

## **Mediterranean Environmental Change Management. Master Study and Ecosystem (MEHMED)**

**Erasmus + project MEHMED - 598826-EPP-1-2018-1-ES-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP**

### **Call for External Evaluator**

#### **1. Context and objective**

MEHMED is a project under the funding umbrella of the ERASMUS+ Programme's Key Action 2 'Capacity Building for Higher Education (CBHE)'. The aim of the project is to develop and implement a master's degree curriculum in Mediterranean Environmental Change Management in eight Algerian, Moroccan and Tunisian universities through a Bologna educational process. 14 partners participate to this project, which started in January 15, 2019 and will end on January 14, 2022.

The external evaluation is part of the work package on quality control (WP4), which is a binding element of the funding contract with ERASMUS+, which acts under the leadership of the University of Sousse, Tunisia. The external evaluator acts independently, but in close communication with the leader of WP4. The MEHMED management unit (WP6) at the University of Girona (UdG, Spain) acts as the contractual of the external evaluator and responsible for the final acceptance of evaluation results.

The main objective of the evaluation is to support the decision-making on further proceedings of MEHMED with regard to the successful realization of its anticipated goals. The three-annual evaluation reports will serve simultaneously as evidence and attachment to the MEHMED mid-term report to the donor representative, which is due on July 14, 2020, and the MEHMED final report, due on January 14, 2022. It is planned to ask for a 6-month extension to the Erasmus project to EACAE, in the case it is accepted the final MEHMED report will move until July 10, 2022.

Expected analyses during the evaluation include the assessment of project procedures and results. Results from these analyses shall provide the basis for suggestions about potential improvements in the remaining project period.

The present call invites external evaluator(s) to submit a proposal for project assessment. The external evaluation will cover all project activities in order to complement the quality assessment scheme of the project and to provide the consortium with ideas for further improvement. He/she must not be an employee, i.e. have a contractual link with one of the MEHMED partner institutions.

#### **2. The project**

The general objective of the project is to develop and implement a curriculum for a new master's degree in environmental change management at eight HEIs in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. The project will address the challenges of dealing with environmental policies in accordance with EU and international standards and strengthen the role of local universities in development of innovative environmental management strategies. MEHMED aims are:

- promoting the understanding of environmental systems.
- responding to needs for environmental professionals with advanced degrees.
- assisting in the process of shifting toward more sustainable practices.
- encouraging cross-disciplinary collaboration to solve environmental problems.

The specific objectives of MEHMED project are to:

1. Develop and implement the master's degree curriculum "Environmental Change Management in the Mediterranean" in Algerian, Moroccan and Tunisian universities through a Bologna educational approach;
2. Develop a practical, competence-based methodology that facilitates graduate students' access to the labour market and promotes the creation of businesses, thus responding to concrete needs of the national economies and reinforcing current Algerian, Moroccan and Tunisian HEI policies and strategic development plans;
3. Create sustainable means for safeguarding and managing environmental change and develop scientific strategies for environmental programmes to assure the knowledge value chain concepts of the master programme;
4. Increase the mobility of graduate students and university teachers;
5. Promote e-learning strategies through a blended learning approach;
6. Strengthen the relations between Algerian, Moroccan, Tunisian and European HEIs and ensure institutionalisation and internationalisation of the research fields related to environmental change through an inter-university association; and
7. Foster the training of academic teachers in the field of environmental change management in order to ensure the education quality and improve researchers' scientific profile.

The implementation of the project relies on a set of activities organized into six work packages (WPs) under the leadership of different partners:

- WP1: Preparation, Preparation phase (University Mohamed Primer, Morocco)
- WP2: Development I, which focuses on the update of teaching methodologies, tools and infrastructure (University of Girona, Spain)
- WP3: Development II, Curriculum implementation (University of Constantine 3, Algeria)
- WP 4: Monitoring, Evaluation and Quality assurance; Quality plan, which handles quality control and monitoring of MEHMED (University of Sousse, Tunisia)
- WP5: Dissemination & Sustainability, which takes care of awareness campaigns and the sustainability of MEHMED outputs (WUSMED, Spain)
- WP6: Management, which coordinates the activities of the WPs with regard to the joint objective and handles the liaison between MEHMED and the donor representative, i.e. the European Commission's Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACAE) under the leadership of the University of Girona, Spain.

### **3. Description of the external evaluation task**

The external evaluation will focus on three annual reporting periods (first, second and third year of the project), but also considering specific phases of the project's implementation: mid-term report (July 2020) and final report (January/July 2022).

Elements of the external evaluation are:

1. Already installed project mechanisms and tools.
2. Attained intermediary results and their correspondence with the initial project planning.
3. Analysis of bottlenecks in implementation and proposals for overcoming them in the project's second phase, including statements on the relevance and efficiency of project activities for achieving the stated goals of the project's log-frame planning matrix.
4. Analysis of obtained results with regard to their observed and/or expectable

impact on the level of the target group.

5. The assessment of the activities' effectiveness in achieving the stated goals of the project's log-frame planning.
6. Assessment of the sustainability of project achievements.

The external evaluation mission will require at least one on-line meeting with each of the participating partners, which should allow the evaluator to meet virtually all MEHMED partner HEIs in the respective country (bilateral meetings) and gather information for the analyses. The assignments may be combined with the participation at a virtual consortium meeting with the whole consortium.

The evaluation will follow the OECD-DAC quality standards for development evaluation, i.e. Relevance, Effectiveness, Impact, Efficiency and Sustainability. It will also comply with the following standards:

- a. Usefulness, i.e. to ensure that the information requirements of its users are considered and the desired information is provided to them. Therefore, the following issues should be taken into account: Credibility and competence of the evaluator, Selection and scope of information, Transparency of values, Completeness and clarity of reporting, Timeliness of evaluation, Use and benefits of evaluation.
- b. Feasibility and fairness (process quality): The design of the evaluation process must correspond to the use of its results. To make the evaluation as useful as possible for decision-making processes, the following standards should be met like appropriate procedure, diplomatic approach, efficiency, protection of individual rights, fair review, objective execution and reporting, communication to partners.
- c. Accuracy: The methodological quality relies on the application and documentation of a comprehensible concept of methods as well as of the underlying information and its sources, which includes: Description of the object of the evaluation, Context analysis, Citation of sources of information, Justified conclusions

## 7. Deliverables of the external evaluation

Deliverables of the external evaluation will include:

- **3 Annual reports of findings and suggestions**; dates will be agreed upon between the evaluator and the MEHMED management unit.
- **Final report on the findings and overall assessment** until January 10, 2022. It is planned to ask for a 6-month extension to the Erasmus project to EACAE, in the case it is accepted the final evaluation report will move until July 10, 2022.
- **Comments and explanations** on request by the MEHMED management unit or MEHMED partners.
- **Assignment reports of the virtual meetings with the partner HEIs** latest 2 weeks after the respective mission.

The external evaluator will actively participate in consortium discussions during both phases of the evaluation. He/she will present -insight on the findings and suggestions by attending two virtual consortium meetings, one before the submission of the mid-term report and a second before the submission of the final report of the project to the donor agency. All milestones concerning the evaluator's action must be included in WP 4, which is responsible for the project's quality plan.

## 8. Expected profile of the external evaluator

The external evaluator has a proven record of expertise in the field of academic recognition. Specific criteria are:

- Substantive professional experience in the higher education sector in the European Union and/or Maghreb countries,
- Solid background in academic recognition,
- Strong quality assurance and management experience in the context of internationally funded projects. Past experience conducting external evaluations or as reviewer is an asset,
- Good experience in management/coordination and development of international projects or academic networks, ideally including EU and East European and Central Asian Higher Education Institutions,
- Prior involvement into the implementation of EU-funded projects,
- Excellent knowledge of English and French required,
- Excellent communication competence and experience in working in intercultural and international environments,
- University degree, a PhD in either humanities or science and technology is an asset.

The external evaluator should demonstrate in his/her application a sound knowledge and understanding of the project topic.

The selection will follow the principle of equal opportunities based on the stated selection criteria.

## 9. Support by the MEHMED consortium

The MEHMED management unit will

- provide the required documents for the analyses and support the evaluator in the access to the relevant documents and information at the partner HEIs,
- provide the evaluator with an access to the MEHMED Moodle platform with the signature of the contract,
- facilitate the communication between the consortium partners and the evaluator.

The leadership of the work package 4 "Quality" will provide the evaluator with all documents and data of the MEHMED internal monitoring system on request.

## 10. Budget and financial offer

The project budget allows for a maximum sub-contract of 3.500 € including all related costs and taxes for the external evaluation.

## 11. Documents to present:

Bids must include:

- A technical proposal: The description of the proposed evaluation approach should outline the methodological approach as well as the intended approach to cooperation and communication with MEHMED partners. (maximum 2 pages).
- A CV, which provides detailed information on related previous activities that contribute to the expertise on the topic of the evaluation.

The evaluation of the proposal will be done following the score from 0 – 100 points:

- Quality of the technical proposal: 0 – 60 points,
- Quality of the CV in relations the expected profile of the external evaluator: 0 – 40 points.

The documents shall be sent in English language and PDF format to the administrative manager of MEHMED:

Dra. Anita Geiszinger

e-mail: [anita.geiszinger@udg.edu](mailto:anita.geiszinger@udg.edu)

## 12. Deadline to submit proposals

Proposals must be sent until May 31, 2020, 23:59 CEST.

## 10. Timeline

Analysis of submitted proposals: June 1-5, 2020

Steering Committee decision: June 8, 2020

Communication of results: June 9, 2020