

**EU4INNOVATION**



**Terms of Reference (ToR)**  
**For**  
**International Pool of Experts**

**under**

**Challenge Fund, EU4Innovation 2023-2026**  
**Project**

Tirana, Albania  
October 2024



The 'EU for Innovation' project, funded by the European Union, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) is implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and Embassy of Sweden Tirana.

Implemented by



Cooperation Partner



## TERMS OF REFERENCE AND SCOPE OF SERVICE

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### 1. Background

Partners Albania for Change and Development (PA) is an Albanian NGO, established in 2001. PA's mission consists in the support of civil society and the facilitation of inter-sector cooperation to strengthen democratic institutions and advance economic development in Albania. PA is a member of Partners Global, a network of 20 independent organizations in Europe, the Americas, Africa, and the Middle East, working for peaceful and democratic change.

PA has built its operations in four key programmatic areas, namely:

- 1. Enabling Environment and Sustainable Development of CSOs**, contributing to the empowerment of civil society actors and civic engagement through *capacity building* programs, *monitoring and advocacy* for an enabling legal and practical environment for CSOs operation, and *financial support* for the sector.
- 2. Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation**, developing and supporting the ecosystem of entrepreneurship and social enterprises (SEs) through research, advocacy, financial support mechanisms, expertise, and networking opportunities.
- 3. Philanthropic Activity and Support Infrastructure**, developing and promoting philanthropic activity in the country through research, advocacy actions for an enabling environment, awareness raising, and promotion activities on the economic and social value of philanthropy.
- 4. Transparent and Accountable Participatory Governance** contributing to the development and growth of civil society practitioners and public administration officials in their efforts to building strong institutions, manage open and transparent processes and overcome corruption.

PA has vast experience in designing and managing EU-funded projects and sub-granting schemes in the frame of EU projects. Since 2012, PA has implemented **more than 20 projects funded by the EU**. The organization also works for the *development of Social Enterprises* (SEs) and start-ups, generating social impact through a) research; b) advocacy; c) education and public awareness; d) financial support to 3-rd parties.

Since June 2023, Partners Albania is the Cooperation Partner of SIDA for the implementation of the Challenge Fund, under the framework of the EU4Innovation Phase II, 2023-2026.

The Multi Donor Action EU4Innovation Phase II, 2023-2026 is jointly co-financed by the EU, the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and Sida and implemented by GIZ and Embassy of Sweden in Tirana.

The aim of the Challenge Fund is to improve and diversify finance opportunities for Albanian start-ups and MSMEs, with innovative solutions (e.g., products, services, business models, processes) and (ii) start-ups with prominent tech content with the potential for global expansion and rapid growth.

Within this framework, Challenge Fund will launch three different calls for proposals during the project implementation period 2023-2026, for funding of a minimum of 50 (fifty) start-ups and innovative micro, small and medium-sized enterprises with the potential to expand locally or internationally, around 16-17 successful applicants under each call.

In conjunction with the grant, Challenge Fund will offer comprehensive technical assistance to grantees throughout the entire grant period. To facilitate this, PA is creating an International Pool of Experts to support the diverse needs that both the project and the grantees may encounter during the implementation of the project. The experts will be available to offer guidance, answer questions, and deliver tailored solutions, ensuring the successful implementation and progress of the project.

## 2. Objective of the ToR

Partners Albania for Change and Development through this call aims to identify experienced experts at the international level, to extend the network of collaborators in various fields of services and offer support to the project and start-ups awarded from the Challenge Fund.

The purpose of the Call is to identify qualified and experienced experts to join the International Pool of Experts for providing services for the startups in 3 categories (Idea and Validation stage, Growth stage, and Scale-up stage<sup>1</sup>) in the following areas:

- a) Go to market strategy
- b) Network and Partnership Building
- c) Market Expansion Strategies
- d) Investments and Funding Strategies
- e) HR Management
- f) Supply Chain Management
- g) B2B Sales Strategies
- h) Sustainability Practices
- i) AR and AI development for applications

Interested applicants can apply to one or more fields of expertise from the above-mentioned areas.

The experts will be contracted to deliver their services based on the need and according to the project plan. The services will be delivered online and in Tirana and other cities of Albania.

The expertise will be provided in the **English language**.

<sup>1</sup> <https://challengefund.euforinnovation.al/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/factsheet-CHF-thirrja2.pdf>

### 3. Duties and Responsibilities

The experts are expected to fulfill the following duties and responsibilities related to the above-mentioned areas:

- Assist in defining target markets and developing tailored value propositions for effective product launches.
- Aid in identifying potential partners and developing engagement strategies to foster strategic partnerships.
- Assist in conducting market analysis and developing entry strategies for new markets, including localization efforts.
- Provide guidance on identifying funding sources and developing financial models for investment proposals.
- Aid in developing recruitment strategies and employee onboarding programs to enhance talent acquisition.
- Assist in evaluating suppliers and developing procurement strategies to optimize inventory and logistics.
- Provide advice on identifying target markets and developing sales funnels for effective lead generation.
- Assist in developing sustainability policies and measuring environmental impact for business operations.
- Aid in defining application requirements and developing algorithms for integrating AR/AI technologies.

### 4. Experience and qualification of the Experts

The desired qualifications of the Experts for this assignment are the following:

- At least 7 years of proven working experience in one or more of the above-mentioned topics, at the local, national level, and international level;
- Master's degree in the relevant field/s;
- Similar experiences related to the duties and responsibilities outlined in Section 3 of this ToR;
- Experience with the innovation and startup ecosystem is preferred;
- Fluent in English language, both oral and written;
- Strong communication skills;
- Excellent analytical and reporting skills;
- Good problem-solving skills.

## 5. Contracting Authority

The experts will work under the supervision of Partners Albania for Change and Development, to which the experts will directly report with regard to the implementation of the task.

## 6. Contractual Arrangements

Partners Albania for Change and Development will contact the successful candidates after the evaluation of the applications. Being included in the International Pool of Experts does not imply the obligation of Partners Albania for Change and Development to engage any expert or to establish any contractual relationship between Partners Albania for Change and Development and them.

The successful candidates will be included in the Challenge Fund International Pool of Experts for the period of around 2 years (November 2024 – June 2026). Entry into the International Pool of Experts system does not necessarily mean that a contract with Partners Albania for Change and Development is guaranteed. This will depend on forthcoming needs.

Where a request for services arises, PA shall directly contact the expert from the pool without the need for a further selection process. A specific Term of Reference (ToR) outlining the outputs for each assignment shall be provided and an Individual Contract will be issued to the expert, detailing the time frame for the engagement.

## 7. Submission of the documents

**The deadline for submitting the application is November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024.**

Application documents must be in English and sent via e-mail to the following address:

[partners@partnersalbania.org](mailto:partners@partnersalbania.org)

*Partners Albania for Change and Development embraces diversity in its hiring, welcoming individuals of all religions, ethnicities, genders, and orientations to apply.*