CALL FOR TENDERS

External Expert for the EU-funded project: « Enable, Upgrade and Spread Employability, Entrepreneurship and Digital Skills of the Eastern Mediterranean youth through dedicated university centers »

EUSEEDS_A_T_3.1_0172

Call opening date: **12th of June 2026**
Deadline for submission**: 11th of July 2026**

The purpose of this call for tenders is for the Center for Social Innovation (CSI, Cyprus) to select an **external expert on digital skills** who will be responsible for developing two training courses:

(a) a short introductory course on basic digital skills, and
(b) a longer professional training course focusing on advanced digital competencies (e.g. web development, coding, etc.). [more details included below]

The training courses will target vulnerable populations distant from employment (women, youth, refugees, displaced persons, people far from the job market and not engaged in any training - including those classified as NEETs - Not in Education, Employment, or Training).

Following the development of the training materials, the external expert will be required to deliver a Training of Trainers (ToT) programme based on the developed content. The ToT participants will include university staff, who will subsequently train teachers and student trainers to deliver the courses to vulnerable populations.

The above activities will be implemented within the framework of the project ''EUSEEDS_A_T_3.1_0172'', co-funded by the European Union under the Interreg NEXT MED Programme.

Project Overview

The EUSEEDS project has been selected for co-funding by the European Union up to EUR 2,499,564.20 (89%) under the Interreg NEXT MED Programme. The total project budget, including partner co-funding, amounts to EUR 2,808,499.10. The project is implemented across five Eastern Mediterranean countries to strengthen youth employability and digital skills. It foresees the establishment (creation or revitalisation) of 24 university centres across five countries (Cyprus, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine) to enhance professional integration and digital competences mostly among students. These centres, located on

university campuses in areas with significant social needs, will provide sustainable services (during and beyond the project):

- Internal services for universities (for students and recent graduates): employability and digital skills training, micro-certifications, and pre-incubation schemes for student entrepreneurship projects;
- External services for vulnerable community members: digital literacy and professional training delivered possibly by students, accessible to surrounding communities.

Project Consortium

The project is led by AUF Middle East (Lebanon), acting as lead partner of a consortium composed of:

- Partner 1: Center for Social Innovation (Cyprus);
- Partner 2: Enroot (Egypt);
- Partner 3: Aix-Marseille University (France);
- Partner 4: Jordan Youth Innovation Forum (Jordan);
- Partner 5: Forward Digital Mena (Lebanon);
- Partner 6: Palestine Information and Communications Technology Incubator (Palestine).

Project Duration

36 Months, from 07/08/2025 to 06/08/2028

Tasks of the External Expert

The external expert will be responsible for the following tasks and responsibilities:

- Develop two digital skills training courses tailored to the needs of vulnerable populations, particularly unemployed women and youth, including individuals classified as NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training).
- Design and prepare all related training materials, including curricula, trainers' manuals, presentations, practical exercises, handouts, assessment tools, and any additional supporting resources/ material required for the trainers to implement effective delivery of the courses.
- Ensure that the training content is accessible, user-friendly, gender-sensitive, and adapted to participants with varying levels of digital literacy.
- Develop one introductory digital skills course covering basic digital competencies and one advanced professional training course focusing on areas such as web development, coding, AI and other relevant digital skills. The curriculum will be based on the Skills Assessment Study carried out by the responsible project partner. **CSI will provide the updated version of the relevant manual that the external expert will follow to develop the curriculum.**

- Deliver a Training of Trainers (ToT) programme to university staff designated by the project partners, ensuring that participants are adequately prepared to subsequently train teachers and student trainers.
- Apply participatory and interactive training methodologies that encourage active engagement, practical learning, and knowledge transfer.
- Ensure the consistent quality, relevance, and accuracy of all training materials and training activities delivered under the assignment.
- Maintain regular, smooth, and effective communication with the teams of CSI throughout the duration of the assignment, ensuring prompt responsiveness and timely access to documents, explanations, clarifications, and feedback whenever required.
- Coordinate closely with CSI and relevant project partners to ensure that all outputs are aligned with project objectives, timelines, and reporting requirements.
- Deliver all agreed outputs and activities within the established deadlines and implementation schedule, ensuring timely completion of all tasks under the assignment.
- Revise and adapt the training materials, where necessary, based on feedback received from CSI and project stakeholders.
- Participate in coordination meetings, consultations, and review sessions related to the implementation of the assignment, as requested by CSI.

Scope of Work

The expert will need to develop a curriculum taking into account the skills identification needs in the 5 countries. The design and production of content for hybrid digital training modules will include a short introductory or acculturation training courses in digital technology and long professional training courses aimed at autonomy in a professional context. The training material will subsequently be made available to the centers.
The training programme will be implemented across the 24 universities selected under the project. Each university will designate 2 trainers from its academic or administrative staff to participate in the Training of Trainers (ToT) programme.
These trainers will subsequently transfer the acquired knowledge and skills to six additional students and/or staff members within their institution. The workshops will then be delivered by the trained staff and students as part of the universities' Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Following the capacity-building phase, the trained staff and students will be responsible for delivering training sessions to vulnerable populations within their respective communities.

1. Training 1: Introduction to Digital Literacy: This training introduces participants to the basics of digital tools and online communication. It focuses on developing practical skills that enhance employability, including internet navigation, email use, basic productivity software, and online safety:

a. Module 1: Understanding Digital Devices
b. Module 2: Navigating an Operating System
c. Module 3: Introduction to Internet, Web Browsing and AI tools
d. Module 4: Online Communication
e. Module 5: Productivity Tools
f. Module 6: Digital Safety and Online Privacy
g. Module 7: Job Search and Online Opportunities
h. Module 8: Practical Digital Skills for Daily Life

2. Training 2: **Certified Professional Digital Training-** This training is designed to equip participants with practical, entry-level technical digital skills that enable them to pursue pathways into web development and related digital professions. The training adopts a practical, hands-on approach, allowing trainees to apply digital tools to real-life professional scenarios.
    a. Module 1: Introduction to Coding and Development Environment (Immersion Phase)
    b. Module 2: Digital Work Practices and Task Organisation
    c. Module 3: Web Fundamentals and Structure of the Internet
    d. Module 4: Web Design and Prototyping
    e. Module 5: Front-End Web Development (HTML & CSS)
    f. Module 6: Introduction to Programming (JavaScript Basics)
    g. Module 7: Introduction to Back-End Concepts
    h. Module 8: Publishing and Deployment of Web Projects
    i. Module 9: Building a Complete Web Project with and without the use of AI tools
    j. Module 10: Introduction to Digital Career Pathways

Indicative Timeline

The assignment is expected to be implemented according to the following indicative timeline:

- **July - September 2026:** Development of training content and preparation of training materials.
- **September - October 2026:** Review, revision, and finalisation of training content and supporting materials, incorporating feedback from CSI and project partners.
- **November 2026 - January 2027:** Organisation and delivery of the Training of Trainers (ToT) programme.

Eligibility Requirements

Interested applicants must meet the following minimum eligibility requirements:

- Demonstrated experience in the development and delivery of training programmes, particularly in the fields of digital skills, ICT, coding, web development, or related areas.
- Proven experience in designing training materials and curricula tailored to diverse target groups, including vulnerable populations and/or individuals with low levels of digital literacy.
- Previous experience in delivering Training of Trainers (ToT) programmes and applying participatory and learner-centred training methodologies.
- Strong understanding of issues related to digital inclusion, employability, youth engagement, and gender-sensitive approaches to training delivery.
- Excellent communication, facilitation, and interpersonal skills.
- Ability to work collaboratively with multidisciplinary teams and maintain effective communication with project partners and stakeholders.
- Ability to deliver high-quality outputs within agreed timelines and according to project requirements.
- Fluency in English, both written and spoken. Knowledge of Arabic and/or French will be considered an asset.
- University degree in education, information technology, computer science, instructional design, social sciences, or another relevant field.
- Previous involvement in EU-funded, international cooperation, or donor-funded projects will be considered an advantage.

Application Requirements

Applicants must submit:

A. Technical Proposal
- Understanding of the assignment (10%)
- Methodology and approach (30%)
- Work plan and timeline (10%)
- Relevant experience (20%)

B. Financial Proposal
- Detailed financial offer in EUR (15%)
- Exclusive of taxes (15%)

C. Supporting Documents
- CV highlighting relevant qualifications and professional experience

Evaluation Criteria:

Proposals will be evaluated based on a **combined technical and financial assessment**, in line with principles of transparency, fairness, and value for money.

The evaluation will follow the weighting below:

- **Technical Evaluation: 70%**
- **Financial Evaluation: 30%**

Only proposals that achieve the **minimum technical score required by CSI** will proceed to the financial evaluation stage.

Technical Evaluation Criteria

The Technical Proposal will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. **Understanding of the Assignment:** Assessment of the bidder's understanding of the assignment objectives (development of 2 digital skills training; introductory and advanced digital skills curricula as well as the organisation and execution of the Training of Trainers (ToT) in supporting capacity building across university innovation centers).
2. **Methodology and Approach**: Assessment of the proposed methodology for designing, developing, and delivering the training courses and related materials, including curricula, manuals, presentations, exercises, and assessment tools. This includes the approach to participatory and interactive learning, ensuring accessibility for learners with different digital literacy levels and delivering an effective ToT programme.
3. **Work Plan and Implementation Timeline:** Assessment of the clarity, feasibility, and sequencing of the proposed work plan, including the development of training curricula and materials, delivery of the ToT programme, and integration of feedback and revisions. Particular attention will be given to the ability to deliver all outputs within the agreed timeframe and to ensure a logical sequence between curriculum development, material preparation, validation, and implementation activities.
4. **Experience and Qualifications of the Consultant:** Assessment of the consultant's or team's relevant experience and qualifications in developing digital skills training programmes, particularly for vulnerable groups such as women and NEET youth. This includes experience in ICT-related training areas (e.g. digital literacy, coding, AI, web development), development of training materials, delivery of Training of Trainers (ToT) programmes, and previous work in inclusive, gender-sensitive, and EU-funded capacity-building projects.

Total Technical Score: 70 Points

Minimum Passing Score: Only proposals that achieve at least **70% of the total technical score (49 out of 70 points)** will be considered technically qualified and proceed to financial evaluation.

Contract Amount

Interested tenderers are requested to submit their proposed rates/financial offer, taking into consideration the expected duration of the collaboration and the scope of work to be delivered.

Submission of Applications

Interested applicants are invited to submit their application by email to paschalia.leventi@csicy.com and maria.andreou@csicy.com no later than **11th of July 2026.**

The email subject line must clearly state: "Application - External Expert on Digital Skills - EUSEEDS Project."

Structure of the Submission

Applicants must strictly adhere to the following structure:

Applications should include:

D. A CV highlighting relevant qualifications and professional experience.
   - Submitted in a separate PDF file
   - Must be sent in the same email with the financial and technical proposal

   Technical Proposal:
   - Submitted in a separate PDF file
   - Must NOT contain any financial information, pricing, or cost references
   - Subject line must follow the exact format specified above
   - Must be sent in the same email with the financial proposal

E. Financial Proposal:
   - Submitted in a separate PDF file
   - Must be password-protected
   - Password shall be shared only upon official request from the Evaluation Committee
   - Must be sent in the same email with the technical proposal

The selected expert will enter into a service contract with CSI for the implementation of the assignment. Applicants are requested to submit a financial offer indicating their proposed

fee/rate for the assignment. The final remuneration and payment terms will be mutually agreed upon and specified in the contract.

Deadline: **11th of July 2026**

Opening and Evaluation Process

- The Evaluation Committee shall open technical proposals first
- Financial proposals will only be opened for applicants who successfully pass the technical evaluation
- The minimum passing threshold is 70% of the technical score
- Qualified applicants will be requested to provide the password for their financial proposal

Clarifications

Any inquiries, clarification requests, or questions regarding this ToR must be submitted exclusively via email no later than **26/06/2026** to: paschalia.leventi@csicy.com

For Submissions & Inquires

- **Inquiries and Clarification Requests:** Must be submitted no later than **26/06/2026** to: paschalia.leventi@csicy.com
- **Submission of Proposals:** Must be submitted no later than **11/07/2026** to: paschalia.leventi@csicy.com and maria.andreou@csicy.com

About CSI

Centre for Social Innovation (CSI) is a Research and Development organization, which focuses on fostering social innovation that can bring about positive change to local, national, regional, and global entities. These entities include but are not limited to governments, local administrative agencies, non-for-profit agencies, commercial entities, and educational institutions. The CSI team is composed of open-minded, fully equipped researchers, entrepreneurs, project managers, trainers, and Information Technology Developers. CSI encompasses the capability and capacity to identify social needs, design and implement adjusted initiatives, and provide for sustainable growth. The CSI team's areas of expertise are in the fields of traditional education and e-learning, entrepreneurship, start-ups, innovation, creativity, negotiations, IP advisory services, social responsibility, business advisory solutions, data analytics, information technologies, project management, project

evaluation services, product validation, training, and computer gaming. CSI draws know-how and skills from its wide global network which includes academic institutions, IT companies, public services, international organizations, start-ups, and public services.