

TENDER SPECIFICATIONS

PART II

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

No EEAS/DELRUSM/2019/OP/0039

**EU-RUSSIA MULTIMEDIA PROJECT 'EUROPULSE'
FOR THE DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION TO RUSSIA**

Services contract

OPEN PROCEDURE

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1. TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

1.1. Background

EU-Russia multimedia project 'Europulse' (www.euro-pulse.ru) is an on-going web platform, owned by the contracting authority, on European lifestyle, education, culture, travel and trends.

'Europulse' was launched in 2009 and since then has been regularly going through various transformations in format, content, and general look.

In the project cycle 2016-2019, 'Europulse' provided a stream of 3-5 news items daily, 6-8 articles published monthly, and 3-4 video features/video interviews/announcements produced monthly.

By the middle of the year 2019, on average 'Europulse' had some 10,000 monthly unique visitors to the website and about 6,000 members of the 'Europulse' groups in Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/EuroPulseRu>) and in the Russian social media V Kontakte.ru <http://vk.com/europulse>.

The new phase of the project shall adapt the platform to the current information needs of the target audience and maximize use of new trends and technologies.

1.2. Objectives

The overall objective of the EU-Russia multimedia project 'Europulse' is to raise understanding of the EU and of its relations with Russia.

To pursue the objective of the project, the contract will aim at:

1. modernization of the current web site,
2. management and providing editorial content of the platform in accordance with the following:
 - Illustrate EU policies and show how they affect everyday life;
 - Bring to Russian readers firsthand accounts about European lifestyle;
 - Promote people-to-people dimension of EU-Russia relations, especially in the areas of general interest;
 - Highlight common values, especially in the social, cultural and human areas;
 - Encourage exchange of opinions on Europe in Russian social media;
 - Contribute to rebuilding mutual trust and to creation of a perceptible image of the EU among the Russian general public.

1.3. Target audience

The project targets the Russian general public with a larger focus on young people aged 18-30 years old.

1.4. Project description

The project shall be carried out in an informative and entertaining manner, offering a wide-ranging view of topics and aiming to interest public across the whole territory of Russia.

In accordance with the stated objectives, the contractor shall present on 'Europulse' platform various aspects of the European Union, its policies and actions and demonstrate how they affect the lives of the European and Russian citizens and the world at large. The project shall aim to bring the readers up-to-date with the current developments in Europe and issues of European modern society and culture as well as to encourage exchange of opinions. The web platform must enable users to comment and interact.

Furthermore, through concrete examples, the project shall highlight bilateral relations and initiatives. To this end, the project shall make a special focus on social, cultural and education areas of the EU-Russia relations, translating policy into attractive, reader- and viewer-friendly material.

The contractor shall ensure to translate 'euro-speak' into interesting dynamic content, both written and visual.

Among other issues, the project shall present public diplomacy initiatives of the EU Delegation to Russia, EU study weeks, EU-funded programmes, cultural and public diplomacy events of the EU Member States. A special focus shall be made on European initiatives in the Russian regions.

The project shall also offer useful, practical information, e.g. on academic exchanges, studies at European universities, scholarships available to Russian students, travel to Europe, etc.

The contractor shall ensure a good variety of storytelling genres, e.g. news, reports, in-depth interviews, long reads, short stories, infographics, life hacks, comic strips/ graphic stories, reviews, podcasts, etc.

The 'Europulse' editor-in-chief shall decide which storytelling technics to use in each particular case for each particular topic - to make it most interesting and appealing to the audience.

The platform shall be in line with modern web trends and expectations of the young audience. It shall be easily accessible both by desktop Web and mobile Web offering a user-friendly interface for all platforms.

The tenderer shall propose the most feasible ways to implement these tasks.

All project components must create a synergy effect. There shall be cross-promotion of topics.

1.5. Scope of the services

The services provided by the contractor shall include:

1.5.1. Website

a) Modernization of the current website in terms of technical software, information architecture and graphic line so that it is in line with modern web trends and it meets expectations of the young audience.

This shall include design and development of a modern, advanced website with a responsive design that displays optimally, regardless of the device being used (ex.: a smartphone, tablet, laptop, and computer). The website shall be tested against different sizes of mobile devices such as iPhone SE, X, XS Max, XR, iPad mini/Pro, Samsung Galaxy S10+, Samsung Galaxy Tab S. It shall work on iOS and Android mobile platforms. Access shall be working on mobile networks and in regions with potentially slow internet.

The modernized website shall allow users to easily share the content via the most popular social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Ok, Vk, Telegram, Instagram). It shall also have a build-in commenting service and analytics tools.

All content from the current website shall be transferred to the new website while making sure that all links and hyperlinks are valid/non-broken and all images display correctly.



Important: The modernization task is only for the first year of the contract. The new website shall be fully operational 6 months after the entry into force of the contract.

b) Conducting a SEO audit on a yearly basis to make sure that the website performs optimally, and has greater visibility and increased traffic. Such audit shall cover technical SEO, on-page SEO and off-page SEO.

c) Hosting the web platform and 24/7 technical support of the website.

d) Content management, including spam control.

e) Coverage of the domain name registration fee for the whole duration of the contract plus 6 months.

1.5.2. Editorial content

- Attendance at the monthly editorial meetings at the EU Delegation to Russia, during which focal points for coverage in the coming month will be identified;
- Daily update of the news feed. Some 3-5 news items shall be published throughout the day;
- Publication of 6-8 articles monthly;
- Independent writing of all texts and, if necessary, commissioning articles to a pool of qualified external contributors – in Russia and Europe.
All contributors shall have a journalist background and experience, and good knowledge of current storytelling technics. Articles published on 'Europulse' may be signed by authors.
If an external contributor provides his / her contributions in a language different from Russian, the contractor shall ensure the professional translation into Russian of such contributions;
- Professional Russian editing and professional proof-reading of all articles and/or of their translations as well as of all titles and subtitles in the video features.
It is the contractor's responsibility to ensure that all materials produced in the framework of the project have no spelling errors and are with correct punctuation and capitalization;
- Provision of photographs, video, infographics and artwork to illustrate the 'Europulse' web platform and social media accounts. Those shall be of high quality and relevance to the events, facts, themes and personalities featured in the publications, be both recent and varied. The contractor shall need to ensure all the material is copyright cleared.

1.5.3. Video

The 'Europulse' shall feature video stories/video blogs. Videos shall be produced in different formats: reports, interviews, addresses/comments by the EU Ambassador and/or EU Delegation Spokesperson, thematic stories, vox pop, etc.

The contractor shall produce:

- thirty 1.5-2 minute video stories/ video blogs per year;
- one viral video per year.

Videos shall be of the following types, at a minimum:

- Original video produced by the contractor to cover events organized by the EU Delegation to Russia, EU Member States embassies and cultural centers in Russia, EU-funded projects, etc.;
- Original 1.5-2 minute video stories/video blogs to illustrate a specific topic;

- Russification of video material produced by the EU institutions: the European External Action Service, the European Commission, the European Council, the European Parliament and others. Those video features shall be accompanied by Russian subtitles.

The contractor shall proactively use relevant materials available on the official websites of the European External Action Service (http://eeas.europa.eu/index_en.htm), the European Commission (<http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/ebs/schedule.cfm>), the European Council (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/>), the European Parliament (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/>) and other related websites.

All videos produced by the contractor shall be creative, dynamic, and to the point. This shall include professional art direction, sound, lighting and editing; translation as well as Russian dubbing or subtitling where necessary; selection of relevant copyright cleared music.

In case of voiceover, it shall be done with good diction and clarity.

For original video produced by the contractor, video features shall be ready within 3 working days after filming.

The contractor shall use all available up-to-date tools to ensure the widest possible dissemination of the 'Europulse' video content across the whole territory of the Russian Federation.

1.5.4. Social media

The contractor shall ensure professional day-to-day activities in 'Europulse' Russian-language social media accounts, stimulating exchange of views among followers.

Activities in social media accounts shall go beyond mere sharing links to written and visual content published on the website. The contractor shall ensure to generate, edit, publish and share engaging content daily (e.g. original text, photos, videos and news) on all social media accounts with the aim of turning fans into loyal readership.

All activities shall be in line with current trends in the social media marketing, taking into account particularities of each social media.

1.5.5. Promotion

The contractor shall develop and implement a result-oriented promotion strategy of the 'Europulse'.

By the end of the first year, the promo strategy shall ensure at least 15,000 monthly unique visitors to the website.

In the following years, the promo strategy shall ensure a 30% year-over-year increase in monthly unique visitors.

Use of spam goes against EC rules and must be avoided.

The promotion strategy shall cover the whole territory of the Russian Federation, and aim at ensuring a steady growth of loyal readership.



Important: An outline of proposed promotion strategy shall be included in tenderers' technical offers.

1.6. Copyright

The contracting authority is the official publisher of the 'Europulse'.

Copyright and any other rights of ownership in respect of raw materials and final products, produced as part of the performance of the contract, shall belong exclusively to the contracting authority.

1.7. Reporting

1. Monthly report

On a **monthly** basis, the contractor will provide the contracting authority with:

- a report on produced materials and topics covered;
- a report on promo activities;
- a detailed report on statistics.

2. Report on completion of task of the modernization of the website

Upon 6 months from entry into force of the contract, the contractor shall submit a report on the completion of the modernization of the web platform task. It must be accompanied by a corresponding invoice for this task.

3. Interim 6-monthly report

Every 6 months from entry into force of the contract, the contractor shall submit an interim progress report. It must be accompanied by a corresponding invoice. The interim report should contain:

- a mid-term general evaluation of the project with suggestions for a next 6-month period;
- a report on key performance indicators) and their analysis (number of monthly unique visitors to the website; number of followers/friends on social media accounts; growth of loyal readership;
- a report on website technical performance;

- overall number of published materials per each section of the website with a list of most read/viewed items and citation metrics;
- a report on social media activities with a plan for a next 6-month period;
- a report on promo activities with a plan for a next 6-month period;

4. Final progress report

Final progress report and a final invoice shall be submitted at the period of execution of the contract. In addition to the elements required for the interim report, the final report shall also contain information on main results obtained in the performance of the project and evaluation of its effectiveness. The final progress report should contain:

- a general evaluation of the project and of its effectiveness with suggestions on how best to develop it further.
- an overview of key performance indicators and their analysis in comparison to the initial phase (number of monthly unique visitors to the website; number of followers/friends on social media accounts; growth of loyal readership);
- an analysis of the website performance with suggestions on how best to further develop the website;
- an overview of all published materials per each section of the website with a list of most read/viewed items;
- a citation report with suggestions on how to increase the citation rate;
- an overview of best practices in social media activities with suggestions on how best to further develop social media accounts;
- an overview of best practices in promo activities with suggestions on how best to reach out to the project's target audience;

The reports shall be submitted in electronic format in English.

1.8. Key Staff/Experts required

The contractor shall have a dynamic team of Key Staff/Experts led by a Team Leader. The team shall be based in Russia. The contractor shall ensure efficient management of the project and use of project funds. The contractor shall have a pool of professional authors across Europe and Russia who will contribute to the 'Europulse' content.

The following expertise is required as a minimum:

- team leader;
- editor-in-chief;
- editor;
- social media editor;
- videographer;
- photo editor / designer;

The **Team Leader** shall have the overall responsibility for the smooth implementation of the project, team coordination and synergy of all project components.

He/she shall have the following qualifications:

- Bachelor degree (as a minimum) in PR, journalism, international relations, or management;
- At least 10 years of management experience;
- At least 3 years of experience in managing international projects;
- Proficiency in English: level B2 of CEFR (<https://www.examenglish.com/CEFR/cefr.php>).

The **Editor-in-Chief** shall oversee the planning and conception of both written and visual contents for 'Europulse', contribute editorial pieces, and ensure all information is accurate before publishing it, whether it's written or visual content. Furthermore, he/she shall define a development strategy and innovative ways to attract readers, and implement marketing campaigns and social metrics to ensure loyal readership. When performing these tasks, the Editor-in-Chief shall demonstrate strong editorial judgment, outstanding creativity, insight, and a positive, go-to attitude.

He/she shall have the following qualifications:

- Native Russian speaker;
- Bachelor degree (as a minimum) in journalism, linguistics or philology;
- At least 10 years of experience in journalism;
- At least 3 years in an Editor-in-Chief / Deputy Editor-in-Chief position with on-line media;
- Proficiency in English: level B2 of CEFR (<https://www.examenglish.com/CEFR/cefr.php>).

The **Editor** shall plan, coordinate and revise content for 'Europulse'. He/she shall assist the Editor-in-Chief in evaluating submissions from contributors to decide what to publish, and work with contributors to help their ideas and stories succeed, while bearing in mind both the audience and project objectives.

He/she shall have the following qualifications:

- Native Russian speaker;
- Bachelor degree (as a minimum) in journalism, PR, linguistics or philology;
- At least 5 years of journalism experience, including writing/editing for the web and young Russian audience as a must;
- Proficiency in English: level B2 of CEFR (<https://www.examenglish.com/CEFR/cefr.php>).

The **Social media Editor** shall administrate and create relevant, original, high-quality, engaging content for all 'Europulse' social media accounts. He/she shall have an in-depth knowledge of social media platforms and their respective audiences. He/she shall effectively communicate with social media audiences, both in written and audio-visual formats. He/she shall manage posts and respond to followers in a timely manner.

He/she shall have the following qualifications:

- Native Russian speaker;
- Bachelor degree (as a minimum) in communications, marketing, social science, journalism or philology;
- At least 3 years of experience in SMM;
- Proficiency in English: level B2 of CEFR
(<https://www.examenglish.com/CEFR/cefr.php>).

The **Videographer** shall have the overall responsibility for planning, conception and production of video for 'Europulse'. He/she shall handle everything from filming, interviewing, and setting up the equipment to editing video footage and sound production. The videographer shall have outstanding creativity and a strong artistic sense as well as willingness to try out new ideas and experiment with new tools.

He/she shall have the following qualifications:

- Native Russian speaker;
- Certificate in visual arts or digital media;
- At least 5 years of experience in video production.

The **Photo Editor / Designer** shall oversee the planning, conception and production of photo and other visual products for 'Europulse'. To perform these tasks, the Photo Editor / Designer shall have good knowledge of existing tools for creation of infographics and artworks illustrating the website and social media content.

He/she shall have the following qualifications:

- Native Russian speaker;
- Bachelor degree (as a minimum) in design or arts;
- At least 5 years of experience in design or photo editing for on-line media and social media.



Important: Apart from CVs of proposed key staff/experts, the tenderer's offer shall contain portfolios of videographer and photo editor / designer showcasing their past work and abilities.

Portfolios of videographer and photo editor/designer should be provided in electronic form only, and they should showcase their work/samples of their work for the last three years (from the date of submission of tenders).

For videographer:

- Links to websites where videos are accessible for public viewing (clients' websites or personal websites),
- Links to Youtube channels where videos are accessible for public viewing (clients' channels or personal),

- Links to social media where videos are accessible for public viewing (clients' channels or personal),
can be provided.

For photo editor/designer:

- Links to company's website where samples of work are present,
- Links to clients' websites where samples of work are presented,
- A specially prepared e-portfolio, e.g. in Powerpoint,
can be provided.

N.B. The above lists are not exhaustive and are left at the appreciation of the tenderers.

Please note that the maximum upload size of a file in e-Submission, in case this should be the chosen form of submission for portfolio(s), is 100 MB.

The contractor needs to ensure availability of the proposed key staff/experts during the whole duration of the contract in case of being successful in the tender procedure.

If a key staff/expert intends to quit the project in the course of its implementation, the contractor shall immediately inform the contracting authority and offer to the contracting authority a new staff/expert who shall meet the above mentioned minimum qualifications, and who will be subject to the approval of the contracting authority.



Important: During the project implementation the contractor cannot offer a new key expert with lower capabilities than the minimum requirements stipulated in these technical specifications.

The contracting authority reserves the right to request a change in the team in the course of project implementation.

2. CONTENT OF THE TENDER

The tenderers shall submit via the electronic submission system e-Submission the "*Request to participate form*" duly completed, accompanied by all the information and documents listed in the form.

If any of the documents of the "technical tender" and "financial tender" is missing, the contracting authority shall not request it and will proceed to the evaluation exclusively on the basis of the submitted documents. No further documents or improvement of the content of the tender can be requested by the contracting authority.

Annex 1 – Statement of compliance with the procurement documents

Statement of compliance with the procurement documents

EEAS/DELRUSM/2019/OP/0039

EU-RUSSIA MULTIMEDIA PROJECT 'EUROPULSE'

[I] [We], , the undersigned, being the authorised legal representative[s] of *[to be completed with the name of the tenderer; for joint tenders, this must include all members]*, hereby declare that we have examined and accept without reserve or restriction all the terms and conditions set out in the invitation to tender, in the tender and technical specifications and in the draft contract for the tender procedure referred to above and, where appropriate, waive the tenderer's own general or specific terms and conditions. We offer to provide the services on the basis of our technical tender and our financial tender which do not diverge in any way from the requirements described in the procurement documents as drafted by the contracting authority. Our tender complies with all the technical requirements indicated in the tender and technical specifications.

We also undertake to respect these requirements scrupulously during the performance of the contract in case we become the awardee of the contract.

Name of tenderer:

Name of the legal representative of the tenderer:

Date:

Signature:

NOTE: For joint tenders, this statement of compliance has to be signed by each member unless the leader is duly authorised to sign on behalf of each member by a power of attorney annexed to the tender.

[Name of tenderer]

Name of the legal representative of the tenderer:

Date:

Signature:]

Annex 2 – Technical tender

A description of the tender submitted. The tenderer will explain in detail their tender including detailing the tasks which will be performed by each member of a joint tender and each subcontractor whose share of the contract is higher than 20%.

Annex 3 – Technical tender

Award criterion n° 1: Methodology and organisation of the services

This criterion will enable to assess the overall approach to the project implementation methodology and to assess the organisation of the services offered by the tender, including the different members of a joint tender and the resort to subcontractors.

Tenderers will develop in detail the methods and organisation they offer and in particular provide detailed information for each task in these tender specifications.

It also assesses the global allocation of resources to the contract and to each service, and whether this allocation is adequate for the performance of the services. The tenderer shall provide details on the allocation of resources and the rationale behind the choice of this allocation.

(Maximum number of points: 65)

Sub-criterion 1.1 (20 points):

The overall methodology the tenderer offers to implement the project; what concrete steps will be taken to fulfil each task;

Sub-criterion 1.2 (15 points):

How does the tenderer commit to employ an effective, result-oriented promotion strategy to ensure the required increase in readers/viewers/followers numbers; the creativity and innovative approaches to promotion of written and video content that the tenderer intends to apply;

Sub-criterion 1.3 (10 points):

How does the tenderer commit to ensure active exchange of opinions in social media;

Sub-criterion 1.4 (10 points):

How are the roles of the proposed team (including subcontractors if applicable) distributed for each task;

Sub-criterion 1.5 (10 points):

How does the tenderer commit to ensure the modernization of the current website.

Annex 4 – Technical tender

Award criterion n°2:

Timelines

This criterion will enable to assess the capacity to realistically and clearly plan the implementation of each task.

The tender shall provide details on the allocation of time and the rationale behind the choice of this allocation.

(Maximum number of points: 10)

How is the project planned and what timelines does the tenderer establish for the proper implementation of all tasks (tentative schedule for the modernization of the current website, and for the management of 'Europulse' project).

Annex 5 – Technical tender

Award criterion n°3:

Quality control measures

This criterion will enable to assess of the quality control system applied to the services foreseen in these tender specifications, including the quality and continuity of the service in case of absence of the member(s) of the team.

The quality system shall be detailed in the tender and specific to the services at hand; a generic quality system will result in a low score.

(Maximum number of points: 25)

Sub-criterion 3.1 (12 points):

How are the services monitored and evaluated in order to guarantee their quality, including continuous production of high-quality written and video content;

Sub-criterion 3.2 (8 points):

What mechanisms are employed to tackle unforeseen situations both regarding human and technical resources;

Sub-criterion 3.3 (5 points):

What mechanisms are employed to tackle unforeseen external situations (e.g. downing of servers).

Annex A – Financial tender**Price schedule in EUR (global price)**

Item	For the initial duration of the contract (i.e.: 12 months)	Price including all renewals (i.e.: for 48 months)
A. Modernization of the current website (<i>services under point 1.5.1 (a) Website for the first 6 months after entry into force of the contract; one-off task</i>)	A1	A2=A1
B. Management of EU-Russia multimedia project 'Europulse' (<i>services under points 1.5.1 (b), (c), (d), (e) Website, 1.5.2 Editorial content, 1.5.3 Video, 1.5.4 Social media, 1.5.5 Promotion, 1.7 Reporting, of these technical specifications</i>)	B1	B2= 4*B1
Total price in EUR	(A1+B1)	(A2+B2)

When filling in this table, tenderers shall fill in the global price for each item and will not modify, add or subtract any item. Failing this, their tender will be eliminated.

Name of tenderer:

Name of the legal representative of the tenderer:

Date:

Signature:

NOTE: For joint tenders, this annex has to be signed by each member unless the leader is duly authorised to sign on behalf of each member by a power of attorney annexed to the tender.

[Name of tenderer:]

Name of the legal representative of the tenderer:

Date:

Signature:]