



TRIPLE P TOURISM PROJECT  
Open Call for Consultancy Services

## **Adventure Tourism Development and Promotion**

### **Familiarization Tours Via Dinarica Cross-Border Ski Touring Week in Western Balkan**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE:** Development of regional adventure tourism routes in Western Balkans Six and their successful promotion in international markets through both regional and international promotional and marketing efforts

**Title:** **Implementation of Familiarization Tours – Via Dinarica cross-border ski touring week in Western Balkan**

**RCC Department:** Programme Department

Project: Triple P Tourism in SEE: Promotion, Policy and Pilots

**Eligible:** Respective legal entities/travel agencies and tour operators acting independently or within bidding consortia. The bidder should have **substantial experience in adventure tourism**.

**Reporting to:** RCC Secretariat

**Duration:** 10 February - 30 March 2020

*Expected level of effort (LoE) is indicated in the text below, along with respective deliverables*

**Deadline for Application:** **4 February 2020, at 15.00 CET**

**Reference number:** 005-020

**Price ceiling:** EUR 15,000.00 per LOT/ FAM trip

*Bids indicating a price above this threshold shall not be considered*

## I BACKGROUND

### Purpose

The RCC Triple P Project foresees conducting familiarization trips (FAM trips) for regional and international tour operators, travel agencies, media and bloggers to promote the attractions of traveling as adventure visitor in the WB economies, and in particular the ski touring programmes.

The RCC Triple P staff, in coordination with the contractor(s), will organise 2 (two) Adventure Travel Familiarization Tours – *Via Dinarica cross-border ski touring week in Western Balkan* in the period from *15 February to 15 March 2020* in *3+ economies* in the Western Balkans, to include Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo\*, Montenegro and Republic of North Macedonia.

The FAM trips are to be attended by key international travel media and tour operators and to be used to promote the new regional adventure tourism offer.

The purpose of this assignment is to provide assistance to the RCC Triple P Tourism in SEE project team and the tourism industry of the Western Balkans Six in implementation of the FAM trips in accordance with the new ski touring and winter sports programmes designed for promoting adventure tourism in the WB economies.

The Call has two LOTs. Applications may be submitted for either Lot1 or Lot2 or both Lots.

LOT 1: Implementation of FAM tours for *Ski touring in cross-border areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro – Kosovo\**;

LOT2: Implementation of FAM tours for *Ski touring in cross-border areas of North Macedonia – Albania – Kosovo\**;

The FAM tours aim to:

- increase awareness of the region as adventure destination through product awareness and update, and in particular as the ski touring destination;
- create a mutually beneficial business relationship between the wholesalers, agents and other travel operators;
- build confidence among the regional and international agents in selling the WB region as adventure destination.

### Background information

Tourism is one of the priority sectors of the SEE 2020 Strategy, with its significant potential for regional cooperation as direct and indirect contributor to the employment, export and GDP growth. However, due to many challenges, such as sector fragmentation, underdeveloped infrastructure, burdensome administrative procedures, lack of diversified market offer, etc., the industry has still not reached its full potential. To mitigate this SEE economies have agreed to prioritise tourism and address those challenges through joint, regional action.

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\* *“This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.”*

RCC's Triple P Tourism Project, a three-year initiative funded by the EU, focuses on the 6 IPA II beneficiaries in the Western Balkans. The project aims to improve the quality of the tourism offer by: creating joint offer/product(s) to foster regional integration in the tourism sector and its joint global promotion while diversifying tourism offer of the region; alleviating policy barriers to development of tourism industry and easing of administrative procedures; improving the level of services related to tourism; and supporting small-scale infrastructure projects to support the development of regional tourism offer/product.

The Project team implements the action under the supervision of the RCC Secretariat's Programme Department (Competitiveness). The coordination that guides the activities, verifies and endorses the results is achieved through the RCC Tourism Expert Group (TEG), comprised of relevant national stakeholders from the six governments, the private sector and the civil society active in tourism development and promotion. The national TEG Coordinators are also responsible for coordination of relevant stakeholders from tourism or other relevant fields within their own economies.

### **Product Development – Adventure**

During 2018 and 2019 RCC Triple P Tourism project completed stage one of the product development that included identification and selection of the themes for the regional routes, development of key framework approach for each route/product and initial concept development for the two new themes. Through the consultative process executed with Tourism Expert Group (TEG) the following regional adventure tourism offer has been selected for project support:

**Via Dinarica** and spin off programmes: Via Dinarica, as the regional mega trail, already enjoys recognition in international adventure travel market, and serves as a growth generator in remote areas of the region offering several tourism products. Via Dinarica backbone group of products includes hiking and mountain biking, and the current effort seeks to expand the adventure offer with new products, ski touring being one of them.

Via Dinarica - Ski touring: The WB region is perfectly suited for ski touring. It is one of the best ways to explore the mountains of the region especially in the winter period. You can get into areas considered inaccessible to ordinary skiers that offer completely different mountain experience. "Ski Touring is the biggest niche market worldwide in skiing at present"- stated by Ski Club of Great Britain.

Via Dinarica trails are still underused during the winter, thus there is a need to develop and promote the winter activities as part of this trail offers. Currently available winter outdoor activities throughout Via Dinarica are the snowshoeing and alpine skiing. The ski touring is still underused and underutilised as a product. Still, ski touring is potentially a most profitable winter activity which can be offered to potential foreign tours, along the line of free ride skiing, ice climbing and alpinism. A variety of ski touring programmes to suit all abilities and ambitions, from one-day to multi-day tours, have been developed by RCC external experts, including initial selection of international operators and media. Selected programmes are to be implemented via the commissioned FAM tours for this 2020 winter season.

## II. DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

### **Objectives and scope of the assignment:**

The main objective of this assignment is to diversify the Western Balkans adventure tourism products, to experience the products first hand and garner positive editorial publicity about Western Balkans as an **authentic adventure destination**. This objective will be reached through well-organised and implemented FAM tours in 2020.

The successful Contractor(s) will be expected to deliver the organisation and implementation of the contracted FAM trip(s) in full compliance with the tailor-made programmes designed and provided by RCC Triple P External Consultants including itineraries and places to visit, main selected foreign and regional tour operators, and other interested foreign enterprises dealing with ski and winter sports and service providers. **Each FAM visit will last up to 6 days.**

The assignment is divided in two lots:

LOT 1: Implementation of FAM tours for *Ski touring in cross-border areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro – Kosovo\**

LOT 2: Implementation of FAM tours for *Ski touring in cross-border areas of North Macedonia – Albania – Kosovo\**

### **Duties**

The services under this assignment include the following key duties, the same for both lots:

1. Implement the FAM tour programmes in coordination with RCC - Ski Touring External Expert in compliance with the prepared detailed trip plan for each FAM tour proposed (please see reference documents) as the most convenient and realistic to be executed taking into consideration the duration of the trip (max 6 days), number of locations to be visited and distances. (depending on the economies involved – at least 3+);
2. In accordance with the list of selected regional and international tour operators, service providers, etc. coordinate efforts with RCC - Ski Touring External Expert for finalisation of co-finance contributions that requires cooperation of service providers and tour operators from the WB economies. The participating regional operators and service providers are requested to have a professional track record in handling international groups in the last three years.
3. Preparation of comprehensive final reports for each of the FAM tours.

In all their stages, the deliverables will be developed in close consultation with the RCC Triple P Tourism in SEE project team and RCC - Ski Touring External Expert.

### **Deliverables**

The following deliverables will be produced and transferred to the RCC Triple P Tourism project during the course of the assignment, in the following timeline:

LOT 1: Implementation of FAM tours for *Ski touring in cross-border areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro – Kosovo\**

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Expected Level of Effort (LoE)</b>
Attendance at the preparatory meeting in Sarajevo – Work plan	10 February 2020	12 days
Coordination and implementation of FAM tours (1 trip in 3 economies)	15 February – 15 March 2020	
Final report on the implemented FAM tour with recommendations	30 March 2020	3 days

Reference document for **LOT 1**:

- Final Programme “Ski touring in cross-border areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro – Kosovo\*” and list of proposed participants to attend the FAM tour.

LOT 2: Implementation of FAM tours for Ski touring in cross-border areas of North Macedonia – Albania – Kosovo\*

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Expected Level of Effort (LoE)</b>
Attendance at the preparatory meeting in Sarajevo – Work plan	10 February 2020	12 days
Coordination and implementation of FAM tours (1 trip in 3 economies)	15 February – 15 March 2020	
Final report on the implemented FAM tour with recommendations	30 March 2020	3 days

Reference document for **LOT 2**:

- Final Program “Ski touring in cross-border areas of North Macedonia – Albania – Kosovo\*” and list of proposed participants to attend the FAM tour.

**Methodology**

The Contractor(s) is expected to propose the best methodological approach for undertaking this task. However, the following guiding principles should be taken into consideration:

- i. Communication with private sector, CSOs, and relevant regional and international organisations;
- ii. Any other methods applicable.

**Lines of Communication**

The Contractor(s) will work in close coordination and under guidance of the RCC Triple P Tourism in SEE project Adventure Tourism Expert and the Project Leader, and RCC Secretariat. Each deliverable will be sent within the set deadlines. RCC Triple P Tourism in SEE project will conduct a quality assessment and approval of each deliverable.

## Timeframe

The engagement is expected to start:

Lot 1: 10 February 2020 – 30 March 2020

Lot 2: 10 February 2020 – 30 March 2020

## III. COMPETENCES

The applicant must have the necessary human and technical resources and experience to perform the contract in accordance with the relevant quality standard. Where available and appropriate, one travel organisation/agency/tour operator might be selected to undertake preparation, organisation and implementation of FAM tours for both lots. However, given the diversity and amount of activities requested, applications for individual Lots by different agencies will be taken into consideration.

The selected Contractor(s) will work as part of a team to allow for knowledge exchange and complementary product development in line with specific requirements and needs of each specific site and attraction. The expert team will be coordinated by the Triple P Tourism team and in particular by the Expert on Adventure Tourism and the Project Leader.

### Education and Experience

Requirements concerning work experience and skills must be relevant to the specific assignment, but as a general rule, candidates with the following experience (as a minimum) are encouraged to apply:

<b>Education:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Degree in tourism management or a related field, i.e. economics, business, community development or other qualifications in the areas directly related to the subject of work.</li></ul>
<b>Experience:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At least 7 years of demonstrable work experience in tourism industry, product development and marketing, operations of travel organisation or a related field, particularly in the field of adventure tourism;</li><li>• Practical experience in designing and implementing similar actions, operational implementation of FAM tours for tour operators, travel agencies and travel media, including experience in business support and partnerships and promotion;</li><li>• Proven experience in organising and implementing SEE cross-border travel itineraries;</li><li>• Proven analytical skills;</li><li>• Proven communication and presentation skills and ability to work in an environment requiring liaison and collaboration with multiple actors including businesses, communities, local authorities and other stakeholders;</li><li>• Excellent and demonstrable drafting and formulation skills, with a track record of producing and publishing reports or papers in specified areas;</li><li>• Knowledge of the SEE region and experience in working in the region is considered an advantage.</li></ul>

<b>Language requirements:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fluency in English, as the official language of the RCC;</li> <li>• Knowledge of other RCC languages is an advantage.</li> </ul>
<b>Other:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Familiar with MS Office applications.</li> </ul>

### **Core Values**

- Demonstrates integrity and fairness by modelling RCC values and ethical standards;
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability.

### **Core Competencies**

- Possesses strategic vision, understanding of fundamental concepts and principles of a professional discipline or technical specialty;
- Demonstrates professional competence to meet responsibilities and post requirements and is conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results;
- Strong analytical capabilities and writing skills;
- Result-oriented; plans and produces quality results to meet the set goals, generates innovative and practical solutions to challenging situations;
- Communication: Excellent communication skills, including the ability to convey complex concepts and recommendations clearly;
- Team work: Ability to interact, establish and maintain effective working relations in a culturally diverse team and with a multitude of diverse stakeholders; flexibility to change and openness to receiving/integrating feedback;
- Ability to establish and maintain productive partnerships with regional and national partners and stakeholders.

## **IV. QUALITY CONTROL**

The Contractor(s) should ensure internal quality control during the implementing and reporting phase of the assignment. The quality control should ensure that the draft reports comply with the above requirements and meet adequate quality standards before sending them to stakeholders for comments. The quality control should ensure consistency and coherence between findings, conclusions and recommendations. It should also ensure that findings reported are duly substantiated and that conclusions are supported by relevant judgment criteria.

The views expressed in the report will be those of the Contractor(s) and will not necessarily reflect those of the Regional Cooperation Council. Therefore, a standard disclaimer reflecting this will be included in the report. In this regard, the Contractor(s) may or may not accept comments and/or proposals for changes received during the above process. However, when comments/proposals for changes are not agreed by the Contractor(s), the reasons for the final decision should be clearly explained in a comments table.

For the implementation of the familiarization trips (FAMs) the quality control during the preparation time will ensure approval of the program by the RCC and consistency with the approved during the delivery.

## V. APPLICATION RULES

**The application needs to contain the following:**

**For companies and consortia:**

- Company/institution profile including a brief description (up to 2 pages) about the company (in case of a bidding consortium, only the lead member should submit the profile);
- Copy of Company's/Institution's Registration Certificate (in case of a bidding consortium, only the lead member submits the Registration Certificate);
- Financial records - company's/institution's balance sheet and profit-and-loss statement for the past 2 years (in case of a bidding consortium, only the lead member should submit the financial records);
- CV of key members of the project team, outlining relevant knowledge and experience as described in Terms of Reference, along with contact details of referees;
- An action plan, up to 1 page, for each Lot, indicating the individual tasks to be undertaken against a timeframe;
- A concept note, up to 2 pages, for each Lot, elaborating proposed methodology for addressing and undertaking individual tasks (one concept note per Lot); an additional page can be included, where relevant, indicating key stakeholders to be included in the proposed approach;
- List of references for relevant activities implemented over the past 5 years demonstrating relevant experience in the subject matter;
- Application Submission Form (Annex I);
- Financial offer, as per Budget Breakdown (Annex II);
- Signed Statements of Exclusivity and Availability (Annex III).

When preparing the financial offer, the applicant should take into account the following:

- The proposed budget should be stated as a lump sum and broken down by key tasks;
- Costs of travel within the WB6, if planned and proposed, should be budgeted and borne by the contractor;
- The fee rates should be broadly consistent with the framework rates applicable in the region for these types of professional services;
- VAT amount needs to be clearly identifiable.

**Applications need to be submitted via e-mail to [ProcurementforRcc@rcc.int](mailto:ProcurementforRcc@rcc.int) by 4 February 2020, 15.00 CET.**

When applying, please identify your submission as response to this call by naming the subject line of your message as:

RCC Triple P Tourism - Reference Number 005-020 (stating the number of LOT and title of the LOT you are applying for).

## VI. EVALUATION AND SELECTION

The assignments will be awarded to the highest qualified applicant based on the skills, expertise, and the quality of the concept note(s) and the cost-effectiveness of the financial offer.

Applications will be evaluated on the basis of the profile and competencies of the candidate and the responsiveness to the terms of reference of Consulting Services.

The best value for money is established by weighing technical quality against price on a 80/20 basis.

The applications are evaluated following these criteria:

<b>EVALUATION GRID</b>	<b>Maximum Score</b>
<b>A. Technical Offer (A.1+A.2+A.3)</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>A.1. Work experience, references list:</b> Relevant work experience; evidence of other contracts of the nature comparable to that of the Call; experience with clients comparable to the Contracting Authority.	<b>35</b>
<b>A.2. Quality and professional capacity of the consultants:</b> CVs satisfy the criteria set forth in the ToRs, education and experience demonstrates professional capacity and experience required.	<b>35</b>
<b>A.3 Quality of the concept note and Action Plan:</b> Relevance and applicability within the WB6 regional framework; methodologically sound concept/plan, achievable within the defined time frame	<b>30</b>
<b>B. Financial Proposal/ lowest price has maximum score</b>	<b>100</b>

**Score for offer X =**

**A: [Total quality score (out of 100) of offer X / 100] \* 80**

**B: [Lowest price / price of offer X] \* 20**

### **Information on selection of the most favourable bidder**

The RCC Secretariat shall inform candidates and bidders of decisions reached concerning the award of the contract as soon as possible, including the grounds for any decision not to award a contract for which there has been competitive tendering or to recommence the procedure.

Standard letter of thanks for participation to unsuccessful bidders shall be sent within 15 days after the contract is signed with the awarded bidder.

The candidates and bidders wishing to receive a feedback may send a request within 15 days after receipt of the standard letter of thanks.

The request may be sent to the e-mail address [ProcurementforRcc@rcc.int](mailto:ProcurementforRcc@rcc.int) or to the address of the RCC Secretariat:

Regional Cooperation Council Secretariat  
Attention to: Administration Department  
Building of the Friendship between Greece and Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Trg Bosne i Hercegovine 1/V  
71000 Sarajevo  
Bosnia and Herzegovina

### **Appeals procedure**

Bidders believing that they have been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may petition the RCC Secretariat directly. The RCC Secretariat must reply within 15 days of receipt of the complaint.

The appeal request may be sent to the e-mail address [ProcurementforRcc@rcc.int](mailto:ProcurementforRcc@rcc.int) or to the address of the RCC Secretariat:

Regional Cooperation Council Secretariat  
Attention to: Administration Department  
Building of the Friendship between Greece and Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Trg Bosne i Hercegovine 1/V  
71000 Sarajevo  
Bosnia and Herzegovina

**ANNEX I:****APPLICATION SUBMISSION FORM****Open Call for Consultancy Services:****Implementation of Familiarization Tours – Via Dinarica cross-border ski touring week in Western Balkan****REF: 005-020****One signed copy** of this Call for Consultancy Submission Form must be supplied.

1 SUBMITTED by:

Name	
Address	
Telephone	
Fax	
e-mail	

## 2. STATEMENT

[Name of the Authorised person representing the Entity] \_\_\_\_\_ hereby declares that we have examined and accepted without reserve or restriction the entire contents of the Open Call for Experts, Grounds for Exclusions and Conflict of Interest as such:

**Grounds for exclusion**

Candidates or bidders will be excluded from participation in a procurement procedure if it is known that:

- (a) They are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- (b) They have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;
- (c) They have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the Contracting Officer can justify;
- (d) They have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the Contracting Officer or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;

- (e) They have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity.

Contracts may not be awarded to candidates or bidders who, during the procurement procedure, are:

- (a) Subject to a conflict of interest;
- (b) Guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the Contracting Officer as a condition of participation in the contract procedure or fail to supply this information.

### **Conflict of Interest**

- a) The Contractor shall take all necessary measures to prevent or end any situation that could compromise the impartial and objective performance of the contract. Such conflict of interests could arise in particular as a result of economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties, or any other relevant connection or shared interest. Any conflict of interests which could arise during performance of the contract must be notified in writing to the Contracting Authority without delay.
- b) The Contracting Authority reserves the right to verify that such measures are adequate and may require additional measures to be taken if necessary. The Consultant shall ensure that their staffs, including its management, are not placed in a situation which could give rise to conflict of interests. The Consultant shall replace, immediately and without compensation from the Contracting Authority, any member of its staff exposed to such a situation.
- c) The Contractor shall refrain from any contact which would compromise its independence or that of its personnel. If the Contractor fails to maintain such independence, the Contracting Authority may, without prejudice to compensation for any damage which it may have suffered on this account, terminate the contract forthwith.
- d) The Contractor shall, after the conclusion or termination of the contract, limit its role in connection with the project to the provision of the services. Except with the written permission of the Contracting Authority, the Contractor and any other contractor or supplier with whom the Contractor is associated or affiliated shall be disqualified from the execution of works, supplies or other services for the project in any capacity, including tendering for any part of the project.
- e) Civil servants and other agents of the public administration of the RCC Participants, regardless of their administrative situation, shall not be recruited as experts in contracts financed by the RCC Secretariat.
- f) The Contractor and anyone working under its authority or control in the performance of the contract or on any other activity shall be excluded from access to RCC Secretariat financing available under the same project unless they can prove to the Contracting Authority that the involvement in previous stages of the project does not constitute unfair competition.

We offer to provide the services requested in the Terms of Reference on the basis of supplied documentation subject to this Open Call for Consultancy Services, which comprise our technical offer, and our financial offer.

This Open Call for Consultancy Services is subject to acceptance within the validity period stipulated in the Terms of Reference.

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

## ANNEX II: BUDGET BREAKDOWN

REF: 005-020

N o Cost categories	Unit	Total Cost
<b>2 TOTAL COSTS</b>		

NOTE:

When preparing the financial offer, the applicant should take into account the following:

- Price ceiling: up to EUR 15,000.00 per LOT/ FAM trip. Bids indicating a price above this threshold shall not be considered.
- The offer should also include the costs of travel to the Beneficiaries if required by Terms of Reference, providing it as a separate budget line.
- The expert fees should be consistent with those applicable in the region.
- VAT amount needs to be clearly identifiable.

