TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR SERVICE

Recruitment of an IT and Digital Transformation Expert

Design, Procurement Support and Technical Supervision of the Development of an Digital Matchmaking and Virtual B2B Events Module for the Business Country Desk (BCD) Platform

Project: Reviving North African Biodiversity and Nature-Based Climate Resilience in Outstanding Wetlands (RAINBOW)

INSTRUCTIONS TO PROPOSERS AND PROPOSAL CONDITIONS

1.1 About the Contracting Authority and the Project

This Terms of Reference is issued within the framework of the project **"Reviving North African Biodiversity and Nature-Based Climate Resilience in Outstanding Wetlands (RAINBOW)"**, funded by the **International Climate Initiative (IKI)** of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMUKN).

The project is implemented by a consortium of organisations led by the **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)** in collaboration with regional and national partners in Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia.

BUSINESSMED – Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises (BUSINESSMED – UMCE) is one of the implementing partners of the RAINBOW project and is responsible for the implementation of several activities related to private sector engagement, business cooperation, and sustainable economic development in Tunisia.

As part of these activities, BUSINESSMED operates the **Business Country Desk (BCD)**, a digital platform designed to facilitate business cooperation, networking and matchmaking between companies and Business Support Organisations (BSOs).

The current version of the platform allows users to create company profiles, publish opportunities, and organise in-person Business-to-Business (B2B) meetings during physical events.

To further strengthen the platform and increase its capacity to support international cooperation with respecting limitation of travels and carbon emission linked to it, BUSINESSMED intends to develop a **new Digital Matchmaking and Virtual B2B Events Module** enabling companies and organisations to organise virtual B2B events, schedule online meetings, manage participants, and conduct meetings directly through integrated videoconferencing solutions.

To support this process, BUSINESSMED seeks to recruit an **IT and Digital Transformation Expert** who will provide technical assistance throughout the entire development process, from defining the functional requirements to supervising the implementation and validating the final solution.

BUSINESSMED – UMCE is the Contracting Authority for this assignment.

1.2 Objective of the Assignment

The overall objective of this consultancy is to provide technical assistance to BUSINESSMED for the design, procurement, development and deployment of a new **Digital Matchmaking and Virtual B2B Events Module** integrated into the Business Country Desk (BCD) platform.

More specifically, the selected expert will:

- define the functional and technical specifications of the future module;
- prepare the Terms of Reference and technical documentation required for the procurement of the software development company;
- support BUSINESSMED during the evaluation and selection of the service provider;
- supervise the software development process;
- validate the deliverables produced by the selected developer;
- ensure that the final solution fully complies with the project's functional requirements and international standards for usability, security and performance.

The expert will work under the supervision of the BUSINESSMED and will closely coordinate with the selected software development company throughout the assignment.

1.3 Duration of the Assignment

The assignment will be implemented over a period of **five (5) months**.

The estimated level of effort is approximately **20–25 working days**, distributed over the duration of the contract according to the different phases of the assignment.

1.4 The Procurement Process

The following indicative timetable applies to this procurement process.

Activity	Date
ToR Publication	30 July 2026
Deadline for Questions	6 August 2026
Submission Deadline	15 sept 2026
Evaluation of Proposals	16 sept 2026
Contract Award	18 Sept 2026
Expected Start of Assignment	20 Sept 2026

BUSINESSMED reserves the right to modify these dates whenever necessary.

1.5 Conditions

BUSINESSMED – UMCE is under no obligation to accept any proposal submitted in response to this Terms of Reference.

The Contracting Authority reserves the right to:

- reject any or all proposals;
- cancel the procurement procedure at any stage;
- request additional information or clarifications from applicants;
- negotiate specific aspects of the assignment with the selected expert prior to contract signature.

Participation in this procurement process implies full acceptance of the conditions described in this Terms of Reference.

1.6 Requests for Clarification

Any request for clarification regarding this procurement procedure shall be submitted by email to:

promotion@businessmed-umce.org

Replies will be shared with all applicants whenever appropriate, while preserving the confidentiality of the requesting party.

1.7 Submission of Proposals

Interested experts shall submit their application electronically in PDF format to:

promotion@businessmed-umce.org

with the subject:

Application – IT and Digital Transformation Expert – RAINBOW Project

Applications shall include:

- Financial Proposal based on monthly rate.
- Curriculum Vitae
- References for similar assignments

Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

All proposals shall remain valid for a period of **90 calendar days** following the submission deadline.

1.8 Currency and Taxes

Financial proposals shall be expressed in **Euro (EUR)** and shall include all applicable taxes, professional fees, travel costs, communication expenses and any other costs necessary for the successful completion of the assignment.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICES

2.1 Objective of the Assignment

The objective of this assignment is to provide BUSINESSMED with technical expertise for the design, procurement and supervision of the development of a new **Digital Matchmaking and Virtual B2B Events Module** to be integrated into the existing **Business Country Desk (BCD)** platform. www.bcdesk.eu

The new module will complement the current functionalities of the platform by enabling companies, Business Support Organisations (BSOs), project partners and other stakeholders to organise and participate in fully digital B2B matchmaking events.

The selected expert will support BUSINESSMED throughout the entire process, including the functional analysis, preparation of technical specifications, drafting of the procurement documentation, technical evaluation of offers, supervision of software development, quality assurance, testing and final validation of the developed solution.

2.2 Scope of Work

The selected expert will provide technical assistance during all phases of the assignment, from the initial needs assessment to the final acceptance of the developed module.

The assignment will include the following tasks.

Preparation of the Technical Specifications and Procurement Documents

Based on the functional analysis, the expert shall prepare the complete technical documentation required for the procurement of the software development company.

This task includes:

- Defining the overall functional architecture of the future module.
- Preparing detailed functional specifications.
- Preparing technical specifications.
- Defining system performance requirements.
- Defining interoperability requirements.
- Specifying cybersecurity and data protection requirements.
- Defining accessibility and usability requirements.
- Preparing the list of expected deliverables.
- Preparing acceptance criteria.
- Preparing the procurement Terms of Reference.
- Supporting BUSINESSMED in answering technical clarification requests during the procurement procedure.

The procurement documentation shall allow software development companies to clearly understand the expected solution and submit technically comparable proposals.

Deliverable 1

Complete Terms of Reference document.

Technical Support during the Procurement Process

The expert shall provide technical support to BUSINESSMED throughout the procurement process for selecting the software development company.

The expert shall:

- Participate in the technical evaluation of submitted proposals.
- Review the proposed technical methodologies.
- Assess the proposed system architecture.
- Evaluate the proposed implementation schedule.
- Assess the qualifications of the proposed development team.
- Participate in clarification meetings when required.
- Prepare a technical evaluation report with recommendations.

BUSINESSMED will remain solely responsible for the final procurement decision.

Deliverable 2

Technical Evaluation Report.

Technical Supervision of Software Development

Following the selection of the software development company, the expert shall supervise the implementation of the Digital Matchmaking and Virtual B2B Events Module.

The expert shall:

- Participate in the project kick-off meeting.
- Review the implementation roadmap.
- Monitor compliance with the approved technical specifications.
- Participate in periodic technical coordination meetings.
- Review intermediate deliverables.
- Validate prototypes, wireframes and interface designs.
- Monitor progress against the agreed work plan.
- Identify implementation risks and recommend corrective actions.
- Ensure proper communication between BUSINESSMED and the software development company.
- Verify that all functionalities are correctly implemented.

The expert shall act as BUSINESSMED's technical focal point throughout the software development process.

Quality Assurance, Testing and Final Validation

The expert shall ensure that the developed module fully complies with the approved specifications before final acceptance.

Activities shall include:

- Functional testing.
- Verification of interoperability with the existing BCD platform.
- Identification and documentation of bugs and inconsistencies.
- Follow-up of corrective actions.
- Final validation of the completed solution.

The expert shall recommend acceptance only after all major issues have been satisfactorily resolved.

2.3 Duration

The assignment shall be implemented over a period of **five (5) months**.

The level of effort is estimated at approximately **20 to 25 working days**, distributed according to the different phases of the assignment.

2.5 Reporting and Coordination

The expert will report directly to BUSINESSMED .Regular coordination meetings will be organised throughout the assignment to ensure timely implementation and quality control.

3. Expert Profile and Required Qualifications

BUSINESSMED is seeking an experienced **ICT/Digital Transformation Expert** with demonstrated expertise in digital platforms, software development management, business analysis, and the supervision of IT projects.

The expert should be capable of translating business needs into functional and technical specifications while ensuring the successful implementation of digital solutions through effective coordination with software developers and project stakeholders.

3.1 Academic Qualifications

The candidate must hold at least:

- A university degree (Master's degree preferred) in Computer Science, Information Systems, Software Engineering, data management, Information Technology, Digital Transformation, or another relevant field.

3.2 Professional Experience

The candidate shall demonstrate:

- At least **7 years of professional experience** in the design, management, or supervision of digital platforms or software development projects.

- Proven experience in drafting **technical specifications and Terms of Reference** for software development assignments.
- Proven experience in business analysis and the definition of functional requirements.
- Proven experience coordinating or supervising software development teams.
- Experience in testing, quality assurance, and validation of digital solutions.
- Experience working with web-based platforms, digital services, or online collaboration tools.
- Experience participating in procurement or technical evaluation of ICT solutions is considered an asset.
- Previous experience in EU-funded or other international cooperation projects is considered a strong advantage.

3.3 Technical Competencies

The expert should demonstrate strong knowledge of:

- Business process analysis and functional specifications;
- Web platforms and cloud-based applications;
- Online event management and virtual collaboration solutions;
- B2B matchmaking platforms and networking tools;
- API integration and interoperability between digital systems;
- Software testing methodologies and quality assurance;
- Cybersecurity and data protection principles;

4. Application Procedure

Interested candidates are invited to submit a complete application containing the following documents:

- A detailed Curriculum Vitae (CV) highlighting relevant qualifications and professional experience related to the assignment;
- A **financial proposal**, indicating the total consultancy fee in EUR, inclusive of all taxes, travel, communication and any other costs related to the assignment;
- References for similar assignments successfully completed, including the name of the client, a brief description of the assignment.

Applications must be sent electronically to:

promotion@businessmed-umce.org

with the subject line:

Application – ICT/Digital Transformation Expert – RAINBOW Project

Applications must be received **no later than [15 september– 23:59 CET]**.

Incomplete applications or applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

5. Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Score
Academic qualifications	20
Relevant professional experience in ICT, software development and digital platforms	30
Experience in drafting technical specifications and ToRs for software development	20
Experience supervising or managing software development projects	20
Experience in EU-funded or international cooperation projects	10
Technical Score	**100**

Only candidates obtaining a minimum technical score of **70/100** will proceed to the financial evaluation.

The financial proposal will be evaluated separately.

Financial Evaluation	Maximum Score
Financial Offer	30

The financial score will be calculated using the following formula:

> **Financial Score = (Lowest Financial Offer / Candidate's Financial Offer) × 30**

The final ranking will be based on the combined technical and financial scores.

Final Evaluation	Maximum Score
Technical Score	100
Financial Score	30
Total	**130**

6. Contract Duration and Payment

- **Type of Contract:** Service Contract
- **Duration:** Five (5) months
- **Duty Station:** BUSINESSMED Headquarters, Tunis, Tunisia, with the possibility of remote work and online meetings.
- **Expected Start Date:** September 2026

Payments will be made upon acceptance of the agreed deliverables

7. Confidentiality and Intellectual Property

All information, documents, data, software specifications and other materials produced during the assignment shall remain the exclusive property of BUSINESSMED.

The selected expert shall treat all information obtained during the assignment as strictly confidential and shall not disclose it to any third party without the prior written consent of BUSINESSMED.

All deliverables produced under this contract shall become the exclusive intellectual property of BUSINESSMED.

8. Final Provisions

BUSINESSMED reserves the right to:

- Request additional information or supporting documents from applicants;
- Invite shortlisted candidates for an interview;
- Negotiate minor aspects of the financial proposal where appropriate;
- Cancel or relaunch the procurement procedure without awarding the contract if deemed necessary.

Submission of an application does not create any obligation on the part of BUSINESSMED to award a contract.

The selected expert shall perform the assignment in accordance with the contractual provisions of the **RAINBOW Project** and the applicable procurement and financial management rules governing the project