

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

### Design and Implementation of the Digital Green Innovation Competition

Helvetas invites interested parties to submit proposals for the provision of services described in this RFP.

#### 1. Contract description

Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation is implementing the *Greening Private Enterprises in Kosovo (GPEK)* project, funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). The project supports small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Kosovo in transitioning toward greener, more resource-efficient, and climate-resilient business models.

Under the TRANSFORM component, GPEK plans to organize a Digital Green Innovation Competition, conceived as a catalytic initiative to identify concepts for innovative digital solutions that can support the green transformation of SMEs and contribute to the broader project objectives. The competition is expected to attract a diverse pool of applicants from across Kosovo and result in the selection of a limited number of high-potential concepts for digital solutions. To ensure high-quality design of this activity, outreach, and implementation of Digital Green Innovation Competition (DGIC), GPEK intends to engage a service provider as detailed in Annex 1: Terms of Reference.

#### 2. Timetable

	DATE	TIME - CET
Tender announcement	12.05.2026	-
Deadline for written enquiries via <a href="mailto:procurement.kosovo@helvetas.org">procurement.kosovo@helvetas.org</a>	22.05.2026	16:00
Last date for Helvetas to issue clarifications (clarifications can be found in the same link where the tender dossier was posted in Helvetas website)	25.05.2026	16:00
Deadline for submitting offers to <a href="mailto:procurement.kosovo@helvetas.org">procurement.kosovo@helvetas.org</a> account <sup>1</sup>	02.06.2026	16:00

#### 3. Nature of the contract

Service Agreement.

#### 4. Negotiations

Helvetas reserves the right to enter into negotiations with all or part of eligible bidders in order to amend and/or complete their original offers.

Negotiations may concern the technical, financial, legal and other aspects of the contract.

#### 5. Eligibility

Eligibility to apply for this assignment is open to legally registered entities in Kosovo,

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<sup>1</sup> Any application received after this deadline will not be considered.

including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), foundations, ICT and digital education providers (such as academies or training centers), event management organizations, and other qualified service providers. Eligible entities may apply either as a single entity or as part of a consortium.

A consortium may be a legally established entity or an informal grouping created for the purpose of this tender. All members of the consortium (including the lead entity and all partners) shall be jointly and severally liable for the performance of the contract. The lead entity shall be designated and will act as the main point of contact and assume primary responsibility for contract management.

A bidder (including all consortium members) may not participate in more than one application, either individually or as part of a consortium. In case of multiple participation, all related applications may be excluded from the procedure. Civil servants and persons elected or appointed to a public function are ineligible to participate in the procedure for this contract. Any offer containing such persons will be excluded from the procedure without further evaluation.

## **6. Costs for preparing offers**

No costs incurred by the bidder in preparing and submitting the offers are reimbursable. Such costs fall under the responsibility of the bidder, including the costs incurred during negotiating and interviewing process.

## **7. Sub-contracting**

Sub-contracting services to another legal person is not allowed.

## **8. Provisional commencement date of the contract**

June 2026.

## **9. Initial period of execution and possible extension of the contract**

The core implementation phase is expected to start upon contract signature and continue for approximately 2 months, followed by a 6-month post-competition monitoring and follow-up period, in accordance with the ToR.

## **10. Submission of offers**

Offers must be submitted via email in electronic format only in two separate files using the standard forms provided by the Helvetas (PART 1 and PART 2).

**PART 1 - Technical offer file** shall contain:

- 1. Signed Eligibility Documentation Form<sup>2</sup>** – as per ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTATION part below  
**Signed Application Form – as per PART 1 – APPLICATION PACKAGE** part below
- 2. Technical proposal document including:**
  - Technical Approach, Methodology, Detailed Work Plan and Competition Design

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<sup>2</sup> Electronic copies of eligibility documentation should be provided only by the winning bidder prior to contract signing.

- Management, Key Personnel, and Staffing Plan
- Corporate Capabilities, Experience, and Past Performance

The name of the file should have the bidder's name, Reference No: NT-0001-GPEK and the text 'Technical offer documents' (for example **My Company NT-0001-GPEK technical offer documents**). and

**Part 2 - Financial offer file** shall contain:

- 1. Signed Financial Offer form** – according to instructions in PART 2 of this document.

The Financial offer must be presented in Euros. The fees proposed in this offer should cover all costs necessary for delivery of the assignment, including but not limited to professional fees, event-related costs, outreach and communication, travel, monitoring, administrative support, and any other implementation costs.

Helvetas is exempt from VAT, thus the fees offered should be without VAT. The contractor is responsible for all other taxes and duties in compliance with the legislation of the country.

The name of the file should have the bidder's name, Reference No: NT-0001-GPEK and the text 'Financial offer documents' (for example **My Company NT-0001-GPEK financial offer documents**).

Financial offer file should be **password protected**<sup>3</sup>. The bidders will be informed in advance once the evaluation date is confirmed so they can stay reachable on that date in order to provide the passwords. During the evaluation process the entitled purchasing panel member will call the bidder and ask for the passwords at the spot<sup>4</sup>.

The subject of email should contain only the PRF reference number (for example **NT-0001-GPEK**).

The body of the email should contain bidder's official name, address and telephone number.

Offers must be submitted in English language exclusively to the following email address: [procurement.kosovo@helvetas.org](mailto:procurement.kosovo@helvetas.org). Offers submitted after the deadline mentioned under point 2 Timetable of this RFP will not be considered. The counted official receipt time is the time showing on the email received from the bidder to [procurement.kosovo@helvetas.org](mailto:procurement.kosovo@helvetas.org).

## 11. Evaluation of offers

Each offer will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria and the weighting as detailed below. In the case of offers submitted by a consortium, these criteria will be applied to the consortium as a whole.

### Eligibility criteria

Only bidders that provide signed forms below will be processed for further evaluation:

- **Eligibility Documentation Form** and
- **Application Form**

The weighting of the criteria for evaluation of technical and financial offers are as follows:

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<sup>3</sup> Offers received without password will not be considered for evaluation

<sup>4</sup> If the bidder is not reachable on the phone during the evaluation process, the offers will not be considered for evaluation

Evaluation Grid		Max Points
Technical Offer Evaluation Criteria		
1	<b>Technical Approach, Methodology, Detailed Work Plan and Competition Design (30 points)</b>	30
	Competition Concept, Methodology, and Work Plan (15points): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality and clarity of the competition concept and methodology</li> <li>- Alignment with digital and green innovation objectives</li> <li>- Clear implementation phases</li> <li>- Feasibility and practicality of the work plan</li> </ul>	
	Competition Design, Outreach, and Implementation (15 points): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Does the proposal provide a comprehensive and actionable delivery approach?</li> <li>- Outreach and participant mobilization strategy (including youth, women, and non-majority inclusion)</li> <li>- Approach to application management, screening, and evaluation</li> <li>- Organization and facilitation of the competition event (stakeholder engagement and visibility)</li> </ul>	
2	<b>Management, Key Personnel, and Staffing Plan (20 points)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expertise in green and/or digital innovation</li> <li>- Experience in outreach, facilitation, and event management</li> <li>- Clear roles and responsibilities</li> <li>- Experience in innovation competitions, startup programs, or similar initiatives</li> </ul>	20
3	<b>Corporate Capabilities, Experience, and Past Performance (20 points)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Demonstration of capacities and relevant experience</li> <li>- Proven experience in similar competitions, programs, or events</li> <li>- Experience with SMEs, startups, or innovation ecosystems</li> <li>- Minimum 2 relevant references of similar scope and complexity</li> <li>- Demonstrated organizational capacity to deliver end-to-end implementation</li> </ul>	20
<b>Total Technical Score</b>		<b>70</b>
Financial Offer Evaluation Criteria		Max Points
1	<b>Financial offer in EUR (as per part 2)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cost-effectiveness (value for money)</li> <li>- Clarity and completeness of the budget breakdown</li> <li>- Alignment of costs with proposed methodology and activities</li> </ul>	30
<b>Total Financial Score</b>		<b>30</b>

The bidders that do not pass the technical evaluation (**min 50% of technical evaluation scoring**) may not be processed for further evaluation. After evaluation of offers, Contract will be awarded to the bid that received the highest scoring based on above criteria. Helvetas reserves the right to contract only part of required services or cancel this procedure should it not be satisfied with the quality of offers

## **12 Alteration or withdrawal of applications**

Candidates may alter or withdraw their offers by written notification prior to the deadline for submission of tenders. No offer may be altered after this deadline.

Helvetas retains ownership of all offers, which have not been withdrawn. Consequently, bidders do not have the right to have their offers returned to them.

## **13 Validity of offers**

Bidders are bound by their tenders for 90 days after the deadline for submitting offers. In exceptional cases, before the period of validity expires, the Helvetas may ask bidders to extend the period of validity for a specific number of days, which may not exceed 40.

## **14 Signature of the contract(s)**

Within 5 days of receipt of the contract already signed by the Helvetas, the selected bidder shall sign and date the contract. Failure of the selected bidder to comply with this requirement may constitute grounds for annulling the decision to award the contract. In this event, the Helvetas may award the tender to another bidder or cancel the tender procedure.

## **15 Terms of payments**

Helvetas is not a payer of value added tax (VAT). Prices in the application must be submitted, taking into account all expenses.

The payment will be made via bank account transfer to the winner of the tender in EUR within a maximum of 30 working days from the date of acceptance of goods or execution of services or works. Cases of non-performance of obligation and their legal consequences will be separately indicated in the contract.

## **16 Terms of cooperation**

In the case of a contracting, the parties will have to perform according to the established time and in accordance with Helvetas – Supplier purchase order or Helvetas – Service provider contract. Helvetas has the right to increase or decrease the number of ordered items. Helvetas has the right to choose a supplier/ implementer on the given offer according to its own discretion. Helvetas has the right to re-formulate the Request for Quotation (RFQ), Invitation to Bid (ITB) or Request for Proposal (RFP) to its own discretion, if any additional items are needed. In case of failure or non-compliance with contractual obligations, Helvetas has a unilateral right to terminate the contract without incurring any legal obligation.

The Applicant has to be familiar with all instructions, forms and requirements mentioned in the RFQ, ITB or RFP documents. The responsibility for the submission of the offer in accordance to these requirements lies entirely with the Applicant.

Helvetas signs a purchase order/contract with the winning bidder. The contract will come into force upon signature by both parties.

## **17 Ethics clauses/Corruptive practices**

Bidders making false declarations may be subject to financial penalties representing 10% of the total value of the contract being awarded. This rate may be increased to 20% in the event of a repeated offence. Any attempt by a bidder to obtain confidential information, enter into unlawful agreements with competitors or influence the PP or the Helvetas during the process of examining, clarifying, evaluating and comparing offers will lead to the rejection of its offer and may result in penalties as described above.

Bidders must not be affected by any conflict of interest with other bidders or parties

involved in the project. Helvetas reserves the right to suspend or cancel the RFP procedure and/or contract if corrupt practices of any kind are discovered at any stage of the award process or during the execution of a contract. Bidders will be rejected or contracts terminated if it emerges that the award or execution of a contract has given rise to unusual commercial expenses. Such unusual commercial expenses are commissions not mentioned in the main contract or not stemming from a properly concluded contract referring to the main contract, commissions not paid in return for any actual and legitimate service, commissions remitted to a tax haven, commissions paid to a payee who is not clearly identified or commissions paid to a bidder which has every appearance of being a front bidder.

Contractors found to have paid unusual commercial expenses related to this project are liable, depending on the seriousness of the facts observed, to have their contracts terminated and/or be penalised. Helvetas reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the award procedure proves to have been subject to substantial errors, irregularities or fraud. If substantial errors, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the award of the contract, Helvetas may refrain from concluding the contract and/or terminate the contract.

### **18 Operational language**

All written communications for this tender procedure and contract must be in English.

### **19 Additional information**

The conclusion of the tender and the award of any contract are subject to the availability of funds.

Helvetas reserves the right to annul this tender procedure at any time, without any liability on its side.

### **20 Annexes**

#### **a. Annex 1**

Terms of Reference - Design and Implementation of the Digital Green Innovation Competition

## TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

### Design and Implementation of the Digital Green Innovation Competition

#### 1. BACKGROUND

The Greening Private Enterprises in Kosovo (GPEK) project is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and implemented by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation. The project supports small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Kosovo in transitioning toward greener, more resource-efficient, and climate-resilient business models.

GPEK operates through three interconnected components:

1. **INFORM:** Strengthening knowledge and awareness of green transition opportunities among SMEs
2. **ENABLE:** Improving access to green advisory services and financial solutions
3. **TRANSFORM:** Catalyzing green innovation and systemic change in priority economic sectors.

A key priority under the TRANSFORM component is to stimulate innovation-driven pathways for SME greening, including the integration of digital technologies as enablers of green solutions. Digital tools and solutions increasingly play a critical role in enabling resource efficiency, traceability, compliance with environmental standards, and new circular business models.

To contribute to this objective, GPEK plans to organize a Digital Green Innovation Competition, conceived as a catalytic initiative to identify and promote innovative digital solutions that can support the green transformation of SMEs and contribute to the broader project objectives.

The competition is expected to attract a diverse pool of applicants from across Kosovo and result in the selection of a limited number of high-potential solutions. Particular attention will be given to engaging youth, women, and minority communities, ensuring inclusiveness and broad participation.

To ensure high-quality design of this activity, outreach, and implementation of Digital Green Innovation Competition (DGIC), GPEK intends to engage a service provider through a competitive procurement process (Request for Proposals - RFP). Detailed qualification and eligibility requirements will be defined in the solicitation document.

#### 2. GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF ASSIGNMENT

The objective of this assignment is to design and implement the DGIC activity that generates innovative, practical, and scalable ideas of digital solutions contributing to the green transformation of SMEs in Kosovo.

The assignment aims to:

- attract a sufficient number of relevant applications for the competition (minimum 30 eligible applications)
- ensure participation of youth, women, and minority communities across Kosovo

- result in the identification of 3 high-potential digital solutions with clear practical applicability and potential for implementation in the Kosovo SME context.
- deliver a professionally organized and visible competition event.

### **3. SCOPE OF SERVICES AND EXPECTED APPROACH**

The service provider will be responsible for the end-to-end design and implementation of the DGIC activity, ensuring a coherent, well-structured, and high-quality process.

The detailed concept of the DGIC should be proposed as part of the technical offer under the RFP, in line with the following minimum requirements:

- a clear approach/logic with all stages of the implementation for generating creative and innovative ideas of practical and implementable digital solutions, addressing real challenges faced by SMEs for green transformation (e.g. resource efficiency, circular economy, environmental compliance, climate resilience, etc.) with a potential uptake by businesses.
- clearly define the profile of participants (e.g. individuals, teams, startups, or other relevant actors) and criteria for eligibility screening
- a structured and transparent evaluation and selection process of the competition activity
- propose an appropriate incentive structure (prize for winners) aligned with the competition objectives.
- plan the organization of the competition event
- 6-months post-competition monitoring and follow-up of the final prize winners on implementation of proposed solutions.

### **4. MAIN TASKS OF THE SERVICE PROVIDER**

The service provider will be responsible for the design and implementation of DGIC activity through the following key tasks:

#### **Task 1: Development of Implementation Plan**

Develop and submit for approval the implementation plan according to the competition concept.

#### **Task 2: Outreach and Participant Mobilization**

Plan and implement targeted outreach activities to attract a diverse and qualified pool of applicants, ensuring inclusive participation of youth, women, and minority communities across Kosovo.

#### **Task 3: Application Management and Evaluation Process**

Manage the application and evaluation process, ensuring transparency and quality, in close coordination with GPEK, which will participate in key validation steps, including final selection of winners.

#### **Task 4: Organization of Competition Event**

Plan and deliver the competition event, including:

- development of the event concept, agenda, and format (requires approval by GPEK)

- coordination and facilitation of the event sessions
- organization of pitching/presentation of shortlisted solutions
- coordination of the evaluation process during the event, in line with agreed criteria
- engagement of relevant stakeholders (e.g. jury members, private sector representatives, ecosystem actors)
- ensuring appropriate visibility and communication of the event.

#### **Task 5: Post-Competition Monitoring and Follow-up**

Design and implement a 6-month follow-up and monitoring process for the selected winning solutions, including tracking progress, identifying challenges, and documenting early results related to the implementation and potential uptake of solutions by SMEs.

#### **Task 6: Documentation and Reporting**

Document the implementation of the competition and its results, including participation overview, key outputs, and insights from the post-competition follow-up of winning solutions.

### **5. DELIVERABLES**

The service provider will be responsible for delivering the following outputs during the assignment.

#### **Deliverable 1: Implementation Plan**

At the start of the assignment, the service provider will submit an Implementation Plan following:

- the proposed competition concept and methodology
- outreach and communication approach
- implementation timeline and sequencing of activities.

The Implementation Plan will be reviewed and approved by GPEK prior to the launch of implementation.

#### **Deliverable 2: Applicant Database and Screening Results**

A structured database of all applications received, including:

- list of applicants and basic profile information
- confirmation of eligibility screening
- classification of eligible and non-eligible applications.

#### **Deliverable 3: Evaluation Results and Shortlisted Solutions**

Documented results of the evaluation process, including:

- list of 5 shortlisted applicants/solutions
- scoring or assessment results based on agreed criteria
- justification of selection.

#### **Deliverable 4: Competition Event and Selection of Winners**

Successful organization and delivery of the final competition event, including the pitching of

shortlisted solutions and formal selection of 3 winning solutions.

#### **Deliverable 5: Monitoring Report on Winning Solutions**

A brief report summarizing the follow-up of winning solutions, including:

- progress towards implementation
- key achievements and challenges
- initial evidence of uptake or interest from SMEs
- recommendations for further support (if relevant)

#### **Deliverable 6: Final Report**

Upon completion of the assignment, the service provider will submit a Final Report in English summarizing:

- overall implementation of the competition
- participation overview (including inclusiveness aspects)
- summary of shortlisted and winning solutions
- key insights and lessons learned.

### **6. TIMELINE**

The core implementation phase of the assignment is expected to be carried out over a period of approximately 2 months, starting from the date of contract signature. This will be followed by a post-competition monitoring and follow-up phase of up to 6 months, focused on tracking the progress of selected winning solutions.

The service provider will propose a detailed timeline and sequencing of activities in the Implementation Plan, which will be reviewed and agreed with the GPEK project team.

### **7. QUALIFICATIONS OF SERVICE PROVIDER**

The service provider should demonstrate:

- proven experience in designing and implementing competitions, hackathons, or similar initiatives
- strong outreach capacity and access to relevant networks, particularly involving youth, women, and minority communities
- experience in digital innovation, entrepreneurship, or IT ecosystems
- familiarity with green economy, sustainability, or environmental innovation concepts (considered an asset)
- strong organizational, communication, and facilitation skills
- demonstrated ability to deliver high-quality, engaging events and processes.

Consortia or partnerships are encouraged where they bring complementary expertise (e.g. outreach + technical + event management).

### **8. MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING**

The service provider will work under the overall supervision of GPEK's SME Innovation Lead, who will serve as the primary point of contact for this assignment.

The service provider will work in close coordination with the SME Innovation Adviser, who will:

- provide technical guidance to ensure alignment with GPEK objectives
- support coordination during key stages of implementation

- participate in key validation steps, including methodology approval and selection processes
- facilitate linkages with relevant stakeholders where needed.

Regular communication will be maintained throughout the assignment to ensure quality and timely delivery of outputs.

## **9. FINANCIAL PROPOSAL**

Financial proposal requirements, including format and cost breakdown expectations, will be detailed in the RFP document.

## PART 1 – ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTATION FORM

### LIST OF REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

#### Eligibility criteria

Requirements	Documentary evidence
The company/organisation is registered	The full Registration certificate
VAT number (if applicable)	VAT certificate (if applicable)
The total turnover of the company/organisation over the past 3 years (2023, 2024 and 2025) must be equal to or exceed € 100,000	Financial statements
The company/organisation has no open case of a dispute, an execution procedure, reorganisation, bankruptcy, or insolvency procedure	A valid proof issued by a competent judicial or administrative authority (not older than 6 month)
All taxes paid (if applicable)	A valid tax administration certificate or a valid agreement signed with the Tax Administration to repay the outstanding debts

#### STATEMENT<sup>5</sup>

I, the undersigned (for consortiums, **every consortium member should sign a separate statement as part of this application**) hereby declare that we have in possession all documents listed above. All documents are valid as requested in the table above and hard copies or electronic copies can be distributed as/when needed.

Signed on behalf of the bidder

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

<sup>5</sup> Statement should be signed by each member of consortium, if a consortium.

## PART 1 – APPLICATION PACKAGE

### APPLICATION FORM<sup>6</sup>

#### 1 SUBMITTED by (i.e. the identity of the bidder)

	Name(s) of entity(ies) making this application	Nationality
Leader		
Member 2 <sup>7</sup>		
Member 3		
...		

#### 2 CONTACT PERSON (for this application)

Name	
Organisation	
Address	
Telephone	
e-mail	

#### 3 STATEMENT<sup>8</sup>

I, the undersigned, the authorised signatory of the above bidder (for consortiums, **every consortium member should sign a separate statement as part of this application**), hereby declare that we have examined the tender dossier for the contract referred to above. We hereby accept its provisions in their entirety, without reservation or restriction.

We agree to become one of the parties of the framework contract and to submit an offer whenever requested by the Helvetas in accordance with the terms of the tender dossier and the conditions laid down, without reservation or restriction.

We are making this application for this tender in our own right. We confirm that we are not tendering for the same contract in any other form. We understand that our consultants may be excluded if we propose consultants who have been involved in offers of other bidders.

We are fully aware that, for consortiums, the composition of the consortium cannot be changed in the course of the tender procedure, unless Helvetas has given its prior approval in writing. We are also aware that the consortium members have joint and several liabilities towards Helvetas concerning participation in the above tender procedure and any contract awarded to

<sup>6</sup> Please do not change the format of the Application Form

<sup>7</sup> Add/delete additional rows as appropriate

<sup>8</sup> Statement should be signed by each member of consortium, if a consortium.

us as a result of it.

We will inform Helvetas immediately if there is any change in the above circumstances at any stage during the implementation of the contract. We also fully recognise and accept that any inaccurate or incomplete information deliberately provided in this application may result in our exclusion from this and other contracts funded and/or managed by Helvetas and that penalties may be applied as specified in the tender dossier.

We note that the Helvetas is not bound to proceed with this tender and that it reserves the right to award only part of the contract and that it will incur no liability towards us should it do so.

Signed on behalf of the bidder

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

**PART 2 - FINANCIAL OFFER****FINANCIAL OFFER**

Helvetas is exempt from VAT, thus the cost should be without VAT. The contractor is responsible for all other taxes and duties in compliance with the Law of the country.

<b>Services Items – specifications</b>	<b>Qty</b>	<b>Price unit / Euro</b>	<b>Total</b>
Development of Implementation Plan	1		
Outreach and Participant Mobilization	1		
Application Management and Evaluation Process	1		
Organization of Competition Event	1		
Post-Competition Monitoring and Follow-up	1		
Documentation and Reporting	1		
<b>Total cost (sum of units)</b>			

Signed on behalf of the bidder

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	