. They have been the subject of a final judgment for participation in a criminal organisation, corruption, fraud, or money laundering;
2. They are insolvent, have suspended business activities, or are subject to proceedings for a declaration of insolvency;
3. They have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can demonstrate;
4. They have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or taxes.

The applicant must confirm, by submitting a signed declaration (Annex 2: Declaration on Exclusion Criteria), that none of the exclusion criteria apply. The contracting authority reserves the right to request supporting documents at any time.

11. Annex

Annex1: Evaluation Documents

Annex2: Declaration on Exclusion Criteria