

Terms of Reference (ToR) Provision of External Service:

“Support Services for research activity”

PROJECT "MOVE ON 2027: QUALIFICAZIONE E MOBILITÀ DEL
CAPITALE UMANO NELL'AREA TRANSFRONTALIERA ITALIA-MALTA"
- C1-1.2-58 - CUP: G15H24000090007

PROGRAMME INTERREG VI – A ITALIA MALTA 2021 - 2027

August 7, 2025

Subject

Public selection procedure related to the provision of Support Services to:

- Research activity

The services are necessary for the implementation of the activities entrusted to the company HERMES CORPORATION LTD located in Pinto Building Triq San Albert GZR 1159 MALTA, Email info@hermesmalta.com Telephone +35627181517 (hereafter HERMES) under the PROJECT MOVE ON 2027: QUALIFICAZIONE E MOBILITÀ DEL CAPITALE UMANO NELL'AREA TRANSFRONTALIERA ITALIA-MALTA" - C1-1.2-58 - CUP: G15H24000090007 and, in particular, of those falling within WP 3 RESEARCH, ANALYSIS AND CAPITALIZATION – Activity A2.1 “Communication plan and project launch” and Activity A.3.1 “PRELIMINARY DESK ANALYSIS”.

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Background

The PROJECT MOVE ON 2027: QUALIFICAZIONE E MOBILITÀ DEL CAPITALE UMANO NELL'AREA TRANSFRONTALIERA ITALIA-MALTA" - C1-1.2-58 - CUP: G15H24000090007 is an EU territorial cooperation project co-financed by the EU under the INTERREG VI – A ITALIA MALTA 2021 - 2027, Priority and Specific Objective 1.2

The MOVE ON 2027 project has the aim to fill the gap that the territorial analysis of the cross-border area (April 2021) and the CP Italy/Malta 2021-2027 (December 2022) confirm among the point of weakness the "weak exchange of skills and of mobility of people between the two territories of the area". To overcome this weakness, in addition to an improved qualification of human capital, it is necessary to continue to invest in mobility as it can favour a better balance in the cross-border labour market and can increase innovation and internationalization of the entrepreneurial systems. In this regard, starting from the success achieved by the recent "MOVE ON" project (Code: C2-2.2-112), "MOVE ON 2027" wants to involve in cross-border mobility experiences not only young people in transition from training to the labour market but also employed people (e.g. entrepreneurs, managers, professionals, etc.). Furthermore, the new initiative focuses also on the issue of qualification of human capital. MOVE ON 2027, therefore, capitalizes on the lessons learned with the MOVE ON project and introduces significant elements of innovation capable of strengthening the impact of a model already successfully tested. Moreover, MOVE ON 2027 wants to involve policy makers more actively and to consolidate and expand a result achieved by MOVE ON - the "cross-border network" - making it a dynamic platform for cross-border cooperation not only for employment and mobility but also for entrepreneurship and innovation, in particular in the RIS3 areas of Sicily and Malta and, more generally, in sectors of common interest. Finally, MOVE ON 2027 promotes synergies with the main local development programs (especially ERDF/ESF+ programmes), with cooperation strategies for the Mediterranean area (e.g. West MED, EUSAIR, other ETC programs) as well as with other EU programs (e.g. Erasmus+, Horizon, etc.).

Project Lead Partner:

ASS.FOR.SEO. Società Consortile ar.l.

Project Partners:

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Associated Partners:

- Confederazione Generale dell'industria Sicilia - CONFINDUSTRIA SICILIA
- Camera di Commercio Industria Artigianato e Agricoltura di Palermo ed Enna
- Città di Palermo - Assessorato all'Innovazione digitale e Rapporti funzionali con SISPI
- North Harbour Ltd.; Platinum Development Ltd, ST Hotels Ltd, ST Properties Ltd
- Ecomarine Malta
- Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, Ghammieri

The project duration is 24 months (Start Date: 02.01.2025 - End Date: 02.01.2027) with a total budget of: 880.000,00 € ERDF Contribution of which: 704.000,0€.

Within this framework, HERMES is selecting a supplier/consultant to which it will subcontract some tasks related to the implementation of PRELIMINARY DESK ANALYSIS activities of which it is responsible. In particular, the services that will be related to carrying out on behalf of the HERMES

- Research activity

To these ends, by means of market research and after comparing the curricula by all the offers that showed interest and evaluating professional experience and technical skills, HERMES will identify a qualified suppliers/consultants and evaluating the economic offer in response to the specifications described in the next section ("Description of the Service"). The contract will be awarded to the tender offering the most economically advantageous tender based on the best quality/price ratio.

Description of the Service

1. Objectives of the contract

The main objective of the contract is to contribute to the goals of the MOVE ON 2027 project by subcontracting services that are necessary for the implementation of the tasks forming part of the activities that the HERMES needs to carry out within the project.

The services will be accomplished through the execution of the tasks as described in the following paragraph.

2. Detailed description of the tasks to be performed and deliverables to be achieved

The goal of WP3 is to develop a solid knowledge base on the project's core themes, particularly for the

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implementation of WP4. This knowledge base, in turn, will be enriched along the way, thanks to information derived from the actions carried out in WP4, until one of the project's main outputs is finalized: OT1.1 "Policy paper for the qualification and circulation of skills in a cross-border context."

All WP3 activities and related deliverables will contribute to this output, most of which involve the active involvement of the project's three main target groups: i) young people in transition from education to work; ii) employed individuals/businesses; iii) policy makers and key stakeholders. The project partners will cooperate both in the executive planning and implementation of the WP, which has a strong cross-border dimension.

First, a preliminary analysis will be conducted, primarily on a desk basis, to reconstruct the general framework for the project's key sectors/themes (e.g., main trends in RIS3 sectors, characteristics of mobility in the cross-border labor market, etc.). This activity will provide essential input both for the implementation of the other WP actions and for the implementation of WP4 (e.g., micro-design of services to be offered through local hubs and of skills-building and cross-border mobility initiatives).

The preliminary knowledge base will then be enriched in the field by acquiring expert opinions, both sector-specific (e.g., regarding the Sicilian and Maltese RIS3 areas) and thematic (e.g., emerging training needs, youth job placement/self-employment, international mobility, programs supporting innovation and business internationalization, cooperation in the Mediterranean region, and international cooperation in general).

WP3 will also evaluate the skills-building and cross-border mobility activities implemented and monitored in WP4, particularly in terms of placement, professional growth, and business development. The beneficiaries of these activities will be directly involved through a web survey and a cross-border focus group.

Finally, attention will be paid to capitalizing on project results, actively involving representatives of the key stakeholders, first in local focus groups and then in a cross-border focus group. Both types of focus groups will be carefully planned (e.g., identifying participants and sharing the focus group's objectives, sending the agenda and supporting materials well in advance, etc.) and will be moderated using consolidated co-design methodologies.

External expertise and services will be acquired for the implementation of the WP, in full compliance with applicable regulations.

Activity A.3.1 PRELIMINARY DESK ANALYSIS

Description of the Activity

A desk analysis will be conducted to reconstruct the overall framework for the project's key sectors and themes. In particular, the main obstacles to mobility in the cross-border labor market will be explored, as well as recent and ongoing programs and experiences in this area. This activity will also allow for a comprehensive mapping of key stakeholders and provide essential input for the other activities of WP3 as well as WP4.

Task 1 Research activity

Product Description – Deliverable: Research report focusing primarily on: i) analysis of the main trends in the cross-border labor market; ii) current and emerging skill shortages, especially in RIS3 sectors, and matching opportunities through cross-border mobility; iii) main measures for hiring young people, for

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business creation/development, and for promoting innovation and internationalization; iv) experiences and best practices in cross-border mobility and economic cooperation. Target value 1
Month of implementation October 2025

Other specifications

To ensure the quality of the service, the Contractor shall guarantee appropriate and consistent standards in its execution. Moreover, the Contractor must produce task related documents and communication in a high-level English.

Expected schedule

During the contractual period, the Contractor must submit periodical reports, which must be written in English and which must contain comprehensive information on the activities put in place with a view to achieving the tasks set out in the contract.

- October 2025: Final report.

Contractual and financial terms

The maximum amount available for this service is 10.000,00 € VAT included.

The travel and accommodation costs for the participation of the expert in the workshops and events relevant to the scope of this contract are not included in the contract.

The participation to project meetings and events will be agreed among HERMES and the expert. The expenses incurred for traveling will be reimbursed by HERMES only if the working trips have been previously authorized by HERMES and fully documented with supporting documents by the expert.

The fees will be paid in no. 3 installments on presentation of a duly-issued and detailed invoices:

- 1st invoice on September 2025 (50 % of the total cost of the service)
- 2nd invoice on October 2025 (balance of the total cost of the service)

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Other conditions for the payments:

- Satisfactory acceptance of services;
- Submission of the requested interim and final reports.;
- Submission by the Service Provider of a detailed invoice/claim for expenses.

Reporting

The Contractor must report to HERMES about the achievements of the entrusted tasks, by providing electronic version of the documents and deliverable. Electronic files shall be editable and in Microsoft® Office or equivalent for Windows format. Moreover, during the and at the end of the contract period, the Contractor must submit task achievement reports and a final report which must be written in English.

Payment Instructions

The payment term for the invoices will be Bank transfer within 30 days after the acceptance of the original invoice. The bank account details will be asked to the Contractor. HERMES maintains the right to require additional fiscal documentation if considered needed. The tax legislation in force at the date of acceptance of the offer will be applied.

The Awarded Provider shall submit to HERMES both an electronic (by emailing to info@hermesmalta.com) and the original hard copy of the invoice/claim for expenses.

The invoices have to include the following information:

Header: HERMES CORPORATION LTD Pinto Building Triq San Albert GZR 1159 MALTA
Income tax number: 996137537
Registration No. C58707

Object: "Provision of research activity" – PROJECT "MOVE ON 2027: QUALIFICAZIONE E MOBILITÀ DEL CAPITALE UMANO NELL'AREA TRANSFRONTALIERA ITALIA-MALTA" - C1-1.2-58 - CUP: G15H24000090007
PROGRAMME INTERREG VI – A ITALIA MALTA 2021 - 2027– [Instalment No._]"

Description: Details of the service provided.

Hermes is not in the condition to pay in advance the invoice.

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Duration

The contract is expected to be signed in September 2025. Execution of the tasks is to start upon the entry into force of the contract, which will take place from the date on which it is signed. The service contract will last for 2 months, presumably from 01/09/2025 to 30/10/2025.

Selection Criteria, Evaluation and Award Procedure

Eligibility

- Citizens in possession of her/his full civil and political rights; Against the applicants, no charges
- shall be pending such as disqualification, prohibition, suspension or decadence, or even indictments, pending convictions and / or preventive measures, pursuant to current legislation;
- The maximum limit for the offer is set at € 10.000,00 (ten thousand euros), VAT included.

Experience and required skills and qualifications of the Applicant (or its legal representative or one of its staff member)

- The Applicant (or its legal representative or one of its staff member) should have the following experience and skills:
 - University degree or diploma;
 - able to work independently as well as within team dynamics;
 - good research skills.
- The Applicant (or its legal representative or one of its staff member) should have proven expertise in research activities; As detailed in the section "Other Specifications", to ensure the high-quality of
- the execution of the assigned tasks, the Contractor (or its legal representative or one of its staff member) must

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- guarantee proficiency in written and spoken English;
- Applicant shall have full technical ability to perform the service described in this ToR.
- Having VAT number (or availability to request a VAT number in September 2025).

How apply

All interested bidders should submit a quotation respecting the following requirements.

Instruction to Proposers	Specific Requirements
Deadline for the submission the offer	25 August 2025 – by 13:00 PM. (Zagreb/Rome time GMT+1). Any offers received after this date and time will not be accepted
How to submit the offer	<p>The candidate must send in one file in PDF format to the following e-mail address: info@hermesmalta.com with the following subject: "Provision of research activity"— PROJECT "MOVE ON 2027: QUALIFICAZIONE E MOBILITÀ DEL CAPITALE UMANO NELL'AREA TRANSFRONTALIERA ITALIA-MALTA" - C1-1.2-58 - CUP: G15H24000090007 PROGRAMME INTERREG VI – A ITALIA MALTA 2021 - 2027</p> <p><u>The application must include the following documents in English language:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Updated Curriculum vitae (CV) in Europass format; - Economic offer in Euro (taking to account that the ceiling amount available for this service is € 10.000,00 included VAT).
Language for submitting the offer	English only
Currencies	EURO (€)

The sending of the offer does not in any way constrain HERMES to request the service in question.

Invitation, selection, evaluation and award criteria

As a subcontractor, HERMES will award the service on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender on the basis of the best quality/price ratio, following the procedure specified below:

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- HERMES after receiving all the offers will carry on in comparing the curricula and evaluating professional experience and technical skills, respecting and guaranteeing the principles of transparency, equal treatment, non-discrimination and competition. Information about the present
- procedure is published on the following websites: <https://italiamalta.eu/> <https://www.hermesmalta.com/en/> Bidders shall send their offers **no later than 13:00 of 25 August 2025** to the email address indicated above. Offers received after the aforementioned deadlines will not be evaluated. Offers shall be sent in Euro and excluding VAT. As a first step, HERMES will assess if the bids meet the eligibility requirements and the experience and required skills of the applicant (or his legal representative or one of his staff member). Secondly, HERMES will evaluate the offers
- on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender (on the basis of the best quality/price ratio) based on the scores awarded for satisfying the requirements outlined above. The offer that gathers the maximum score will be selected. The maximum amount payable for the services described above may not exceed the amount of **€ 10.000,00** (ten thousand euros), included VAT. Any higher offers will be declared ineligible.
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Other issues

HERMES will proceed to award the tender even in case a single valid candidature is received, in the case that it is considered appropriate and convenient.

If two or more offers of the same amount will be received, HERMES will contact the bidders and conduct interviews via telephone and /or web meeting, in order to better evaluate the offers.

HERMES, as a contracting entity, reserves the right not to proceed with the awarding of contracts if no offer is convenient or suitable in relation to the subject of the contract, without the bidders having nothing to claim, not even as a pre-contractual liability.

All the charges and risks relating to the activities and obligations necessary for fulfilling the contract, being considered part of the agreed remuneration, shall be borne by the Contractor.

The Successful bidder assumes full and direct management liability for the services and supplies entrusted to him/her, thereby freeing up HERMES.

It will directly, criminally and civilly, respond for the damages to people and things caused in the execution of the services and supplies, and will bear the full and exclusive charge for any compensation, without the right to recourse or remuneration from HERMES.

Consequently, the Contractor exonerates HERMES from these responsibilities, undertaking to relieve it of any request that, for this reason, should be presented.

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The results of the present selection procedure will be communicated within 5 days after the deadline for submission of bids to all bidders.

A service contract will be concluded with the selected bidder, which must contain all the parts indicated in this tender.

Contacts

In case additional information is required to submit the proposal, we kindly invite you to contact HERMES by writing to the following e-mail address info@hermesmalta.com

Only relevant questions in writing concerning clarifications of the tender will be answered.

This procedure is available for consultation on HERMES website.

Appendix

General Scoring System of the Offers

Attachments

Bid form

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Appendix: General Scoring System of the Offers

1. Technical offer

The technical offer will be evaluated out of 80 points, based on the following criteria:

General experience and technical references: 70 points

The references submitted by the candidates will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. Proven expertise in communication activities, to be highlighted in the updated curriculum that must be attached to the bid form. The capacity to offer innovative communication services will be considered an asset.

Type of outputs realized during the carrying out of communication activities (Maximum 70 points):

- Innovative/digital communication outputs (online surveys, social media management, platforms, databases, mobile or web apps): 70 points.
- Traditional communication outputs (Communication plans, press releases, posters, flyers): 10 points;
- No experience: 0 point.

Candidates with technical offers scoring under 50 points are eliminated automatically.

Among the successful candidates, the best score is made equivalent to 100 points, the scores of the other candidates are then adjusted based on the following equation:

$$TSC = (\text{Initial technical score of the candidate} / \text{Best initial technical score}) \times 100$$

2. Financial offer

Financial offers of the tenderers having a technical score of at least 20 points are examined. The financial offers are first compared with the maximum budget available for the contract.

Tenders exceeding the maximum budget allocated for the contract are considered unacceptable and are eliminated.

For the remaining bids, scores are assigned as follows: the lowest bid is given 20 points, and the other bids are awarded points according to the following equation:

$$PC = (\text{Lowest financial offer} / \text{Financial offer of the tender being considered}) \times 20.$$



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