

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND SCOPE OF SERVICE

1. Background

Partners Albania for Change and Development (PA) is an Albanian NGO, established in 2001. PA's mission consists in the support of civil society and the facilitation of inter-sector cooperation to strengthen democratic institutions and advance economic development in Albania. PA is a member of Partners Global, a network of 19 independent organizations in Europe, the Americas, Africa, and the Middle East, working for peaceful and democratic change.

PA has built its operations in four key programmatic areas, namely:

- 1. Enabling Environment and Sustainable Development of CSOs**, contributing to the empowerment of civil society actors and civic engagement through *capacity building* programs, *monitoring and advocacy* for an enabling legal and practical environment for CSOs operation, and *financial support* for the sector.
- 2. Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation**, developing and supporting the ecosystem of entrepreneurship and social enterprises (SEs) through research, advocacy, financial support mechanisms, expertise, and networking opportunities.
- 3. Philanthropic Activity and Support Infrastructure**, developing and promoting philanthropic activity in the country through research, advocacy actions for an enabling environment, awareness raising, and promotion activities on the economic and social value of philanthropy.
- 4. Transparent and Accountable Participatory Governance** contributing to the development and growth of civil society practitioners and public administration officials in their efforts to build strong institutions, manage open and transparent processes and overcome corruption.

PA has vast experience in designing and managing EU-funded projects and sub-granting schemes in the frame of EU projects. Since 2012, PA has implemented **more than 20 projects funded by the EU**. The organization also works for the **development of Social Enterprises** (SEs) and start-ups, generating social impact through a) research; b) advocacy; c) education and public awareness; d) financial support to 3-rd parties.

Since June 2023, Partners Albania is the Cooperation Partner of SIDA for the implementation of the Challenge Fund, under the framework of the EU4Innovation Phase II, 2023-2026.

The Multi Donor Action EU4Innovation Phase II, 2023-2026 is jointly co-financed by the EU, the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and Sida and implemented by GIZ and Embassy of Sweden in Tirana.

The aim of the Challenge Fund is to improve and diversify finance opportunities for Albanian start-ups and MSMEs, with innovative solutions (e.g., products, services, business models, processes) and (ii) start-ups with prominent tech content with the potential for global expansion and rapid growth.



As part of ongoing efforts to promote the impact and achievements of the Challenge Fund supported start-ups, a booklet will be developed to showcase their journey. The publication will provide an overview of the second phase of the Challenge Fund, highlighting key achievements, results, and contributions, followed by dedicated profiles of each supported startup. Through compelling storytelling and engaging visual presentation, the booklet will highlight the startups' innovative and sustainable business models, entrepreneurial journeys, milestones achieved, challenges overcome, and their contribution to Albania's socio-economic development. Produced in both Albanian and English language, the booklet will serve as a strategic communication and knowledge-sharing resource, showcasing success stories, promoting lessons learned and best practices, inspiring aspiring entrepreneurs, and increasing awareness among local, regional, and international stakeholders of the role and impact of innovation-driven enterprises in strengthening Albania's startup ecosystem.

2. Objective of the ToR

The objective of this Call is to engage an experienced and qualified service provider to conceptualize, design, and produce a high-quality promotional booklet showcasing the startups supported under the second phase of the Challenge Fund. The booklet will capture and communicate the entrepreneurial journeys of the supported startups through compelling storytelling, impactful visuals, and an engaging publication format. It will highlight each startup's achievements, innovative solutions, challenges encountered, milestones reached, and the broader impact generated through the support of the Challenge Fund.

The booklet will feature **55 startups** supported through the second phase of the Challenge Fund, representing entrepreneurial journeys and innovative solutions from across Albania, including Tirana, Malësia e Madhe, Saranda, Berat, Vlorë, Shkodër, Durrës, Librazhd, Korçë, and other cities. It will highlight startups operating in diverse sectors, including IT and digital solutions, tourism, sustainable agriculture and food processing, green and circular economy, creative industries, health and wellbeing, fintech, education, and other innovative fields, demonstrating the impact of Challenge Fund support on their growth and development.

Through the documentation and promotion of these success stories, the publication aims to inspire current and aspiring entrepreneurs, demonstrate the potential of innovative and sustainable business models, and disseminate key lessons learned and best practices from Challenge Fund supported ventures. Furthermore, the booklet will serve as a strategic communication and advocacy tool to increase visibility of the supported startups and promote awareness among public institutions, development partners, investors, and other relevant stakeholders regarding the importance of fostering innovation driven entrepreneurship and strengthening Albania's startup ecosystem.

3. Duties and Responsibilities

The selected service provider will be responsible for the complete design, production, and delivery of the digital booklet. The scope of work shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- **Creative concept, editorial approach, and publication design:** Develop the overall creative concept, editorial direction, structure, format, and layout of the booklet, ensuring a modern,



engaging, and professional publication aligned with the Challenge Fund branding and communication strategy. This includes developing page designs, typography, infographics, graphic elements, illustrations, and other visual components that enhance readability, storytelling, and overall impact.

- **Content development and storytelling:** Develop a compelling and consistent narrative approach for presenting the journey of each supported startup, highlighting their innovation, achievements, challenges overcome, lessons learned, and contribution to Albania's startup ecosystem. Review, edit, and refine content provided by the contracting authority, prepare concise and engaging startup profiles, and ensure consistency in tone, structure, messaging, and editorial style while maintaining factual accuracy.
- **Photography and visual asset management:** Shoot, collect, and select high-quality photographs and visual materials for each featured startup. Ensure they meet professional design and publication standards. Ensure that all images and visual assets are appropriately licensed or authorized for use and obtain permissions where required.
- **Branding, review, and quality assurance:** Ensure compliance with the visual identity requirements of the Challenge Fund | EU4Innovation programme and European Union visibility guidelines. Present design concepts and sample layouts for review, incorporate feedback from the contracting authority throughout the process, and coordinate closely on content development, design, proofreading, copy editing, translation into English, and final quality control to ensure consistency in language, formatting, references, and visual presentation.
- **Final production and delivery:** Prepare the final publication in Albanian and English, including print-ready and digital versions optimized for online dissemination and high-quality printing. Deliver editable source files (e.g., Adobe InDesign package with linked assets and fonts, where applicable), print-ready PDFs, and all graphic assets developed under the assignment. The booklet should be formatted as a digital flipbook, with a two-page spread, displayed side by side. Complete all deliverables within the agreed timeline and incorporate reasonable revision rounds requested by the contracting authority prior to final approval.

4. Main deliverables

The service provider is expected to submit the following deliverables related to the above-mentioned duties and responsibilities:

1. Inception Concept Note

- Proposed editorial and creative concept for the booklet.
- Proposed structure, layout, visual identity, and storytelling approach.
- Work plan and timeline for implementation.

2. Design Concept and Sample Pages

- Initial design proposal, including cover design, typography, color palette, page layouts, and visual elements.
- Sample pages illustrating the proposed design and presentation of startup profiles.

3. Draft Booklet

- Complete first draft of the publication, including edited text, selected photographs, graphics, and layout for review by the contracting authority.

4. Revised Draft

- Updated version of the booklet incorporating comments and feedback received from the contracting authority.

5. Final Digital Booklet

- Fully edited, proofread, and professionally designed digital booklet in Albanian and English, approved by the contracting authority.
- Print-ready high-resolution PDF suitable for professional printing.
- Web-optimized PDF for online dissemination.

6. Editable Source Files

- Complete editable design package (e.g., Adobe InDesign files), including linked images, graphics, fonts (where licensing permits), and other source materials necessary for future updates.

5. Experience and Qualifications of the service provider

- At least 10 years of demonstrated experience in the development, design, and production of high-quality publications, including promotional booklets, success story compilations, reports, magazines, brochures, or similar communication materials.
- Demonstrated experience in developing creative concepts, editorial layouts, branding materials, infographics, and visually engaging publications for print and digital dissemination, with a portfolio showcasing high-quality design and storytelling outputs.
- Proven ability to develop compelling narratives, edit and structure content, and transform technical or programme related information into accessible and engaging stories for diverse audiences.
- Ability to deliver professionally designed publications in both digital and print-ready formats, including editable source files and all related graphic assets. The service provider must have access to the required design and publishing tools and technical expertise for high-quality production.
- Excellent written and editorial skills in English and Albanian, including the ability to adapt content for different audiences while maintaining accuracy, consistency, and professional quality.
- Previous experience working with startups, entrepreneurship support programmes, innovation initiatives, EU-funded projects, international organizations, development partners, or similar programmes will be considered an added value.

6. Timeline of the assignment

The assignment is expected to be conducted during **September 2026 - November 2026**. The service provider must be available during the time frame foreseen. They must be independent and free from conflicts of interest in the responsibilities they take on.



7. Contracting Authority

The service provider will work in close cooperation with Partners Albania for Change and Development to which they will directly report the implementation of the task. All outputs, deliverables, and final product developed under this assignment shall be subject to review and approval by the Embassy of Sweden in Tirana. The selected service provider should address and incorporate all comments, recommendations, and requested revisions and ensure that the final deliverables are revised accordingly prior to obtaining final approval and acceptance. All final products and editable source files developed under this assignment shall remain at the property of the contracting authority.

8. Submission of the tender documents

Interested applicants should submit their proposals within **4 September 2026, at 16:00 hrs.**

Application documents must be in English and sent via e-mail to the following address:

partners@partnersalbania.org

Partners Albania for Change and Development embraces diversity in its hiring, welcoming individuals of all religions, ethnicities, genders, and orientations to apply.

