

Bucharest
20.09.2017

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTING SERVICES – INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS)

ROMANIA

Romania Secondary Education Project
Loan Agreement No 8481-RO

Assignment Title: Technical assistance to Support the Revision of the National Curriculum for High Schools - International Best Practices

Reference No.: C 1.2/1.1.1

The *Government of Romania (GoR)* has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the *Romania Secondary Education Project*, and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services (“the Services”) include *Technical assistance to Support the Revision of the National Curriculum for High Schools - International Best Practices* within a period of 60 days, between September 2017 and March 2018. The Terms of Reference for *Technical assistance to Support the Revision of the National Curriculum for High Schools - International Best Practices* are annexed to this Request for Expressions of Interest.

The *Ministry of National Education / Unit for the Management of Externally Financed Projects* now invites eligible consultants (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

One Consultant will be selected in accordance with the selection of individual consultants method set out in the Consultant Guidelines. Firms are not allowed to propose individual consultants. Each consultant must indicate the targeted position, taking into account the following minimum qualification requirements:

Qualification

The minimum competencies required are the following:

- (i) Advanced graduate degree (PHD/master degree/other postgraduate studies) in education sciences or pedagogy;
- (ii) At least 10 years of experience in curriculum development, assessment and teacher training at national and international levels;
- (iii) Proven international experience in curriculum framework and syllabus development and assessment;

- (iv) Proven experience in competence based curriculum development and formative assessment;
- (v) Experience in development or implementation of inclusive practices in curriculum and assessment will be an advantage;
- (vi) Academic track record/ publications on the topics of curriculum development or at least 7 years' experience in working with education development projects;
- (vii) Understanding of the Romanian system of education, especially of the upper secondary level, and of the Romanian curriculum/ Eastern-Europe will be an advantage;
- (viii) Proved ability to deliver under tight deadlines and produce high quality outputs;
- (ix) Strong interpersonal skills and excellent written and oral communication skills in English.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraph 1.9 of the World Bank's *"Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits and Grants by World Bank Borrowers"* dated January 2011 (revised July 2014). ("Consultant Guidelines"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest. In addition, please refer to the following specific information on conflict of interest related to this assignment:

Bank policy requires that consultants provide professional, objective, and impartial advice and at all times hold the client's interests paramount, without any consideration for future work, and that in providing advice they avoid conflicts with other assignments and their own corporate interests. Consultants shall not be hired for any assignment that would be in conflict with their prior or current obligations to other clients, or that may place them in a position of being unable to carry out the assignment in the best interest of the Borrower. Without limitation on the generality of the foregoing, consultants shall not be hired under the circumstances set forth below:

(a) Conflict between consulting activities and procurement of goods, works, or non-consulting services (i.e., services other than consulting services covered by these Guidelines): A firm that has been engaged by the Borrower to provide goods, works, or non-consulting services for a project, or any affiliate that directly or indirectly controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with that firm, shall be disqualified from providing consulting services resulting from or directly related to those goods, works, or non-consulting services. Conversely, a firm hired to provide consulting services for the preparation (before Loan effectiveness) or implementation of a project, or any affiliate that directly or indirectly controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with that firm, shall be disqualified from subsequently providing goods, works, or services (other than consulting services covered by these Guidelines) resulting from or directly related to the consulting services for such preparation or implementation. This provision does not apply to the various firms (consultants, contractors, or suppliers) which together are performing the Contractor's obligations under a turnkey or design and build contract.

(b) Conflict among consulting assignments: Neither consultants (including their personnel and sub-consultants), nor any affiliate that directly or indirectly controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with that firm, shall be hired for any assignment that, by its nature, may be in conflict with another assignment of the consultants. As an example, consultants assisting a client in the privatization of public assets shall neither

purchase, nor advise purchasers of, such assets. Similarly, consultants hired to prepare Terms of Reference (TOR) for an assignment shall not be hired for the assignment in question.

(c) Relationship with Borrower's staff: Consultants (including their experts and other personnel, and sub-consultants) that have a close business or family relationship with a professional staff of the Borrower (or of the project implementing agency, or of a recipient of a part of the loan) who are directly or indirectly involved in any part of: (i) the preparation of the TOR for the assignment, (ii) the selection process for the contract, or (iii) the supervision of such contract may not be awarded a contract, unless the conflict stemming from this relationship has been resolved in a manner acceptable to the Bank throughout the selection process and the execution of the contract.

(d) A consultant shall submit only one proposal, either individually or as a joint venture partner in another proposal. If a consultant, including a joint venture partner, submits or participates in more than one proposal, all such proposals shall be disqualified. This does not, however, preclude a consulting firm to participate as a sub-consultant, or an individual to participate as a team member, in more than one proposal when circumstances justify and if permitted by the RFP (Request for Proposal).

One Consultant will be selected in accordance with the selection of individual consultants method set out in the Consultant Guidelines.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours 8:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.

Expressions of interest and CVs must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by fax, or by e-mail) by September 29, 2017, at 2 P.M local time. To validate the information presented in the CV, the candidate will attach all supporting documents, necessary to prove at least the minimum qualifications that are mandatory (study diplomas, proofs for the professional experience, list of papers and/or copies after the cover and the content of relevant scientific works, recommendations, training diplomas etc.).

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Romania
Ministry of National Education
Romania Secondary Education Project (ROSE Project)
Loan Agreement N° 8481-RO

**Terms of Reference for Consultant to Support the Revision of the National Curriculum
for High Schools - International Best Practices**

I. Background

On April 17, 2015, the Government of Romania (GoR) and the World Bank (WB) signed the Loan Agreement N° 8481-RO on the implementation of the **Romania Secondary Education Project** (hereinafter referred to as **the ROSE Project**). The ROSE Project was declared effective on October 14, 2015, and will be implemented by the Ministry of National Education (MNE) until November 2022, through the Unit for the Management of Externally Financed Projects (UMEFP). The ROSE Project Development Objectives (PDO) are to improve transition from upper secondary to tertiary education and increase the retention in the first year of tertiary education in project-supported education institutions. It is structured in three components, as described below.

Component 1 – School-based and Systemic Interventions finances supply-side interventions at the school and system levels to address the academic and personal factors hindering Romanian students from transitioning from upper secondary to tertiary education, including dropping out, declining to take the Baccalaureate, or scoring a low mark on the Baccalaureate.

Sub-component 1.1 – School-based Interventions supports the transition of students from upper secondary to tertiary education using a decentralized approach based on non-competitive grants to low-performing public high schools.

The criteria for selection of eligible high schools combine the following rates: Baccalaureate passing rate and graduation rate of the last years of high schools. Grants will be awarded to public high schools for a 4-year period to allow sufficient time for implementing activities aimed at supporting students from Grade 9 through Grade 12. At the end of the Project, it is estimated that approximately 80 percent of Romanian public high schools (1,082) would benefit from this sub-component.

Sub-component 1.2 – Systemic Interventions finances interventions at the level of the entire pre-university education system related to: (i) revision of the upper secondary education curriculum, with specific consideration for the needs of disadvantaged students including Roma; (ii) training of teachers and public school directors on implementing the revised curriculum, on adapting the curriculum to the needs and abilities of different students (inclusive education), student-centered teaching approaches, intercultural competence and on formative assessment; (iii) improving teaching conditions within Teachers Houses; (iv) revising and updating Grade 8 and Baccalaureate exam banks of items, and providing training and improvement of existing information and technologies platform; (v) development and implementation of a Grade 10 learning assessment, to be administered at the end of the compulsory education cycle; (vi) development of digital teaching and learning materials; (vii) development and implementation of campaigns to raise student and teacher awareness, which could be tailored for Roma students; and (viii) strengthening of MNE’s capacity to use

educational information to monitor upper secondary education and the transition of students into tertiary education.

This sub-component would finance technical assistance for the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) and the National Center for Technical and Vocational Education and Training Development (NCTVETD) to revise the curriculum for upper secondary education from a knowledge-based to a competence-based model, including the revision of the teaching plans for high schools and more than 430 syllabi of general subjects or specialty subjects/modules for grades 9 to 12 in all three tracks of Romanian high schools. This process will be conducted in alignment with the curriculum revisions for grades 1-8, which have been approved during school year 2016-2017.

In close relationship with the curriculum revision, the ROSE project funds will be used to finance training and professional development programs for teachers and public school directors of Romanian high schools, focusing on pedagogical techniques aligned with the competence-based approach, student-centered teaching that shifts the focus from teachers to learners, inclusive education and intercultural competence.

Component 2 – University - Level Interventions and Bridge Programs supports activities designed to address the needs of students who are at risk of dropping out of faculties in the first year of study in tertiary education. It finances three grant schemes – one non-competitive and two competitive – for public faculties/universities that serve these at-risk students. Approximately 85 percent of Romanian public faculties would benefit from this component.

Component 3 – Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation finances day-to-day project management activities, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) activities and studies, an analysis of existing demand-side programs, project audits, as well as incremental operational and staffing costs of the MNE's UMEFP.

II. Objective

The objective of this assignment is to provide technical assistance to the Romanian decision-making bodies in curriculum, in particular the Ministry of National Education, the Institute of Education Sciences and the National Center for Technical and Vocational Education and Training Development, in their process of revision of the national curriculum, by **documenting relevant recent international best practices in the area of curriculum development and curriculum reforms, with a special focus on upper secondary curriculum, and proposing a set of Recommendations for the development/revision of the Romanian upper secondary curriculum.**

III. Scope of Services

To achieve the objective of this assignment, the Consultant is expected to undertake the following tasks:

a. Learning Tasks:

- Review the ROSE Project documents including the Project Appraisal Document, Loan Agreement No 8481-RO and, if necessary, other documents as indicated by the Project Director.
- b. **Meet the core members of the ROSE Project Management Unit**, especially the Project Director, the Technical Coordinator, and the Upper Secondary Education

Specialist for Systemic Interventions, other specialists in the UMEFP as indicated by the Project Director, as well as other experts involved in ROSE, especially in curriculum and evaluation related activities.

- c. ***Meet and collaborate with the representatives of the Institute for Educational Sciences***, especially the Director General, the Deputy Director, and the head of the Curriculum Laboratory, as well as ***with the relevant representatives of the National Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training Development***.
- d. ***Analyze the current curriculum development process in Romania*** (framework, approach, actors, institutions involved) and the curriculum documents developed so far: curriculum policy document and other strategic documents referring to curriculum development, curriculum frameworks and subject curriculum for primary and lower secondary level of education.
- e. ***Identify and present in a report international experiences and best practices in curriculum reforms***, covering European, especially European Union, countries, but also ensuring global coverage on recent and highly acknowledged curriculum development processes, with a focus on upper secondary level, having in mind the curriculum development policies and practices existing in Romania.

The report resulting from the analysis of international best practices will focus at least on:

- Examples of conditions to access the upper secondary level of education;
- Examples of educational aims and upper secondary school graduates profiles;
- Types of final examinations, types of certifications and conditions to access tertiary education;
- Learning pathways/tracks provided by upper secondary education and flexibility across and within educational pathways;
- Models of curriculum design, focused on competency-based/ learning outcomes-based approach (including frameworks, documented examples on quality and efficiency etc.);
- Documenting recent EU initiatives in the area of key competencies in a lifelong perspective (revision of the eight European key competences);
- Examples of promoting inter- and trans- disciplinary approaches in curriculum, with a focus on upper secondary level;
- Strategies to adapt curriculum to the needs and abilities of different students, as a foundation for an inclusive system of education; innovative approaches in curriculum development to adjust educational context to disadvantaged students (caused by personal, social, cultural or economic factors);
- Trends in international curriculum reforms, based on examples of successful curriculum reform (stages and implementation steps, duration, staff and stakeholders involved, including involvement in development of curriculum frameworks and subjects syllabi, aspects related to piloting, monitoring and evaluation of the new curriculum, success factors etc.);

The draft of the report should be presented to the ROSE Project Director, and all comments provided to the Consultant should be incorporated in the final version of the documents.

- f. ***Elaborate a set of Recommendations for the development/revision of the Romanian upper secondary curriculum***, based on the documented best practices and international trends in this area, but also having in mind the curricular development policies and practices existing in Romania.
The draft of the recommendations should be presented to the ROSE Project Director and all comments provided to the Consultant should be incorporated in the final version of the documents.
- g. ***Coordinate with the other consultant/consultants*** contracted by UMEFP in the field of curriculum and, if necessary, in the field of learning outcomes assessment, in order to ensure coherence and consistency of their approach and to make sure that their activities and deliverables complement each other.
- h. ***Design and conduct 2 national workshops*** for policy-makers and curriculum experts, to present and discuss the preliminary and final findings and conclusions of the *Report on international experiences and best practices in curriculum reforms and Recommendations for the development/revision of the Romanian upper secondary curriculum*. The UMEFP will be responsible for organizing the 2 workshops.
- i. ***Communicate proactively and regularly with the ROSE Project Director and his/her core team and participate in meetings, as needed.***

IV. Deliverables

As a result of the services described above, the Consultant shall deliver the products specified in the table below. All deliverables shall be provided in English.

Deliverable	Due Date (in weeks following contract signing)
Draft <i>Report on international best practices in competency-based/learning outcomes-based approach in curriculum reforms, with a focus on upper secondary level.</i>	10 weeks
Draft <i>Recommendations for Romanian curriculum development/revision of the upper secondary level.</i>	12 weeks
Final version of the <i>Report on international best practices in competency-based/ learning outcomes-based approach in curriculum reforms, with a focus on upper secondary level.</i>	15 weeks
Final version of the <i>Recommendations for curriculum revision in Romania, with a focus on upper secondary level.</i>	17 weeks
First workshop addressed to policy makers and members of the working groups for curriculum development in upper secondary education, based on final findings and recommendations.	19 weeks
Second workshop addressed to policy makers and members of the working groups for curriculum development in upper secondary education, based on final findings and recommendations.	22 weeks

V. Qualifications

The following qualifications are required for the proposed appointment:

- Advanced graduate degree (PHD/master degree/other postgraduate studies) in education sciences or pedagogy;
- At least 10 years of experience in curriculum development, assessment and teacher training at national and international levels;
- Proven international experience in curriculum framework and syllabus development and assessment;
- Proven experience in competence based curriculum development and formative assessment;
- Experience in development or implementation of inclusive practices in curriculum and assessment will be an advantage;
- Academic track record/ publications on the topics of curriculum development or at least 7 years' experience in working with education development projects;
- Understanding of the Romanian system of education, especially of the upper secondary level, and of the Romanian curriculum/ Eastern-Europe will be an advantage;
- Proved ability to deliver under tight deadlines and produce high quality outputs;
- Strong interpersonal skills and excellent written and oral communication skills in English.

VI. Other Relevant Terms

Period of the Assignment. The assignment is planned for up to 60 days between September 2017 and March 2018, with the possibility to be extended, if needed, based on positive assessment of the performance of the Consultant.

Reporting Obligations. The Consultant shall report to the ROSE Project Director. All deliverables shall be submitted to the ROSE Project Director.

Confidentiality. The Consultant shall not at any time communicate to any person or entity any confidential information acquired in the course of the proposed assignment. Any public communication related to the present assignment should be previously agreed with the ROSE Project Director.

Proprietary Rights. All documentation compiled or prepared by the Consultant for the MNE and World Bank in the course of the proposed assignment shall be confidential and become and remain the absolute property of the MNE. The Consultant shall, not later than upon termination or expiration of the Contract to be prepared for the proposed assignment, deliver all such documentation to the MNE.