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DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
REGIONAL AND URBAN POLICY
Administrative Capacity Building and Programme Implementation II

European Commission
Call for tenders 2020CE160AT015

**Promote stakeholders' involvement in border
obstacles resolution**

Open procedure

TENDER SPECIFICATIONS
Part 2: Technical specifications

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1. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

a) Background:

Around one third of the EU's population lives in cross-border areas¹. Despite continued European integration, political borders still represent important obstacles to cooperation. Proximity to a border can however also provide opportunities for increased cooperation and economic development, i.e. by creating functional cross-border regions.

The 2014-2020 programming exercise for Interreg programmes and the Commission's 'Cross-Border Review', have targeted the overcoming of legal and administrative obstacles in border regions. One pillar of the 'Cross-Border Review' notably included a study² listing more than 200 critical border obstacles together with examples of how these obstacles have been addressed on certain borders.

As a result in 2017, the Commission identified ten priority actions in its Communication 2017/534 "Boosting growth and cohesion in EU border regions"³, highlighting ways in which the EU and its Member States can reduce the obstacles to cross-border cooperation and promote the pooling of services along the EU's internal borders.

In order to facilitate the implementation of these 10 actions, a "Border Focal Point" was established in 2017 in the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO). One of its functions is notably to share experiences and good practices effectively and widely with relevant stakeholders.

Therefore, in 2018, an online professional network on "Boosting EU border regions" has been created using the Futurium platform developed by the Directorate General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CNECT) of the Commission. The main objective of this network is to create a stronger border community at European level by providing an arena to discuss and present border issues and solutions. The "Border Focal Point" also uses this platform to engage fully with border stakeholders, and promote events organised by the European Commission.

b) Objective:

The aim of the present contract is to assist unit D2 of DG REGIO and the "Border Focal Point" in engaging more widely with border stakeholders. It procures the help from a communication expert/team to manage and develop the communication activities of the Border Focal Point, particularly by using the "Boosting EU Border Regions" platform hosted on Futurium⁴, as well as to promote border stakeholders' involvement in the platform via social media and other communication activities.

¹ Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament "Boosting growth and cohesion in EU border regions" – COM(2017) 534 final, 20.09.2017

² "Easing legal and administrative obstacles in EU border regions", https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/studies/pdf/obstacle_border/final_report.pdf

³ Ibid.

⁴ Futurium is a platform dedicated to Europeans discussing EU policies. <https://ec.europa.eu/futurium/en/your-voice-our-future>

2. DETAILED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PURCHASE

a) Specific objectives:

The overall objective shall be achieved through the following four specific objectives:

1. To manage the general communication activities of the “Border Focal Point” in coordination with unit D2, including promotion on social media, in newsletters and events. For this the contractor is required to suggest a communication strategy.
2. To maintain the daily management of the “Boosting EU border regions” platform through moderation of content and publication of relevant items (news, events, good practises, library items etc.).
3. To identify external border stakeholders (*e.g.* public administrations, cross-border structures, companies, research institutions and NGO) involved in cross-border interactions and encourage them to engage in the “Boosting EU border regions” platform discussions, as well as in other events organised within the context of the “Border Focal Point”.
4. - To monitor progress on the “Boosting EU border regions” platform’s outreach and measure the increased awareness of the “Border Focal Point” activities.

b) Tasks

Task 1: Manage the communication activities of the “Border Focal Point”

- Tenderers should propose a communication strategy in order to manage the general communication activities of the “Border Focal Point”. This should include the promotion of the actions of the “Border Focal point” on the “Boosting EU border regions” platform. The tenderer should therefore integrate the platform into a wider communication strategy of the “Border Focal Point” Social media, newsletters, publications, event, etc. should be an integral part of this strategy. Tenderers are free to propose the methodology they find the most relevant.
- The contractor shall implement the proposed communication strategy.

Task 2: Daily management of the platform and content creation

- The contractor shall perform the daily management of the platform through a close monitoring of the platform’s back office twice a day (working days – once in the morning and once in the afternoon).
The contractor shall ensure the relevance, within the context of the platform, of all content uploaded by external contributors. In case of doubt, the contractor shall liaise with REGIO D2 to assess the appropriateness of the content. In case the content is deemed suitable, the contractor should approve and publish it on the platform as soon as possible.
- The contractor shall reply to all questions regarding the functionalities of the platform from the platform’s members and manage the access rights. Moreover, in case of any technical issue encountered or when a request for improvement of the

platform arises, the Contractor shall coordinate with DG CNECT. The contractor is required to attend the annual technical meeting with DG CNECT on the developments of the futurium platform. DG CNECT organises on average one meeting a year. These meetings can be attended in person but also via conference call.

- The contractor shall create and publish content related to activities of the Border Focal Point, i.e. events, launch of calls, good practices, news items, launch of polls etc. The contractor shall also proactively search for good practices and other news items that might be of relevance for the “Border Focal Point”. The contractor shall liaise with the “Border Focal Point” to ensure the relevance and quality of the proposed content, as well as to identify the latest developments of its activities.

Task 3: Promotion of the Platform

- The contractor shall encourage stakeholders to engage in the “Boosting EU border regions” platform to share experience, take part in discussions, share views through blogposts, upload documents etc. The tenderer is free to propose the methodology to be applied. This last one should be integral part of the communication strategy requested in task 1.
- The Contractor shall identify relevant stakeholders who could publish content on the platform. Moreover, the contractor should motivate and encourage stakeholders to use the platform to share experience, take part in discussions, share views, upload documents, announce events, etc. The tenderer is free to propose the methodology to identify and engage new stakeholders on the platform as an integral part of the communication strategy requested in task 1.

Task 4: Reporting on the platform

The contractor shall perform a regular monitoring of the platform:

The Contractor shall provide regular statistical updates on the use of the platform in general and per theme, including at least analysing progress on:

- Page views and visits
- Contributions of external stakeholders
- Source links used to reach the platform.
- Tenderers are free to suggest any other statistics that might be considered useful. Tenderers should specify them in their offers.

The contractor should take into account previous reports from Unit D2 (See Annex).

3. DELIVERABLES

The Contractor shall provide the Contracting authority with the following deliverables:

- Communication strategy for the “Border Focal Point” (see task 1)
- At least 5 publications a week on average over the duration of the assignment, including at least a library item and a good practice. Other publications can consist of news items or active commenting.
- At least one poll a month in order to animate the platform.
- At least 1 post per week on average on social media (Facebook and Twitter) promoting the platform and the activities of the “Border Focal Point”
- Participation to at least 4 relevant events per year to promote the platform. This should include the Interreg Annual Event and the European Week of Regions and Cities. The latter takes place in Brussels. The Interreg Annual Event is organised in Brussels in 2020 and in the country holding the EU Presidency in the first half of 2021. DG REGIO/D2 will provide more information on both events⁵. The contractor may suggest to work with the Interreg Volunteer Youth⁶ (IVY) to organise the promotion of the platform at those events This will depend on the developments on the covid-19 crisis. The contractor is expected to keep in close contact with DGREGIO/D2 to assess the options and assess the possibility for video conference or other solutions where possible.
- Reporting deliverables corresponding to quarterly statistical reports on outreach progress (see task 4)
- A final report providing an overall assessment of the progress on the platform outreach and awareness of the “Border Focal Point’s activities from stakeholders taking into consideration the initially proposed communication strategy, including a short analysis on challenges and possible future improvements.

3.1. Work organisation and deliverables’ time schedule

The overall duration of the tasks is 24 months starting from the entry into force of the contract. The deliverables and their timing are specified below.

Month	Deliverables
T0	Signature of the contract by last signing party and kick-off meeting
T0 + 4 months	Quarterly Reporting deliverable 1
T0 + 8 months	Quarterly Reporting deliverable 2
T0 + 12 months	Quarterly Reporting deliverable 3
T0 + 16 months	Quarterly Reporting deliverable 4
T0 + 20 months	Quarterly Reporting deliverable 5
T0+ 24 months	Final report

⁵ <https://europa.eu/regions-and-cities/>

⁶ <https://www.interregyouth.com/>

The Contractor is expected to be available for quarterly scheduled meetings. The first meeting (kick-off meeting) will be held in person and will consist on a general dialogue regarding the strategy and methods planned for carrying out the contract in presence of Unit D2 and others as deemed necessary. For the remaining meetings, video conferences can be considered as an option. The meetings will be organised by the European Commission. Minutes of the meetings, including agreed action points will be drafted by the contractor.

3.2. Technical requirements of the final deliverable

The contractor must provide the deliverables as indicated below.

- Final analysis report:

The final report must include:

- A short assessment of the statistical results over time and an analysis on challenges and improvements, both in English and French;
- specific identifiers which must be incorporated on the cover page provided by the Contracting Authority;
- the following disclaimer and its equivalent in French:

“The information and views set out in this [report/study/article/publication...] are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the Commission. The Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this study. Neither the Commission nor any person acting on the Commission’s behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein.”

Requirements for publication on Internet

The Commission 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. The Commission 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 versions of the study, abstract and executive summary, the contractor must respect the W3C guidelines for accessible pdf documents as provided at: <http://www.w3.org/WAI/>.

Graphic requirements

The contractor must deliver all publishable deliverables 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

The contractor must comply with the visual identity of the “Border Focal Point” in every communication activities. The graphic elements will be provided to the contractor after the signature of the contract.