

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST CONSULTING SERVICES – INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT

Republic of Serbia

Serbia Accelerating Innovation and Growth Entrepreneurship (SAIGE AF)

Loan No. 7230-YF

Assignment Title:

- **Science Fund (SF) Consultant for financial management and financial procedures (part-time), Reference No. SER-SAIGE-IC-CS-26-76**

Serbia has received a loan from the World Bank (Bank), through the “Serbia Accelerating Innovation and Growth Entrepreneurship Project” (Project), to support the strengthening of the Serbian Innovation and Entrepreneurship ecosystem. The main objective of the Project is to improve (i) the relevance and excellence of scientific research; and (ii) innovative entrepreneurship and access to finance for enterprise growth, as a way of contributing to Serbia’s growth and competitiveness. The European Union Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA-II) is also providing complimentary financing support for the Project. The SAIGE Project Additional Financing, which became operational in May 2025, also aims to scale up the ongoing SAIGE activities and to further enhance innovation capacity through better R&D and entrepreneurship in the areas of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and biotechnology, to increase the country’s competitiveness in global markets.

Objective of the assignment

The objective of the Consultant’s engagement is to support the Science Fund in the analysis and further development of internal financial procedures and practices, as a precondition for efficient and accountable implementation of the SF programs and activities.

A further objective is to support the SF in strengthening of the financial management framework related to public calls, grant/program implementation, financial documentation, and internal financial control processes.

Specific expertise is needed to improve financial procedures, strengthen consistency in financial processing and reporting, and support compliance with applicable institutional and project requirements.

Scope of Work

Following are the specific tasks and responsibilities of the Consultant:

- Analyze SF internal financial procedures, workflows and supporting documentation;
- Provide expert support in further development and improvement of internal financial procedures and related templates/documents;
- Review financial aspects of procedures related to public calls, contracting, implementation and monitoring of funded programs/projects;

- Provide expert advice on financial controls, documentation requirements, traceability of expenditures and related compliance aspects;
- Analyze previously implemented financial procedures and practices of the Science Fund and provide recommendations for improvement;
- Support harmonization of the SF internal financial procedures with the operational needs and relevant applicable rules/procedures;
- Provide expert input, opinions and practical recommendations on day-to-day financial matters related to the SF functioning, as requested.
- Participate in meetings as required;
- Prepare reports, and other relevant documentation as required by the SF;
- Perform other related duties as requested by the SF.

The Consultant will conduct the work in the SF premises or remotely, as needed. The SF will provide access to all relevant documents, infrastructure and employees for implementation of tasks.

Timing and Duration

The Consultant will be engaged on a part-time basis until September 30, 2026. The expected initial time effort for the assignment is up to 10 days (i.e., 80 hours) per month. The engagement will be subject to appropriate extension based on the Project's needs and the performance of the candidate.

Required experience and qualifications

- University degree in economics, finance, accounting or related field (master's or equivalent is desirable, bachelor's degree is mandatory);
- At least 7 years of relevant professional experience in public finance, financial management, financial operations, accounting, auditing or related financial affairs;
- At least 3 years of work experience within or with public institutions, international projects, donor-funded programs, or other relevant institutions;
- Experience in development and/or implementation of financial procedures, internal controls and financial documentation;
- Knowledge of financial governance and compliance requirements in the public sector environment;
- Experience related to grant management, program funding, public calls, or financial administration of publicly funded programs will be considered an advantage;
- Previous experience with public research institutions, science funding bodies, or World Bank / donor-supported projects will be considered an advantage.
- Excellent spoken and written Serbian and English;
- Excellent communication, organization, and teamwork skills;
- Advanced computer skills.

The detailed Terms of Reference for the above referenced consulting services is posted on the website of the Science Fund <https://fondznanauku.gov.rs/pozivi/>

The Central Fiduciary Unit (CFU) of the Ministry of Finance now invites eligible Consultants to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

The evaluation criteria for the assignment:

- Qualifications and General experience (40 Points)
- Specific Experience relevant to the Assignment (60 Points)

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraph 3.14, 3.16 and 3.17 of the *World Bank's Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers – Procurement in Investment Project Financing Goods, Works, Non-Consulting and Consulting Services (July 2016, revised November 2017 and August 2018)* (“the Regulations”) setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the *Open Competitive Selection of Individual Consultants* as set out in the Regulations.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours 09:00 to 15:00 hours.

Expressions of interest in English language must be delivered in a written form to the email below, by **May 15, 2026, 12:00 hours, noon**, local time. Interested consultants must provide **Cover Letter** and **CV** representing description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions and availability of appropriate skills (**scanned diplomas to be sent with CV**).

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