Funded by the European Union

LEBANON INNOVATE

Consultancy expert to undertake mapping and identification of critical barriers faced in the Research Centers in Lebanon within Lebanon Innovate Project

Terms of Reference

Project Title	Lebanon Innovate
Financing	European Commission
Contracting authority	The Euro-Lebanese Centre for Industrial Modernisation (ELCIM) at the Industrial Research Institute (IRI)
Experts to be selected	Expert to undertake mapping and needs assessment (including identification of critical barriers faced) in the Research Centers in Lebanon
Location of the contract	Lebanon
Procedure	Simplified procedure (formerly known as "competitive negotiated" procedure)

1. Background

Over the last years, Lebanon suffered from a major economic depression, the most severe crisis episodes globally since the mid-19th century' (World Bank Data, 2021). The country's GDP has dropped tremendously. It became urgent to implement new measurements and transform its economy into a knowledge-driven one. However, it lacks the tools, mechanisms, enabled environment and incentives to activate and commercialize innovations, hence depleting the overall innovation output.

In this perspective, Lebanon Innovate aims to foster the set up and growth of an innovation ecosystem, involving key stakeholders: Universities and research institutions, responsible for

knowledge creation and diffusion; incubators and accelerators, providing a supportive environment for startups, possibly with a physical space and access to technology infrastructure and equipment, besides business and technical assistance; investors, providing financial support to startups and SMEs; government and public institutions, Technology Transfer Offices(TTOs) Lebanese Industrialists and Private Sector organizations that may promote a favorable environment for the entire ecosystem through adequate supporting policies and regulations; and entrepreneurs, a core element of an innovation ecosystem, as they are inherently innovative, agile and adaptive as opposed to larger corporations; development agencies, intermediaries, and foundations, which may contribute to building connectivity and capacity of the ecosystem actors; Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), active at the national and international levels, including the diaspora network; the industry sector, which can collaboratively tackle large-scale socio-economic issues that are hindering the development of new markets and the efficiency of their broader business environments.
This project addresses mainly the following sectors: Agri-food, Health and the ICT/CCI.

Within this context, The Euro-Lebanese Centre for Industrial Modernisation (ELCIM) at the Industrial Research Institute (IRI) has partnered within the Europeaid funded project entitled Lebanon Innovate along with Berytech, IraLeb, EBN, Leitat and Anima.
ELCIM/IRI brings more than 20 years of successful track records in supporting the growth of the local business ecosystem for the management of innovative projects. ELCIM has a large portfolio of activities ranging from capacity building, provision of technical and financial services, project management in addition to initiatives to empower ecosystems, on a local and regional scale, in various sectors such as Agrofood, renewable energy and ICT.

2. Objective

ELCIM seeks an external expert to carry out mapping and needs assessment for Research centers (existing and in development phase) working on Agri-food, health and the ICT/CCI Sector in Lebanon. The main purpose is to provide a comprehensive assessment on the current challenges and needs in Lebanon through an assessment questionnaire to be prepared and to be addressed to the most active research institutions/departments in applied topics for the target sectors and set the overall priorities and the timeline of activities, in line with the Lebanon Innovate call outcome. The Expert should identify key research centers, conduct and develop an assessment questionnaire with key persons in the identified entities, which includes but not exclusive to:

- A performance indicator to identify research strengths, trendy research topics, key researchers, and innovators
- Research productivity (publications from academic databases, conference proceedings, and research projects)
- Resources needs (human capital skillset, needed equipment, capacity building etc...)
- Type of collaborations undertaken with different stakeholders (commercialization opportunities)

This Questionnaire will detect the needs and challenges hindering Technology Transfer (TT) and business development capabilities, while assessing their innovation maturity level, market orientation and opportunities, technologies needed and mastered and gaps towards commercialization. A dedicated focus will be on assessing TT capabilities and mapping dedicated structures/services, including IP support for researchers.
A report will be generated based on the mapping findings and outputs and will serve as a baseline for all upcoming activities in the project.

The expert will work under the overall direct guidance of the Program Director, in close coordination with Agri-Food, health and the ICT/CCI Sector Specialists.

3. Description of the work

The Expert will undertake the following activities:

(1) Identification of at least 5 active Research Institutions/departments in Lebanon as well as active key personnel in each

(2) Develop and conduct a solid assessment questionnaire covering the following:

a. Profile of the identified entity including the name, date of establishment, size, ranking, location, staff members and others
b. Intra-Curriculum related to the types of research programs offered and undertaken research projects, publications and patencies
c. Extra-Curriculum related to the types of collaboration and synergies done with the different sectors, mainly industries, whether in terms of internships and placements, research, innovation and entrepreneurship, competitions and summits.
d. Infrastructure, physical and digital

e. Available Funding, Awards and Grants
f. Inter-department collaboration
g. Innovation Toolboxes including the IP Policy & Toolboxes as well as the Information Management Systems
h. Assessments of the number of beneficiaries such as Innovation and commercialization, Start-up, Spin-off Research, Venture Labs, Incubators & Accelerators, Licensing & Sublicensing supported by the institution
i. External ecosystem, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ecosystem, Government and Policy, Civil Society organizations/NGO/Ingo, Industry & Private Sector and Media and PR
j. Technical needs of the entity's team members
k. Type of collaboration needed for future matchmaking

The main purpose is to obtain up-to-date information on the general market status pertaining to food system, health and ICT/CCI needs/gaps of the SMEs.

(3) Conduct desk review of major studies, reports, assessments produced by the research centers
(4) Undertake research to identify the different stakeholders working along the three pillars of the supply chain: production, transformation and consumption.
(5) Conduct Key Informant Interviews with different stakeholders for the challenges to be tackled through local solutions.
(6) Identify the needs and areas of complementarity with organizations as well as areas overlap to gear the project into a more beneficial direction.
(7) Provide Detailed Reports on the findings, as well as updates on the matching process and findings from the key interviews.

4. Preparation of a Power Point summary of the report

The report shall compile some statistics and graphics with an interpretation of the collected results.

The Expert should gather the information through desk work, interviews and focus group meetings with relevant stakeholders. Meetings might be organized with the project partner leading the benchmarking study and the action plan to ensure coherence with the other national reports.

5. Deliverables and Calendar

The Consultant's team will start the work after the validation of their offer by the contractor and shall coordinate with ELCIM team for the strategy and implementation along the whole process.

Deliverable	Deadline
#1. Conceptualization, work plan and drafting que stionnaire	2 weeks
#2. Interviewing key people in identified Research centers & filling the questionnaire	4 weeks
#3. Results analysis, report and deliverable preparation and submission	2 weeks

All the deliverables will have to be presented in English and validated by the Contractor within 1 week after the submission, before moving to the next step of the assignment. Failure in submitting deliverables or not reaching enough quality may result in a reduced budget allocation. In addition, regular calls will be organized with the contractor.

6. Means of work and eligible costs

Equipment, consumable and Transportation should be included in the financial offer as a lump sum.

7. Eligibility

The applicants can be a freelance expert or a legally established company complying with the European Commission Recommendation 2003/361/EC2 and the SME user guide.

As a summary, the criteria which define an SME are:

(a) Independent (not linked or owned by another enterprise), in accordance to Recommendation 2003/361/EC;

(b) Headcount in Annual Work Unit (AWU) less than 250;

(c) Additionally, they need to fulfill the following requirements:

- Be established in Lebanon
- Be able to comply with national fiscal context and rules for receipt of international funds.
- Not exceed the ceiling of 7,500 euros covering the whole project assignment
- Be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s), not acting as an intermediary
- Academic background in relevant majors
- At least 5 years' experience in mapping, innovation, knowledge innovation communities and intellectual property with specific focus on the Lebanese context
- Not exceed the estimated time for the service execution which is up to 3 months
- Excellent English writing skills

8. Ethic Clauses and Code of Conduct

a) Absence of conflict of interest

The applicant must not be affected by any conflict of interest and must have no equivalent relation in that respect with other applicants or parties involved in the actions. Any attempt by an applicant to obtain confidential information, enter into unlawful agreements with competitors or influence the evaluation committee or the project Lead Beneficiary / partner during the process of examining, clarifying, evaluating and comparing applications will lead to the rejection of its application and may result in administrative penalties.

All members of the selection committees will sign a non-disclosure agreement

b) Respect for human rights as well as environmental legislation and core labour standards

The applicant and its staff must comply with human rights. In particular, and in accordance with the applicable act, applicants who have been awarded contracts must comply with the

environmental legislation including multilateral environmental agreements, and with the core labor standards as applicable and as defined in the relevant International Labor Organization conventions (such as the conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining; elimination of forced and compulsory labor; abolition of child labor).

Zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and sexual abuse:

The European Commission applies a policy of 'zero tolerance' in relation to all wrongful conduct which has an impact on the professional credibility of the applicant.

Physical abuse or punishment, or threats of physical abuse, sexual abuse or exploitation, harassment, and verbal abuse, as well as other forms of intimidation shall be prohibited.

c) Anti-corruption and anti-bribery

The applicant shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations and codes relating to anti-bribery and anti-corruption. The project Lead Beneficiary / partner and the Programme bodies reserve the right to suspend or cancel the sub-grant if corrupt practices of any kind are discovered at any stage of the award process or during the execution of the contract. For the purposes of this provision, 'corrupt practices' are the offer of a bribe, gift, gratuity or commission to any person as an inducement or reward for performing or refraining from any act relating to the award of a contract or execution of a contract already concluded.

d) Breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud

The project Lead Beneficiary / partner and the Programme bodies reserve the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the award procedure proves to have been subject to breach of obligations, irregularities, or fraud. If breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the award of the contract, the project beneficiary may refrain from concluding the contract.

9. How to Apply and the Procedures to Follow

a. Application formats

Applicants are invited apply by filling in an online application form or by sending the following documents by mail:

- A technical offer detailing the procedure the applicant intends to follow to accomplish the task, including timeline and deliverables
- A financial offer
- The CV of the applicant

Additionally, if the applicant is a private company, it should upload/provide an extract from its Commercial Register.

Please note that only the completed application form which gathers all the listed documents above will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain all the relevant information concerning the action.

Any error related to the administrative information of the applicants will be communicated during a clarification period before the technical evaluation of applications, according to the eligible criteria. The applicants will have a 7-day period to provide the information before the application is finally 0rejected.

b. Application process

Applications must be submitted through the following channels:

Country	Submission channels
Lebanon	Electronically

For electronic submissions (form or email):

- Applications must be submitted to the address below:

Country	Electronic submission channels
Lebanon	elcim@elcim-lb.org

- The email subject must include the reference of the call for Mapping Research Centers in Lebanon.

c. Deadline for submission of applications

The deadline for the submission of applications will be:

Country	Deadline
Lebanon	31/03/2023

Applications submitted after this deadline will be rejected unless an extension of the deadline is decided by the project management and notified on the project partner media channels and webpages.

d. Further information about application process

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 10 days before the deadline for the submission of applications to the following e-mail address below, indicating clearly the reference of the call for business ideas:

Country	Email address
Lebanon	s.sarkis@elcim-lb.org; Ms Sandra Sarkis j.chebli@elcim-lb.org; Ms Joelle Chebli

The project partner who launches the call has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date. Replies will be given no later than 7 days before the deadline for the submission of applications.

10. Evaluation and Selection of Applications

Applications will be examined and evaluated by a selection committee set by the contractor. All applications will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria:

(1) STEP 1: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS. VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY OF THE APPLICANTS

During the opening and administrative check, the following will be assessed:

- If the deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will be automatically rejected.

- If the application satisfies all the criteria specifying the eligibility of the action, otherwise the application will be rejected on that sole basis and the application will not be evaluated further.
- If the application satisfies all the criteria specified in the administrative checklist of the application form, otherwise the missing documents will be asked to be submitted within 7 days from their request

(2) STEP 2: EVALUATION OF THE APPLICATION

The applications will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria shown below.

Points	Criteria
Maximum 30 points	Quality of the technical offer to meet the work objectives
Maximum 20 points	Proven track-record in mapping or similar activity
Maximum 50 points	Financial offer

Important:

The header of the **technical and financial offers** must clearly note the candidate data (Name, address, country, telephone, email and fiscal identity number or other official number).

If the examination of the application reveals that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria stated in Section 6, the application will be rejected on this sole basis.

11. Budget

The maximum budget set for this activity is 7,500 Euros.

12. Selection and Payments

The winning candidate will be notified by email and post on the selection of the offer. From that moment on work can start according to the calendar.

Payments will be done as it follows:

- Upon the approval of deliverables #1 and #2 the consultant will receive 50% of the contract
- Upon the approval of deliverable #3 the consultant will receive the remaining 50% of the contract

Payments will be done in a period of 30 days after reception and validation of the invoice.