



**Local & Regional
Europe**



Terms of Reference

COMMUNICATION SUPPORT AND SERVICES FOR THE *PLATFORMA* PROJECT

| 09 February 2024

1. Background

a. About CEMR

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions ([CEMR](#)) is the broadest organisation of local and regional governments in Europe. Its members are over 50 national associations of municipalities and regions from 40 European countries. Together these associations represent some 150,000 local and regional governments.

CEMR's objectives are twofold: to influence European legislation on behalf of local and regional authorities and to provide a platform for exchange between its members associations and their elected officials and experts.

Moreover, CEMR is the European section of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), the worldwide organisation of local governments.

b. About PLATFORMA

[PLATFORMA](#) is the pan-European coalition of local and regional governments, their associations at the national, European and global levels active in city-to-city and region-to-region development cooperation, also named decentralised cooperation. They are all key players of international cooperation for sustainable development.

PLATFORMA is an externally funded activity led by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR). It was created in November 2008, with the support of the European Commission, to guarantee presence and advocacy of local and regional governments towards the EU institutions to defend the key role of local and regional governments in development cooperation and to raise awareness on decentralised cooperation actions led by EU cities and regions.

The PLATFORMA network currently counts [26 partner organisations](#).

2. Objectives of the contract

In 2015 and 2022, CEMR signed [Framework Partnership Agreements](#) (FPAs) with the European Union. While preparing for its 10th anniversary, PLATFORMA launched in 2017 a [new website](#), followed by a new logo and visual identity.

Several major initiatives have also been launched under successive financing periods, including the [European Days of Local Solidarity](#) (EDLS) and the [PLATFORMAwards](#), all of them needing strong visual and communication components. Therefore, dedicated websites and specific communication tools were created. Moreover, since 2016, more than 25 [publications](#) have also been published (in .pdf format and online), using a common visual layout.

Therefore, **PLATFORMA is looking for a long-term assignment (until 31 August 2026) with an external service provider for communication support and related services** to upscale and enhance the initiatives launched over the past years.

This assignment must be based on existing materials and particularly these resources:

- PLATFORMA [graphic charter](#) and [logo](#)
- [European Commission Communication Guidance for EU external actions \(2022\)](#)
- [European Commission Interinstitutional Style Guide](#)
- [PLATFORMA](#), [EDLS](#), and [PLATFORMAwards](#) websites and related paper-based materials (examples [EDLS](#), [PLATFORMAwards](#))

- [PLATFORMA newsletters](#)
- [PLATFORMA publications](#) (online and .pdf)

3. Assignment

1. Lot 1: Website

The service provider should:

- **ensure the hosting, domain names, maintenance, security and back up** of the existing website (WordPress) <https://platforma-dev.eu/> (EN, FR, ES)
- make proposals to improve some of the features and the design of this website (especially a modernisation of the homepage to keep the website modern and attractive).

The maximum amount foreseen for this lot is **€2,000 including VAT** from the start of the contract until 31 August 2026. The service provider should present a detailed budget with lump sums or hourly costs with an estimated number of hours to provide the tasks. Tips and ideas to improve the website, its visibility or the related communication tools such as the [monthly newsletter](#) are welcome.

2. Communication campaigns

In the next three years, PLATFORMA will launch communication campaigns to support its **two major initiatives**:

- **Lot 2: PLATFORMAwards**

The [PLATFORMAwards](#) have been launched in 2017 to reward the best city-to-city and region-to-region development cooperation partnerships and projects. For the 3 editions (2018, 2020 and 2022), PLATFORMA received 70 applications, from a total of:

- 15 EU countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, Spain, and United-Kingdom¹)
- 33 partner countries (Algeria, Benin, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Georgia, Guinea, Haiti, Indonesia, Israel, Kenya, Lebanon, Mali, Mexico, Moldova, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nicaragua, Palestine, Peru, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Togo, Tunisia, Ukraine, Uruguay)

In addition to the [dedicated website](#), communication materials such as [presentation brochures](#), video animations ([2018](#), [2020](#), [2022](#)) or [visuals for social media](#) were produced for the 3 editions².

The fourth edition of the PLATFORMAwards will be launched in Spring 2024 with an award ceremony foreseen in Spring 2025. The application period will end in Autumn 2024 at the latest. A similar timeline is foreseen for the 5th edition in 2026.

¹ The UK was still in the EU at the time of the application.

² For each edition, the first prize laureates were rewarded with documentaries, out of the scope of this call for proposals ([2018](#), [2020](#), [2022](#)).

In addition to improvements to the website (WordPress) <https://platformawards.eu/> (EN, FR & ES), the service provider will ensure the **updates, hosting, domain names, maintenance, security and back up**.

Building on the existing campaign and communication materials, the service provider will **update and improve these materials for the 2024 and 2026 editions** and **deliver a realistic dissemination strategy** that aims at a high-impact campaign to build visibility for the PLATFORMAwards initiative. This should include communication materials to encourage local and regional governments to apply but also communications materials for the ceremony.

The service provider will propose the type of communication tools he deems relevant as from the proposal phase.

The maximum amount foreseen for this lot is **€22,500 including VAT** from the start of the contract until 31 August 2026. The service provider should present a detailed budget with lump sums or hourly costs with an estimated number of hours to provide the tasks. Additional options with detailed budgets are welcome.

- **Lot 3: European Days of Local Solidarity (EDLS)**

The European Days of Local Solidarity ([EDLS](#)) were launched in 2016 to call on European cities and regions to raise their citizens' awareness on the challenges of global sustainable development and on the need to act. From 12 cities and regions in 2016, more than 40 local and regional governments organised no less than 70 events in 2023. The 2024, 2025 and 2026 editions will take place from 15 to 30 November but mobilisation events are also planned all along the year. Therefore, EDLS communication materials should be ready each year by mid-June.

Several ready-to-use campaign and communication materials were developed over the past years. Building on the [existing materials](#), the service provider will **update and improve these materials for the 2024, 2025 and 2026 editions, and help to increase the visibility of the campaign**, having in mind that the 2026 edition will mark the 10th anniversary of the EDLS.

The service provider will propose the type of communication tools he deems relevant as from the proposal phase. The service provider will **deliver a realistic dissemination strategy** that aims at a high-impact campaign to build visibility for the EDLS initiative. The service provider should also present ideas of visual materials for the website and social media (gif/video presentations...).

In addition to improvements to the website (WordPress) localsolidaritydays.eu, the service provider shall also ensure the **hosting, domain names, maintenance, security and back up**.

The maximum amount foreseen for this lot is **€22,500 including VAT** from the start of the contract until 31 August 2026. The service provider should present a detailed budget with lump sums or hourly costs with an estimated number of hours to provide the tasks. Additional options with detailed budgets are welcome.

3. Online studies

- **Lot 4: Study on the localisation of the SDGs**

Since 2018, PLATFORMA and CEMR are publishing an annual study on the localisation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (see [2018](#), [2019](#), [2020](#), [2021](#)) at the occasion of the United

Nations High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) taking place in July each year. Since 2022, following the COVID-19 pandemic and the difficulties to promote printed publications, **the study is published as an online tool <https://local-sdgs.eu/> with downloadable .pdf versions** (see [2022](#) and [2023](#)). Those were promoted via printed bookmarks with QR codes.

Three new editions are foreseen to be released at the beginning of July in 2024, 2025 and 2026. Final texts of each SDG publication will be available around mid-May in both languages, for a final product to be ready by mid-June.

The service provider should make concrete proposals for the **three online publications in English and French³ with the possibility to download .pdf versions in English and French** equivalent to 12,000 words (estimated) per edition with infographics. All creative ideas are welcome, such as promotion materials (for social media, bookmarks, videos...).

The service provider shall also ensure the **hosting, domain names, maintenance, security and back up of the website <https://local-sdgs.eu/>.**

The maximum amount foreseen for this lot of three online publications is **€21,000 including VAT** from the start of the contract until 31 August 2026. The service provider should present a detailed budget with lump sums or hourly costs with an estimated number of hours to provide the tasks. Additional options with detailed budgets are welcome.

- **Lot 5: DC Mapping**

In 2023 PLATFORMA launched a study to collect data on existing decentralised cooperation projects and partnerships which was published as a pilot online tool named [DC Mapping](#) (in English and French). Over the contracting period, PLATFORMA wants to improve the tool and regularly update it with new data, making it a reference for all players interested in decentralised cooperation.

The service provider should make concrete proposals for an enhanced online tool, aimed to be updated several times⁴ by PLATFORMA with the support of the service provider between the start of the contract and 31 August 2026. All creative ideas, potential automation of the system and similar examples already developed by the service provider are welcome.

The service provider shall also ensure the **maintenance, security and back up of the tool**. The maximum amount foreseen for this lot is **€10,000 including VAT**. The service provider should present a detailed budget with lump sums or hourly costs with an estimated number of hours to provide the tasks. Additional options with detailed budgets are welcome.

4. Proposal & selection criteria

Interested service providers must send detailed descriptive and financial proposals for one or several lots of this call for interest. Interested service providers are invited to send concrete visual proposals. Proposals sent by service providers that will not be selected to sign the contract will not be used by PLATFORMA, but will only be assessed during the selection phase. Only proposals by the service provider(s) that will be selected might be further developed only after the signing of the contract(s).

³ Translations will be provided by PLATFORMA.

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The tender procedure is open on equal terms to all tenderers effectively established in an EU Member State or a country, territory or region mentioned as eligible in [Annex A2a1 to the practical guide 2021.1](#).

A selection committee will review all received offers and choose one or several service providers for one or several lots, depending on the complementarity of the offers. The **main criteria** for awarding would be the price, the evidence provided to carry out the work under this contract and the content of the offers. The originality of the proposals, the knowledge and understanding of the subjects, past experiences with EU-wide communication services and deliverables for EU-financed projects but also with local and regional governments will also be taken into consideration. PLATFORMA will sign the contract(s) with one or several service providers offering the best value for money.

All candidates who have applied by the deadline will receive an automated or manual confirmation of receipt of the tender submission. Only those candidates selected will be contacted later.

5. Contract details

Interested service providers can apply for one or several lots. The contract(s) will be signed between one or several selected service providers (no more than one per lot) and CEMR (legal entity of PLATFORMA) as the client.

Signing the contract binds the service provider to lump-sum, hourly or unit costs until 31 August 2026, with a possible extension beyond the final date if the duration of the Grant contract CSO-LA/2023/445-896 (SGA4) concluded between CEMR and the European Commission Directorate-General for Directorate General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) was extended.

Signing the contract does not give the service provider(s) any exclusivity on the communication aspects of the PLATFORMA project.

6. Intellectual property and data protection

The service provider will ensure compliance of all deliverables, or their constituent elements, with applicable legislation on intellectual property and the protection of personal data in accordance with the GDPR.

7. Coordination of the contract

The service provider will assign a senior staff member to coordinate all aspects of the contract. The proposal must include a CV proving this person's experience in similar assignments. This person must be able to communicate fluently in both English and French.

The tasks requested from the service provider(s) will be coordinated by PLATFORMA Press and Communication Adviser. In specific chapters of the contract, other PLATFORMA staff and possibly other partner organisations might be involved. The service provider(s) must have the flexibility and openness to work in a multi-stakeholder, and a multi-cultural context.

All meetings between the service provider(s) and the client will be held in Brussels (Belgium) or over online platforms.

8. Requirements

- The service provider must provide a proof of registration in the EU or that it meets eligibility criteria mentioned in point 4, a short description of the company, examples of similar tasks, and a list of previous clients.
- A CV of the senior staff member who will coordinate the contract.
- **Detailed financial and technical proposals (narrative, graphic when required and budget) for one or several lots should be sent in French or English by Friday 1st March 2024 at midnight Brussels' time (CEST) to application.platforma@ccre-cemr.org with the Subject line "PLATFORMA Communication 2024-2026".**
- Any question should be addressed by email in French or English to PLATFORMA Press & Communication Adviser Hervé Devavry: herve.devavry@ccre-cemr.org by Friday 23 February 2024 at midnight Brussels' time (CEST). Answers will be sent by email and published on PLATFORMA website.

Contact

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About CEMR

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