Integrate

Joint Action on integrating prevention, testing and linkage to care strategies across HIV, viral hepatitis, TB and STIs in Europe

Terms of Reference for Evaluation of the Joint Action on integrating prevention, testing and linkage to care strategies across HIV, viral hepatitis, TB and STIs in Europe (INTEGRATE)

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1. The Purpose of this Document

The objective of this contract is to provide an independent external evaluation of the activities of the INTEGRATE project at the current state of development and to assess the needs for adjustments or improvements in horizontal organization and/or core work.

The purpose of these terms of reference is to give instructions and guidance to candidates about the nature of the offer they will need to submit and will become part of the contract that may be awarded through the services procurement procedure. Fondazione Lega Italiana per la Lotta contro l'AIDS (Italian League for Fighting AIDS) in Milan (LILA Milano) and Public Health England (PHE) in London are the INTEGRATE partners responsible for the related evaluation activities. LILA Milano and PHE are pleased to invite Suppliers to submit a proposal to the abovementioned contract.

2. Background

The INTEGRATE project (Joint Action on integrating prevention, testing and link to care strategies across HIV, Viral Hepatitis, TB & STIs in Europe) is a three-year project funded by the EU Commission's Health Programme. The project officially started on 1st of September 2017 and aims to:

- strengthen national policy on integrated activities related to early diagnosis of HIV, viral hepatitis, TB and STI's and linkage to care by 2020 in EU member states,
- increase the normalisation of testing and linkage to care for HIV, viral hepatitis, TB and STI's in EU member states by 2020, to improve the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of testing and linkage to care for HIV, viral hepatitis and STIs and integration of data into national surveillance and M&E systems in EU member states by 2020,
- improve the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools and partner notification in combination prevention for HIV, viral hepatitis, TB and STIs in the EU member states by 2020,
- improve the capacity of health care professionals, civil society organizations and public health institutions on integration of diagnosis and linkage to care for HIV, viral hepatitis, TB and STIs in EU member states by 2020.

The project builds on the efforts, tools and outcomes of previously or simultaneously implemented projects such as: EURO HIV EDAT, the COBATEST network, OptTEST, EU HEPCARE EUROPE, HA-REACT, E-DETECT TB, ESTICOM and the Euro TEST (previously HIV in Europe) initiative.

The project brings together 29 partners across 15 countries with the overall objective to improve timely diagnosis and linkage to care for the reduction of new HIV, viral hepatitis, TB and STI infections in EU Member States by 2020.

The project is coordinated by Region HOVEDSTADEN/CHIP/University of Copenhagen (Copenhagen, Denmark) and the work is split over 8 work packages (4 horizontal and 4 core WP – see below) and supported by a Steering Committee consisting of representatives from the Work Package lead and co-lead organisations, an Advisory Board of topic experts, community representatives and Third Sector stakeholders, and a Partnership Forum consisting of the head of each of the 29 partner organisations.

3. Monitoring and evaluation

It is a requirement from the EU Commission that an external evaluation is conducted. The role and responsibilities of the external evaluators is to conduct a assessment of the achievements of the project against the overall and specific objectives in the first two years. Findings will be used to improve the work, including pilots and deliverables, in the final year of the project. The scope of the external evaluator work is to:

1. Evaluate the progress of INTEGRATE in meeting its overall aims
2. Answer the specific evaluation questions for the evaluation
3. Assess progress and early impact of the pilot activities

The output for the external evaluation is a report aligning with the end of Year 2 activities, which will complement internal evaluation reports at the end of Year 1 and Year 3.

INTEGRATE WORK PACKAGE DESCRIPTION AND PARTNERS INVOLVED

INTEGRATE Work Packages		Lead Partner/Co-Lead Partner
Horizontal Work Packages		
1	Coordination	LP: RegionH/CHIP (Denmark)
2	Dissemination	LP: CERTH (Greece)
3	Monitoring and Evaluation	LP: LILA Milano (Italy) Co-LP: PHE (UK)
4	Policy development and sustainability	LP: ARCIGAY (Italy) Co-LP: TAI (Estonia)
Core Work Packages		
5	Integrating testing and linkage to care	LP: RegionH/CHIP (Denmark) Co-LP: PHE (UK)
6	Monitoring of HIV, STIs and viral hepatitis testing and linkage to care	LP: ICO (Spain) Co-LP: NIJZ (Slovenia)
7	Improving use of ICT tools and partner notification in combination prevention	LP: UCD (Ireland) Co-LP: LILA MILANO (Italy)
8	Capacity building	LP: FVM (Italy) Co-LP: NAC (Poland)

4. Goals and objectives of Independent External Evaluation

The **evaluation report** should reflect on the processes from the project start (1st September 2017) to approximately month 24 (31st August 2019). The overall goal of the external evaluation is to evaluate the process, progress and implementation of the project to date, and generate recommendations that will improve working methods and coordination and fine tune and adjust activities and priorities in the first part of the project.

The evaluator will engage relevant stakeholders on every level of involvement in a process of reflection and learning. The evaluation should reflect progress and expectations as perceived by all the different levels of the INTEGRATE project including donors, partners, stakeholders, and coordination.

Apart from evaluating the progress of INTEGRATE in meeting its overall aims, the five questions to be answered by the evaluation are:

1. Is the project on its way to accomplish its expected outcomes and actions?
2. How effective is the project in promoting and facilitating cross-sector working across disease areas and disciplines?
3. How effective is the coordination of the project and how well are the partners working together?
4. Are the planned specific activities feasible over the next 12 months?
5. How useful are the indicators to measure progress and impact?

Additionally, the evaluation will assess the progress and early impact of the pilot activities and make recommendations to optimise impact and scalability of the pilot actions.

The Supplier will be expected to synthesize the findings into an evaluation report that will describe the status and results of INTEGRATE to the end of Year 2 and use these findings to provide suggestions for improving the on-going project implementation. Following publication of the evaluation report, the coordinators (CHIP) will lead the INTEGRATE Steering Group in an analysis of the recommendations and root causes of the issues which generated the recommendations, as well as the formulation of a practical approach to each issue identified.

5. Methods

The Supplier is asked to propose effective methods for the evaluation. The methods applied by the Supplier consequently need to be based on an all-inclusive and participatory approach. However, the review must include the following methodological steps:

1. Document and literature review
- Desk study of relevant INTEGRATE documents (background papers, work plans, reports, minutes of meetings) and available monitoring data and narrative and financial reports.

2. Information gathering
- A kick-off meeting with LILA Milano and PHE
- Conference calls or interviews with project partners, collaboration partners, advisory board members, the Health Program of the European Union and other stakeholders
- Conference calls or interviews with representatives of the target populations and key stakeholders

3. Analysis, draft of report and discussion
- Synthesis of available data and production of a draft report

- Discussion of the draft report in a meeting with LILA Milano and PHE and the coordinating partner (RegionH/CHIP)
- Production of the final report

6. Role and tasks of the Supplier

Primarily, the role of the Supplier is to draw up and execute the external review and to bring an outsider's view to this process. The review will enable the stakeholders to broaden their perspective and will provide the opportunity for joint reflection and a reciprocal learning process.

The Suppliers appointed by LILA Milano and PHE must have the following qualifications:

- Experience working on European/international programs;
- Detailed knowledge within the fields of infectious disease (particularly HIV, hepatitis, STI and/or tuberculosis)
- Minimum 5 years' experience working in evaluation activities and research
- Strong research, analysis, synthesis and drafting skills
- Capacity to collect and organize information efficiently
- Good communication skills
- An excellent command of written and spoken English

Specific tasks include the following:

a. Participate in a kick-off meeting with LILA Milano and PHE within two weeks after the contract signature. The notes from this meeting produced by the Supplier will be used as a basis for the plan of the work
b. Develop the evaluation methodology with outline of the work and detailed description of the planned data collection. Submit this to LILA Milano and PHE for review and approval within 1 month of contract signature
c. Collect data for the evaluation (e.g. from the donor, INTEGRATE partners, collaboration partners, advisory board members and other stakeholders)
d. Visit the premises of the coordinating partner (Region Hovedstaden/CHIP) to conduct the document and literature review
e. Analyze and synthesize data collected and produce the evaluation report presenting:
    - A summary of project activities and results so far, both the horizontal activities and the core work packages;
    - Description and assessment of the project's progress (as set out in section 4);
    - Recommendations for adjustments or improvement in the project implementation.
f. Submit the draft evaluation report to LILA Milano and PHE for review and discussion of the draft report in a meeting/teleconference with LILA Milano and PHE and the coordinating partner (Region Hovedstaden/CHIP) within 3 months of contract signature
g. Incorporate comments and suggestions and submit the final report to LILA Milano and PHE within 4 months of contract signature.

7. Deliverables

The Supplier will produce one deliverable: a final evaluation report.

8. Timeline and budget

The overall timeframe for the project duration is 4 months from contract signature. The equivalent of up to 50 working days is estimated to be required overall. Most of the work is required to be carried out at the Supplier's premises. The supplier is required to attend a one-day meeting at either LILA Milano or PHE premises in Milan or London. The supplier is also required to travel to the premises of the coordinating partner CHIP to conduct the document and literature review in Copenhagen, Denmark.

The budget for the review is €25.000 including all taxes, travel expenses (e.g. costs of flights, per diems) and communication costs.

The information within the program is confidential. By signing the Terms of Reference, the Supplier agrees with the confidentiality of the information and the findings of the review.

9. Process

a. LILA Milano will advertise the contract for open competition for 3 weeks;
b. LILA Milano and PHE will make an analysis of the proposals and will select the best Supplier, based upon level of experience and subject knowledge, as well as daily rate
c. The consultant will be contracted by LILA Milano

10. Proposals from Suppliers

Suppliers who are interested in this contract are invited to submit a proposal of 6 pages maximum. In this proposal the Suppliers are asked to present the following:

- A unit price
- A list of relevant work done in this area
- Their knowledge of the domains encompassed by the INTEGRATE program
- Their knowledge of the INTEGRATE program
- Potential conflicts of interests
- An action plan on how to perform the evaluation

Qualified candidates are invited to submit their proposal and CVs to LILA Milano via l.cosmaro@lilamilano.it .

Consortium

Croatia

Hrvatski Zavod za Javno Zdravstvo Croatian Institute of Public Health

Life Quality Improvement Association

Croatian association for HIV and viral hepatitis

ISKORAK

Denmark

Region Hovedstaden / CHIP

Estonia

Tervise Arengu Instituut
National Institute for Health Development

Greece

Centre for Research & Technology Hellas, Institute of Applied Biosciences, Information Technologies institute

Hellenic Centre for Disease Control and Prevention

Hungary

Semmelweis University

Ireland

University College Dublin, National university of Ireland Dublin

Italy

Arcigay Associazione LGBTI Italiana

Croce Rossa Italiana

Fondazione LILA Milano ONLUS - Lega Italiana per la Lotta contro l'AIDS

Fondazione Villa Maraini Onlus

Lithuania

National Public Health Surveillance Laboratory

Vilnius Centre for Addictive Disorders

Centre for Communicable Diseases and AIDS

Vilnius University Hospital SANTARIŠKIŲ Klinikos

Malta

Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

Poland

National AIDS Centre Agency of the Ministry of Health

Romania

"Victor Babes" Clinical hospital of infectious diseases and pneumophtisiology Craiova

"Marius Nasta" Institute of pneumoftiziology

Institut of Public Health of Republic of Serbia "Dr Milan Jovanovic Batut"

Slovakia

Slovak Medical University in Bratislava

Slovenia

National Institute of Public Health Nacionalni inštitut za javno zdravje

Spain

Centre d'Estudis Epidemiològics sobre les ITS i Sida de Catalunya

Consorci Institut d'Investigacions Biomèdicas August Pi i Sunyer

Instituto de salud pública y laboral de Navarra

United Kingdom

Public Health England