EUROPEAN URBAN INITIATIVE

Thematic Partnership Officers - Support Service for UAEU

Terms of Reference
Version 02/08/2024

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GLOSSARY:

| DGUM	Directorate General Urban Matters
EUI	European Urban Initiative
EUI PS	European Urban Initiative Permanent Secretariat
CALM	Coordinators and Action Leaders Meeting
TPO	Thematic Partnership Officer

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 THE EUROPEAN URBAN INITIATIVE

The Cohesion policy legislative package for 2021-2027 includes the establishment of the European Urban Initiative (set out in Article 12 of Regulation No 2021/1058 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund[1] - ERDF/CF Regulation) – an instrument of the European Union, the successor of the Urban Innovative Actions Initiative implemented during the 2014-2020 programming period, and building on activities undertaken in the URBACT III Programme and Urban Development Network.

This Initiative is an essential tool to support cities of all sizes, build capacity and knowledge, support innovation, and develop transferable and scalable solutions to urban challenges of European Union relevance. The EUI provides different levels of assistance:

- Supporting urban authorities with up to 80% direct co-financing and up to €5M ERDF, allowing EU cities to experiment as testbeds for their innovative idea and transferring it to other cities.
- Strengthening capacities of cities in the design and implementation of sustainable urban development strategies, policies and practices in an integrated and participative way.
- Providing a knowledge environment for cities to ensure easier access to horizontal and thematic knowledge and share the know-how on sustainable urban development.
- Supporting the Urban Agenda for the EU (UAEU), and upon request of Member State(s), supporting the intergovernmental cooperation on urban matters.

The EUI is managed by the EC's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO) via indirect management. The EC has designated the Region Hauts-de-France (France) as Entrusted Entity, for the implementation of EUI. The EUI Permanent Secretariat has been created to assist the Entrusted Entity and to ensure the day-to-day management of EUI.

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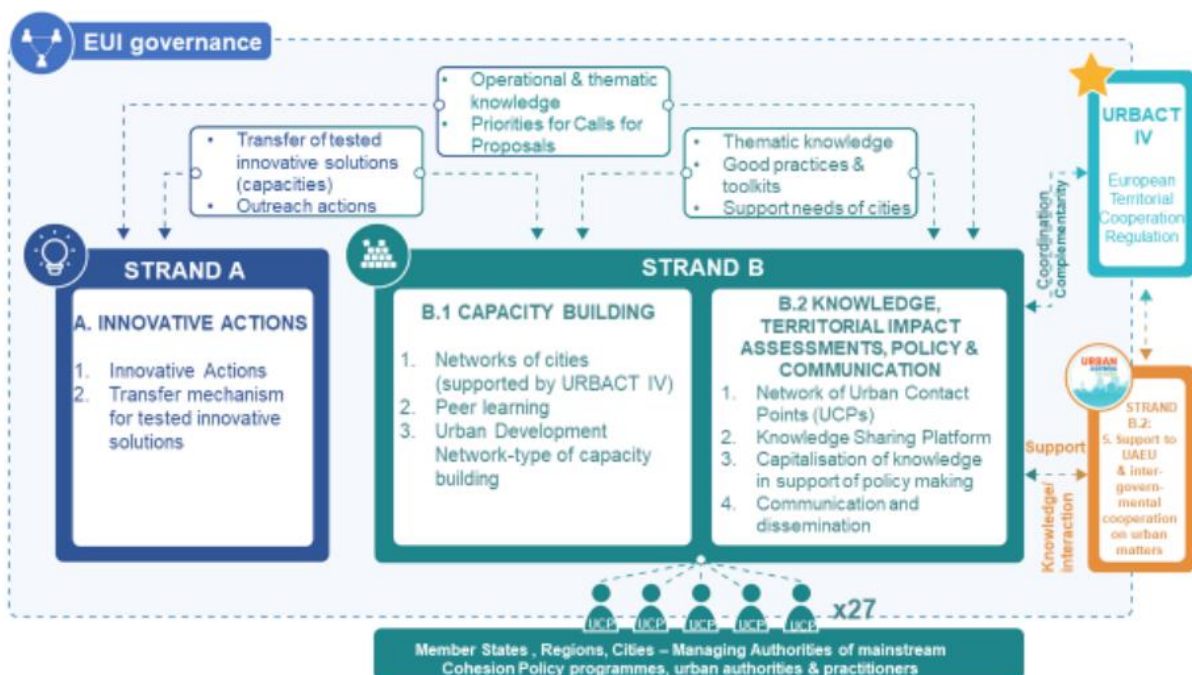
[1] Regulation (EU) 2021/1058 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on the European Regional Development Fund and on the Cohesion Fund: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32021R1058.

1.2 THE URBAN AGENDA FOR THE EU (UAEU)

The Urban Agenda for the EU (UAEU) was initiated within the framework of intergovernmental cooperation. The Pact of Amsterdam signed on 30 May 2016 at the informal meeting of EU Ministers responsible for Urban Matters, established the Urban Agenda for the EU. It intends to better involve cities in the design and implementation of policies. The overall objective is to include the urban dimension in policies and its implementation should lead to better regulation, better funding and better knowledge for cities in Europe.

The Urban Agenda for the EU is a multi-level and multi-stakeholder working method and institutional innovation promoting cooperation between cities, Member States, the European Commission and other stakeholders[2]. It is implemented through Thematic Partnerships and "when a more specific and targeted approach is needed"[3] through Other Forms of Cooperation[4] involving the European Commission (and ultimately other EU institutions), Member States, cities and stakeholders in a multi-level governance format (Partnership) and focus on a theme.

The first phase of the Urban Agenda for the EU delivered 14 Thematic Partnerships and action plans in relation to better regulation, funding, and knowledge, including 139 actions. According to the parameters adopted through the Ljubljana Agreement (2021), four new themes for thematic partnerships were added: Cities of Equality, Food, Greening Cities and Sustainable Tourism.

This was considered a necessary addition after the findings of the Assessment study on implementation and performance of the Urban Agenda for the EU (2019).

1.3 EUI SUPPORT SERVICES FOR THE UAEU

One of the objectives of the EUI is to **provide support to the Urban Agenda for the EU** as indicated in the Pact of Amsterdam and Ljubljana Agreement and further detailed in the Contribution Agreement between the Commission and the Region Hauts-de-France.

Administrative Support Service – The Thematic Partnership Officer (TPO) is one of several support services provided by EUI. The **current document describes the Terms of Reference** based on which the call to recruit the TPOs will be launched.

The EUI PS will secure one or more **TPOs** for each UAEU Thematic Partnership established after 2021, for a duration of up to 3 years. This period can be extended for a maximum of 2 consecutive times. Each extension will be of 1 year.

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[2] "Membership - Each Partnership is made up of Urban Authorities (cities), the European Commission, EU organisations (EIB, EESC, CoR), Member States, Partner States, experts, umbrella organisations (e.g. EUROCITIES, CEMR), knowledge organisations (e.g. URBACT, ESPON, EUKN) and stakeholders (NGOs, business, etc.)." Pact of Amsterdam, page V

[3] "When a more specific and targeted approach is needed, for example when an urban topic requires a quicker response, targeted delivery or a specific focus on one pillar of the UAEU and/or question/issue, OFC can extend opportunities for the UAEU multi-level and multi-stakeholder cooperation besides Partnerships. The OFC operational framework is to be kept limited and flexible, so there is room for innovation and experimentation." page XIII

[4] Ljubljana Agreement, 2021, page 4

2. TPO SELECTED VIA THE PRESENT CALL

2.1 SCOPE OF THE SERVICE REQUIRED

The **aim** of the current call is to recruit one or more **Thematic Partnership Officer(s) (TPOs)** for each of the following UAEU Partnerships (two in total):
  (1) UAEU Partnership on **"Water Sensitive Cities"**
  (2) UAEU Partnership on **"Building Decarbonisation: Integrated Renovation Programmes and Local Heating and Cooling Plans"**

The TPO will be tasked to <u>assist and guide</u> (1) the coordinators of each Thematic Partnership and (2) EUI in structuring, organising, planning, moderating, facilitating, and reporting **on the key** <u>organisational and administrative</u> **activities/tasks necessary to ensure the** <u>operational functioning</u> of their specific UAEU Thematic Partnership. This is predominantly **administrative and technical support**. The TPOs will **not** need to contribute with thematic knowledge, but will represent an advantage.

The TPO will play a fundamental role in the day-to-day work related to its allocated UAEU Thematic Partnership. The TPO will focus on the **operational functioning** of the Thematic Partnership based on the:
  (1) **thematic direction** defined by the Thematic Partnership and its **Coordinator(s)** (for their thematic partnership) and
  (2) **operational directions** and principles defined by **EUI PS** in agreement with EC (for the UAEU). The TPO will be contracted by and report directly to EUI PS but will work closely with the Thematic Partnership Coordinators, action leaders and UAEU Partnership(s) members.
  (3) **procedural/ methodological directions** and principles defined by the **TPO Process Curator** (in agreement with EUI PS). **TPO Process Curator** is task to provide:
    a. Coordination, curation and management of the TPOs' work (to secure coherence between the TPOs' work, approaches, methods and tools):
    b. Coordination and provision of guidance to the TPOs.
    c. Supervision of the processes between TPOs and the UAEU Thematic Partnership Coordinators and UAEU Thematic Partnership members.
    d. Support the EUI PS in creating coherent processes and for the implementation of the UAEU Support Services package.

The new TPO(s) recruited will work closely also with the other four TPOs. EUI PS is already working with several TPOs and one TPO Curator.

2.2 TASKS OF TPO

Indicatively, the TPO(s) will perform **tasks as follows:**

Group A: Tasks related to the EUI PS support services offered specifically to the UAEU Thematic Partnerships

Offering specific **information, guidance and advice** regarding the existing **support service package** (in complementarity with the general guidance offered directly by EUI PS on this matter).
  (1) Administrative Support
    a. **Meetings, workshops, and events:**
      i. Planning, organising and facilitating the online and in-person meetings, workshops and events related to the allocated Thematic Partnership (before, during and after the meeting).
      ii. Creating/updating calendar invitations for meetings.
      iii. Offering technical assistance for online meetings.
      iv. Drafting meeting agendas and preparing presentations when necessary.
      v. Organising, updating and archiving the lists of participants (linked to Travel and Accommodation procedure).

vi. Taking notes and drafting minutes of Thematic Partnership meetings.
vii. Taking pictures, audio, and video recordings during Thematic Partnership meetings and events (e.g., study visits).
viii. Supporting the logistical aspects related to Thematic Partnership meetings (before and during the meeting, online and on-site).
ix. Facilitating and moderating (when needed) the meeting, workshop or event, to make sure there is a clear, effective and efficient way of working which generates results.
x. Providing communication and sharing of information to the UAEU Thematic Partnership in between meetings, workshops, and events.

b. **Digital data, tools and processes:**
   i. Updating the Thematic Partnership contact list(s).
   ii. Developing, writing, and monitoring online surveys for different purposes (via tools like EUSurvey, Mentimeter, Slido, etc)
   iii. Developing visual boards of information to facilitate understanding, brainstorming and cooperation (via Miro and other tools).
   iv. Developing a Gantt charts/calendars of intended/planned steps for the Thematic Partnership (before the activities take place) based on the work and decisions of the UAEU Partnership members (via Miro and other tools).
   v. Developing & updating a visual timeline of the (actually) realised steps for the Thematic Partnership (after the activities have taken place) (via Miro and other tools).
   vi. Organising, managing, and maintaining updated:
      1. the Web-based collaborative platform: Microsoft SharePoint.
      2. the specific UAEU Thematic Partnership web page on the website[5];
      3. the UAEU Partnership dynamic map with members and meetings (and other similar maps).
      4. other interactive pages/tools used in the UAEU Partnership implementation.
      5. the tracking form for the "Monitoring of UAEU dissemination activities".
      6. The specific surveys linked to reporting issues with the use of SharePoint.

c. **Manage the various consultation processes** needed. Such consultation processes can be with specific stakeholders or with the general public as other consultation of UDG/DGUM or EC. They can be related to the orientation paper and the action plans of the UAEU Partnerships as well as other consultations of UDG/DGUM and/or interservice of the EC)

(2) Initiation Phase Service
a. Supporting EUI PS in designing, planning and implementing the initiation meetings and/or interactive workshops and provision of support materials.

(3) Guidance and advice regarding planning, managing, and monitoring.
a. Supporting the UAEU Partnerships in reporting on their activities and monitoring the implementation of their actions.
b. Supporting the EUI PS in collecting information for the monitoring of the implementation of the Urban Agenda for the EU

(4) Provision of Expertise Support Services.
a. Supporting EUI PS in designing, planning and implementing the Provision of Expertise Services and development of support materials, in line with the steps and roles defined in the flowchart.
b. Supporting the identification, selection and verification of the assignment and quality of outputs of experts (that is under the responsibility of the EUI PS) related to the provision of expertise services.

(5) Travel and accommodation support for urban authorities
a. General support linked to the procedure.

(6) Communication and dissemination support (to the UAEU Thematic Partnerships)

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[5] https://www.urbanagenda.urban-initiative.eu/partnerships

a. **Day-to-day support**:
    i. Researching and writing short (non-academic) articles and social media posts.
    ii. Contributing to the writing, editing and proofreading of Thematic Partnership articles and documents (Orientation Paper, Scoping Fiches, Draft Action Plan, Final Action Plan, Specific Outputs from various actions, etc.).
    iii. Writing and filling in reports about the Thematic Partnership and the support services offered.
    iv. Drafting graphics/schemas/visuals for social media posts.
b. **Questions and Answers (Q&A) tool**:
    i. Supporting EUI PS in designing, updating and implementing the Q&A tool and its related materials.
    ii. Supporting EUI PS in identifying and collecting questions
c. **Visual Identity**
    i. Supporting EUI PS in securing that the visual identity / brand book is properly respected.
d. **Editorial Support**
    i. Supporting EUI PS in offering editorial support.
e. **Information session and trainings**
    i. Supporting EUI PS in planning, organising, and implementing information sessions and trainings. They can be related to procedures, processes, tools used, specific topics, etc.
f. **Visibility and engagement through events**
    i. Supporting EUI PS in planning, organising, and implementing UAEU and EUI visibility and engagements
g. **UAEU Website – Thematic Partnership Page**
    i. Supporting EUI PS in planning, organising, and writing content
h. **UAEU Website – News Articles**
    i. Supporting EUI PS in planning, organising, and writing content
i. **UAEU Website – Urban Blog**
    i. Supporting EUI PS in planning, organising, and writing content
j. **EUI Newsletter**
    i. Supporting EUI PS in planning, organising, and writing content
k. **UAEU social media**
    i. Supporting EUI PS in planning, organising, and writing content

Group B: EUI Support Services for the implementation of the UAEU as a whole

(1) Monitoring and reporting of actions service
a. Supporting EUI PS in planning, organising, and monitoring the status the UAEU development and implementation as a whole.
(2) Organisation of Coordinators and Action Leaders'(CALM) Meetings support
a. Supporting EUI PS in planning, organising, and implementing the CALM meetings for agenda points correlated to the work of the Partnerships and/or interventions of the relevant action leaders/coordinators are planned.
(3) Support services for the creation of synergy - UAEU initiative as a whole
a. Supporting EUI PS in planning, organising, and implementing synergy activities.
(4) Communication and Dissemination support to the UAEU as a whole
a. Supporting EUI PS in planning, organising, and implementing communication and dissemination activities to the UAEU as a whole.
(5) Communication between thematic partnerships and other forms of cooperation
a. Supporting EUI PS and contributing to the communication between different Thematic Partnerships

Group C: Annual work programme:

Each year an **annual work programme** will **be developed by the TPOs** (in cooperation with EUI PS and when needed UAEU Partnership Coordinators) to secure a more detailed and clearer understanding of the expectations by taking into account all the information available at that moment.

The work programme will include a tailor-made timeline of expected activities, events, and deliverables in alignment with the specific needs of the UAEU Partnership. They will also include Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to allow for a clear monitoring of progress and if needed to take necessary corrective actions.

The work programme will be **validated by the EUI PS**, who will ensure it is aligned with the support services and the EUI PS needs.

The work programme should be **reviewed periodically** during the year to accommodate any evolution of the UAEU Partnerships activities and their needs.

2.3 CURATION OF THE PROCESS

Resources at the EUI PS are available for the management and coordination of the **TPO Process Curator** (and to the extent needed by the TPOs). Close cooperation is in place between EUI PS and the **TPO Process Curator** to allow for an effective and efficient implementation of the tasks.

Coordination of the TPOs is based on:
- Coordination meetings per year, between the TPO Process Curator and all TPOs.
- Online meetings and webinars.
- Annual Work Programmes (and Work Orders)
- Implementation/Activity Reports
- Ongoing flow of information on EUI PS activities through digital means.
- Trainings to support service delivery
- Participation of TPOs in key EUI activities and events.

Individual day-to-day support is also provided to TPOs in the implementation of their tasks.

2.4 DURATION OF THE SERVICE

EUI PS estimates that, to appropriately fulfil the tasks requested a TPO will **need approximately 160 days of work per year** to support one UAEU Partnership (if he/she will be the only TPO for that UAEU partnership). On average, this means **3 days per week**. Nevertheless, (1) there will be periods with more workload and periods with less workload and (2) EUI PS might decide to select multiple TPOs for the same UAEU Partnership, which will need to work cooperatively.

Through the present call, the EUI PS will secure TPOs in the frame of the **Administrative Support Service**[6] for each UAEU Thematic Partnership established after 2021. Currently, UAEU Thematic Partnerships are established for a duration of up to 3 years. This period can be extended for a maximum of 2 consecutive times. Each extension will be for 1 year.

The contract to be signed by the TPOs will initially span 1 year, and it will include the provision for annual extensions, up to the end of the partnership.

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[6] One of the services under Support Service package of the Urban Agenda for the EU

2.5 OUTPUTS EXPECTED

The **outputs** delivered by the contracted providers can be for **internal use**[7] (shared with EUI and UAEU Partnership Coordinators or shared only inside the UAEU Partnership/across Partnerships) or for **external use** (shared with the general public). All outputs will remain in the ownership of the EUI PS.

Outputs for external use can be included in any EUI communication and dissemination materials and be published on the Urban Agenda for the EU website, the EUI website and other.

3.   APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

3.1 APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Candidates are invited to apply to the present call for TPO(s) by respecting the procedure indicated in this document and the application form.

Because the UAEU is driven by an intergovernmental cooperation[8] governance system, which involves numerous actors and processes, it is important to know that TPOs **are expected to be cooperative and flexible** in the implementation of the contract, report regularly and concisely about the activities, to accommodate for the changes naturally emerging within the general framework.

Any applicant is allowed to apply for **both UAEU Thematic Partnerships** if **they consider themselves to be suitable for**. In this case, they will be required to prove having sufficient capacity to implement more than one role in parallel.

The application form will allow the EUI PS to assess the candidates' eligibility and suitability for the TPO role(s) they applied for.

Besides mentioned above, candidates are requested to:

1.   Indicate the specific UAEU Partnership(s) they would like to be considered for.
2.   Indicate if they will prefer and have the capacity secured to implement the services for one or both UAEU Partnerships in parallel.
3.   Describe the main experiences, skills, knowledge which individual provider would bring to the role(s) and provide evidence of their experience while respecting the word limit in each question box.

In addition to the application form, all applicants are required to **submit a CV** of a maximum of 5 A4 pages preferably in Europass format, a maximum of 1 MB size, detailing your qualifications and work experience. The duration in months along with the start date and end date must be provided for any previous relevant employment. Examples of previous work can be included as hyperlinks or annexes to your CV in the same single document to be uploaded on the application platform. This may include links to event recordings to demonstrate evidence of your speaking/moderating skills. Any examples of previous work must be limited to relevant examples to support the knowledge and skills required in the framework of the present Call.

Applications must be submitted via EUSurvey to the EUI PS by the deadline indicated under the section "Indicative timeline for the call" (table below).

If five (5) weeks after the deadline for submissions, you have not received an answer form the EUI PS consider you have (with this occasion) not been shortlisted for an invited. Do to limited capacity EUI PS might not be able to send emails to these not shortlisted. We are grateful for your understanding.

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[7] There might be situations when certain outputs are better not to be shared publicly.
[8] https://www.urbanagenda.urban-initiative.eu/urban-agenda-eu

3.2 SELECTION PROCEDURE

The selection of applications for the TPO roles will be performed by the EUI PS and an external service provider selected by the Entrusted Entity through an open call.

The selection procedure will be undertaken in **two stages**: (1) **Eligibility Evaluation** and (2) **Quality Evaluation.**

Eligibility Evaluation

During the eligibility assessment, in order to be selected for the TPO role, the following criteria will apply:

- **Fluency in English** (written and spoken, C1 level certificate[9] required from non-native speakers)
- **University degree** & **Work Experience:** in any field linked to the tasks of the contract or the UAEU Partnership themes:
  - Bachelor's + 4 years of work experience OR
  - Master's + 2 years of work experience OR
  - PhD + 1 years of work experience
- **IT literacy**

Please note that in line with Article IV, 21 of the Pact of Amsterdam stating that "participation in [UAEU] Partnerships is voluntary" for the UAEU Partnership members:

- the employees of the organisations which are members of one of the UAEU Partnerships
- the experts/consultants representing one of the organisations which are members in one of the UAEU Partnerships

are **not** eligible to apply for this call for TPO(s).

Quality Evaluation

For the quality evaluation, the following criteria will be applied:

1. Formal education - University degree(s) with additional relevance for the tasks of the contract (beyond the eligibility criteria).
2. Work Experience relevant for the tasks presented above.
3. Language competences/ skills[10]
4. IT skills
5. Knowledge and experience related to the UAEU[11].
6. Knowledge of and experience regarding the specific tasks of the contract
7. Knowledge and experience related to the theme(s) of the selected UAEU Partnerships.

The quality evaluation will be carried out by EUI PS for candidates listed as eligible. A shortlist of the candidates with the best applications will be invited for an interview. **A proof of English language skills at C1 level will be required from shortlisted candidates** (ideally) prior to the interview unless English is listed as the candidate's native language. **A language test can be organised at the expense of EUI PS if needed**, but for those applicants owning a proof of language, it is highly recommended

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[9] Non-exhaustive list of accepted certificates: TOEFL®, IELTS, PTE Academic, Cambridge English Qualifications, EFSET, Duolingo English Test, Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC), Business English Certificate (BEC), Integrated Skills in English exams (ISE). Candidates without a certificate will be required to pass an online English test organized by EUI PS. Tests are expected to take place in the period indicated below in the Indicative timeline for the call).

[10] Proficiency (C1. C2 or native) in any EU languages other than Italian and Greek represents a small advantage. (Italian and Greek languages are already covered by the existing TPOs).

[11] EU citizens resident in EU will have a small advantage.

that they upload it in the application form. The proof of English level must be provided according to the indicative timeline.

Following the interviews with shortlisted candidates, the EUI Permanent Secretariat (EUI PS) will then select experts for the role of TPOs. The EUI PS is supported in this process by an external contractor.

3.3 INDICATIVE TIMELINE FOR THE CALL

The **indicative** timeline for this work order is detailed below (if needed EUI PS can decide to extend the deadline). **The applicants** are required to **ensure their availability for an interview, and the kick-off meeting** on the indicative dates below. All of which will be organised online.

Applications might be read on a rolling bases, therefor **EUI PS encourage all applicants to submit their application as early as possible** and not wait until the last day.

Steps	Date
Launch of call for TPOs	2 Aug 2024
Closing date for receipt of applications	**13 Sep 2024 10:00 CEST**
Eligibility assessment and provision of: • list of eligible candidates to EUI PS with evidence of C1 level English language proficiency • List of eligible candidates with the need for English language testing	27 Sep 18:00 CEST
Quality assessment and shortlisting of candidates	10 Oct 18:00 CEST
Shortlisted candidates are informed and invited to: • choose a date/time for interview • Take the English language test (if needed)	11 Oct
English language test (if needed)	**14 to 17 Oct**
Interviews take place online	**14 to 17 Oct**
Informing the selected TPO(s) candidates	21 to 25 Oct
Indicative kick-off meeting for TPO(s)	22 Nov 10:00 CET
Start of the work for TPOs	22 Nov

4.   CONTRACTUAL DETAILS

4.1 CONTRACTUAL MANAGEMENT

The external service provider, in charge of the eligibility evaluation of the received applications will be also responsible for the contractual management of the selected TPOs.

A contract will be signed between the external service provider and each selected TPO. Shortlisted experts selected for the TPO role will be informed in due time after the interviews.

The EUI PS will coordinate and support the activities of the TPOs. Only EUI PS is responsible for the quality control of the activities and deliverables of the TPOs.

4.2 FEES

The daily rate of TPOs are fixed at: **EUR 450 / day (all taxes included)**
The payments will be financed in the framework of the EUI.

4.3 TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

The delivery of this service will require traveling to Lille (France) and to other locations in the EU to work with the EUI Permanent Secretariat and other partners.

Travel and accommodation costs will be covered by the EUI according to the refunding conditions communicated to the Assessors in advance and after reception by the external service provider of the declarations of expenses form and justifications of payments.

4.4 CONTACT

For questions regarding the present Call for TPOs, please contact urbanagenda@urban-initiative.eu. In case of technical issues on EUSurvey, please contact us before the closure of the call.