



Finanțat de
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TERMS OF REFERENCE

for selecting a service provider to develop an IT solution - open-source online search platform to assist journalists and analysts in conducting independent research and integrity assessments

Call for proposals for the development of an IT solution - open-source online search platform to assist journalists and analysts in conducting independent research and integrity assessments within the project "Ensuring integrity, efficiency and independence of the justice system in Moldova - #Justice4Moldova", funded by the European Union and co-financed by Soros Foundation Moldova and implemented by IPRE in partnership with IWPR.

Announcement published: November 17, 2023.

Deadline for submission of proposals: December 17, 2023, 23.590 Chisinau time

Provider: Individual / Legal entity

Development services period: December 2023 – February 2024

Maintenance services period: 24 months

1. About the project:

The Institute for European Policies and Reforms (IPRE), as lead partner, in consortium with the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR), implements the project "Ensuring the integrity, efficiency and independence of the justice system in Moldova - #Justice4Moldova", funded by the European Union and co-financed by Soros Foundation Moldova.

Donor: European Commission and Soros Foundation Moldova

Implementation period: March 2023 - February 2026

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to increasing the role of civil society and media in supporting the independence, integrity, efficiency, and accountability of the justice system in the Republic of Moldova.

Specific objectives:

- Strengthen the capacity of civil society and public policy experts to advance the implementation of justice policies in a transparent and accountable manner, in line with European standards on rule of law, human rights and Association Agreement.
- Increase the independence, integrity and efficiency of justice and anti-corruption actors through oversight and support from civil society, media and policy organisations.

2. Object of the procurement

IPRE (hereinafter - Beneficiary) requests offers from IT service providers from the Republic of Moldova, Romania, as well as other countries (individuals or legal persons) for the development of an IT solution - *open source* online search platform to assist journalists and analysts in conducting independent integrity assessments and research.

3. Tasks of the provider:

The selected provider will develop an IT solution – an open source online search platform that can be used by journalists, analysts and other persons interested in independent research activities of the integrity of justice actors.

The online search platform will be an integrated search engine based on keywords from public information available in the online environment on the websites of public institutions, mass-media and other specialized websites (i.e. websites of the National Integrity Authority, courts, Superior Council of Magistracy, Superior Council of Prosecutors, TV, radio and online media institutions, which will be decided upon in the technical specifications jointly agreed upon with the provider). The web interface of the platform will be available on a web page integrated on the project website <https://ipre.md/justitie-pentru-moldova/>

A. Basic technical specifications:

1. The *backend part* of the IT solution;
2. The frontend of the online platform available in Romanian language with basic search elements, including search field, search criteria, user guide, project information, cookie policy, privacy and data protection. The web interface could also include support solutions based on integrated artificial intelligence);
3. Web interface with results based on primary search criteria.

The detailed technical specifications of the online platform are to be decided upon by the selected provider in cooperation with the IPRE and IWPR team of experts at the first stage of the project, based on the methodology proposed by the provider at the competition stage.

B. Basic requirements and functionalities:

Given that the functional and non-functional requirements of this system can be implemented based on different hardware and software platforms (which involve different development and maintenance costs), it is considered appropriate for the project to choose exclusively free *open source* software solutions and open code most commonly used by companies offering web hosting services that fully correspond to the terms of reference submitted to the IT solution.

The developed IT solution will have to provide dynamic and accessible tools that will allow the total management of the *frontend* page: from structure to content, in an exclusively visual, dynamic and automatic manner. In this regard, a Content Management System accessible for use to users with computer operator knowledge (Microsoft Windows, Microsoft Office, Microsoft Internet Explorer, Mozilla FireFox, etc.) must be designed and developed.

4. Deliverables:

The selected provider will achieve the following deliverables:

Deliverables	Indicative time frame
Detailed technical specifications of the online platform	by 31 December 2023
Developed open-source <i>online search platform</i> (<i>backend</i> solution, web interface in RO language and search results interface)	by 12 February 2024
Online platform functionality test report	by 23 February 2024
Operational online platform launched	by 29 February 2024
Technical support and maintenance services of the platform for a minimum period of 24 months with the possibility of extension.	by 28 February 2026

The Provider shall ensure minimum quality standards for acceptance of deliverables by the Beneficiary, namely:

- Services will be provided accurately and responsibly.

- Compliance with established deadlines and requirements;
- Proof of good cooperation with IPRE and IWPR;
- The provider will maintain constant interaction and communication with the project team, as well as will demonstrate pro-active attitude and interest in the purpose of the product;

5. Eligibility criteria:

The bidding provider must meet the following criteria:

- Experience in the field (e.g. development of sites, platforms, applications, etc.) minimum 5 years;
- Presentation of a portfolio with similar works performed;
- Outline of the technical proposal and plan for the presentation of works / schedule of activities taking into account the deadline of deliverables in accordance with the terms of reference;
- Providers, individuals and legal entities (IT companies / IR development teams / IT consultant) from the Republic of Moldova, Romania, as well as other countries are eligible.

6. Evaluation and selection procedure

Step 1: Formal assessment

At the first stage, all tenders will be formally assessed to determine whether the complete package of documents has been submitted, according to the terms of reference, including whether the tenderer meets the formal selection criteria. The formal evaluation is carried out by the IPRE Project Coordinator, and will be recommended to the members of the procurement committee for validation of the procurement contest.

Step 2: Evaluation of the technical offer

At the second evaluation stage, the technical offer will be analyzed by the members of the selection board. For each criterion, scores will be awarded as follows:

Criteria for evaluating the technical offer	Score
Reputation and experience in the field (e.g. development of sites, platforms, applications, etc.) minimum 5 years;	30
Portfolio with similar works performed by the bidder	20
Technical proposal and plan for the presentation of works/schedule of activities taking into account the deadline of deliverables in accordance with the terms of reference;	50
TOTAL – technical offer	100

All bids that have accumulated at least 70 points in the technical evaluation will be qualified for the evaluation of the financial offer.

Step 3: Evaluation of the financial offer

The selection board will evaluate the financial offer. The criteria for calculating the financial offer will be based on a percentage proportion, awarding 100% (equivalent to 30 points) to the lowest financial offer submitted and 0% (equivalent to 0 points) to the highest financial offer submitted. The price offered by the participating companies must be competitive respecting the price-quality ratio.

Step 4: Selection and conclusion of evaluation of tenders:

The cumulative method will be applied in the assessment of applications. The technical offer represents 70% of the total score and the financial offer will represent 30% of the total evaluation score (i.e. Final score = Technical offer score * 0.70 + financial offer score * 0.30). The contract

will be awarded to the candidate who obtains the highest cumulative score from the technical and financial offers.

All bidders who will submit applications will be notified about the decision on the selected bid after completing the bid selection process. The selected provider will provide the contracted services under a service contract between December 2023 and February 2026 (First stage, development of the online platform: December 2023 – February 2024 and Second stage, support and maintenance services: March 2024 – February 2026).

7. Tendering procedure:

Bids may be submitted by legal entities or natural persons. Offers accompanied by a letter of intent will be sent by e-mail to procurari@ipre.md until **December 17, 2023, 23.59 (Chisinau time)**, and will include:

A. Technical offer:

1. General information about the offeror, namely: name, contact details, website, customer portfolio, samples of similar work performed, contacts of previous customers, recommendations and other relevant data about the bidder;
2. Curriculum vitae of the offeror in case of individuals;
4. Copy of the registration certificate / Extract from the State Register of Legal Entities and CVs of the main experts of the company who will be involved in the provision of services;
5. Outline of the technical proposal with a plan for the presentation of works/schedule of activities taking into account the deadline of deliverables in accordance with the terms of reference.

B. Financial offer:

Financial offer: total cost of development and maintenance of the solution during the 24-month period indicated in EUR with cost splitting. Calculated with VAT 0% and NET amount for individuals. The indicative budget for developing the platform will be visible separately from the maintenance budget of the platform. The comparison of financial offers will be made in EUR. Bids submitted in another currency will be converted into EUR at the official exchange rate of the NBM on the deadline for submission of bids.

The services to be provided within the project are subject to the application of VAT exemption with the right to deduct and the granting of tax and customs facilities. The confirmation documents for VAT exemption will be presented by the beneficiary.

For any additional information or questions, please contact Ecaterina Popșoi, Project Manager at the following email address: ecaterina.popsoi@ipre.md or by phone: +373 22788978.