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Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME)

Department A – COSME, H2020 SMEs and EMFF

Unit A1 – COSME

CALL FOR TENDERS

**Fostering collaboration through mapping, analysing and
interlinking of European Entrepreneurial Regions**

EASME/COSME/2017/041

TENDER SPECIFICATIONS

Open Procedure

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EASME/COSME/2017/041

Fostering collaboration through mapping, analysing and interlinking of European Entrepreneurial Regions

1. TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (henceforth "EASME" or "the Contracting Authority")¹, acting under the powers delegated by the European Commission (henceforth "the Commission"), is launching this invitation to tender for the signature of a service contract aimed at fostering collaboration through mapping, analysing and interlinking of European Entrepreneurial Regions (EER)² labelled as regions entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Legal basis

The present call for tenders is based on the Regulation (EU) no 1287/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing a Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises (henceforth "COSME"³) for 2014-2020 and repealing Decision No 1639/2006/EC. More particularly, It is based on Commission Implementing Decision of 6 July 2017 amending the Commission Implementing Decision C(2017) 1042 final, concerning the adoption of the work programme for 2017 and the financing for the implementation of the Programme for the Competitiveness of enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises C(2017) 4563 final.

1 EASME was set up by Commission Implementing Decision (2013/771/EU) of 17 December 2013 establishing the "Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized enterprises" and repealing Decisions 2004/20/EC and 2007/372/EC (OJ L 341 of 18.12.2013). EASME replaces and supersedes former Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation (EACI).

2 European Entrepreneurial Region – Labelling scheme introduced and run by the Committee of the Regions (CoR); for more information see <http://cor.europa.eu/en/takepart/eer/Pages/eer.aspx>.

3 For more details see: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013R1287>

1.2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND CONTEXT

Brief background and purpose of the tender

Entrepreneurs usually start their company locally in their own region. They are often in need of a number of services as close as possible to their 'home' before they can scale their business and grow beyond the region they started in.

All the services and offers, be they private or public in nature or delivered by public-private partnerships, form together with other actors - e.g. the companies, public authorities, research institutes and other stakeholders and parties – an 'ecosystem'.

In an increasingly mobile world, potential entrepreneurs look for the ecosystem suiting them the most. It is however in the overall economic interest that their 'next door' ecosystem offers them all they need. As it is not possible for all ecosystems to deliver a complete set of services for financial, logistical, political or geographical reasons, it is in the interest of European economic policy to make sure that services offered by individual ecosystems are made known, assessed and complemented if need be. In particular the latter can be delivered through linking ecosystems across borders as well as within a given Member State.

The Commission and Member States are supporting the creation of such ecosystems to help start-ups to connect with potential partners (e.g. investors, business partners, universities, research centres) and to scale their business inside the Single Market and beyond⁴.

Silicon Valley is one of the best known ecosystems in the world. There is a tendency to bemoan the lack of a European Silicon Valley. However, the specific circumstances that led to the creation of Silicon Valley cannot be reproduced. Every ecosystem has its own specificity, history and experience.

EU policies and initiatives taken on this action

In 2009 the Committee of the Regions (CoR) has started a scheme to attribute a specific label to ecosystems which are in fact 'European Silicon Valleys', i.e. ecosystems which show a well-developed forward looking entrepreneurial spirit. European regions can compete for the '**European Entrepreneurial Region**' (EER) label⁵ which is attributed every year to a number of regions or cities based on their submission and a detailed assessment thereof.

4 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: "Europe's Next Leaders: the Start-up and Scale-up Initiative", p.5 and 6. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2016:733:FIN>

5 See: <http://cor.europa.eu/en/takepart/eer/Pages/eer.aspx>

In view of its EER scheme and thanks to its links to regional and local authorities, the CoR is best placed to effectively contribute to the efforts of implementing the Start- and Scale-up Initiative in EU regions and cities. Through the scheme, the CoR identifies and rewards European regions and cities with an outstanding commitment to promote entrepreneurship through local, regional and interregional actions. Regions and cities who have received the EER label could be the nucleus for fostering the emergence of a network of entrepreneurial regions and cities which will ultimately go beyond the EER labelled regions. Several of these regions and cities are already working together to explore and examine in detail their respective entrepreneurial ecosystems and interlink them, notably through the iEER Interreg Europe project⁶.

In the **Single Market Strategy**⁷, the Commission announced that it will look at how to make the Single Market more efficient for start- and scale-ups as this will have a direct beneficial effect on jobs and growth in the EU. As an important contribution to this effort the Communication 'Europe's next leaders - the Start-up and Scale-up Initiative'⁸ was adopted by the European Commission in November 2016.

This **Start- and Scale-up Initiative** calls for reinforcing activities aimed at bringing together investors, corporates and entrepreneurs, as well as decision-makers at all levels of government, in particular at the regional level. It also announces actions to further strengthen coherence between different EU initiatives by linking up national and regional Ministries, innovation agencies and other stakeholders and ecosystems.

These actions aim at effectively interconnecting entrepreneurial ecosystems across the European Union. They enable more innovation driven start-ups and SMEs to scale across Europe and globally by fostering collaboration.

1.3. GENERAL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The general objective of this call for tender is to strengthen the impact of existing actions aimed at further developing start-up and scale up support by building on the experience of some of Europe's most entrepreneurial regions and capitalising on the CoR's links to and communication channels with regions and local actors.

This is to be done through:

⁶ See: <https://www.interregeurope.eu/ieer/>

⁷ See: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2015%3A550%3AFIN>

⁸ See: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2016:733:FIN>.

- ensuring that the necessary framework conditions and support measures for entrepreneurs to thrive in and between regions are available, as well as developing global links for further expansion;
- addressing the challenges public authorities face when working on policies and initiatives aimed at building thriving entrepreneurial ecosystems and at interconnecting with other public authorities across the Single Market. A crucial element to achieve this is the identification of complementarities between these emerging 'European Silicon Valleys' to better exploit synergies between the regions and cities; to avoid fragmentation or duplication of efforts; to ensure that knowledge is shared better and used for capacity building of all actors in the ecosystem, including public authorities.

EASME wishes to enter into a service contract aiming at fostering collaboration through interconnecting selected entrepreneurial ecosystems across the European Union in order to enable more innovation driven start-ups and SMEs to scale across Europe and globally.

For this purpose, the present action will tap into the expertise of the EER labelled regions, identifying practices which can be transferred to other regions and building on them to fill gaps existing in different regions as well as finding synergies and complementarities through closer collaboration in areas identified as crucial.

This will be done through mapping, analysing and interlinking EER labelled regions; tenderers will identify strategic topic areas and consequently develop and implement concrete action plans to foster collaboration and boost synergies.

The outcome of this project shall contribute to increasing the knowledge of what makes a successful ecosystem; how to compare chosen ecosystems to global ones and what can be learned from this comparison; building knowledge about EER ecosystems; demonstrating how ecosystems can cooperate to avoid costly duplication of structures and initiatives by utilizing their complementarities and synergies; how best practices, experience and knowledge from EER labelled regions can be shared among all European regions and cities and how (potential) entrepreneurs can profit most from available services that are on offer (a map)⁹ so that they can concentrate on their core business which is to develop their business idea.

⁹ <http://startupeuropemap.eu/map/>

1.4. TASKS, GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE AND TERMS OF COOPERATION

1.4.1 Tasks

To meet the objectives mentioned in section 1.3 and with reference to the context described in section 1.2, tenderers are asked to provide an offer that covers as a minimum the following tasks, which are not presented in chronological order or order of importance as both depend on the methodology and project plan the tenderer intends to propose:

- Mapping of the entrepreneurial ecosystems and strategies of the selected EER labelled regions. In this context mapping is to be understood as both the physical map that shows all services or initiatives offered in one ecosystem and the description of the links between these services, further actors and other ecosystems. The contractor will have to update – complete whenever necessary – and map the SWOT analyses and/or smart specialisation strategies and other entrepreneurial strategies of the selected EER labelled regions in order to identify possible complementarities and synergies; these findings shall be displayed in a matrix;
- Organise a workshop to validate the developed matrix;
- Deliver at least three in-depth mappings of regional (or city) ecosystems;
- Organise a workshop to validate the proposed in-depth mapping methodology;
- Elaborate and propose a set of minimum 5 strategic actions for practical inter-regional collaboration on those thematic areas which are of highest common interest to the EER labelled regions, based on the results of the previous tasks;
- Develop detailed action plans for the 5 strategic actions making use of the identified complementarities and synergies as described above;
- Facilitate peer-learning, exchange of best practice and communications among EER labelled regions and beyond.
- Develop guidebook for the regions interested in implementing similar strategic actions and inter-regional collaborations based on the mapping approach.

Tenderers are requested to structure the tasks in a detailed work-plan (for more guidance, please refer to section 1.6).

It is brought to the attention of the tenderers that the contract may be subject to a renewal (see section 1.8). All indications given below and tasks are also applicable to the renewal period if not explicitly excluded (see section 1.6).

1.4.2. Geographical scope of the task

The activities to be delivered must cover at least 4 EER labelled regions and cities across EU Member States selected by the tenderer (see section 1.6). In case of renewal and for the renewal period, the activities to be implemented must cover at least 5 EER labelled regions or cities, different from the initially selected 4 regions.

1.4.3. Cooperation with EER labelled regions

Ensuring cooperation with EER labelled regions is a **minimum requirement** of these tender specifications, as it is considered fundamental for the successful implementation of this service contract. The form and the details of this cooperation must be clearly explained in the submitted tenders.

For this purpose, tenderers must, as part of their tenders, present letters of cooperation with at least 4 EER labelled regions, showing the full support of these regions in collaborating with the tenderer in order to achieve the objectives of the service contract, should the latter be awarded to that tenderer. Such letters are not necessary for those Regions participating in the submitted tender as partners of the bidding consortium (joint tender).

As part of its tasks, the contractor will provide additional 5 letters of cooperation signed with the chosen 5 new EER labelled regions and cities suggested by the contractor for the renewal period (if contract would be renewed), not later than 6 months before the end of the on-going contract (as indicated in section 1.10).

To ensure the above mentioned full support of the regions, the tenderer is free to agree the terms of the cooperation support with the regions. Should that include an arrangement for covering costs which the regions incur in the course of this cooperation, such costs must be included in the global price offered by the tenderer.

Whatever form chosen, tenderers shall explain in their tenders the details and the effectiveness of the cooperation support that they wish to put in place.

1.5. INPUT BY THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

EASME is the contracting authority and therefore responsible for the budgetary, contractual and legal aspects of this contract. The day-to-day management and any technical content-related issue will be dealt with in close cooperation between EASME and DG GROW, unit H.1.

The contracting authority will provide – upon request of the contractor – any public document in its possession that may be considered useful for the successful implementation of the contract.

1.6. GENERAL GUIDANCE ON METHODOLOGY

Preparation of the tender

As part of the offer the tenderer must submit:

- the signed letters of cooperation (see section 1.4.3) with at least 4 EER Regions (unless Regions are part of the bidding consortium); and
- an initial proposal – duly justified - of possible common topics and interregional collaborations based on the existing SWOT analyses and/or smart specialisation strategies of the relevant regional authorities having committed to cooperate with the tenderer.

The above is a minimum requirement of the tender and failing to submit the letters and a preliminary proposal of possible collaborations will cause the exclusion of the offer from the evaluation process.

Work to be performed by the contractor

Tenderers must provide an offer addressing in detail the following Work Packages and tasks.

Unless explicitly excluded, in case of renewal the tasks below must be repeated in relation to the new 5 or more EER labelled regions, suggested by the contractor.

➤ Work Package I: Analytical work on the selected entrepreneurial ecosystems of the selected EER labelled regions and their strategies

Task 1.1 - Mapping of the entrepreneurial ecosystems and strategies of the 4 (or more) selected EER labelled regions.

The contractor will update (or, complete, whenever necessary¹⁰) and map the SWOT analyses existing in the selected EER regions as well as their smart specialisation strategies and relevant entrepreneurial strategies and other supporting documents pertaining to the related economic/regional/industrial parts of development strategies and programmes, including on digital transformation as well as learning from relevant EU funded projects (e.g. under H2020 or regional funding) of the selected EER labelled regions. By scrutinising the ecosystems and strategies, the contractor will identify possible complementarities and actionable synergies among the selected EER labelled

¹⁰ The SWOT analysis (as used for the EER applications) should not be older than two years (the reference date is the final date of submission of this tender).

regions. The analyses will also list the different business supporting services offered locally.

Methodology: This task will be mainly conducted through desk research with the active contribution of the selected regions. If using an established methodology, the tenderer will list/define existing mapping methodologies and justify its selection; in alternative, the tenderer will propose its own methodology.

Expected Output: A matrix¹¹ of complementarities and synergies

The matrix will contain gaps, complementarities and actionable synergies for the potential cooperation areas to emerge. The data will be clustered into thematic areas for strategic cooperation between two or more regions.

In case of renewal, an updated matrix will be delivered.

Task 1.2 – Organising a workshop to validate the developed matrix (see task 1.1)

The complete matrix will be subject to a validation process involving all selected EER labelled regions (as well as any other EER labelled region who might have expressed an interest) in an open workshop.

The validation will consist of the following steps and elements:

- Verify the findings;
- Cluster the gaps, complementarities and actionable synergies into thematic areas such as¹²:
 - i. Access to finance, including cross-border opportunities
 - ii. Skills gaps
 - iii. Employment and mobility, including soft landing packages for entrepreneurs going cross-border
 - iv. Cooperation and exchanges between entrepreneurs/incubators/ investors etc. actors in the entrepreneurial ecosystem

¹¹ The methodology to be used for setting up the matrix will be validated and approved during the inception phase by the Contracting Authority.

¹² This list is not exhaustive and serves only as an example; the thematic areas will depend on the result of the matrix building.

- v. Capacity building of regional/local authorities in ecosystem building including start- and scale-up advisory structures such as the EEN Scale-Up Advisors¹³
- vi. Globalisation – how can cooperating regions better succeed on the global market
- Agree on possible strategic collaboration themes

Expected Output: 1 validated matrix

In case of renewal, the updated matrix will need to be validated.

Task 2 - Delivering at least three in-depth mappings of regional (or city) ecosystems

This will involve the following sub-tasks:

Task 2.1 (please note that in case of renewal this task will not to be performed a second time):

Comparing different types of in-depth ecosystem mapping and proposing the most suitable mapping methodology for European ecosystems to ensure comparability of collected information and in view to:

- better understand the success factors of given ecosystems,
- better understand the ideal size of an ecosystem: total number of companies and number of companies active in dominant sectors, jobs created, level and type of investment received, what is the background of successful founders in the sector and if they had grown in the community, which dynamics of and links between the actors in the ecosystem, identification of the main actors and their contribution, assessment of the support structures and measures in place (e.g. quality and impact of incubators/accelerators as well as policy initiatives in place), availability of finance (types and size of the venture capital available, business angels community, banking etc.), availability and specialisation of mentors, regulatory and administrative barriers and policy solutions to foster scaling up.

The mapping method proposed shall also allow for benchmarking ecosystems¹⁴ over time to evaluate the impact of policy actions, to compare with advanced ecosystems

¹³ For the EEN see <http://een.ec.europa.eu/content/advice-support>

¹⁴ See CLUSTERS OBSERVATORY (https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/cluster/observatory/cluster-mapping-services/mapping-tool_en) and GEN (<https://genglobal.org/>)

globally indicating their relative strengths, weaknesses and solutions as well as to draw meta-level policy conclusions for the further development of these ecosystems. This may include issues such as: How does an individual ecosystem compare to other ecosystems around the world? What are its greatest strengths and challenges? What is the impact of local programmes, accelerators and incubators or individuals? What are the most important features of success for entrepreneurs in this sector and region? How can the current performance of the ecosystem be benchmarked to evaluate the effectiveness of future interventions?

Task 2.2 (please note that in case of renewal this task will not to be performed a second time):

Organising a workshop to validate the proposed in-depth mapping methodology.

After having selected the appropriate pre-existing in-depth mapping methodology, eventually including a further development of this methodology, a workshop will be organised by the contractor at which the methodology used for the mapping will be finalised and approved. This workshop will be attended by the contractor, EASME and the Commission, representatives from the EER labelled regions the tenderer cooperates with, as well as other persons competent in the subject matter upon invitation by the Contracting Authority.

NB: The workshop will be held in Brussels at Commission or EASME premises; travel and accommodation cost for contractor staff is to be borne by the former; travel and accommodation cost for other participants do not have to be covered by the contractor.

Tasks 2.1 and 2.2 must not be repeated in the renewal because the work to be done during the renewal will be based on the same agreed methodology.

Output: 1 validated in-depth mapping methodology

Task 2.3:

Production of at least three in-depth mappings. The findings of the mapping will feed into the finalising of the detailed action plan themes (Task 3.1) and final workshop (Task 4.4).

Output: at least three in-depth mappings elaborated

In case of renewal, at least three additional in-depth mappings will be elaborated.

➤ **Work Package II: Interlinking EER labelled regions**

Task 3.1 – Proposing strategic action themes

Based on the validated matrix and the results from WP I, a set of minimum 5 (and in case of renewal a minimum of 7 additional) strategic action themes for practical inter-regional collaboration will be developed for those thematic areas which have shown to be of highest common interest to the EER labelled regions. These strategic action themes will, as much as possible, take into account existing Single Market related barriers in order to identify challenges, solutions and added value of seeing cross-border cooperation.

Output: at least 5 strategic action themes for practical inter-regional collaboration

In case of renewal, at least 7 strategic action themes will be delivered.

Task 3.2 –Action Plans

Based on results of previous tasks, the contractor will develop a minimum of 6 (and in case of renewal a minimum of 8 additional) detailed action plans making use of the identified complementarities and synergies as described above.

The contractor will break the initial set of strategic action themes (see task 3.1 above) down into concrete action plans/road maps with short, medium and longer term actions. The initial implementation of these action plans will fall within the scope of this service contract. However, action plans must have a longer term perspective with the aim of continuing also after the end of the contract.

These plans have to be detailed to a level at which they can be considered as immediately operational and therefore ready for being implemented (including realistic and effective timeframes – the duration of which will have in most cases to go beyond the lifetime of this project –, milestones, deliverables and monitoring mechanisms) and will have to be – as far as possible - agreed with all key stakeholders. The plans will take into account political initiatives on which the implementation depends.

Output: A minimum of 6 detailed action plans

In case of renewal, at least 8 action plans have to be delivered.

Task 4 – Facilitating peer-learning and sharing of best practice among EER labelled regions.

The contractor will further strengthen the links between EER regions and cities and facilitate peer-learning and exchange of best practice. This will be done through the following:

Task 4.1

The contractor will develop schemes to facilitate the sharing of experience and knowledge as a peer-feedback loop (the proposal should include brief ideas on how the schemes will be identified);

Task 4.2.

The contractor will propose schemes to enable regions to use more experimental methods for their policy making, such as policy labs, regulatory sandboxes or interregional experimentation cooperation including funding (schemes);

Task 4.3.

The contractor will propose a scheme of pro-active dissemination of the learnings and findings of the whole action EER labelled regions to other European regions and cities.

Expected Output: Schemes designed to facilitate peer-learning and sharing of best practices (NB: these schemes need to be structured in a way which allows their replication in other EER labelled regions)

Task 5 – Presentation of results

Task 5.1

The contractor will organise a final workshop to present the outcomes and learnings from the contract. The participation to this workshop will be free of charge.

NB: The workshop will be held in Brussels at Commission or EASME premises or back to back with relevant events; travel and accommodation cost for contractor staff is to be

borne by the former; travel and accommodation cost for other participants do not have to be covered by the contractor.

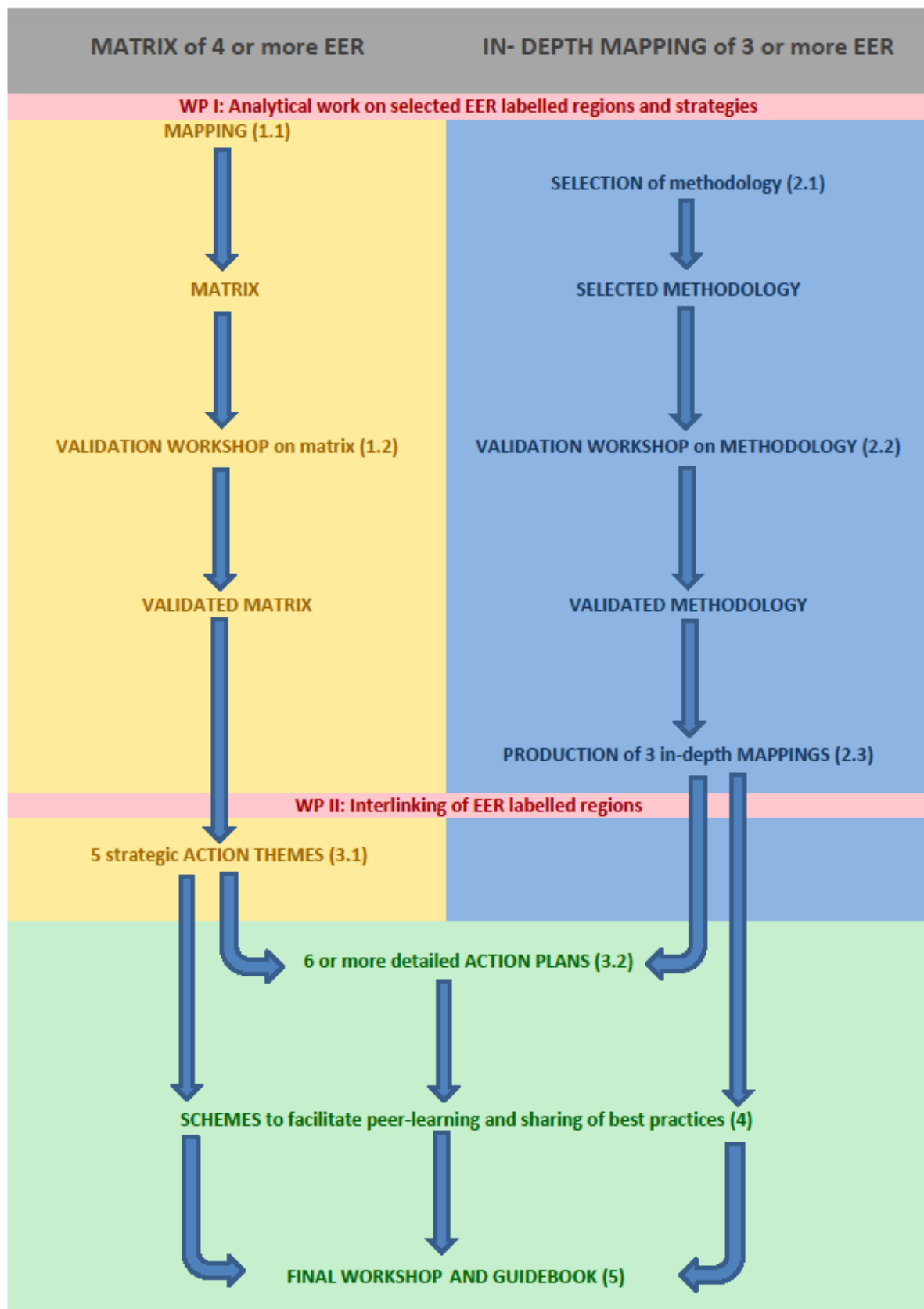
The contractor will be responsible and will have to cater for all aspects linked with the organisation of the workshop (its logistics and equipment in case it is not held at Commission premises, agenda, management of speakers, invitations, registration of participants, communication material, etc.).

Task 5.2

Based on the project findings the contractor will prepare a short guidebook for the regions interested in implementing similar strategic actions and inter-regional collaborations based on the mapping approach. The guidebook will be short (maximum 20 pages plus annexes, if necessary), written in English, in a simple language, readily usable for companies and handed to the Contracting Authority "ready to be published" (respecting the EC visual identity rules and including all publisher identifiers provided by the Contracting Authority). Tenderers will make a proposal on the structure in their offer.

Expected Output: A Workshop delivered and a guidebook.

In case of renewal, an additional final workshop and an updated guidebook will be provided.



Sustainability and cooperation with other relevant initiatives

Tenderers must keep in mind, while formulating their offers, the following guiding principles:

- Any evaluation and mapping of ecosystems has to be built upon what already exists and hence should be designed as an 'open innovation' framework, i.e. open to all regions and cities across Europe and managed by multiple stakeholders with a proven track record for delivering solutions.
- The tenderer will describe how the mapping and matrix developed can be made available to all European regions and cities, being EER labelled or not. Establishing cooperation with relevant intermediary organisations, such as the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN)¹⁵ or other partners should be considered.
- The tenderer will, where relevant, seek synergies with other projects and stakeholders related to the Start- and Scale-up initiative, such as Start-up Europe¹⁶, ESN,¹⁷ GEN¹⁸, Ideas from Europe¹⁹ etc. as well as relevant business organisations acting as observers to the SME Envoy Network.

1.7. PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY REQUIREMENTS

The following list shows the expected results in concise and approximate terms, so as to give a general idea of what will be requested from the contractor.

EXPECTED RESULTS (QUALITY OF DELIVERABLES)	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• INCREASED KNOWLEDGE OF EXISTING GAPS AND SYNERGIES AMONG EER LABELLED REGIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NUMBER OF IN-DEPTH MAPPINGS;• NUMBER AND DIVERSITY OF SOURCES USED IN THE DESK RESEARCH;• NUMBER OF AWARENESS RAISING EVENTS DELIVERED.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• INCREASED UNDERSTANDING OF THE SUCCESS FACTORS OF AN ECOSYSTEM AND IN TURN INCREASED EFFECTIVENESS OF	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NUMBER OF EVENTS TO SHARE GOOD PRACTICES AND NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS;• NUMBER OF PEER LEARNINGS ORGANISED AND NUMBER OF

¹⁵ See: www.een.ec.europa.eu

¹⁶ <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/policies/startup-europe>

¹⁷ <http://europeanstartupnetwork.eu/>

¹⁸ www.genglobal.org

¹⁹ <https://ideasfrom.eu/>

REGIONAL ECOSYSTEMS	<p>PARTICIPANTS;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PERCENTAGE OF REGIONS AGREEING TO RECEIVE FURTHER NEWS.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EFFECTIVE EXPLOITATION OF EXISTING SYNERGIES AND COMPLEMENTARITIES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NUMBER OF ACTIONS PLANS DELIVERED; • NUMBER OF REGIONS CLUSTERED PER THEMATIC AREA; • NUMBER OF REGIONS INVOLVED/INTERESTED IN THE ACTION PLANS; • RATIO BETWEEN THE NUMBER OF STRATEGIC COLLABORATIONS IDENTIFIED AND THE NUMBER OF DEVELOPED ACTION PLANS; • NUMBER OF JOINT INITIATIVES UNDERTAKEN BY REGIONS; • NUMBER OF NEW SERVICES AND INFORMATION SOURCES OFFERED TO ENTREPRENEURS AS A RESULT OF AN ACTION PLAN.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION WITH REGIONAL AUTHORITIES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NUMBER OF REGIONS ACTIVELY CONTRIBUTING AND IMPLEMENTING ACTION PLANS; • NUMBER OF PEER-FEEDBACKS RECEIVED; • NUMBER OF PRACTICES SHARED AMONG REGIONS; • NUMBER OF NEW METHODS FOR POLICY MAKING (I.E. POLICY LABS, REGULATORY SANDBOXES, ETC.) INTRODUCED WITHIN EACH REGION; • NUMBER OF REGIONS COMMITTING TO IMPLEMENT ACTION PLANS AFTER THE END OF THE PROJECT.

1.8. STARTING DATE OF THE CONTRACT AND DURATION

It is expected that the contract is signed approximately in the 3rd quarter of 2018.

The contract shall enter into force on the date on which it is signed by the last contracting party.

The duration must not exceed 18 months following the signature by the last contracting party.

Work will follow the indicative timetable detailed below.

The contract may be renewed once for 18 months, depending on the future needs and on the budget availability. In case of renewal, at least 5 new EER labelled regions will be involved in the project. The renewal will cover the same tasks as described above, **except for** Task 2.1 and 2.2 which will be obsolete for the renewal. More details on the tasks and methodology for the renewal period are given in section 1.6.

1.9. VOLUME OF THE MARKET

The estimated maximum amount for the execution of all tasks referred to in this call for tender is EUR 610.000 including all charges and expenses, and excluding any renewal. No contract offer above this amount will be considered.

The estimated maximum amount for the possible renewal is EUR 700.000 including all charges and expenses. No price quotation above this amount will be considered.

1.10. PLANNING, OUTPUTS AND DELIVERABLES

The contractor must provide the required reports and documents in accordance with the conditions of the draft service contract. When requested in the contract the reports and documents will accompany the invoices for payments.

Each report or document will be submitted in electronic format compatible with Word or Excel or in other formats previously agreed with the EASME and must be in English.

The contractor must ensure that all reports under the contract are drafted in professional/high-quality English using a clear, concise, understandable, user-friendly language. Deliverables for publication (online and/or printed) will be of the highest linguistic quality and will have been edited and proofread by a native speaker or equivalent.

All reports should be consistent in style (headings, margins, citations, bibliography, etc.) and contain a short Executive Summary. Once adapted according to input from EASME and the Commission, the reports should be delivered in publishable quality, ready for exploitation. It will remain contractor's responsibility to ensure a proper application of quotation and the verification of improper re-use of existing material.

Together with the deliverables, the contractor shall also hand over all source material and documentation on a USB stick or other equivalent digital medium.

List and description of deliverables

Throughout the project implementation, the contractor shall regularly report to the Contracting Authority.

Apart from the Interim and Final Technical Reports described in sections 1.10.1 and 1.10.2 below (which must also be provided with the same modalities in case of renewal), the contractor must provide:

- **An inception report**, detailing the approach and first working assumptions (including a more detailed methodology for setting-up the matrix, an overall and more detailed work plan). The methodology for the matrix will be agreed between the contractor and EASME/Commission. In case of renewal, the inception report for the renewal will only contain the work plan for the period of the renewal.
- **Minutes of all meetings held with EASME** (and Commission, where applicable), namely: the inception meeting, two coordination meetings and the final project meeting, including presentation material, to be submitted within 5 working days after the meeting is held. Minutes shall be approved by the Contracting Authority. In case of renewal, minutes of all meetings held with the Contracting Authority during the renewed period must also be provided following the same modalities.
- **The following deliverables (unless differently instructed the same deliverables are expected to be delivered for the renewed period):**

WP1

- **A matrix of complementarities and synergies; in case of renewal, an updated matrix of complementarities and synergies;**
- **At least 3 in-depth mappings;**
- **2 workshops (preferably back to back with established conferences dealing with similar subjects); in case of renewal, only 1 additional workshop during the renewal, since the methodology for in-depth mapping (task 2.1) has already been agreed on and validated in a workshop (task 2.2);**
- **1 validated methodology for in-depth mapping (not applicable for the renewal);**
- **1 validated matrix; in case of renewal, an updated validated matrix;**

WP2

- **At least 5 strategic action themes for interregional collaboration; in case of renewal, at least 7 new strategic action themes for interregional collaboration;**
- **A minimum of 6 action plans; in case of renewal, a minimum of 8 additional action plans;**
- **Schemes to facilitate peer-learning and sharing of best practices;**
- **Final workshop (preferably back to back with established conferences dealing with similar subjects);**
- **Guidebook; in case of renewal, an updated guidebook.**

Meetings

The contractor will participate in at least the following four meetings with EASME/ the Commission: 1 inception meeting; 2 coordination meetings; 1 final project meeting. The meetings will be held in Brussels and organised by the Contracting Authority at EASME's premises (or alternatively if appropriate at other premises of the European Commission). In case of renewal, during the renewed period, at least 3 meetings (2 coordination meetings and 1 final project meeting) will be held of which one will be held in Brussels and organised by the Contracting Authority at EASME's premises (or alternatively if appropriate at other premises of the European Commission).

The above meetings may be replaced by video/teleconferencing upon explicit agreement with the Contracting Authority. Video/teleconferencing are also to be envisaged in addition to the above meetings on the basis of specific needs and the progress of the work.

In addition to the above, ad-hoc meetings may be convened by both contractual parties whenever deemed useful or necessary.

1.10.1. Intermediate outputs and deliverables

The interim technical report shall include at least the following:

- Aims and objectives of the activities performed;
- Description of the work performed; results, outcome and impact;
- List of "interim" deliverables (those developed within the period covered by the interim report);
- Changes/delays with respect to the original plans; justification for changes and measures taken to compensate for any possible delay in the schedule;
- Tasks to be performed in the remaining contract period with a corresponding timeline;
- Issues encountered and how they have been solved;
- Awaited risks and mitigating measures.

The interim technical report shall not exceed 30 pages, annexes excluded.

EASME will comment on the report within **30 calendar days**.

The same applies to the renewed period.

1.10.2 Final outputs and deliverables

Building on the interim technical report (see 1.10.1), the final technical report shall include all the elements specified in the sections 1.10 "Planning, outputs and deliverables" (see also Section 2.1.1. "Final report") and elaborate at least on the following:

- Aims and objectives of the activities performed;
- Description of the work performed; results, outcome and impact;
- List of final deliverables (the final version of all deliverables actually delivered during the implementation of the project);
- Issues encountered and how they have been solved;
- Evaluation of the performed work (on the basis of the performance indicators);
- Suggestions for future initiatives and follow-up actions. The contractor must ensure that the recommendations are clear, concise and operational.

The final technical report shall not exceed 30 pages, annexes excluded.

EASME will comment on the report within **30 calendar days**.

The same applies to the renewed period.

Indicative Timetable	Meetings	Actions/Deliverables
Reference date		Date of signature of the contract
Reference date + 2 weeks	1° meeting with the European Commission / EASME: Inception meeting	The inception meeting will ensure that the contractor has a clear understanding of the terms of the contract and the implementation modalities. The methodology for setting up the matrix will be discussed and approved (unless a request for revision is made by EASME/European Commission).
Month A (= ref. date + 5		Submission of the 1 st draft interim

months)		report
Month A + 1 week	2° meeting with the European Commission / EASME: Coordination meeting	The aim is to discuss the draft interim report and to check that the planned work has been performed on schedule and to agree – if needed – on adjustments to be made to the remaining work
Month A + 4 weeks		Submission of the 1 st interim report Submission of the invoice for 1 st interim payment Submission of minutes of the 2° meeting
Month B (= ref. date + 11 months)		Submission of the 2 nd draft interim report
Month B + 1 week	3° meeting with the European Commission / EASME: Coordination meeting	The aim is to discuss the draft interim report and to check that the planned work has been performed on schedule and to agree – if needed – on adjustments to be made to the remaining work
Month B + 4 weeks		Submission of the 2 nd interim report Submission of the invoice for 2 nd interim payment Submission of minutes of the 3° meeting
Month B + 4 weeks		If the Contracting Authority confirms its intention to renew the contract, the contractor will submit the additional letters of cooperation with a new set of at least 5 regions or cities and a proposal of possible common topics and interregional collaborations.
Month C (= ref. date + 17 months)		Submission of the draft final report for comments
Month C + 2 weeks	Final project meeting with the European Commission / EASME	The aim is to discuss the draft final report and to take stock of the work done and to be done to finalise all deliverables and to evaluate the

		contractor's performance (see performance indicators, Section 1.7)
Month C + 3 weeks		Submission of minutes of the final meeting Finalisation of all deliverables
Reference date + 18 months		Submission of the final version of the final report and deliverables Submission of invoice for balance payment

1.11. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

The provisions on the intellectual property rights related to the services/studies to be provided, are in the draft service contract (Annex 1 to these tender specifications).

If the results are not fully created for the purpose of the contract this has to be clearly pointed out in the tender. Information has to be provided about the scope of pre-existing materials, their source and when and how the rights to these materials have been or will be acquired.

Plagiarism in the tender

In the tender all quotations or information originating from other sources and to which third parties may claim rights have to be clearly marked (source publication including date and place, creator, number, full title etc.) in a way allowing easy identification.

2. CONTENT, STRUCTURE AND GRAPHIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE DELIVERABLES

The contractor must deliver all reports as indicated below.

2.1. CONTENT

2.1.1. Guidebook

The guidebook must include:

1. an abstract of no more than 200 words and an executive summary of maximum 6 pages, in English;
2. specific identifiers – whenever appropriate - which must be incorporated on the cover page provided by the Contracting Authority;
3. the following disclaimer:

“The information and views set out in this guidebook are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of EASME or of the Commission. Neither EASME, nor the Commission can guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this guidebook. Neither EASME, nor the Commission or any person acting on their behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein.”

2.1.2. Publishable executive summary

The publishable executive summary must be provided in English and must include:

1. specific identifiers which must be incorporated on the cover page provided by the Contracting Authority;
2. the following disclaimer:

“The information and views set out in this summary are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of EASME or of the Commission. Neither EASME, nor the Commission can guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this study. Neither EASME, nor the Commission or any person acting on their behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein.”

2.1.3. Requirements for publication on Internet

EASME is committed to making online information as accessible as possible to the largest possible number of users including those with visual, auditory, cognitive or physical disabilities, and those not having the latest technologies. EASME supports the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 of the W3C.

For full details on the Commission policy on accessibility for information providers, see:

http://ec.europa.eu/ipg/standards/accessibility/index_en.htm

For the publishable version of the guidebook, abstract and executive summary, the contractor must respect the W3C guidelines for accessible pdf documents as provided at: <http://www.w3.org/WAI/>.

2.1.4. Structure

Not applicable

2.1.5. Graphic requirements

The contractor must deliver the guidebook in full compliance with the corporate visual identity of the European Commission, by applying the graphic rules set out in the European Commission's Visual Identity Manual, including its logo. The graphic rules, the Manual and further information are available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/communication/services/visual_identity/index_en.htm

3. INFORMATION ON TENDERING


3.1. PARTICIPATION

Participation in this procurement procedure is open on equal terms to all natural and legal persons coming within the scope of the Treaties, as well as to international organisations.

It is also open to all natural and legal persons established in a third country which has a special agreement with the Union in the field of public procurement on the conditions laid down in that agreement²⁰.

States covered by the Public Procurement Agreement concluded within the World Trade Organisation are not included in this call for tenders as the Executive Agencies are not signatories of the Agreement.

In the case of a joint tender (see section 3.4), each member of the group must have access to this procurement procedure.

 For British candidates or tenderers:

Please be aware that after the UK's withdrawal from the EU, the rules of access to EU procurement procedures of economic operators established in third countries will apply to candidates or tenderers from the UK depending on the outcome of the negotiations. In case such access is not provided by legal provisions in force candidates or tenderers from the UK could be rejected from the procurement procedure.

3.2. CONTRACTUAL CONDITIONS

The tenderer should bear in mind the provisions of the draft contract which specifies the rights and obligations of the contractor, particularly those on payments, performance of the contract, confidentiality, and checks and audits.

²⁰ Third countries with a special agreement with the Union in the field of public procurement are: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYRoM), Montenegro, Serbia; Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

3.3. COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE LAW

The tender must comply with applicable environmental, social and labour law obligations established by Union law, national legislation, collective agreements or the international environmental, social and labour conventions listed in Annex X to Directive 2014/24/EU²¹.

Information about the environmental policy of EASME is provided in Annex 9 to these specifications.

3.4. JOINT TENDERS

A joint tender is a situation where a tender is submitted by a group of economic operators (natural or legal persons). Joint tenders may include subcontractors in addition to the members of the group.

In case of joint tender, all members of the group assume joint and several liabilities towards the Contracting Authority for the performance of the contract as a whole, i.e. both financial and operational liability. Nevertheless, tenderers must designate one of the economic operators as a single point of contact ("the leader") for the Contracting Authority for administrative and financial aspects as well as operational management of the contract.

After the award, the Contracting Authority will sign the contract either with all members of the group, or with the leader on behalf of all members of the group, authorised by the other members via powers of attorney.

3.5. SUB-CONTRACTING

Subcontracting is the situation where a contract has been or is to be established between the contracting authority and a contractor/tenderer only and where the contractor or tenderer, in order to carry out that contract, enters into legal commitments with other entities for performing parts of the contract. The contracting authority has no direct legal commitment with the subcontractor(s). In practice, any third party involved in the contract implementation which has no legal link with the contracting authority but with the contractor will be considered as subcontractor (e.g. any other company which does not participate in the contract execution but provides financial capacity).

21 Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC (OJ L 94, 28.3.2014, p. 65).

Subcontracting is permitted but the contractor will retain full liability towards the contracting authority for performance of the contract as a whole. The rules of access to EU public procurement (Section 3.1) do not apply to subcontractors. Tenderers are required to identify all subcontractors whose share of the contract is above 20% or whose capacity is necessary to fulfil the selection criteria.

3.6. COSTS

Tenderers themselves will bear the costs of drawing up their tenders and EASME will not be liable to pay any compensation if a tender is rejected or if it decides not to select any tender.

3.7. CONTENT OF THE TENDER

- The tenders must be presented as follows:
- Part A: Identification of the tenderer (see Section 3.8)
- Part B: Non-exclusion (see Section 4.2)
- Part C: Selection (see Section 4.3)
- Part D: Technical offer (including Annex 6)

The technical offer must cover all aspects and tasks required in the tender specifications and provide all the information needed to apply the award criteria. Offers deviating from the requirements or not covering all minimum requirements may be rejected on the basis of non-compliance with the tender specifications and will not be evaluated.

For the appraisal, the written submission shall include a clear and detailed description of the organisation, technical and human resources and methodology proposed. The tenderers will provide **in their technical offer** a practical and detailed description of the technical and human resources and services proposed to achieve the objectives and results set out in Sections 1.3, 1.4 and 1.7 above.

The technical offer must also cover the possible renewal period. The offer for the renewal period will be taken into consideration when evaluating the quality of the submitted tender under Section 4.4 Award criteria.

- Part E: Financial offer (Annex 7)

The price for the tender must be quoted in euro. Tenderers from countries outside the euro zone have to quote their prices in euro. The price quoted may not be revised in line with exchange rate movements. It is for the tenderer to bear the risks or the benefits deriving from any variation.

Prices must be quoted free of all duties, taxes and other charges, including VAT, as the European Union is exempt from such charges under Articles 3 and 4 of the Protocol on the privileges and immunities of the European Union. The amount of VAT may be shown separately.

The quoted price must be a fixed amount which includes all charges (including travel and subsistence). Travel and subsistence expenses are not refundable separately.

A price must also be quoted to cover the tasks for the possible renewal (see above sections 1.8 and 1.9). The price quoted for the optional renewal of the contract will be taken into consideration when calculating the ranking of tenders (see Section 4.5).

3.8. IDENTIFICATION OF THE TENDERER

The tender must include a cover letter (letter of submission of tender - Annex 2) presenting the name of the tenderer (including all entities in case of joint offer) and identified subcontractors if applicable, and the name of the single point of contact (leader) in relation to this procedure.

In case of joint tender, the cover letter must be signed either by an authorised representative for each member, or by the leader authorised by the other members with powers of attorney (Annex 4). The signed powers of attorney must be included in the tender as well. Subcontractors that are identified in the tender must provide a letter of intent (Annex 5) signed by an authorised representative stating their willingness to provide the services presented in the tender and in line with the present tender specifications.

The tenderer (and each member of the group in case of joint tender) must declare whether it is a Small or Medium Size Enterprise in accordance with Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC²². This information is used for statistical purposes only.

In the course of this tender procedure the EU Validation Services may contact tenderers via the *Participant Register* and ask for supporting documents with respect to the legal existence and status. Please note that a request for supporting documents in no way implies that the tenderer has been successful.

Nevertheless, the Contracting Authority may ask, in the course of the procedure, for complementary supporting documents, other than those requested by the EU Validation Services. Such complementary documents may be asked so as to complete the checks on the

²² OJ L 124/36, 20.5.2003

compliance of successful entities with the selection criteria and/or to ensure that the entity is not in one of the exclusion situations referred to in this call for tenders.

4. EVALUATION AND AWARD

4.1. EVALUATION STEPS

The evaluation is based solely on the information provided in the submitted tender. It involves the following:

- ✓ Verification of non-exclusion of tenderers on the basis of the exclusion criteria
- ✓ Selection of tenderers on the basis of selection criteria
- ✓ Verification of compliance with the minimum requirements set out in these tender specifications
- ✓ Evaluation of tenders on the basis of the award criteria

The Contracting Authority may reject abnormally low tenders, in particular if it established that the tenderer or a subcontractor does not comply with applicable obligations in the fields of environmental, social and labour law.

The Contracting Authority will assess these criteria in no particular order. The successful tenderer must pass all criteria to be awarded the contract.

4.2. VERIFICATION OF NON-EXCLUSION

All tenderers must provide a declaration on honour (Annex 3), signed and dated by an authorised representative, stating that they are not in one of the situations of exclusion listed in that declaration on honour.

In case of joint tender, each member of the group must provide a declaration on honour signed by an authorised representative.

In case of subcontracting, all subcontractors whose share of the contract is above 20 % or whose capacity is necessary to fulfil the selection criteria must provide a declaration on honour signed by an authorised representative.

The Contracting Authority reserves the right to verify whether the successful tenderer is in one of the situations of exclusion by requiring the supporting documents listed in the declaration of honour.

The successful tenderer must provide the documents mentioned as supporting evidence in the declaration on honour before signature of the contract and within a deadline given by the contracting authority. This requirement applies to each member of the group in case of joint tender and to all subcontractors whose share of the contract is above 20 % or whose capacity is necessary to fulfil the selection criteria.

The obligation to submit supporting evidence does not apply to international organisations.

A tenderer (or a member of the group in case of joint tender, or a subcontractor) is not required to submit the documentary evidence if it has already been submitted for another procurement procedure and provided the documents were issued not more than one year before the date of their request by the contracting authority and are still valid at that date. In such cases, the tenderer must declare on its honour that the documentary evidence has already been provided in a previous procurement procedure, indicate the reference of the procedure and confirm that that there has been no change in its situation.

A tenderer (or a member of the group in case of joint tender, or a subcontractor) is not required to submit a specific document if the Contracting Authority can access the document in question on a national database free of charge.

4.3. SELECTION CRITERIA

Tenderers must prove their economic, financial, technical and professional capacity to carry out the work subject to this procurement procedure.

The tenderer may rely on the capacities of other entities, regardless of the legal nature of the links which it has with them. It must in that case prove to the Contracting Authority that it will have at its disposal the resources necessary for performance of the contract, for example by producing an undertaking on the part of those entities to place those resources at its disposal.

The tender must include the proportion of the contract that the tenderer intends to subcontract.

4.3.1. Declaration and evidence

The tenderers (and each member of the group in case of joint tender) and subcontractors whose capacity is necessary to fulfil the selection criteria must provide the declaration on honour (see Annex 3), signed and dated by an authorised representative, stating that they fulfil the selection criteria applicable to them. In case of joint tender or subcontracting, the criteria applicable to the tenderer as a whole will be verified by combining the various declarations for a consolidated assessment.

This declaration is part of the declaration used for exclusion criteria (see Section 4.2) so only one declaration covering both aspects should be provided by each concerned entity.

The Contracting Authority will **evaluate selection criteria on the basis of the declarations on honour (Annex 3), the information included in the tables in Annex 2.1 and Annex 2.2, fully completed, and the evidence, where requested.** Nevertheless, it **reserves the right to require (additional) evidence** of the financial and economic and technical and professional capacity of the tenderers **at any time during the procurement procedure and contract performance.** In such case the tenderer must provide the requested evidence without delay. The Contracting Authority may reject the tender if the requested evidence is not provided in due time.

After contract award, the successful tenderer will be required to provide the necessary evidence before signature of the contract and within a deadline given by the Contracting Authority. This requirement applies to each member of the group in case of joint tender and to subcontractors whose capacity is necessary to fulfil the selection criteria.

A tenderer (or a member of the group in case of joint tender, or a subcontractor) is not required to submit the documentary evidence if it has already been submitted for another procurement procedure and provided the documents were issued not more than one year before the date of their request by the contracting authority and are still valid at that date. In such cases, the tenderer must declare on its honour that the documentary evidence has already been provided in a previous procurement procedure, indicate the reference of the procedure and confirm that that there has been no change in its situation.

A tenderer (or a member of the group in case of joint tender, or a subcontractor) is not required to submit a specific document if the contracting authority can access the document in question on a national database free of charge.

4.3.2. Legal and regulatory capacity

Not applicable

4.3.3. Economic and financial capacity criteria

The tenderer must have the necessary economic and financial capacity to perform this contract until its end. In order to prove its capacity, the tenderer must comply with the following criterion:

Its average annual turnover for the last two years for which the accounts have been closed²³ shall amount to at least EUR 300.000. This criterion applies to the tenderer as a whole, i.e. the combined capacity of all members of a group in case of a joint tender, and subcontractors whose capacity is necessary to fulfil this criterion.

To this effect, **tenderers are requested to provide in their tender Annex 2.1** of these tender specifications completed with this information.

The following evidence will also be provided with the tender:

- ✓ Copy of the Profit and Loss accounts for the last two years for which the accounts have been closed from each concerned legal entity;

Failing that,

- ✓ Appropriate statements from banks;

or

- ✓ Evidence of professional risk indemnity insurance.

If, for some exceptional reason which the Contracting Authority considers justified, a tenderer is unable to provide one or other of the above documents, it may prove its economic and financial capacity by any other document which the Contracting Authority considers appropriate. In any case, the Contracting Authority must at least be notified of the exceptional reason and its justification. EASME reserves the right to request any other document enabling it to verify the tenderer's economic and financial capacity.

²³ In the case of joint tender or identified sub-contractors, the turnover must be provided for the same two years for all the partners/subcontractors.

4.3.4. Technical and professional capacity criteria and evidence

Tenders must provide in their tender the table in Annex 2.2 of these tender specifications, exhaustively completed with all the necessary information.

The evidence mentioned below must be provided only on request, except evidences A4 and CVs of the team (evidences B1, B2, B3 and B4) that should be a part of the submitted offer.

A. Criteria relating to tenderers:

Tenderers (in case of a joint tender the combined capacity of all members of the group and identified subcontractors) must comply with the criteria listed below.

The project references indicated below consist in a list of relevant services provided in the past years, with the sums, dates and clients, public or private, accompanied by statements issued by the clients.

Criteria	Evidence
✓ <i>Criterion A1: The tenderer must prove experience in analysing policy initiatives on European and/or national and/or regional level.</i>	✓ Evidence A1: The tenderer must provide evidence for at least two completed projects delivered in the last five years demonstrating the required experience.
✓ <i>Criterion A2: The tenderer must prove experience in setting up (policy) action plans in the field of economic policies on European and/or national and/or regional level.</i>	✓ Evidence A2: The tenderer must provide evidence for at least two completed projects delivered in the last five years demonstrating the required experience.
✓ <i>Criterion A3: The tenderer must prove experience in the mapping of economic ecosystems.</i>	✓ Evidence A3: The tenderer must provide evidence for at least two completed projects delivered in the last five years demonstrating the required experience.
✓ <i>Criterion A4: The tenderer must demonstrate the capacity of mobilising support of at least 4 EER labelled regions</i>	✓ Evidence A4: Signed letters of cooperation with, and/or inclusion as partners of, at least 4 EER labelled regions.

<i>engaging in collaborating with the tenderer in the implementation of the service contract, should this be awarded.</i>	
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Any tenderer with a professional conflict of interest will be rejected on the basis not fulfilling selection criteria for professional capacity.

B. Criteria relating to the team delivering the service:

The team delivering the service should include, as a minimum, the following profiles. In addition to the minimum profiles, a tenderer may add other profiles to the team. It should also explain the role, the involvement concerning the task requested by this call for tenders.

Evidence will consist in CVs of the team responsible to deliver the service. Each CV should indicate the intended function in the delivery of the service.

Criteria	Evidence
✓ <i>Criterion B1 - Project Manager: At least 5 years' experience in project management (including overseeing project delivery, quality control of delivered service and conflict resolution experience) of projects of a size of at least € 100 000, with experience in management of a team of at least 3 people.</i>	✓ Evidence B1 – CV
✓ <i>Criterion B2 - Language quality controller: at least 1 member of the team should demonstrate a native level English language proficiency or at least C1 level in the Common European Framework for Reference for Languages²⁴ and should have proven experience in drafting reports and communication and dissemination material in English.</i>	✓ Evidence B2 – CV, a language certificate, mother tongue or past relevant experience.
✓ <i>Criterion B3 – At least one expert in providing advice on</i>	✓ Evidence B3 – CV or past relevant

²⁴ Level envisaged by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment, abbreviated as CEFR. The CEFR describes language ability on a scale of levels from A1 for beginners up to C2 for those who have mastered a language. Information on the CEFR can be found on the Council of Europe website: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Cadre1_en.asp Self-assessment grids can be found at <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/resources/european-language-levels-cefr>

<i>entrepreneurship and business environment and involved in drafting analytical documents, reports and/or policy guidelines: higher education degree and at least 3 years' professional experience.</i>	experience
✓ <i>Criterion B4 – At least one expert in mapping ecosystems: at least 3 years of professional experience in mapping ecosystems.</i>	✓ Evidence B4 – CV or past relevant experience

4.4. AWARD CRITERIA

The contract will be awarded based on the most economically advantageous tender, according to the 'best price-quality ratio' award method. The quality of the tender will be evaluated based on the following criteria. The maximum total quality score is 100 points.

Tenders that receive less than 60% of the maximum possible mark for the whole quality evaluation or less than 50% for one of the quality criteria will be eliminated and their final score will not be calculated. Tenders that do not reach the minimum quality levels will be rejected and will not be ranked.

Criteria	Points	
<p>Overall quality and relevance of the offer</p> <p><i>This criterion will assess, amongst others,</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The quality and relevance of the proposed preliminary matrix and the relevance and number of regions actively involved;</i> - <i>the extent to which the offer is addressing the overall objectives of the call;</i> - <i>the levels of overall coherence and completeness of the work plan (including that for the renewal period);</i> - <i>the roles and responsibilities of the proposed team and the clarity of the allocation of tasks (including subcontracting, if applicable): global allocation of time and resources to the project and to each task,</i> 	40 points	

<p><i>and whether this allocation is adequate for the work to be performed (including those for the renewal period);</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>the effectiveness of the proposed quality control mechanisms and risk mitigating measures.</i> 		
<p>Quality and effectiveness of the methodology developed for WP 1 (for the matrix and in-depth mappings).</p> <p><i>This criterion will assess, amongst others,</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>the proposed methodology to review/complete the SWOT analysis and/or smart specialisation strategies and other strategic documents and to develop the matrix and the in-depth mapping;</i> - <i>the feasibility of the chosen approach to achieve the expected results.</i> 	30 points	
<p>Quality and effectiveness of the methodology developed for WP2.</p> <p><i>This criterion will assess, amongst others,</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>the clarity and completeness of the proposed methodology to ensure high quality strategic actions;</i> - <i>the proposed methodology to draft realistic and viable action plans based on these strategic actions;</i> - <i>the feasibility of the chosen approach to achieve the expected results;</i> - <i>how modern and potentially effective is the proposed way;</i> - <i>the extent to which the proposed approach is adjusted to the needs of the target audience (regions);</i> - <i>proposed methodology for sharing and peer-learning experimentation methods and dissemination.</i> 	30 points	
	100	

4.5. RANKING OF TENDERS

The contract will be awarded to the most economically advantageous tender, i.e. the tender offering the best price-quality ratio determined in accordance with the formula below. A weight of 80/20 is given to quality and price.

The price used for the ranking of the tenders is the price quoted under "**C. Total price used for the assessment of the financial offer**" in Annex 7 Price and breakdown of costs.

score for tender X	=	$\frac{\text{cheapest price}}{\text{price of tender X}}$	*	100	*	price weighting (20 %)	+	total quality score (out of 100) for all award criteria of tender X	*	quality criteria weighting (80 %)
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The tender ranked first after applying the formula will be awarded the contract.

4.6. INFORMATION TO TENDERERS ON THE FINAL EVALUATION

EASME will inform tenderers of decisions reached concerning the award of the contract, including the grounds for any decision not to award a contract or to recommence the procedure.

EASME will inform all rejected tenderers of the reasons for their rejection and all tenderers submitting an admissible tender of the characteristics and relative advantages of the selected tender and the name of the successful tenderer.

However, certain information may be withheld where its release would impede law enforcement or otherwise be contrary to the public interest, or would prejudice the legitimate commercial interests of economic operators, public or private, or might prejudice fair competition between them.

5. ANNEXES

The following documents are annexed to these specifications and form an integral part of them:

Annex 1: Draft contract (for information)

Annex 2: Letter of submission of tender (to be filled in and signed by the tenderer)

➤ Annex 2.1. – Statement of turnover

➤ Annex 2.2. – Technical capacity

Annex 3: Declaration on honour (exclusion and selection criteria)

Annex 4: Power of attorney

Annex 5: Letter of intent for sub-contractors

Annex 6: Technical tender form

Annex 7: Financial offer (price and breakdown of costs)

Annex 8: Checklist for Submission

Annex 9: EASME's Environmental Policy