

National Project Officer for the Council of Europe/European Commission Joint Programmes (ROMED2 –ROMACT)

Call for Expressions of Interest

Deadline for applying: 30 June 2013

In the framework of the ROMED Programme – *democratic governance and community participation through mediation* – and the future ROMACT Programme - *political will and understanding of Roma inclusion at local and regional level*, the Council of Europe is recruiting consultants to act as National Project Officers in the following Member States: Bulgaria, Hungary, Italy, Romania and Slovakia.

1. Background of the ROMED Programme

The ROMED Programme is a joint action between the European Commission (DGEAC) and the Council of Europe which started in 2011. The Programme entered into a new phase in 2013. The past implementation has led to concrete results and many lessons learned which, together with the shortcomings and challenges identified, serve as a strong basis and invaluable resource for the future implementation of ROMED2.

The **overall objectives** of the Programme are:

1. To improve equal access to public services for Roma;
2. To improve dialogue and build confidence between Roma communities and public institutions;
3. To enhance the democratic participation and visible empowerment of Roma communities;
4. To stimulate an increased responsiveness of public institutions towards Roma.

The initial Programme (ROMED1, 2011-2012) was set up with the aim of improving the quality and effectiveness of the work of intercultural mediators working in Roma communities, with a view to supporting better communication and cooperation between Roma and public institutions. This phase was focused mainly on objectives 1 and 2 above.

ROMED2 is built on ROMED1's achievements, maturing the approach and going beyond the results obtained:

- Shifting the approach from the target group (mediators in ROMED1) to beneficiaries (Roma communities and local institutions and authorities);
- Focusing on objectives 3 and 4 (above):
 - To enhance the democratic participation and empowerment of Roma communities;

- To stimulate an increased responsiveness of public institutions towards Roma. Contribute to the creation of a socio-political transformation at local level through a participatory working cycle involving all the actors concerned;
- Continuing, on a more selective basis, the training aspect of the Programme at national level, both in the countries that multiply the training at local level, as well as in countries that have officially expressed a wish to join the Programme with a view to promoting the ROMED approach.

The **challenges** are:

- Change in the local democratic process (government and local level administration can become more responsive to Roma citizens' needs and more effective in service delivery). Local democracy is a process whereby local leaders become accountable to citizens and responsive to their needs and aspirations. The Programme provides local actors with an approach for supporting the emergence and consolidation of local democracy where Roma participate in the decision making process.
- How to render the process of mediation (not the mediator as an individual) effective and conducive to achieving positive change in the local contexts focusing on the national and local potential (domestic policies and human and financial resources); improving the trust relationships between a) the Roma and non-Roma citizens of the municipality, b) the Roma representatives and the people they represent, and c) the Roma representatives and local authorities

2. Background of the ROMACT Programme

The ROMACT Programme intends to improve upon local democracy, accountability, inclusiveness and responsiveness towards Roma citizens and consequently delivery of services. It strives to build up political will and sustained policy commitment through general capacity-building at local and regional levels.

In particular, **ROMACT sets out to:**

- ⇒ Build the capacity of local governments to perform roles and responsibilities in an effective and efficient manner when it comes to implementation of policies and practices that improve Roma inclusion, with the particular aims of becoming more citizen-oriented, responsive and accountable ;
- ⇒ Support the establishment and enforcement of mechanisms and processes promoting and ensuring good governance standards and effective integrated development efforts covering the dimensions of housing, employment, urban development, health, culture, and education;
- ⇒ Improve upon the efficiency and effectiveness of local policies and initiatives and therefore in the delivery of services; stimulate local ownership and capacity to ensure sustainability to the policy.

Objectives

ROMACT will strengthen the capacity of local and regional authorities (targeting both elected officials and senior civil servants) to develop and implement plans and policies. It complements the activities of ROMED2, mainly by ensuring that local authorities are equipped with the tools, knowledge and skills enabling them to:

1. overcome the challenges and barriers they often face when it comes to taking into account the needs of the Roma (including structural barriers which prevent a proper implementation of the strategies and policies);
2. provide concrete outputs in terms of general local development in which the contribution of Roma is properly recognised

3. The Role of the National Project Officer

The National Project Officer representing the Council of Europe and European Commission in the field will secure the successful coordination, at national level, of the various phases of the ROMED2 and ROMACT Programmes and support the selected municipalities, mediators and Community Action Groups in their implementation at local level.

Some of the specific tasks of the National Project Officer will be to:

- a) Assist in the organisation of the national launch meetings and national workshops;
- b) Facilitate the start-up processes at local level;
- c) Report on the baseline situation of the municipalities based on the criteria used for their selection and provide regular updates throughout the programmes;
- d) Regularly organise field visits and meetings with mayors/local administration and community representatives and liaise with trainers and other resource persons.
- e) Identify and suggest the necessary adjustments for the improvement of the local implementation of the Programmes;
- f) Update the country file in the ROMED2/ROMACT website (specific training for this task will be provided by the Council of Europe);
- g) Provide the Council of Europe's Secretariat with monthly reports (drawn up in accordance with the Reporting Template) on the implementation of the activities in the respective municipalities;
- h) Participate in the regular meetings with the various NPOs of the Programmes' operating countries and the Advisory Board (accountability and benchmarking to discuss and review strategy and developments).

4. Requisite qualifications and experience of the National Project Officer

Applicants should possess the following qualifications and experience:

- solid experience of working with Roma Communities at local and national level, together with concrete knowledge of the challenges faced by the Roma communities in the respective country;
- solid knowledge of national and local public policies for Roma communities;
- good understanding of local policies and practices related to local democratic governance (local processes of participatory decision making and community participation);
- experience in carrying out activities of community development and networking and awareness of community organising;
- solid understanding of the mechanisms, manifestations and consequences of multiple forms of discrimination and their impact on the lives of people;
- good command of English and strong reporting skills;
- experience with European and/or international funded projects;
- awareness of existing programmes of the Council of Europe, European Union and other institutions related to Roma;
- proactivity, sense of commitment, discretion and respect of deadlines.

5. Required Availability

Applicants should be available to:

- ✓ commit to a consultant contract signed with the Council of Europe. The contract will cover the duration of implementation of the Programmes, the exact duration and start date of which will be established with the consultant based on the development of the Programmes in the respective country;
- ✓ travel regularly to the selected municipalities and to national and international meetings related to ROMED2/ROMACT;
- ✓ take part in the training for National Project Officers (Strasbourg, 10-14 September, TBC).

6. Planned Fees for the National Project Officer

In return for the fulfillment by the Consultant of the aforementioned tasks and obligations to the satisfaction of the Council of Europe, the latter will pay a fixed monthly fee (within the range of €750-€1,500). This fee will be determined by the Council of Europe depending on inter alia the number of selected municipalities in the country and the existing support structures for the successful implementation of the Programmes.

7. Conditions and Applications Procedure

This call is open for expressions of interest for applicants from the following Member States: **Bulgaria, Hungary, Italy, Romania and Slovakia.**

The National Project Officer should be a citizen and/or resident of the country s/he is applying for.

Applicants interested in this call should send the following documents to the Council of Europe Secretariat **no later than 30 June 2013**:

- An updated CV (2 pages maximum);
- A short motivation letter outlining how you fulfill the required qualifications and experience to perform the tasks highlighted in this call.

Please send your completed application to romed@coe.int, specifying in the Subject Field "SURNAME/FAMILY NAME, Country, National Project Officer".

Please note that late applications will not be taken into consideration and no personal correspondence can be entered into.

8. Selection Procedure

Selection shall be made by the Council of Europe Secretariat (Support Team of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Roma Issues, Secretariat of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and the Human Resources Correspondent). The Council of Europe may require telephone interviews with pre-selected applicants.

Successful applicants will be notified of their selection by **6 July 2013**.