



Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions
Conférence des Régions Périphériques Maritimes



CALL FOR TENDERS

Terms of Reference

Provision of external service:

Procedure for contracting technical assistance for the elaboration of a Study on “Circular Economy - EUSAIR Territorial Challenges and Development”

Issue date: 16 January 2023

Deadline for submission of offers: 29 January 2023 at 23:59 (CET)

1. Context

The AI-NURECC PLUS partners have joined their efforts to support the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Sea Region ([EUSAIR](#)) implementation, ensuring deep and broad territorial coverage while enhancing Regional and Local Authorities' appropriation of the EUSAIR main objectives and opportunities in the EUSAIR cross-pillar topics: "Research and Innovation", "SMEs Development", and "Skills Development". AI-NURECC PLUS therefore supports entrepreneurship, transnational clusters, and digital innovation hubs activities for the EUSAIR.

Special attention is paid to Youth, also through initiatives addressed to sport, integration and social inclusion, tools that are expected to further encourage community sustainable development, cohesion, and solidarity in the area. AI-NURECC PLUS also aims at encouraging multi-actor networking and collaboration among representatives of the private and public sectors and civil society to foster coordination among EU, national, regional, and local policies to develop Circular Economy.

In this context, AI-NURECC PLUS operates in the following fields: Sustainable Tourism, Cultural and Creative Industries, and Circular Economy.

AI-NURECC PLUS activities contribute to the implementation of the Cultural and Creative Regional Ecosystems ([CCRE-S3](#)) thematic area's objectives in the EUSAIR area. CCRE-S3 is an AI-NURECC deliverable and the first thematic area with a specific focus on a Macro-Regional Strategy.

2. Brief description of AI-NURECC PLUS

The Adriatic Ionian Network of Universities, Regions, Chambers of Commerce and Cities Initiative PLUS ([AI-NURECC PLUS](#)) is a preparatory action financed by DG REGIO that EUSAIR and its Action Plan capitalises on the results of the [AI-NURECC Initiative](#), ended in December 2019. AI-NURECC PLUS started in April 2021 and will close at the end of 2023.

This project is coordinated by the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe ([CPMR](#)) in partnership with four stakeholders from the area: the Adriatic Ionian Euroregion ([AIE](#)), the Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities ([FAIC](#)), the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce ([FORUM AIC](#)), and the Association of Universities of the Adriatic Ionian area ([UniAdriatic](#)).

3. Background information

This consultancy work is part of the project's activities on CIRCULAR ECONOMY.

The CPMR is in charge of the overall coordination of activities of the project and in particular of the activities related to the Study on “Circular Economy - EUSAIR Territorial Challenges and Development”.

The Covid-19 outbreak has radically changed the world's economy and has posed a new challenge into how sustainable development is to be understood, both socially and economically. In particular, the transition to a more circular economy has gained prominence in the international political debate and has been reaffirmed as a priority of the EU's sustainable growth agenda as embedded in “The Circular Economy Action Plan” one of the blocks of the new EU Green Deal.

The circular economy is based on the idea that economic growth can be allowed by optimising and regenerating the use of (finite) natural resources, minimising environmental pressures and transforming production systems, supply chains and consumption patterns so that they gain long-term sustainability.

The transition to a circular economy could prove particularly successful in rural areas, as it encompasses a methodology for designing sustainable, place-based and resilient rural development strategies, aimed at counteracting the inexorable process of marginalisation, land abandoning, loss of biodiversity and of cultural and aesthetic values that by and large characterises these areas.

For instance, circularity increases the resilience of local agri-food systems and triggers changes in every phase of the productive process, from food and feed production, to distribution and consumption. There are some good examples of the possible policy applications of Circular Economy principles to the agri-food sector e.g., short supply chains, regenerative farming practices, organic farming or social farming, bio-districts, agritourism and waste management through reuse of excess food or organic matter recycling, multifunctional valorisations of rural assets through participatory and community-based development governance models.

Following the results of the AI-NURECC Initiative's past actions, we will examine how successful circularity-based and innovative local development policies and policy instruments need to create interconnections between and within sectors, institutions, and local actors.

Taken this into consideration, all AI-NURECC PLUS partners, under the CPMR leadership, will produce a study on territorial challenges and development.

Territorial challenges and development in the Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion imply the cooperation between EU-member countries and non-EU member countries in different stages of EU integration. Such diversity is crucial to improve territorial cohesion in the area.

While territorial cohesion is a key European Union objective, cooperation and several innovative tools based on the involvement of local actors (such as ITI, CLLD and other) are gaining momentum as, on the one hand, they can really focus on territorial challenges and development needs and, on the other, connect them with European and global objectives, thus allowing for a smoother economic, social and territorial cohesion.

The role of Local and Regional Authorities in creating bridges between the territories and the structures and actors of the Strategy is to be promoted and coordinated if the area as a whole must sustainably prosper and unleash its full potentials.

With this study, the AI-NURECC PLUS consortium identifies key development strategies based on local and regional knowledge of needs with a focus on the principles of circularity, sustainability and entrepreneurship and, by highlighting complementary as well as common assets, provides for solutions for a long-term and balanced territorial development.

4. Objectives and scope of these Terms of Reference

The objective of the present Call for applicants is to select an expert to conduct a **Study on “Circular Economy - EUSAIR Territorial Challenges and Development”**.

AI-NURECC PLUS addresses the territorial challenges in specific Adriatic-Ionian territories (e.g., mountains, islands and sparsely populated areas). In this respect, it will develop a specific study on to what extent the EUSAIR and its future Action Plan contribute to tackle these territorial challenges by promoting sustainable development and growth.

This study will be coordinated by the partnership (all partners will contribute under the leadership of the CPMR) with the support of an external expert and will provide input and concrete proposals so that the EUSAIR and its future Action Plan could **better tackle the territorial challenges in the region**.

4.1. Main tasks to be performed

For the purpose of the Study on “Circular economy-EUSAIR Territorial Challenges and Development”, the following issues are proposed to be examined:

- Transition towards a circular economy in the Adriatic-Ionian Region: implications on the environment, economy and society (through sharing knowledge, evidence, and experience);
- Opportunities for green, resilient and inclusive recovery: policies, measures, recommendations, funds;
- Circular economy as a leverage to achieve the Sustainable Development goals;
- Circular Economy Management: SMEs are slowly approaching the challenges of moving from a linear to a circular economic model and, given their average size, do not normally have the resources and skills to face it with the appropriate tools and references. It is

therefore important to support SMEs in the development and implementation of circular businesses (in terms of knowledge transfer, skills, innovation, certifications) and to realise them within an integrated system for the local development;

- Circular economy relevant to agriculture and rural areas.

4.2. Outputs of this assignment

Final version of the Study on “EUSAIR Territorial Challenges and Development”.

4.3. Expected Schedule/Calendar

The expert is expected to start working in early February 2023 and conclude the work by 30 June 2023. The following section describes the estimated workload.

Activity/Deliverable	Deadline
First coordination meeting and Presentation of draft table of contents for validation	Beginning of February 2023
Literature review, including analysis of outputs/deliverables produced by AI-NURECC PLUS project and other relevant projects and drafting of the study	February and March 2023
Analysis of regional (Adriatic-Ionian, overlapping Mediterranean and Danube areas) existing policy frameworks and initiatives fostering Circular Economy principles	March and April 2023
Delivery of the final version of the report	End of April/first week of May 2023
Production of a final version, taking into account the outputs of the EUSAIR Annual Forum 2023	May and June 2023 (maximum three weeks after the event)

Each of the abovementioned steps will be validated by the CPMR. Regular coordination calls and meetings are to be foreseen throughout the duration of the contract to ensure the smooth development and delivery of the tasks.

5. Selection criteria and process

- Master's or PhD or equivalent degree in policy and/or environmental/sustainability studies, circular/blue economy and other relevant fields
- Previous relevant experience in drafting reports/studies or policy documents towards Adriatic-Ionian and Euro-Mediterranean policymakers
- Previous relevant experience on circular economy matters
- Experience in the Adriatic-Ionian (AI) region strongly desired and a good knowledge of actors and governance processes in AI countries
- Experience in application of circularity issues, both in urban, as in rural areas
- Strong conceptual and synthesis ability combined with good writing and communication skills
- Ability to mobilise information and existing knowledge in an efficient way
- Relevant project and publications references
- Fluency in English as well as proven technical writing skills is required.

The tenderer must prove a conceptual, methodological, and technical domain, adequate for the execution of the contract and reflect the necessary capacity for the assignment. The objective criterion of the technical proposal has a weight of 70% in the total evaluation according to the following objective evaluation criteria:

- **Technical offer (70%):**
 - Methodological approach (30%)
 - Experience and CV of the tenderer (40%)
- **Economic offer (30%),** including detailed estimates of required amount of time per activity/task described in section 4 of these ToR.

The CPMR, as a contracting body, will proceed to examine the documentation provided to verify compliance with the technical and economic requirements of the proposals, and may request from the tenderer any additional relevant documentation. The contracting authority shall exclude from the evaluation the proposals that do not comply with the requirements of the contract.

The final score will be the sum of the percentages resulting from the technical and the economic evaluations. The offer that gathers the maximum score will be selected.

6. Contractual and financial terms

Administrative details of the Contracting Authority:

CPMR

6, rue Saint Martin

35700 Rennes – France

VAT: FR315305 483 61

The maximum amount available for this service is €8,000 net of VAT (€1,600 of VAT to be directly paid to French taxation authorities by the CPMR) for a 5-month expertise service providing (until 30 June 2023).

For this work the CPMR will be responsible for paying VAT in France, therefore, the fees to be charged by the experienced entity/expert will be submitted net of VAT. The fees will be paid in three instalments on presentation of a duly issued invoice, to be agreed with the selected tenderer:

- 30% after the signature of the contract in February 2023;
- 40% on the submission of the final version of the report in April 2023;
- 30% once the contract has been fulfilled within June 2023.

Depending on the sanitary situation, the travel costs for the participation of the experienced entity/expert in face-to-face meetings and events relevant to the scope of this contract (i.e. stakeholders' workshops and Final Conference) will be borne by the CPMR.

The graphic design and layout of the Study will be carried out by AI-NURECC PLUS partners directly. The costs should therefore not be included in the service provision.

Please note that, the acceptance of the offer of the successful tender implies the acceptance of the conditions and schedules detailed in these ToR.

The payment term for the invoice will be a bank transfer (bank details will be asked). A duly issued invoice will be required for payment at the presentation of the final document.

The CPMR maintains the right to require additional fiscal documentation if considered necessary. The tax legislation in force at the date of acceptance of the offer will be applied.

7. How to apply

The offer must be sent in **one single file on PDF format** to the following e-mail addresses: lejla.becirovic@crpm.org, hafida.michaud@crpm.org, with the following subject: Study on "EUSAIR Territorial Challenges and Development" by 23.59 (CET) of 29 January, 2023. Tenderers might be contacted for further details on their offers.

For any questions related to this call for applicants please contact:

Ms Anuska STOKA, Project Manager

E-mail: anuska.stoka@crpm.org Ccing: stavros.kalognomos@crpm.org; flora.leroy@crpm.org

8. Awarding and formalisation of the contract

The contracting authority shall award the contract to the most economically and technically advantageous proposal. The contract must be formalised within a period of **ten working days** from the notification of the award. The contract shall enter into force once it has been signed (in February 2023) and will last until 30 June 2023.

9. Intellectual property

In the spirit of cooperation and exchange, the ownership of the work covered by the contract related to these Terms of Reference and co-funded by the European Commission is open to the public and free of rights. The deliverables and results of the project should be accessible and available for free to the general public in a usable format. The European Commission any other relevant EUSAIR macro-regional body can use them for information and communication purposes. The authorship of the work covered by the contract related to these Terms of Reference is co-shared between the author and all the partners of the engaged project.

10. Confidentiality Clause

Despite the public execution of the project, part of the information exchanged for the development of the purpose of this contract between the CPMR and the selected entity/expert, may be confidential. On this basis, only the documents and other pieces of information provided explicitly with the statement “confidential” will be dealt with as such. The selected entity/expert ensures to respect its confidentiality, not disseminate it, forward it to third parties or use it without prior written consent from the CPMR.

11. Useful references

AI-NURECC PLUS

<https://cpmr.org/policy-work/cohesion/ai-nurecc-plus/>