

**Call for Service:
Business Development Expert in the
Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Field
FSM- 2024-10-21**

INTERNET ACCESS FLAGSHIP: Rural Empowerment through Digital Inclusion (REDI) is an EU funded project that Solidarity Fund PL in Georgia (SFPL in GEO) began implementing on December 1st, 2023, together with our partner - the e-Governance Academy from Estonia (eGA).

By virtue of its innovative approach, this action will reduce the existing digital division and include those traditionally left behind by improving access to affordable digital infrastructure and developing digital literacy skills in rural areas of the target regions of Imereti, Guria, Racha-Lechkhumi, Kvemo Svaneti and Kakheti.

When it comes to the development of the connectivity infrastructure, first of the two main directions of the project, it will be implemented as a follow-up of the Open-Net Programme's project "Log-in Georgia" and will focus on providing access to the Internet and technology to inhabitants of rural areas from ≈200 selected villages from target regions with a minimum effort required (via public spaces of the greatest social impact (i.e., schools, kindergartens, ambulatories, libraries, village administration, outdoor pavilions - panchaturi, local shops, etc.)) and at the minimum cost, so that it is affordable and at the villagers' fingertips.

The second direction of the action centers around promoting digital literacy in the inhabitants of the rural areas of the selected target regions. This will be done in coordination with and by increasing the impact of the already existing educational programmes implemented by the "Login Georgia" project and the Communications Commission (ComCom). Approx. 25 Digital Rural Hubs (DRHs) will be created to be used for the purpose of enhancing digital skills of the rural population. Some of them will be set up by expanding the existing ones, while others will be in completely new locations, closer to the villagers, which will make them more accessible. Furthermore, mobile training buses with IT trainers, equipped with laptops and with Internet, will be visiting the areas with no IT-equipped training classes.

The REDI team is looking to conduct service/consultancy contract with a seasoned professional with extensive experience in the field of ICT business strategies/market consultation in order to develop optimal modes of cooperation with relevant stakeholders, or future partners for ensuring the sustainability of the REDI project.

Service requested: Provide expert consultations and support for the project Rural Empowerment through Digital Inclusion (REDI).

Responsibilities:

Task: Develop optimal business model(s) of work with Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and/or other relevant stakeholders for the purpose of implementation and sustainability of project deliverables in 4 target regions of Georgia.

Specifically:

- Review feasibility studies, research of village profiles and other research materials available to the project as the basis to prepare/suggest a minimum of 4 different business models of venture with regional/local small and medium-sized ISPs, municipalities, and/or other stakeholders, relevant to keep project deliverables sustainable.
- Facilitate the relevant aspects of the project's Steering Committee and/or other roundtables in terms of business models of deployment and maintenance of connectivity infrastructure.
- Within the frames of competency, provide guidance and consultation to project team, local technical expert and possibly partners in tailored formats for deploying and maintaining connectivity infrastructure, such as Wi-Fi arrays and transmission equipment, based on the most commercially viable international practices that fit the local context.
- Within the frames of competency, identify strategies to overcome specific challenges for digital inclusion via the research study commissioned by SFPL and applicable international practices that fit the local context .
- Provide any relevant consultation/advice regarding the sustainable business models of work as will be requested by the project team.

1. Duration of the assignment:

Upon request, during the year 2024, with possible terms of extension for the upcoming year of 2025, with approximately 65 working days (number of days can change based on the needs of the project).

2. Place(s) of Assignment

Online but the selected Expert will be required to conduct occasional field trip(s) to the selected regions in Georgia.

3. Minimum requirements

- 3.1 Higher education in ICT technology, engineering, business administration, marketing and/or other relevant field from a reputable university.
- 3.2 Professional experience in project(s) in the field of ICT, telecommunications, and/or infrastructure building in the last 5 years.
- 3.3 Fluency in English language.

Offers from service providers that do not meet the minimum criteria will be rejected for formal reasons.

4. Apart from minimum requirements, following criteria for selection will be assessed based on the points provided (max. 140 points)

4.1 Knowledge and experience - max. 40 points

4.1.1 Experience of working in international development projects.

- Over 5 years of experience – 10 points
- 1 to 5 years of experience - 5 points
- Less than 1 year of experience – 0 points

4.1.2 Experience of working in the business administration and/or marketing fields.

- Over 5 years of experience – 10 points
- 1 to 5 years of experience - 5 points
- Less than 1 year of experience – 0 points

4.1.3 Experience of working with international best practices in ICT, telecommunications and/or infrastructure fields.

- Over 5 years of experience – 10 points
- 1 to 5 years of experience - 5 points
- Less than 1 year of experience – 0 points

4.1.4 Availability of research papers and/or articles, on connectivity business models and/or solutions published or commissioned from reputable academic sources – max. 10 points

4.2 Practical task (please see the task in point 16 of the Application Form) – max. 50 points

4.3 Cost of a single consultation (a single consultation equals 8 hours) – max. 30 points

Cost should be provided in the designated field in the application form.

Assessment under the criterion „cost” will be processed based on the following formula:

$$P = P_{min} / P_{of} \times 30 \text{ points}$$

where:

P_{min} - the lowest proposed price

P_{of} – price presented in the examined offer

P – the number of points awarded to the examined offer under the price criterion, rounded to the full number.

Settlements between the Contracting Authority and the Contractor will be conducted in EUR depending on the Contractor's place of tax residence and in relation to the current Euro exchange rate of the National Bank of Georgia.

4.4 Interview – max. 20 points

The interview process will be aimed at verifying the candidate's suitability for the position and execution of specific task(s) listed in the announcement.

Only shortlisted candidates will be invited for an interview.

Following the interview process, the Contracting Authority may select one or more applicants

5. SUBMISSION

Application must be submitted no later than November 21, 2024 24:00 Tbilisi time to the email address: redi@solidarityfund.pl

The application must contain:

- A CV submitted in a PDF format.
- Application form that has been filled-out, signed, scanned and submitted in a PDF format.
- Service Provider Fiscal Statement that has been filled-out, signed, scanned and submitted in a PDF format.

If one of the documents is missing, the applicant will be excluded on a formal basis.

Questions regarding the call for proposals, can be directed to redi@solidarityfund.pl before the expiration of the deadline.

6. Information on the outcome of the procedure will be sent to the e-mail address indicated by the applicant and will be published on Solidarity Fund PL_GEO Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/solidarityfund.ge> and <https://participatoryhub.ge/>

7. Please be advised that by submitting an application you agree to share the content of the application with other applicants who could submit an appropriate request to the SFPL (except for personal data, which will be anonymized).

8. Solidarity Fund PL, provides equal opportunity and fair and equitable treatment in employment to all people without regard to race, colour, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, protected genetic information, or sexual orientation.

9. Please be advised that the administrator of personal data contained in the submitted applications is the Solidarity Fund PL with headquarters in Warsaw, ul. Mysłowicka 4, 01-612 Warsaw. The data will be processed on the basis of art. 6 clause 1 point. c of the Polish law on personal data protection for the purpose related to public procurement procedure. You have the right to access the personal data provided, the right to rectify personal data and the right to request the administrator to limit the processing of personal data, subject to the cases referred to in art. 18 clause 2 of the law. You have the right to lodge a complaint with the President of the Office for Personal Data Protection "The data controller is Solidarity Fund PL in Georgia, 20 Chavchavadze Avenue, Apartment #3, floor 2, 0179 Tbilisi, Georgia. To exercise your rights, please contact the SFPL in Georgia directly at georgiarep@solidarityfund.pl – we are committed to protecting your rights to the best of our ability