

CALL FOR APPLICATION
FOR BRANCH OFFICE EXPERT POSITION
in Košice region, Slovak Republic

published in the frame of

Interreg VI-A NEXT
Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine Programme

On behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary acting as the Managing Authority (hereinafter referred to as MA), the Széchenyi Programme Office Consulting and Service Nonprofit Limited Liability Company (hereinafter referred to as SZPO) hosting the Joint Secretariat (hereinafter referred to as JS) of the Interreg VI-A NEXT Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine Programme (hereinafter referred to as Programme), is launching the Call for Application of Branch Office positions to identify and select qualified and experienced professionals to become the Programme's **Slovak Branch Office** in Košice self-governing region. The expert selected within the framework of this Call will be involved in the information activities to be provided to the potential Beneficiaries and implementation follow up under the HU-SK-RO-UA Interreg NEXT Programme.

In order to be eligible applicants have to comply with the criteria listed in the **Terms of Reference** annexed to this call that also contains other important details related to the tasks to be performed.

TERMS OF REFERENCE
for setting up and operating a Branch Office in Košice self-governing region,
Slovak Republic

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. Programme information

The objective of the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine Interreg VI-A NEXT Programme is to develop and implement cross-border cooperation projects in the specified programme area and to intensify the cooperation between Zakarpatska, Ivano-Frankivska and Chernivetska regions of Ukraine and the eligible and adjacent areas of Hungary, Romania and Slovakia in order to initiate progress on the fields of existing social, economic, infrastructural and environmental difficulties. For achieving its goals the programme is aiming at setting up and operating a professional and effective Branch Offices with educated and experienced staff.

1.2. Aim of the Call

The aim of the Call is to invite interested candidates possessing adequate experience and knowledge in the areas of cross-border cooperation, regional development, thematic objectives and priorities of the Programme concerned, as well as specificities of the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine bordering region for setting up and operating **Branch Office in Košice self-governing region, Slovak Republic (one expert in Košice)**. The selected experts of the Branch Offices will support the implementation of the Programme in the eligible territory of the Slovak Republic.

2. GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1 Description of the task

The overall task of the Branch Office will be supporting the MA and JS in the Programme communication, to provide information and promotion activities of the Programme on the Slovak side in close cooperation with the JS, reach eligible stakeholders as well as assisting the project evaluation and implementation follow-up and to foster good information links and exchanges with the eligible Slovak regional and local authorities.

Under no circumstances may the Branch Office be entrusted with tasks exercising public authority or use of discretionary powers of judgment regarding projects by the hosting organisations.

2.2 The tasks to be fulfilled by the hosting institutions

Establishing and operating the JS Branch Office

Providing premises, equipment, facilities and devices which are necessary to operate the Branch Office and perform its tasks.

Transferring the annual contribution received from the Programme to the salary of experts of the Branch offices, or any other costs connected to fulfilling the tasks of the Branch office.

2.3 The tasks to be fulfilled by the Branch Office

- Informing potential Applicants in the border regions of the Slovak Republic on activities planned under the Programme (Call for Proposals, seminars, trainings, Infodays etc.)

Branch Office is providing information to all potential Applicants and other actors interested in cross-border cooperation. Comprehensive support should be granted to all potential interested Applicants on an equal basis and free of charge. Information support to potential Beneficiaries and other actors interested in cross-border cooperation should be provided continuously via telephone and/or e-mail and/or basis of personal consultation.

- Support in the organisation of the Monitoring Committee (hereinafter referred to as MC) and other meetings related to the Programme implementation in the Slovak Republic.

This activity includes in particular the logistic and organisational tasks of the MC and other important meetings related to the Programme. Slovak stakeholders must be informed in time about the meetings. When necessary, the meetings are organised in Slovak eligible regions.

- Implementation of the Communication plan
 - To contribute to information and publicity actions within the respective territory, especially publication of call for proposals notices in Slovak local and regional newspapers relevant to inform potential applicants;
 - To cooperate in the organisation of and active participation at partner search forums, info days, workshops, conferences, creation of databases etc. within the Programme;
 - To provide any information or document that is necessary for the management of the Programme;
 - To contribute to the development of the Programme website;
 - To co-ordinate in advance all its activities with the JS and to inform the JS about the achievements regularly;
- Collection of data to improve the monitoring of projects and identification of potential risks for effective implementation or suspicion of errors, fraud and corruption;
 - Collecting data for database on projects implemented under the Programme and potential beneficiaries according to the JS's request;
- Supporting the MA and JS in their day-to-day implementation activity. The Branch office may be involved in the project evaluation and implementation follow up

- Assistance to MA/JS in activities related to the translation of all relevant documents from/into Slovak and English;
- Support to the JS in performing administrative and eligibility check (screen for administrative and eligibility compliance applications) of projects;

The Branch Office may be involved in supporting the JS performing site inspections to check on compliance of the project actions with the projects' activity plans, observe progress and discuss issues as well as visit project events and conferences.

- Prepare the minutes of the projects' visit and send them to the JS
- To take all necessary steps to perform and correctly manage the tasks delegated by the JS on behalf of MA;

- To submit annual report in the given format to the JS within one month after the end of each calendar year and provide information needed for it.

Any other specific task will be listed separately in the Job Description of the selected expert of the Branch office

2.4 Expected results

The Branch Offices will be established and operated by the hosting institutions, which is the **Košice Self-governing region** in the Programme eligible area. Any interested applicants can apply to the Branch Office to receive comprehensive information support, technical information concerning the Programme eligibility criteria and requirements, as well as about conditions and terms of the future Calls for proposals, organisation of info days, trainings, seminars etc. The Applicant should be aware about the risk of overlap with other projects funded by the European Commission (hereinafter referred to as EC) or other donors. Information about funding possibilities is actively and broadly disseminated to the Slovak eligible partners, in particular at the opening of Calls for proposals. Comprehensive information in English is prepared for the Programme website.

The MA and JS receive the required information and support in implementation of the Programme in the Slovak Republic.

In case if the Branch office is involved into the implementation follow-up the site inspection and on spot visit to the projects will be performed. Results of these visits will be broadly communicated to the JS in written in order to minimise the risk of the unsuccessful implementation and follow the project developments.

3. PLACE AND DURATION

3.1 Place

The location of performance of the assignment is the seat of the Self-governing region of Košice in the Slovak Republic, where the expert performs the duties of the Branch Office of the Programme. The project will include visits to the Programme eligible regions in Slovak Republic and missions abroad if necessary. The hosting institution shall ensure that the Branch Office is adequately equipped and maintained.

3.2 Project duration

The intended commencement date is the **01.09.2024** and the implementation period will be 27 months from the signature of the contract.

The JS, after consulting the MA may, at its own discretion, extend the engagement in duration, however, it ends at the latest on 30.06.2029. Any subsequent extension of the contract would be subject to satisfactory performance by the Branch Office. This shall be judged, in particular, in terms of the progress towards the achievement of the project purpose, and the delivery of the anticipated results. The JS, after consulting the MA and Slovak National Authority may, at its own discretion, extend the duration of the engagement to the period of the HU-SK-RO-UA Interreg NEXT Programme.

The JS reserves the right to terminate the agreement in case of insufficient performance, repeated unavailability or if problems arise regarding the impartiality and/or confidentiality of the expert.

4. SELECTION PROCEDURE

The experts shall be selected on the basis of their professional and technical ability to perform the defined tasks.

4.1. Application process

Interested candidates are requested to submit the following documents via email:

- Curriculum Vitae in English with photo (EU format as it can be found at) <https://europa.eu/europass/en/create-europass-cv>
- Motivation letter in English
- proof of education, professional experience and language knowledge in national languages (scan only)

Curriculum Vitae shall contain personnel information, employment history, education and training, personal skills and competencies.

The motivation letter shall contain the description of the previous experience in the professional field.

Applicants must provide evidence they possess the required skills, sufficient professional experience. Expertise in the priorities and measures of the Programme is an advantage.

4.2. Requirements

Only the candidates fulfilling the following minimum requirements will be taken into consideration:

- Relevant higher education degree (regional development, spatial planning, public administration, economics, law or other);

- At least 2 years professional experience (in the Programme territory of the Slovak Republic) in working with local/regional authorities as well as with civil society organisations in organizing disseminating information about the EU funding, providing trainings, developing information activities;
- Having experience in project evaluation and/or implementation follow up (e.g. be familiar with the logical framework approach to the projects implementation, working with project action plans and performance indicators;
- Sound knowledge of the requirements set by the legal framework related to the management of the EU Funds and the European Neighbourhood Policy;
- Demonstrated knowledge on the HU-SK-RO-UA ENI CBC and HU-SK-RO-UA Interreg NEXT Programme;
- Knowledge of the relevant Slovak legislation;
- Fluency in Slovak and English; knowledge of the other languages of the programme area (*Hungarian, Romanian, Ukrainian*) is an advantage;
- Organisational, management and communication skills;
- Initiative and problem-solving oriented;
- Negotiation skills;
- IT literacy.

Thorough knowledge of the programme area, as well as the planning and regional/local development documents and strategies is an asset. Experience in the fields of cross-border cooperation, preferably INTERREG, PHARE CBC, TACIS CBC, ENPI CBC, project management, regional development, evaluation of projects and skills for compiling a financial and budgetary analysis of proposals will be considered as additional assets.

4.3. Selection criteria

The selection of the proper Branch Office staff shall be managed **open procedure in line with relevant national legislation**. Thus, every natural person has the right to apply, if fulfils all requirements.

The recruitment committee consists of the representatives of the following organisations: Managing Authority, Joint Secretariat, concerned National Authority (Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic) and the representative of the Branch Offices' hosting organisation. The recruitment committee's decision shall be reached with consensus. To ensure that selection is in line with the ToR and with other legally binding documents, the MA has a right for veto.

5. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS AND CONTRACTING

The organisation hosting the JS shall transfer yearly the financial contribution as pre-financing. The provision of the financial contribution shall be subject to fulfilment of the obligations under the contracts/agreements by the Branch Offices. The Branch Offices must draw up – in English language – annual reports as well as brief half a year activity reports during the period of implementation of the tasks. Brief activity reports shall be

produced every half a year starting from the first half a year, which should be submitted within 10 calendar days of the following month, and will describe activities and actions undertaken by the Branch office expert, his results and outcomes within the concerned half year. Copy of materials produced by the Branch Offices will be attached to the half a year reports.

According to the decision of the Monitoring Committee of the Programme the indicative yearly allocation foreseen for the Slovak Branch Office in Košice with 1 expert is 10 000 EUR. This contribution shall cover the personnel costs of the experts working for the Branch Offices, the expenditure related to communication, information, assistance to the Managing Authority and Joint Secretariat in the project evaluation and implementation follow-up. The Programme may allocate separate budget for travel and subsistence costs which are directly linked to Programme activities up to 15% of the yearly contribution.

Contracts/agreements will be signed between Széchenyi Programme Office Nonprofit Llc. on behalf of JS and the authorized representatives of the organisation hosting the Branch Office.

6. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

For each task performed, the expert selected must demonstrate appropriate ethical conduct and must respect the confidentiality of the information and documents to which they will have access. Furthermore, expert may not be personally involved in project elaboration or coordination or linked to projects or activities implemented by the entities submitting project application under HU-SK-RO-UA Interreg NEXT Programme.

7. DEADLINE

All interested candidates shall submit their applications via e-mail as detailed in point 4.1 of this ToR.

Following must be indicated to the subject of the e-mail: "Call for Application of Branch Office Expert Position – HU-SK-RO-UA Interreg NEXT Programme".

The electronic version comprising of:

- Curriculum Vitae in English (in EU format),
- Motivation letter in English and
- proof of education, professional experience and language knowledge in national languages (scan only)

must be sent via e-mail to call@huskroua-cbc.eu by **23rd of August, 2024**, at the latest.

A copy of e-mail must be sent to the following e-mail addresses:

Balazs.Zam@mfa.gov.hu

peter.balun@mirri.gov.sk

Barbora.Kovacova@vucke.sk