

For the purposes of the project Increasing Civic Engagement in the Digital Agenda – ICEDA, co-financed by the European Union and based on the Grant Contract with ref. no. IPA/2019-414-059, NGO 35MM opens a

## CALL FOR SUBMISSION OF BIDS

**for procurement of services for preparation of Investigative articles for the Digital Agenda**

### 1. Contracting authority

NGO 35MM, project Increasing Civic Engagement in the Digital Agenda – ICEDA, co-financed by the European Union and based on the Grant Contract with ref. no. IPA/2019-414-059,

### 2. Basic information about the project

The Digital Agenda is an initiative developed by the European Union, which has also been extended and adopted for the Western Balkan 6 Countries. It aims to ensure that the citizens of the region can fully reap the benefits of the digital transformation. The commitment to the Digital Agenda will ensure that citizens have the skills to match the demands of the new economy and will help modernize public administrations, strengthen cybersecurity, increase connectivity, and improve the business climate.

The “[Increasing Civic Engagement in the Digital Agenda - ICEDA](#)” project is aiming to increase the engagement of the civil society organizations (CSOs) in the promotion, shaping, and implementation of the Digital Agenda in the Western Balkans. As such, the implementing partners across three years will be working on increasing the capacities of CSOs and media for tackling challenges related to the Digital Agenda as well as promoting the Digital Agenda at the national and local levels. Moreover, currently across the region of Western Balkans, there are a lot of digital services (e-services) available for the citizens and provided by the public institutions. ICEDA will increase the usage of e-services through promotion and contribution to solving issues preventing their widespread use as well as advocating for new quality services to be introduced from the governments at all levels.

The “Increasing Civic Engagement in the Digital Agenda – ICEDA” project is implemented by Metamorphosis Foundation (North Macedonia), Open Data Kosovo (Kosovo), e-Governance Academy (Estonia), CRTA – Center for Research, Transparency, and Accountability (Serbia), NGO 35mm (Montenegro), and Levizja Mjaft! (Albania).

### 3. Subject of the service contract

The subject of the service contract is the preparation of Investigative articles for the Digital Agenda.



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## Description of the assignment

NGO 35MM hereafter, 'Contracting authority/ organization', is seeking to contract Investigative journalists, hereafter 'journalists' who will be engaged to produce Investigative articles about the Digital Agenda.

In total 4 investigative articles will be published in the span course of two years, i.e. 2 per year.

The investigative articles should be focused on the impact of certain developments or situations on the lives of the ordinary citizens and the institutions to incite media interest and promote public debate (such as improving efficiency of certain eGovernment applications, or reporting on needs of citizens that have been met elsewhere through such solutions). The articles will contribute in reaffirming and upholding the Digital Agenda through systematic fact-based investigative articles about issues directly affecting the quality of life of citizens in the Western Balkans. This activity will directly tackle the evident absence of fact-based media content that includes expert analysis mainstreaming the issues related to the Digital Agenda in the Western Balkans.

All delivered products should be in Montenegrin language. The deadline for the delivery of the investigative articles will be communicated with the journalist/s, after the signing of the Contract.

The engagement involves meetings with the Contracting authority/ organization, which can be done online or offline, depending on the circumstances.

### 4. Place of the Assignment

The journalists will conduct the investigative work and placement in Montenegro, where the articles will be based on.

### 5. Assignment timetable

This assignment is expected to start on the 15<sup>th</sup> of September 2021 and last until the 30<sup>th</sup> of November, 2022.

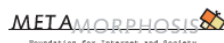
The service delivery for the first year is expected to start on the 15<sup>th</sup> of September, 2021 and last until 15<sup>th</sup> of November, 2021.

The Assignment of Journalist/s for the first year is foreseen to be a total of the production of two investigative articles, excluding the time spent in online discussions, reporting, and other placement-related duties.

The timeline of the preparation and publication of the articles is going to be discussed with the contracted journalist upon signing of the contract.



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## 1. Duties and responsibilities

- The investigative articles need to be presented in a human-friendly format that takes into account patterns of human thinking, privileges stories and trends over plain facts, and consequently allows citizens to grasp a better understand of the Digital Agenda.
- The journalist/s needs to produce high-quality investigative journalism articles for Digital Agenda.
- The journalist/s needs to publish the articles on their official media websites and share them on their social media accounts.
- The journalist/s needs to provide the organization with the financial documentation needed to make payments (Contract, Bank account, Payment request, and Individual Mission Report).
- The writing material must be the original work of the journalist/s and not previously published unless otherwise specified by the Contracting authority/ organization.
- All sides of the issue covered by the journalist/s will be presented and reviewed to refrain from any bias, except opinions.
- If covered, all sides of a community, city, state, national, or international political issues will be presented factually to inform rather than promote or endorse.
- The Contracting authority/ organization will not accept material that is an unnecessarily unwarranted invasion of privacy.
- The Contracting authority/ organization will not accept material that attacks any individual/entity, private or public. The criteria are to act based on the Public's right to know crucial issues.
- It is obligatory to protect the integrity of minors, as well as members of marginalized and vulnerable groups.
- Other similar duties and tasks as required by the project.

The contract may be terminated if the following breaches occur, but this is not a complete list and should not be considered final:

- Missing deadlines without previously notifying the organization (and receiving approval for deadline extension);
- Plagiarism;
- Failing to fulfill duties as outlined in the ToR.

The Contracting authority/ organisation maintains the right to decide for which period and for how many articles would the Contract be valid.

## 2. Preparatory Phase

Please note that prior to the start of or during the work engagement, the selected journalists will be exposed to a preparatory phase which includes the following:

- Attending a workshop session in order to familiarize themselves with the project and the Digital Agenda
- Get familiar with goals and desired effect of the articles.



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- Getting familiar with the Research of state of e-government development & digital literacy in targeted countries in the Western Balkans, conducted as part of the project.

### 3. Selection criteria

Essential experience and qualification:

- University degree or professional certifications for Journalism;
- Applicants need to have a proven track record of at least 3 years' experience in the field of Journalism;
- Evidence of having done similar work previously (2 samples of investigative articles).

Key skills:

- Good writing skills;
- Excellent knowledge of Macedonian language and English knowledge;
- Good reporting and research skills;
- Good understanding of the concept of digitalization

The Contracting authority / organisation reserves the right to contract multiple journalists for this Call.

### 6. The offer should contain the following elements:

- a. Financial offer to be done according to Appendix 1.
- b. Documents proving technical and professional ability:
  - i. Statement for non-existence of conditions for exclusion of a supplier according to the form given as Appendix 2.
  - ii. Statement of acceptance of the terms of the call given as Appendix 3.
  - iii. Supplier's CV which must contain detailed and clear explanation of the required qualifications listed in this document. The Contracting authority/ organisation has the right to request evidence of any qualifications listed in the CV of the proposed experts.
  - iv. Two copies of published investigative articles, in Montenegrin or English.

Each journalist can participate with only one offer.

The offer, as well as all correspondence and documents related to the offer that are exchanged with the journalist (s), are written in Montenegrin or English, filled in manually or on a computer.

Those bids that will not contain the necessary elements or are not made according to the propositions of the call, will not be considered for further evaluation.

Applications should be submitted by e-mail to [office@nvo35mm.com](mailto:office@nvo35mm.com) with the subject: Application for investigative articles - ICEDA.

All applications must be submitted by August 30, 2021, 11:59 p.m.



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Only the selected journalist/s will be contacted.

### 7. Period of validity of the offer

The validity period of the bid should be at least 30 days from the day of the deadline for submission of bids for which duration of the bid in all its elements is mandatory for the journalist/s.

### 8. Awarding criteria

The selection of suppliers will be done through evaluation of the qualitative and financial offer, as follows:

Element	Maximum score
1. Quality - CV - 2 samples of investigative articles	80
2. Price	20
Total (1 +2)	100

For the quality criteria, the following aspects will be evaluated:

- Previous experience shown through the submitted CV - 40 points
- Samples of investigative articles - 40 points

The journalist/s who will receive the most points in total (quality + price) will be selected.

The Contracting authority/ organization reserves the right to divide the task with several journalists.

The Contracting authority/ organization reserves the right not to select a journalist if the Commission decides that none of the bids meets the criteria set out in this document.

### 9. Manner and conditions for payment of compensation

The payment will be made after the realization of the service, i.e. after submitting a report on the work done and its approval by the project.



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