

External Expertise - Financial & Procurement Expert - Part time

Reference SA-0300462/2025/ZICG/1

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

About RIoM

In its capacity as an infrastructure manager, Railway Infrastructure builds and invests in railway infrastructure, takes care of its modernization and maintenance, ensures access and allocates infrastructure capacities to all interested railway carriers that meet the legal requirements, determines fees for the use of infrastructure capacities, creates and publishes timetables, organizes and regulates railway traffic. Railway Infrastructure of Montenegro JSC (RIoM) is responsible for maintaining the construction and electrotechnical railway infrastructure, as well as for managing investment projects related to the reconstruction and modernization of railway structures and electrotechnical systems.

About the “Connected for Cohesion” project

From July 1, 2025, CDI and its partners is implementing the project “**Connection for Cohesion**” co-financed from Interreg South Adriatic Programme 2021-2027. The project is expected to bring in several transformative changes in SAA rail sector, particularly in the context of its integration into the Core TEN-T network before 2030, through: i) an Improved Rail Connectivity: a comprehensive assessment of the rail sector will assess gaps & areas for improvement; ii) Increased Financing Scenarios for CBC initiatives; iii) Knowledge Transfer & Expertise Sharing, which will strengthen candidate countries' strategic capabilities and increase their participation in EU infrastructure & transport policies; iv) an Enhanced Integration into the TEN-T Network. As a result of these efforts, the SA region will become more integrated into the TEN-T network, improving its readiness to access EU corridors. This will increase the region's visibility & influence in EU relevant policies post 2027, facilitating greater economic cooperation & growth. Finally, the project will practically improve the preparedness of AL & MNE for Chapters 14&21. Co4Co is implemented by a cross-border partnership of five institutions: Cooperation and Development Institute (Albania) as Lead Partner, Albanian Railways, Railway Infrastructure of Montenegro, Puglia Region and Molise Region from Italy.

1.1 Beneficiary Country

Montenegro, with coverage of Albania and Italy

1.2 Contracting Authority

Railway Infrastructure of Montenegro (RIoM)

1.3 Relevant Background

The *Co4Co Project* aims to enhance TEN-T rail readiness of the South Adriatic region and increase regions' footprint in EU policies. Project focus is rail connectivity, financing opportunities, and knowledge transfer in the rail sector. The project promotes cross-border cooperation between Albania, Montenegro, and Italy (Puglia and Molise), valorising collaboration and exchange of experience as tangible contribution to candidate countries' readiness for EU integration and funding instruments.

To achieve its objectives, RIoM will complement its internal team with high-level external expertise that will provide dedicated external support.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE CONTRACT

To provide expert financial management and procurement support to the Project Partner, ensuring compliance with applicable EU, donor, and national regulations, and to strengthen internal capacity for efficient project implementation.

3. DURATION AND SCOPE OF WORK

- **Duration:** January 2026 – end of project
- **Engagement:** Part-time, with flexible input according to project needs
- **Location:** Based at the Project Partner premises, with remote support as agreed

Scope of Work - Financial and Procurement Expert

The Financial and Procurement Expert will provide specialized support to ensure sound financial management, compliance, and transparent procurement procedures across the project's cross-border activities. Main tasks include:

- Provide ongoing financial management expertise to RIoM, ensuring compliance with EU and national regulations.
- Support in the monitoring and reporting of project budgets, forecasts, and financial plans.
- Ensure accuracy, eligibility, and timeliness of financial documentation, including invoices, contracts, and supporting evidence.
- Prepare and submit periodic financial reports (interim, final) in line with lead partner, donor and programme requirements.
- Advise and support on procurement planning, tendering, evaluation, and contract award in accordance with applicable procurement rules.
- Develop standard templates, guidance, and checklists to strengthen partner capacity in procurement and financial compliance.
- Support audits, verifications, and monitoring missions by preparing required documentation and ensuring follow-up of recommendations.
- Act as liaison with the Lead Partner's finance/procurement team to ensure consistency and quality across cross-border project management.

3.2 Project Management

3.2.1 Contracting Authority

The Contracting Authority for the contract is: RIoM, at Address: Trg Golootckih zrtava, 13.

3.2.2 Facilities to be provided by the contracting authority and/or other parties

The Contracting Authority will fully co-operate with the Service Provider in order to achieve the best results. Technical information and access to the existing records, any useful information and/or

documentation which may be relevant to the performance of the Contract will be provided upon request.

The Contracting Authority will provide a workplace in its premises for the Contractor, to be used for project purpose.

The Service provider shall appoint a contact person responsible for all communication with the Contracting Authority.

4. ASSUMPTIONS & RISKS

4.1. Assumptions underlying the project

- There are available service providers for the provision of requested services.
- Sufficient flow of relevant information for the project implementation between the involved parties

4.2. Risks

Force majeure affecting the organization of the event (natural force majeure, INTERREG IPA South Adriatic Programme related, etc)

5. LOGISTICS AND TIMING

5.1 Location

Combination of remote support, desk-work, field missions (Montenegro, Albania, Italy, Brussels) and online facilitation.

5.2 Start date & period of implementation of tasks

The intended start date is 15th January 2026 and the period of implementation of the contract will be within two weeks from this date. Please see point 3 of the main conditions for the actual start date and period of implementation.

6. REQUIREMENTS

6.1. Financial and Procurement Expert

- **Education.** University degree in Finance, Accounting, Economics, Business Administration, or related field.
- **Experience:**
 - At least 7 years of professional experience in financial management and procurement, preferably with EU/donor-funded projects.
 - Proven knowledge of EU financial regulations and procurement rules (PRAG or equivalent).
 - Experience in preparing financial reports, budgets, and audit documentation for donor-funded projects.
- **Skills:** Excellent organizational, communication, and interpersonal skills; proficiency in English.

6.2 Facilities to be provided by the contractor

The contractor shall ensure that Key Experts, or any other eventual expert, support staff or backstopping are adequately supported and equipped. In particular it must ensure that there is sufficient administrative, secretarial and interpreting provision to enable other experts, support staff & backstopping to concentrate on their primary responsibilities.

6.3 Equipment

No equipment is to be purchased on behalf of the contracting authority / partner country as part of this service contract or transferred to the contracting authority / partner country at the end of this contract.

7. OUTPUTS

The contractor will report in a timesheet modality for the support provided to RIoM in achieving the following:

- Templates, checklists, and guidance notes on RIoM Co4Co financial and procurement processes developed and used by the Project Partner.
- Accurate and timely interim and final financial reports submitted to the Lead Partner /donor.
- RIoM procurement plans, tender dossiers, evaluation reports, and contract award documents reviewed and validated for compliance.
- Complete documentation package prepared for audits, verifications, and monitoring missions.
- Procurement plans, tender dossiers, evaluation reports, and contract award documents reviewed and validated for compliance.
- Regular reporting and coordination shared with the Lead Partner's finance/procurement team.

8. APPLICATION & SELECTION

Interested experts or expert teams shall submit:

- CV(s) highlighting relevant experience.