



Call for tender

Consultancy support to develop a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Strategy

Deadline: 31st August 2023

ECOS Procurement and Purchase Policy

This tender complies with the ECOS Procurement and Purchase Policy adopted by the ECOS Executive Committee, and last updated in October 2021. This policy covers general principles relating to transparency and fairness, value for money, and non-discrimination. It specifies thresholds relating to a competitive negotiated procedure with at least a specified number of candidates either with tender or selection and sets out the procedure to be followed by ECOS.

About ECOS

ECOS is an international NGO with a network of members and experts advocating for environmentally friendly technical standards, policies, and laws. We ensure the environmental voice is heard when they are developed and drive change by providing expertise to policymakers and industry players, leading to the implementation of strong environmental principles. More at www.ecostandard.org.

ECOS also works towards a more inclusive, open and transparent standardisation system, internationally and at the European and national levels, whilst at the same time ensuring the appropriate use of standards in support of environmental legislation and policy.

ECOS is part of several impactful alliances and campaigns, such as the Rethink Plastic Alliance, Coolproducts, Right to Repair, the Cool Coalition, Platform for Electro-mobility, Coalition for Energy Savings, and the One Planet Network, as part of which we cooperate with other NGOs, progressive companies, and researchers, advocating for a greener future for all. ECOS is also a member of the Global Electronics Council's EPEAT Advisory Council.

ECOS - Environmental Coalition on Standards

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About the project

ECOS has grown rapidly since its inception and continues expanding the core team and operations.

We are currently undertaking a strategy review process, which includes:

- Development of a high level ECOS strategy for the period 2025-2030;
- Development of an HR strategy that is aligned with the overall organisational strategy, combined with a review of HR policies and processes;
- A review of other strategic documents such as the communications and membership strategies.

ECOS wishes to use this time of reflection and re-visioning to adopt a more explicit focus on the links between the environmental and equity agendas, and to strongly integrate attention to gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) issues in both our technical work and how we function as an organisation in relation to staff, partners, stakeholders, and the communities we aim to serve.

ECOS is thus seeking one or more consultants to provide technical assistance to strengthen and advance gender equality and inclusion in ECOS' organisational strategies and processes as well as in our positioning, partnering and advocacy work.

We recognise that meaningfully embedding GESI in our work requires informed commitment and buy-in by staff and leadership. We have already engaged senior staff across the organisation in initial discussions about the scope of this GESI initiative, and these have revealed a strong common understanding of the mutually reinforced linkages and synergies between climate action and action on equity and inclusion, and a desire to integrate this into our work, and to play a stronger agenda setting role in the sector. Maximising ECOS teams' potential by enhancing staff wellbeing, so that everyone feels safe and welcome in the organisation has also emerged as a key priority in these discussions. We are clear that our own organisational culture, structures, and practices must be gender-equal and inclusive if we are to effectively integrate GESI into our network-building, policy and standards work.

Objective of this tender

The consultant(s) will support ECOS to advance and promote gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) within the organisation and through our core activities – including our wider programming and relationships with partners.

To do this, the consultant(s) will:

- 1) Conduct a GESI organisational assessment to understand the challenges and barriers to making more progress within the organisation on GESI goals.
- 2) Conduct a GESI analysis of two to three areas of technical work, including partnerships.
- 3) Work with ECOS staff and leadership to articulate a shared vision for GESI within ECOS and develop a GESI Policy Statement.
- 4) Develop a Strategy and Workplan that will provide a roadmap for how ECOS can intentionally integrate attention to GESI considerations into the new high level and departmental strategies, strengthen our technical work, and create organisational structures and processes that meaningfully support diversity, equality, and inclusion.
- 5) Provide recommendations during the development of the HR strategy to ensure GESI aspects are integrated in it as well as in the reviewed HR policies and processes.

- 6) Scope an appropriate and feasible institutional mechanism which will drive and support implementation of the GESI Strategy and Workplan.
- 7) Alongside ECOS management, identify and deliver one or more selected activity/ies from the GESI Workplan.

We expect the organisational assessment to take a systematic and holistic approach and to encompass different organisational domains, including policies and strategic planning, leadership, organisational structures and processes, staff knowledge and capabilities, and relationships and alliances. The assessment should not be understood as simply about collecting data, but as a key first step in supporting us to engage in ongoing reflection about our ways of working. Data collection should thus be undertaken in a way that promotes a feeling of safety and confidentiality, while at the same time initiating conversations about sensitive topics.

The consultant(s) will ensure that the GESI Policy Statement, Strategy and Workplan focus on advancing gender equality for women and men and incorporate an intersectional approach which brings attention to issues including poverty, disability, sexuality, gender identity, urban/rural location, ethnicity, and religion.

The work will be overseen by an in-house GESI Taskforce, and the consultant(s) will be expected to work collaboratively with this group, co-developing the principles, methodology and key outputs, and providing regular updates.

Scope

The assignment will take place over two phases.

The first phase will involve undertaking an assessment of the organisation and ECOS' technical work to assess the extent to which ECOS currently integrates GESI considerations in its workstreams, institutional structures, processes, and ways of working.

The assessment of ECOS organisational structures will aim to understand the ways in which institutional factors shape ECOS external programming, relationships, and activities, as well as the extent to which ECOS offers an inclusive environment which enables all staff to feel safe, valued, heard and able to succeed and thrive. The assessment should thus include, but not be limited to understanding the following:

- **Programming (technical work and procurement)** – the extent to which GESI considerations are integrated into the design and management cycle of key tasks and outputs. This will focus on 2 – 3 work areas.
- **Advocacy and communications** – the extent to which messages and the messages, language and images used are inclusive and gender transformative.
- **Human resources** - the extent to which recruitment, induction, promotion, and the reward and recognition system are GESI sensitive, and GESI-related competencies are integrated in staff assessment processes.
- **Finance** – the ways in which budgets are created, what proportion is made available for integrating GESI, and how this is tracked.
- **Staff consciousness and competencies** – the extent to which staff have knowledge about, and commitment towards GESI issues and engage with the presence and leadership of women and diverse groups.

- **Organisational culture** – principles, approaches, and normalised ways of working that shape how the organisation determines values, allocates resources, decides which behaviours are rewarded and makes decisions; how this affects the power of women and diverse groups and their ability to make a full contribution to the organisation; and the barriers and opportunities for a shift towards a more inclusive and transformative organisation.

The **second phase** will involve developing a GESI Policy Statement, and Strategy and Workplan that are aligned with the high-level organisational strategy that is currently under development. The GESI Strategy and Workplan will outline objectives, activities, timelines, and indicators on how ECOS will realise its GESI vision and Policy Statement and identify opportunities and strategies for mainstreaming gender and inclusion across ECOS work and operations.

During this phase, the consultant(s) will also support the review and revision of ECOS HR policies, Membership and Communications strategies. A key focus of the work on HR will be considering the competencies required to support GESI-transformative technical work and build and sustain an inclusive organisational culture.

The consultant(s) will also work with ECOS managers to identify and deliver one or more foundational activity/ies from the GESI workplan which will support implementation of the Strategy and Workplan going forward. This could include developing guidance on how to conduct a GESI analysis in ECOS' technical work, possibly using one of ECOS technical areas as a case study; providing training on GESI approaches and tools; or developing M&E frameworks – possibly using one area of ECOS' technical work as a case study.

Timeline

The scope of the assignment will be refined in discussion with the ECOS Strategy Director and team, but it is expected that the tasks will include the following:

Phase 1: Sept-Dec 2023

- Work with senior management to clearly define the scope objectives and process, determine, and agree the resources available, and determine synergies and sequencing with other ongoing strategy development processes.
- Undertake a document review of key ECOS strategic, policy and organisational documents, as well as project and technical guidance documents.
- Identify and conduct interviews and focus group discussions with staff and selected external stakeholders from across ECOS to understand the ways in which the organisation works in terms of its approach to research, partnerships and advocacy, its institutional processes, structures and culture, and key barriers and opportunities for ECOS to become more gender transformative and inclusive.
- Advise on and provide discrete inputs to other ECOS strategy development processes.
- Provide regular updates to the GESI Working Group, consulting the Working Group on the assignment as it develops, discussing progress and challenges, and co-developing principles, approaches and methodologies for the assessment and strategy development.
- Facilitate a workshop with senior management and the wider organisation to validate findings and co-develop the Vision, and objectives for the GESI Strategy and Workplan.
- Produce a scoping report including findings from the Phase 1 activities; recommendations on strengthening GESI in ECOS technical work and embedding GESI throughout the organisation; and an outline of the process for developing the Strategy and Workplan.

Phase 2: Jan-Apr 2024

- Articulate a shared vision for GESI within ECOS and develop a GESI Policy Statement which outlines ECOS' commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion, and sets out key principles that will underpin our technical and organisational work.
- Develop a GESI Strategy which presents ECOS vision, objectives, and approaches for GESI over the next five years. This should be aligned with and reflected in the overall ECOS strategy.
- Develop a Workplan which includes activities against the Strategy objectives, implementation timeframes, progress indicators and resource requirements.
- Advise and provide inputs as appropriate on integrating attention to GESI issues in the overall organisational strategy, HR policies, Communications and Membership strategies, and other strategies and policies as relevant.
- Agree and deliver specific foundational activities from the workplan that are critical for establishing momentum or embedding key systems or ways of working.
- Present the draft GESI Policy Statement, Strategy, Workplan and plans for specific deliverables to ECOS staff and facilitate discussion and elicit feedback.
- Develop a final version of the Policy Statement, Strategy and Workplan incorporating feedback.

Consultant qualifications

Required qualifications:

- Demonstrated experience in GESI mainstreaming, strategy development, and capacity strengthening.
- Demonstrated knowledge of the links between gender equality and inclusion and climate change / sustainability issues.
- Demonstrated knowledge of conceptual frameworks and approaches relating to equity, power, intersectionality, and organisational change.
- Strong experience of facilitating listening and dialogue processes; creating safe spaces within which to explore GESI concepts; and engaging organisations around sensitive issues.
- Ability to synthesise and present complex information in a systematic and accessible manner.
- Comfortable influencing and negotiating with senior-level stakeholders.
- Understanding of major donor approaches to GESI issues.

Desirable qualifications:

- Knowledge of civil society platforms and engagement spaces relevant to ECOS (European and International Standardisation bodies, EU and international institutions)
- Knowledge of GESI civil society space in Europe and beyond – particularly around women's rights and social inclusion

Budget

This assignment is expected to take up to 60 days' work. The budget available for this work is 30.000€ (including VAT). The consultant(s) can work remotely, but one or two trips to the ECOS office in Brussels will be required (covered by ECOS). The consultancy is expected to begin in September 2023 and conclude in April 2024.

Tender preparation

Please provide:

- CVs of the proposed consultant(s).

- A brief proposal responding to these ToRs (maximum six pages), detailing methodology and suggested workplan, total number of days needed to respond to the TORs, daily rate expectation and availability.
- Budgeting for each element of the work and proposed payment schedule

Tender Assessment

Assessment of the tenders will be made using a weighted multi-criteria approach.

The award criteria are:

- 70% quality (qualifications, relevance of the application, quality of the deliverables) and
- 30% price.

Only shortlisted tenderers will be contacted.

The fact of publishing a procurement procedure does not oblige ECOS to award the contract to a tenderer simply because its tender fulfils those criteria. It also reserves the right to decide not to award the contract to any tenderer and to cancel the procedure at any time before award.