



European Center for
Not-for-Profit Law

Catalyst of Change

Call for Consultant(s) for conducting
external evaluation

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Funded by the European Union

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Founded in 1987, the NHC was part of the wave of new human rights watchdogs across wider Europe, established following the signing of the Helsinki Accords. Long-time dissidents and newly inspired activists behind the Iron Curtain called on their governments with appeals for political reform and improved protection of human rights. They were using the human rights commitments of the parties to the Accords to hold their governments to account. Today, we continue to build on our rich experience of 35-years work on the rule of law and human rights, and building bridges between people, sectors and countries. Together we stand strong to inspire, engage and support catalysts of change in building just and rights-respecting societies in wider Europe.

The present document defines the terms for the Call for Consultant(s) for conducting external mid-term and final evaluations for the Netherlands Helsinki Committee's "*Catalyst of Change*" project, financed by the European Union¹.

Background

The *Catalyst of Change* is a 3-year long project (1 January 2023- 31 December 2026) aiming to contribute to creating an enabling environment for civil society in five EU Member States that are in acute need of civil society strengthening: Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovenia, and Portugal.

The project allows Civil Society Organisations working on women's rights, environmental justice, and anti-corruption to be more effective in the promotion of EU values, be more resilient to threats, and be able to quickly respond to concerning trends affecting space for civil society in their respective countries. This will ultimately lead to better protection, promotion, and acknowledgment of EU fundamental rights and values in the target countries and, consequently, will contribute to strengthening respect for the EU values at the EU level too.

The European Center for Not-for-Profit Law Stichting (ECNL) is a non-governmental organisation based in the Hague, Netherlands working on empowering civil society through creating enabling legal and policy frameworks, and the partner of the NHC in implementing the project's capacity building activities.

The project has three main objectives:

- Enhanced civil society's response to new trends affecting democratic and civic space and civil society
- Strengthened effectiveness, accountability and sustainability of grassroots CSOs
- Enhanced visibility and understanding of the work of grassroots CSOs supported by the project

¹ This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the Netherlands Helsinki Committee and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

Objective of the Call

The objective of this Call is to hire one **international consultant or team of international consultants to conduct a midterm and final external evaluation of the project “Catalyst of Change”** and to provide an independent assessment of the project’s implementation, including the assessment of the quality, achievements, and sustainability of the activities undertaken. The **first (midterm) report will provide preliminary findings** so as to steer the final phase of the project implementation, whereas the **final report will provide a comprehensive evaluation** of all the activities conducted.

Responsibilities and tasks

The evaluation will consider all activities that have been implemented under this project and should examine the performance of the project in accordance with its logical framework. Key questions that the evaluation seeks to answer during the evaluations should be developed by the consultant(s) and agreed with the NHC project team.

The set-up of the evaluation process as well as the concrete methods for data collection and analysis shall be proposed by the evaluation consultant. However, the evaluation concept should at least provide for the following phases:

- Inception phase: Review of documents, finalization of work plan, preparation of the field phase, preparation of the interim report.
- Field phase: Collection and analysis of data.
- Finalization: Synthesis of evaluation findings and preparation of final evaluation report.

The mixed method design comprising qualitative as well as quantitative methods should be used.

The data collection (such as interviews with the project stakeholders) is to be completed both online and in person. Travel may be required to conduct interviews with subgrantees in all five project countries.

Deliverables

1. Draft Proposed Evaluation Methodology and a brief work plan for both mid-term and final evaluation (before signing the contract);
2. Final Evaluation Work plan (after signing the contract and based on the comments by the NHC);
3. First draft of final evaluation reports (for mid-term and final);
4. The final evaluation reports with recommendations and identified lessons learned from the implementation of this project (40 pages max. for each period).

The consultants are expected to deliver the midterm report with preliminary findings to steer the final implementation of the project and to be able to implement the recommendations given. The final

evaluation is expected to be robust, evaluating all activities, and travel is expected to all five project countries.

Both midterm and final report should be delivered with an executive summary written in English. The reports should have a clear structure and will follow the layout format we require for decentralised evaluations.

The report shall clearly and in detail describe the evaluation approach/methodology and methods for data collection and analysis and make a clear distinction between the two. The methodology should be relevant to the structure of the project that has important sub-granting component. Limitations to the methodology and methods and the consequences of these limitations for findings and conclusions shall be described.

The evaluation should also analyse the impact of the project on coordination, synergies, relations and information sharing with other framework partners and the bodies of the European Union.

Assignment findings shall flow logically from the data collected from beneficiaries and all other stakeholders of the project, showing a clear line of evidence to support the conclusions. Conclusions should be substantiated by findings and analysis. Evaluation questions shall be clearly stated and answered in the executive summary and in the conclusions. Recommendations and lessons learned should flow logically from conclusions and be specific, directed to relevant intended users and categorised as short-term, medium-term and long-term. The final report will be an important part of the NHC's reporting to the donor and will help to improve future similar interventions of the NHC in this area. Therefore, the report should also include recommendations for the improvement for the NHC and indirectly to the EU/ CERV Programme.

Duration and budget

The total budget for both midterm and final evaluations is **20.000 EUR**, plus additional **travel budget**. Travel may be required to collect in person data from stakeholders in all five project countries.

The expected workload is around 30 working days: online and in person collecting data and home-based report writing.

The expected start of the evaluation is October 2025. The **deadline** for the delivery of the **midterm report is 15 February 2026**. The **deadline** for the delivery of the **final report is 30 April 2027**.

Required qualifications and skills

Prospective applicants are required to have the following qualifications and skills and meet the following criteria:

- Academic background in social science, development studies, or related field;
- At least five years of experience in evaluation in the context of civic space development and capacity strengthening projects, and at least three years of experience with EU funded projects. Experience in evaluating in CERV projects is an asset.
- Sound knowledge of different evaluation approaches and qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods;
- Experience in conducting evaluation on capacity strengthening project with the focus of re-granting/financial support to third parties.
- Experience in conducting participatory evaluations, gender and/or rights responsive evaluations, with practical experience in remote evaluation methods.
- Experience in collecting and handling project evaluation data including production of data visualization.
- Strong conceptual understanding of the Project Cycle and the role of evaluation in the cycle.
- Strong analytical and report writing skills and abilities to present findings and practical recommendations.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills in English.
- Good written and verbal communication skills in one or more of the target countries is an asset.

Confidentiality

Throughout the assignment, and for five years after the date of final payment for service, the consultant must agree to keep confidential all data, documents, or other materials (in any format) that is disclosed (in writing or orally) concerning the project.

Application and Selection Process

Interested candidates are requested to submit the following:

- Technical proposal, including proposed evaluation methodology and brief work plan (no more than three (3) pages);
- Financial proposal, including the proposed fee and breakdown (no more than one (1) page based on the NHC financial proposal template);
- CV (s)- including examples of other evaluations undertaken by the individual(s) (no more than two (2) pages for each CV)

- References or recommendations letters from at least 3 previous evaluations experiences (for each individual, including contact details).
- Confirmation that they are not aware of any conflict of interest (completed and signed Declaration of impartiality on exclusion criteria and selection criteria)

Individual consultants are eligible to apply, but we also welcome applications from teams/groups of consultants. For applications submitted by a prospective team of consultants, team members must complete a joint application form and indicate therein a description of how the team members will cooperate with each other along with a proposed division of tasks must be included in the application.

We invite candidate to [APPLY ONLINE](#) no later than **September 30, 2025.**

Only full applications will be assessed.

For any questions, please contact Nathalie Heidema at nheidema@nhc.nl