



Terms of Reference

for the
Subcontracting of an Expert for the Evaluation of
Proposals for the Tourbit Digital Acceleration
Programme

Nova Gorica, 9th February 2023



1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION - TOURBIT PROJECT

Arctur is a project partner of the Tourbit project.

Tourbit is an EU-funded project supporting the digitalisation of European tourism small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Tourbit's main objective is to foster tourism SMEs' skills and capacity to support their digital transformation and innovation while promoting the resilience and competitiveness of the sector.

The project started in January 2022 and will work on its activities and objectives until June 2024. It has an overall budget of 1,331,570 € and is 75% co-funded through COSME, the European Commission's programme for the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises.

Tourbit brings together the following eight partners from seven European territories:

1. Catalan Tourist Board - Spain (Catalonia) - Coordinator
2. Barcelona Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Services and Navigation - Spain (Catalonia)
3. Welcome City Lab by PARIS&CO - France
4. ARCTUR DOO (lead of Tourism 4.0) - Slovenia
5. Cluster hospitality.brussels hosted by hub.brussels - Belgium
6. Iceland Tourism Cluster - Iceland
7. Lapland University of Applied Sciences - Finland (Lapland)
8. NEST - Tourism Innovation Center - Portugal

One activity under the Tourbit project relates to the implementation of a Digital Acceleration Programme for tourism SMEs from the partner countries. To this end, the project has launched a “Call for Proposals for the Selection of Tourism SMEs to be Awarded Financial Support for the Participation in the Tourbit Digital Acceleration Programme” with the aim to select innovative digitalisation projects.

Under the programme, selected tourism SMEs will receive direct financial support to implement their proposed digitalisation projects.

The call for proposals is launched on a transnational level in the following territories:

Spain (Catalonia), France, Slovenia, Belgium, Finland (Lapland), Iceland, and Portugal. Tourbit aims to select a minimum of 62 tourism SMEs, 7-14 SMEs per territory. SMEs selected in each of the territories will receive funding from their respective local organisation.

More information about Tourbit is available on the project website: <https://www.tourbit.eu/>

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

2.1 Objective

The Tourbit project partner Arctur is looking for an **expert** to assist in the evaluation of proposals submitted under the “Call for Proposals for the Selection of Tourism SMEs to be

Awarded Financial Support for the Participation in the Tourbit Digital Acceleration Programme”.

Each of the proposals submitted under the call will be evaluated by two evaluators, one internal evaluator and one external evaluator. The evaluation is overseen and approved by the Selection Committee. Each project partner will contract one external evaluator to evaluate all proposals submitted in its respective territory. **The present document outlines the requirements for subcontracting the external evaluator for proposals submitted by SMEs from Slovenia.**

2.2 Scope of the assignment

In total it is expected that approximately 100 SMEs will apply to the CfP, out of which it is expected that 15-25 proposals will come from Slovenian SMEs. The selected evaluator must evaluate all proposals submitted under the call by Slovenian SMEs. Each proposal has a length of approximately 8-10 pages (max. 12.000 characters). The ultimate number of proposals to be evaluated is unclear and will only be known once the Call for proposals is closed. The remuneration of the contract is according to the number of proposals to be evaluated.

It is furthermore required that the evaluator familiarises with the CfP requirements and objectives to assure the alignment of its evaluation with the criteria established therein. The evaluation criteria are: relevance, innovation, impact and implementation capacity. The evaluator will be provided with specific evaluation guidelines that he/she needs to follow. He/she is required to familiarise with those guidelines apart from attending a 1-1,5h long online introduction session on the evaluation process. The introduction session will take place on that will be organized on the 28th of March 2023 at 11.00 CET online.

The evaluation needs to be carried out according to preestablished criteria and using official templates for the documentation of the evaluation results. The evaluator needs to submit a short evaluation report in English language for each proposal based on the template.

It is expected that the evaluator carries out the work remotely.

2.3 Expected results

The evaluator is expected to deliver the following results:

- In-depth understanding of the Call for Proposal requirements and the evaluation process and criteria
- Attendance of a 1-1,5h introduction session (n English) on the evaluation process
- Evaluation of 20-25 proposals
- Provision of a short evaluation report in English language and scoring of all proposals in each evaluation criteria using the official templates (aprox. ½ page report per proposal)
- Justification of evaluation results in front of the Proposal Selection Committee (if requested).

3. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Experts need to comply with the following criteria in order to be selected as evaluators:

- Prove a high level of expertise in **tourism SMEs' digitalisation (min. 5 years)**
- Have **sufficient notions on the different topics highlighted in the call for proposals** under section 3.2 (Types of Projects and Activities Supported):
 - Digitalisation, automatisisation or improvement of internal processes (digital workspace solutions, DATA ANALYTICS, and data management, improvement of CYBERSECURITY etc.)
 - Digitalisation, automatisisation or improvement of client relations and online presence (digital marketing, sales solutions and communication, CRM, Website (including accessibility improvements), SEO, etc.)
 - Improvement of products or services using digital technologies (e.g. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, INTERNET OF THINGS, AUGMENTED AND VIRTUAL REALITY, CLOUD COMPUTING, BLOCKCHAIN)
 - Planning/ development/ establishment and implementation of (sustainable) digitalisation strategies and action plans, e.g. including aspects of sustainable and responsible digitalisation.
 - The improvement of digital capacities of staff.
 - Implementation of digital tools and solutions incl. standardisation and compliance adaptation such as adaptation of operational procedures, documentation, data collection etc.
- Have knowledge on the country context (Slovenia) SMEs are coming from to understand their specific challenges and state of digitalisation.
- Have very **good knowledge of English, Catalan, and Spanish (min. B2 level for each)**

4. CONFIDENTIALITY AND ABSENCE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Conflict of Interest:

The subcontracted evaluator must not have a direct or indirect conflict of interest with any of the proposals that he/she evaluates.

An evaluator is deemed to have a direct conflict of interest when any of the following applies: he/she is employed by the applicant institution; works closely in collaboration with the applicant (professional relationship); was involved in the preparation of the proposal; or is in some other way closely related to the applicant (family relationship).

An evaluator is deemed to have an indirect conflict of interest if any of the following applies: the evaluator would directly benefit from the proposal being funded or not funded in the context of his/her own professional activities.

In such cases, the evaluator may not evaluate such a proposal and may not take part in discussions relating to such a proposal. Evaluators must declare that no conflict of interest exist and that they will inform the consortium if any such conflict should arise in the course of their duties. If during the evaluation itself, it is discovered that an evaluator is in some way connected with a proposal or has some other involvement, which impairs his/her impartiality, this will be immediately informed.

Confidentiality:

Evaluators are responsible of maintaining confidentiality at all times during the process. The selected evaluator will have to sign a Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality declaration before receiving proposals for evaluation. When carrying out evaluations remotely, evaluators are expected to keep proposal information confidential and not release proposal or evaluation information to third parties.

Under no circumstance may evaluators attempt to contact an applicant either during the evaluation session or afterwards.

5. DURATION OF THE SERVICE

The technical evaluation process will start on 12 April and will last for 3 weeks until 3 May 2023.

It is expected that the evaluator undertakes all evaluations and provides all related evaluation reports by that date. The subcontracting service is considered as finalised once the Selection Committee has approved the evaluation results. The evaluator needs full availability and capacity to carry out the evaluation within the indicated time frame.

The date for the obligatory introduction session for evaluators is yet to be defined but will probably take place on 28th of March 2023 at 11.00 CET online.

Overall calendar overview:

Stages	Dates
Closure of the call	5 April 2023
Eligibility check (administrative evaluation)	6 -11 April 2023
Technical evaluation	12 April 2023 - 03 May 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third evaluation in case of deviation • Approval by the Selection Committee • Reevaluation of proposals by a third evaluator in case of disagreement • Final Approval by the Selection Committee 	04 -17 May 2023
Communication of evaluation results to SMEs	18 May 2023

6. PAYMENT CONDITIONS

The budget for this subcontracting service depends on the number of proposals to be evaluated.

The provider will issue the corresponding invoice at the end of the service provision (once the training has been carried out).

- The invoice must be identified with the specific purchase order number that the Arctur will provide, otherwise it will be returned for identification.
- The Arctur will pay the invoice within a maximum of 30 days, on date 25th of the corresponding month.