CALL FOR

EXTERNAL FORMATIVE EVALUATOR

I. BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

The Virtual Reality as an Innovative and Immersive Learning Tools for HEIs in Palestine / Tesla project is launching a call for an **external project evaluator**.

As part of a better quality management within the project, the TESLA project has set up a Quality Assessment Committee (CEQ) composed of internal members. In order to complete this internal evaluation approach, the project will appoint an external evaluator to analyze the implementation monitoring of project activities and their achievements, in accordance with the objectives of the logical matrix. This document represents the terms of reference for the selection of an external evaluator.

The "Virtual Reality as an Innovative and Immersive Learning Tools for HEIs in Palestine" (TESLA) is a project co-funded by the European Union under the **Erasmus+ Programme, Key Action 2 Capacity Building in Higher Education** and it will end inNovember 2020.

The overall aim of the project is to **strengthen the capacity** of Higher Education staff in **Palestine** to use Virtual Reality in Higher Education.

TESLA project will enable Palestinian HEIs to offer higher capabilities in translating some major key-concept into a dynamic and a fully interactive VR component.

Due to the unique geopolitical context of Palestinian territories and restrictions imposed by occupation, the virtual reality will offer students, researcher and academic staff in Palestinian universities the ability to conduct research in simulated virtual labs and avoiding on the same time mobility issues ,access to material, lack of specialized laboratories, and the expensive character of such experiences.

On the other hand, virtual reality will be expanded in this project to include the instruction of GIS courses by a standard learning management system using maps and built-in GIS tools which enable students to perform tests and simulate real-life conditions in an instructional evaluated context.

The main characteristics of the VR project will tend to offer better service then consolidate multiple functions into one tool, decreasing need for supplies and equipment, empowerment of users, improved interface, increased customizability, increased longevity, increased productivity, reduced user effort, reduced environmental impact, and finally saving of money.

Project Web page: http://tesla-vr.com/index.php/en/

More specifically, it aims at:

> Involving Palestinian HEI's in Research Movement related to Virtual Reality in Europe.
> Encourage Palestinian researchers and academics to have an interest in topics related to Ergonomics, Cognitive Psychology, and Human Impact.
> Reduce cost of material related to experimentation and mobility issues.
> Reduce risks by offering a simulated controlled environment and immersive learning experience.
> Involving Palestinian 3D Modellers and Programmers into the VR development process.

The project Concrete Objectives

> Setting-up a common VR development framework throughout Palestinian HEI 's providing excellence in term of instructional design, development, and exploitation of services.
> Designing, piloting, and evaluating first courses which integrate the VR concept.
> Creating an international research network about VR integration into instructional technologies.
> Implementing immersive learning experience into technical courses with a high - level of abstraction like topography, criminology, and geography.

The project **partners** are:

Palestine

- AL-ISTIQLAL UNIVERSITY(Coordinator),
- AL-QUDS OPEN UNIVERSITY
- PALESTINE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY
- ARAB AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

EU

- SLOVAK UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE, Slovakia
- UNIVERSITY OF PATRAS, Greece
- UNIVERSITY POLYTECHNIC OF BUCHAREST, Romania

In the framework of the **Project Work Package3 - Quality Assurance**, an international **external evaluator** will be selected, based on this open call, to evaluate the project.

II. OBJECTIVE OF THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION

The external evaluation should aim at measuring the level of the success of the project against the formulated specific objectivesand indicators, so to:
- deliver value to the target beneficiaries;
- fulfill the requirements of the project sponsor, i.e., EACEA;
- operate in an efficient and timely manner;
- assist in the strategic-decision making during and after project lifetime.

Through the evaluation of:
- The relevance of the partnership;

- The effectiveness of the means of communication between the members of the consortium;
- The successful completion of the various activities of the project and achievement of the objectives set;
- The effectiveness and impact of dissemination and dissemination activities;
- Implementation of best practices at the level of HEIs;
- Weaknesses in management, if they exist; which he will have to propose solutions.

III. TASKS AND QUALIFICATIONS

In line with European Commission's Result Oriented Monitoring, the task of the external evaluation is to investigate, assess and evaluate the implementation of the project with specific reference to the following aspects:

- **Relevance and Quality of Design**: the appropriateness of the project's objectives to the real problems, needs,and priorities of its target groups/beneficiaries and the quality of the design through which these objectives are to be reached.
- **Efficiency of implementation**: how well means/inputs and activities were converted into outputs; internal communication, progress reporting and the sharing of information between work package teams; general coordination and management.
- **Effectivenessof implementation**: the contribution made by the project's results/outcomes to the achievement of the project purpose (quality of results, outreach target groups, etc.).
- **Expected impact**: the project's likely contribution to the project's Overall Objective (to be assessed only during the final evaluation).

According to section-F of the project:
The external evaluation will be performed by External Experts (Formative and Financial Experts). The external evaluation entails of reviewing the deliverables and the financial aspect of the different interventions/activities. The formative evaluator will also evaluate the quality of management, the partnership performance, as well as the effectiveness and the impact of dissemination activities.

The external expert will be responsible for:
➢The definition of the quality indicators for each element above and the procedures to be followed;
➢ Design and submission of questionnaires and grids to assess progress the project mid-term and at the end;
➢ Coordination with the internal quality committee and integration of results;
➢ Preparation of the 2 evaluation reports (interim and final) according to a schedule set by the evaluation committee.

Reports are generated to indicate the progress of the project and to propose recommendations. On the basis of a participatory approach, the results of the evaluation will be shared and discussed in the project steering committee at its meetings.
These reports will be based on questionnaires submitted to partners, interviews with partners and the project coordinator (via Skype or during meetings) and all documents working during the project.

Profile required Essential
-Relevant academic qualifications and field experience;
-Highly proficient in written and spoken English as well Arabic;
-Extensive experience in designing and implementation of assessments and evaluations;
-Research skills and commitment to participatory research methodologies;
-Objectivity, and ability to operate systematically with minimal supervision;
-Result oriented and committed to respect deadlines.

The working language will be**English**. However, a good understanding of Arabic would be desirable.

IV. SUGGESTED ACTION PLAN FOR EXTERNAL EVALUATION& DELEVERABLES

Preparation Phase
- Desk review of relevant project materials, reports, meetings, Quality Assurance plan and work plan;
- Report on the preparation phase (within 3 months of the assignment start date)

Development Phase
- Desk review of relevant project materials, reports, meetings and work plan of the development phase;
- Attendance of the project Steering Committee (SC) Meetings (June 2019);
- Drafting of the interim evaluation report assessing the aspects detailed in paragraph III. The report shall include specific recommendations for enhancing the quality of different aspects of the project. The draft report will be analysed by the project's SC and required actions will be taken to answer the recommendations.

Dissemination and Exploitation Phase
- Desk review of relevant project materials, reports, meetings and work plan;
- Skype/telephone interviews with the coordinator and selected partners (if deemed necessary);
- Attendance of the final SC Meetingand/or Final Conference (Summer 2020TBD);
- Preparation of a final Evaluation Report (draft) for review of the project SC;
- Integration of SC feedback and submission of final Evaluation Report within four weeks of receipt of SC comments.

V. TIMELINE

The timeline for the performance of the external evaluation covers the period from January 2019 until November 2020, including submission of the interim and final report.

VI. FINANCING

A budget of 12,000 euros has been allocated to this activity.

The external evaluator receive four equal paiments after each of thethree interim evaluation and oneafter the final evaluation.

All transport to and from the field, make necessary appointments for meetings with respondents, meetings cost, and any cost related will be part of the consultancy fees.

Travel cost and means of subsistence on the evaluator's expenses.

VII. APPLICATION PROCESS

Please send your **signed and scanned application before February 5, 2019 to** alsaheb@ppu.edu using the **form below**, including annex **and your CV**.

The subject of the e-mail should mention the following reference: TESLA External Evaluation.

Applicants will receive an acknowledgment of the receipt of their application by the project coordinator. The selection of the external evaluator will be made by the members of the Project Steering Committee. The selected external evaluator will be contacted by the project coordinator by 10February 2019at the latest.

Late submissions will not be considered.

Questions and Answers

In accordance with regulations on free and fair competition, all prospective service providers must have access to the same information. Therefore all inquiries regarding this request for proposals must be made by 25 January 2019 to **alsaheb@ppu.edu**; all applicants will receive a standard reply addressing the questions via email by 30 January 2019. Please note Tesla cannot commit to providing answers to all questions asked.

Tenders should include:
  A CV of the expert as well as the staff members of the support who will participate directly in evaluation activities;
  Supporting documents supporting the candidate's CV: experience / competence professional / expertise, etc. (eg diplomas, certificates, certificates, etc.);
  Experience in higher education;
  A concept note with a proposed draft methodology for the evaluation (2 pages maximum).

Any incomplete file is ineligible and will not be evaluated.

Consultant Profile:
-Relevant academic qualifications and field experience;
-Highly proficient in written and spoken English and Arabic;
-Extensive experience in designing and implementation of assessments and evaluations;
-Research skills and commitment to participatory research methodologies;
-Objectivity, and ability to operate systematically with minimal supervision;
-Result oriented and committed to respect deadlines.

Applications will be scored and ranked according to the following criteria:

ELEMENT	Range
Evaluation design (understanding of objectives, suitability & rationale)	(0-25)
Data collection strategy and content	(0-25)
Track record, task-applicable expertise (Erasmus+, Evaluation, Education, and VR)	(0-20)
Availability and commitment based on the level of effort by key staff	(0-10)
Cost efficiency	(0-20)
Total	(0-100)

APPLICATION FORM

Personal details

Name:

Date of birth:

Nationality:

Company or Organization:

Current job position:

Address:

Email address:

Telephone:

Experience

Please describe your experience in European project management, International Credit Mobility programs,and external evaluation. Relevant knowledge of/experience in the MENA region should also be described:

Experience in external evaluation

Experience in Education and VR

Motivation

Please motivate your application (reasons, objectives, concerning the project's aims):

Annex-1: Technical proposal

Annex-2: Sample Work&CVs

Signature and date

Signature:

Date: /   /

ANNEX-1: TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

Please note that all application documents must be submitted in not more than four electronic documents/files. Failure to submit any of the documents below will disqualify the applicant:

1. Application Form

2. Technical proposal (with any appendices forming part of the electronic document

3. Budget (in MS Excel)

Annex-2: Relevant Sample of Work and CVs

Please see below for further guidance on each required document/file.

1) Application form:

Page 6 and 7 of this document.

2) Technical Proposal

The technical proposal is to be submitted as an MS Word document not to exceed 15 pages (excluding CVs). The following aspects must be addressed:

• Introduction which provides an overview of the project and your understanding of the tasks.

• Statement of capacity which indicates proposed organization/company's and proposed personnel's relevant experience and suitability for the tasks at hand. Full CVs may be included for up to 3 key personnel; for other proposed personnel this section must summarize CVs and state which tasks each individualwill be responsible for.

• Details on the methods to be used, including planned sampling approach, individuals/ units/ sources to be targeted and the approximate size of the sample for each method, outline of the content of proposed data collection tools, and discussion as to how the core sub-questions (see above) will be addressed with each of the methods.

• The proposed deliverable schedule which must include, at a minimum, draft and final research instruments, draft final report, and final revised report.

• GANTT chart detailing when activities will be taking place and time allocated for the review of deliverables.

Technical proposal document (and appendices) must be submitted as one electronic word file. Multiple electronic files will not be accepted.

3) Budget

Applicants must provide a detailed budget which complies with the following instructions:

• Budget must be submitted in Excel format with functioning formulas, using at least the following line item headings (additional disaggregation is permissible): personnel, travel, equipment & supplies, other;

• Budget must not exceed 12,000 Euros including indirect costs and VAT if applicable;

• Print ready (page breaks and margins formatted for easy printing);

• Level of effort (of each person who will work on the project) should align to activities in the technical proposal. A column labeled "Budget Notes" should accompany each line item with a breakdown and explanation of this;

• Daily/hourly fees and number of days must be broken down per staff/consultant and should not be lumped together as consultant fees;

• Daily/hourly fees must be in line by the proposed staff/consultants actual salary history and cost to the company; maximum daily rate fees for individuals should not exceed 120 Euros per day;

• Includes all other costs to be charged to the contract (i.e., flights, accommodation, mileage reimbursements, printing, etc.) and shows the unit cost and quantity for each item.

• Budgets submitted under this RFP will be considered preliminary and are subject to final negotiation and approval during the pre-award period.

Proposal Review and Evaluation

The proposals received will undergo a compliance review before being forwarded for technical evaluation by a selection committee. Failure to adhere to the following compliance criteria may result in disqualification:

Compliance Criteria
• No more than 4 electronic documents submitted
• Submitted by the stated deadline
• The budget submitted in print-ready excel format
• Budget complies with all budget guidance provided

Following the compliance review, compliant applications will be forwarded to the technical review selection committee. The selection committee reserves the right not to accept the lowest bid, as the elements listed in the scoring criteria table below will play a significant role when evaluating proposals.

Proposal Evaluation

The proposals received will undergo a technical evaluation by a selection committee. The selection committee reserves the right not to accept the lowest bid, as the elements listed in the evaluation matrix below will play a major role when evaluating proposals. To ensure fair and effective comparison of proposals, potential service providers are requested to furnish detailed information in substantiation of compliance to the technical evaluation criteria.

Scoring criteria

The review of proposals submitted by potential subcontractors will be based on the following parameters and point system:

ELEMENT	Range

Evaluation design (understanding of objectives, suitability & rationale)	(0-25)
Data collection strategy and content	(0-25)
Track record, task-applicable expertise (Erasmus+, Evaluation, Education, and VR)	(0-20)
Availability and commitment based on the level of effort by key staff	(0-10)
Cost efficiency	(0-20)
Total	(0-100)

ANNEX-2: SAMPLE WORK AND CVs

All applicants must submit a sample of a previous product developed by the organization/company. Products with thematic links to the work described in this RFP are preferred.