

COMMON WADDEN SEA SECRETARIAT

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Call for Tender

First Level Control PROWAD LINK project

27 November 2018

With this Call for Tender, the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS) is looking for a qualified and certified First Level Controller according to IAASB and ISOC1, for verifying that the expenditure declared by CWSS, as lead beneficiary of an Interreg North Sea Region Programme project, which complies with the applicable law and the Programme rules, in line with all relevant regulations and guidelines

FLC will cover the CWSS as the lead beneficiary and two German co-beneficiaries in the INTERREG VB North Sea Region (NSR) project "PROWAD LINK: Protect and Prosper: Benefits through linking sustainable growth with nature protection" (project duration September 2018 to August 2021).

1. Project description

The PROWAD LINK project is carried out in the framework of the Interreg North Sea Region Programme (www.northsearegion.eu) under the Programme Priority 1 "Thinking Growth" and the Specific Objective 1.1. "Develop new or improved partnerships between businesses, knowledge institutions, public administrations and end users with a view to long-term cooperation (post project) on developing products and services."

PROWAD LINK aims to provide innovative tools and strategies for a variety of SMEs to engage with nature protection areas like World Heritage Sites, and unlock economic benefits whilst contributing to protecting these sites (nature protection as a driver for sustainable growth and innovation), with the Wadden Sea as an example.

The project will develop and test innovative tools and strategies for SMEs in the NSR in order to: improve access to brands provided by natural heritage sites with economic value; enhance SME sustainability in the NSR; and develop innovative marketable offers and products in a co-creation process with knowledge partners.

Lead beneficiary of PROWAD LINK is the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS). The project consortium consists of 13 further project partners (ministries, provinces, counties, municipalities, national parks, research organisations, universities) in five countries (Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, as well as Norway and the UK).



The project will be carried out transnationally and implemented in selected pilot areas (Wadden Sea World Heritage Site, Geiranger Fjord World Heritage Site, and The Wash & North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site) to ensure transferability of all outputs and results to designated natural areas and World Heritage properties on a national, European and potentially global scale.

The total budget of the project is about 3.7 Million Euros over three years.

2. Competences of the Controller

Wherever possible, the controller should have prior experience of control of projects co-financed by the EU. The controller is required to be independent from the controlled structure and qualified to carry out the control of project's expenditure.

In order to be considered independent, the controllers have to fulfil certain criteria: An external controller can only be considered independent if there are no other contractual relationships with the project or CWSS as partner organization that could lead to a conflict of interest.

With regard to the qualification of the first level controller, the task of controlling project expenditure co-financed under the Interreg Programmes goes beyond classical checks on accounts: it also involves a judgment on the compliance with ERDF, national and North Sea Region Programme rules. The controller is therefore expected to have a profound knowledge of controlling project expenditure under the Structural Funds regulations as well as a good knowledge of English or German (considering that all Programme documents and reports are in one of the Programme languages).

3. Main Tasks

The First Level Controller carry out formal checks on CWSS expenditures declared during the project implementation each time before submitting a Payment claim on OMS. Submission of report via the Online Monitoring System (OMS) – a full progress report with statement of expenditure is mandatory once a year).

Payment claims will be submitted afterwards every 6 or 12 months according to the needs, planned schedule:

Period	Start	End	Duration (months)	Type of report
Period 1	1-Sep-18	15-Apr-19	7.5	Basic progress
Period 2	16-Apr-19	15-Oct-19	6	Full progress
Period 3	16-Oct-19	15-Apr-20	6	Basic progress
Period 4	16-Apr-20	15-Oct-20	6	Full progress
Period 5	16-Oct-20	15-Apr-21	6	Basic progress
Period 6	16-Apr-21	31-Aug-21	4.5	Final report

The aim of the FLC is to ensure to the Managing Authority, the Certifying Authority and, most importantly, to the project itself, that costs claimed for reimbursement by the ERDF Interreg Programmes are justified and that their payment is requested by Lead Partners in accordance with the legal and financial provisions of the Subsidy Contract, the Interreg Programme rules and EU and national provisions.

First level control also gives to ECF the guarantee that project accounts comply with the above-mentioned obligations and with legal and financial obligations of each structure contributing to the co-financing of the operation, in accordance with its legal situation and the valid legislation in the concerned state.

In particular the FLC must verify that:

- a) Expenditure is in line with European, Interreg Programmes and national eligibility rules and complies with conditions for support of the project and payment as outlined in the Subsidy Contract and the up to date Interreg fact sheets.
- b) The costs are eligible;
- c) Expenditure was actually paid with the exception of costs related to depreciations and simplified cost options (SCO);
- d) Expenditure was incurred and paid (with the exceptions above under point b) within the eligible time period of the project and was not previously reported;
- e) The invoices and payments are correctly recorded and sufficiently supported;
- f) Payment of staff costs is proven on the basis of payslips or documents of equivalent probative value;
- g) Expenditure based on simplified cost options (if any) is correctly calculated and the calculation method used is appropriate;
- h) The related activities, sub-contracted supplies and services are in progress or have been delivered or carried out;
- i) Expenditure reimbursed on the basis of eligible costs actually incurred is either properly recorded in a separate accounting system or has an adequate accounting code allocated. The expenditures reported under SCO are recorded in the programme monitoring tool. The necessary audit trail exists and is available for inspection;
- j) Expenditure in currency other than Euro was converted using the correct exchange rate;
- k) Relevant EU / national / institutional and Interreg Programmes public procurement rules were observed;
- l) The community rules have been respected especially with regard to information and publicity, public procurement, equal opportunities and protection of the environment;
- m) Expenditure is related to activities in line with the consolidated application form and the Subsidy Contract.
- n) The beneficiary received external national or European public counterparts corresponding to validated expenditures.

You can find out more information about the controls, audits and verifications procedures in the Programme manuals:

<https://northsearegion.eu/>

The working language in the project is English. All meetings, work documents, communication and reports are in English language.

4. Tender

Please send us your offer by email by Monday 7 January 2019 to Mrs. Anke Rottmann (rottman@waddensea-secretariat.org).

For any further details please contact us by email, using the above email address, or phone on +49 4421 910 811.

OFFER REQUIREMENTS

Your offer (max 2 pages A4) should include

- References to previous experiences as FLC in EU-funded projects, preferably Interreg programmes.
- Short description of your proposal and operative capacity.
- Price offer per control (including details of applicable VAT).

EVALUATION CRITERIA

- Meets minimum requirements for applicant .
- Price offer per control.

Decision will be taken by Monday 21 January 2019.

CWSS reserves the right to withdraw or modify this call at a later date.

5. Contact Address

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