

# Serbia Accelerating Innovation and Growth Entrepreneurship

## SAIGE ETHICS OFFICER

### Terms of Reference

#### 1. BACKGROUND

Serbia has received a loan from the World Bank (Bank), through the “Serbia Accelerating Innovation and Growth Entrepreneurship Project” (SAIGE Project), to contribute to the country’s growth and competitiveness by improving (i) relevance and excellence of scientific research and (ii) innovative entrepreneurship and access to finance for enterprise growth. The SAIGE Project includes the following three components:

**Component 1:** Research Sector Reforms (€34 million). The Component 1 includes the following three subcomponents.

1. **Subcomponent 1.1:** Serbia Science Fund (€22.5 million) – The Subcomponent 1.1 will: (a) finance selected competitive programs of the Science Fund (SF), such as basic science grants, applied research grants; and (b) provide technical assistance (TA) for the capacity building and operationalization of the Science Fund, including governance, organizational structure, program design, monitoring and evaluation and other key institutional elements. Implemented by the SF.

2. **Subcomponent 1.2:** RDI Reforms (€8 million) – The Subcomponent 1.2 will support the design and implementation of institutional transformation plans for selected public research and development institutions (RDIs) focusing on enhancing their excellence and relevance. Interested RDIs will undergo self-assessments done by RDI management, and detailed independent external assessments conducted by a team of international experts. Based on these assessments, detailed transformation plans for selected RDIs will be prepared by the external assessment teams. Implemented by the MoESTD.

3. **Subcomponent 1.3:** Serbian Diaspora Facility (€3.5 million) - The Subcomponent 1.3 will support establishment of a Serbian Diaspora Facility (SDF) within the Science Fund to finance technical assistance and provision of grants to scientists, researchers, entrepreneurs and Serbian diaspora to transfer knowledge and skills from the diaspora community back to the country. More specifically, the facility will leverage the strengths and desire of the Serbian diaspora community to contribute to the research, innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem in Serbia. Implemented by the SF.

**Component 2:** Enterprise Acceleration (€7 million). The Component 2 will support the launch of an enterprise acceleration program at the Innovation Fund (IF). The enterprise acceleration program will consist of two streams: one for early (idea) stage, and the other for growth (scale-up) stage companies. The enterprise acceleration program would be structured as follows: (a) Co-Investment Fund to provide Matching Grants for the financing of investments and TA to Selected Companies (up to €4.5–5.5 million); and (b) Technical Assistance Facility (€2 million). Implemented by the IF.

**Component 3:** Project Implementation, Monitoring, Capacity Building (€1.9 million). The Component 3 will finance activities related to project implementation and monitoring, including the operations of a Project Implementation Unit (PIU), established at the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MoESTD) and part of the operating costs

of the Central Fiduciary Unit (CFU) at the Ministry of Finance (MoF). This will also include capacity building support to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MoESTD), Science Fund, Innovation Fund and selected RDIs.

Implementation of the project is carried out by the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) at the MoESTD comprising of PIU head, project officers for the three Project components and experts for environmental and social standards, monitoring and evaluation expert and other administrative support staff.

The main activities that could have ethics impacts are the research and grant programs described under Component 1, Sub-component 1.1 and 1.3. implemented by the SF and Component 2 implemented by the IF. The Consultant will therefore be part of the PIU team, servicing largely the SF and in less extent the IF.

## **2. OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

For the purpose of implementation of the financing programs in SF and IF the PIU needs to engage a qualified Ethics Officer (hereinafter: Consultant) - subject of this ToR. The main role of the Consultant will be to create conditions that ethics considerations are integrated into SAIGE-related financing programs, ensuring that actions taken fully comply with the national regulation and international standards of ethics in research.

The Ethics Officer will support the SF and IF related to ethical issue and will have responsibility for all aspects of administration associated with the research ethics and research integrity procedures and support the promotion of good research conduct more widely.

A primary goal of the Ethics Officer will be to balance efficiency with ensuring ethical conduct, which will require assigning a risk level to projects in order not to create an unproportionate burden on low risk projects.

The Ethics Officer will also be critical in providing ongoing improvements to ethics processes and to make significant contributions to the strategic and operational plans, policies and procedures relating to research ethics in the programs of the SF and IF.

## **3. SCOPE OF WORK**

The specific functions and responsibilities of the Ethics Officer will be:

- Draft an Ethics Act in the form of Research by-law which will outline the procedures applicable to all RDIs in the country. The Act will be adopted by the SF's and IF's managing board, ensuring consistency with national and EU standards on ethics in research.
- Design and prepare Manual/Guidelines for SF staff and Manual/Guidelines for Reviewers and Panel experts including instructions how to review and process information in project applications related to ethical issues and national regulation.
- Maintain and update documentation on international good practice related to ethical approval of projects in the EU and globally.
- Develop an ethics questionnaire to be included in application materials for SF programs according to the international practices.
- Prepare and deliver training for the selected staff on the assessment of ethical

- issues in the context of implementation of financing programs by the SF and IF.
- Consult SF team on reviewing submitted applications for ethical approval to ensure applications are complete and to flag significantly high risk cases to the program boards and SF Director for possible discussion prior to allocation to a reviewer.
- Be responsible for processing, preparing, and general correspondence to the SF and IF regarding ethics related questions and approvals, adhering to set deadlines.
- Provide expert advice and support to researchers (through thematic open door, online consultation, workshop, etc.) in their development and design of ethics part of applications and modifications prior to committee review.
- Manage ongoing monitoring processes for projects throughout their lifecycle and undertake ad hoc reviews for high risk projects, if any.
- Provide advice in the case where conflicts of interest or other ethical issues arise during the design or conduct of research projects.
- Prepare advisory memos on issues relating to ethics and integrity.
- Draft ad-hoc reports and presentations on issues relating to ethics and integrity, including conflict of interest management.
- Liaise with the Research Development Officers and other relevant staff within research teams, to advise them on ethical standards and guidelines.
- Liaise with Ethics Boards and similar bodies of relevant institutions, in line with applicable legislation.
- Evaluate the subproject based on the Ethic Self-Assessment provided by Applicant (within ESMF – Annex 01C and Annex 02C Ethical Issues<sup>1</sup>).
- Undertake other related duties as required by SF and IF.

#### **4. EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS**

The Consultant suitable for this position should have the following qualifications:

- Graduate/advanced degree in research related field (health science, social sciences, and humanities);
- Minimum of 5 years of relevant professional experience in ethics administration or scientific research administration, investment projects or related area (international and local);
- Experience in at least 2 international funded projects related to grants for research institutions and/or commercial activities would be an advantage;
- Experience in at least 2 internationally funded projects in the field of ethics standards;
- Knowledge and understanding of the international good practice in particular on ethics policies;
- Previous experience with World Bank/other international organizations - funded programs is desired;
- Good analytical skills, ability to think strategically, analyze and synthesize diverse qualitative and quantitative ethics data and information.
- Excellent spoken and written Serbian and English;
- Computer skills, including word processing and spreadsheets.

#### **5. TIMING AND DURATION**

The Consultant will be engaged on part time basis for the duration of the Project with a

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.mpn.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/SAIGE-ESMF-Revision-July-2-2020.pdf>

probation period of 6 months. The contract can be extended, subject to satisfactory performance and specific project needs.

The expected time effort for the assignment is up to 15 working days (120 hours) per month. The expected time effort may vary depending on the needs of the SF and IF. The Consultant may be engaged more or less than 15 working days per month depending on the needs of the SF and the IF or the intensity of work in the respective month.

## **6. REPORTING OBLIGATIONS**

The Consultant will be primarily required to report, at least once per month or as necessary according to Project activities and timeline, to the MoESTD/PIU and SF/IF.

The Consultant shall provide/submit monthly timesheets, summarizing key issues and emerging and day-to-day tasks undertaken, as well as working days/hours spent on each issue and task, within 10 (ten) days after the end of month for which the report is due. Consultant's timesheets will have to be approved by the IF and SF before being signed by the PIU Head.

The Consultant shall proactively prepare ad-hoc reports on any major ethics issues arising during Project implementation, at the MoESTD/PIU, SF, IF or Bank's request.

The Consultant will provide hard and/or electronic copies of any documents and technical materials developed during the Project in their original electronic format. The reports will be provided in the English or Serbian language, according to instructions.

## **7. SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED BY THE CLIENT**

For the Consultant will be provide by the PIU, SF or IF the following:

- Office space, with access to Internet;
- Access to necessary documents; and
- Where the Consultant is required to travel, to site or elsewhere in accordance with the PIU, SF or IF instruction.

## **8. TERMS OF PAYMENT**

The contract, in the form of the Standard World Bank Time-Based Contract for Small Assignments covering all fees costs and expenses, will be entered into between the Consultant and the MoESTD. Payment for services rendered will be made monthly.