

Albanian Road Authority
Building Resilient Bridges Program
Phase 1 of the
Multi-Phase Programmatic Approach

Terms of Reference

For

Selection of an individual consultant for Financial Management Specialist for the PIT

1. Background

The Government of Albania has received financing in the total amount of US\$ 55 million equivalents from the World Bank toward the cost of the Building Resilient Bridges Program, Phase 1 (BRBP) and it intends to apply part of the proceeds for payment of “Financial Management Specialist for PIT”.

The Financial Management Specialist will assist the ARA/PIT in all financial management, disbursement, accounting and audit related matters, and provide financial supervisory services for the various project components. He/she will assist with the preparation every quarter of the Project’s Financial Monitoring Report, taking into consideration the procedures of the World Bank, which is expected to include: (i) Financial Statements; (ii) Programme Progress in coordination with the Project Team Coordinator; and (iii) Procurement Management (including Goods, Works and Services).

Building Resilient Bridges Program is designed to enhance the resilience of bridges in the Albanian National Road Network (NRN), while providing support to ARA to increase its capacity in managing road and bridge infrastructure through a robust Road Asset Management System (RAMS) and Bridge Management System (BMS). The program has been defined, as a simultaneous Multi-Phase Programmatic Approach (MPA) with two overlapping phases. The overall period of the program will be 8 years, and each phase will have a maximum length of 5 and 4 years respectively. Phase 1 of the program will focus on building institutional capacity within MoIE and ARA, along with the rehabilitation or reconstruction of up to 15 bridges, which will serve as a pilot for the next phase. The project under phase 1 is composed from 3 main components:

Component 1: Bridge Infrastructure (USD 44 million) will finance: (i) the rehabilitation or reconstruction of priority bridges and culverts on the NRN, including design studies and supervision of works and equipment for data collection and monitoring; and (ii) road safety and resilience audits

Component 2: Systems and Institutional Capacity Building (US\$ 7 million) will finance: (i) technical assistance activities and training aimed at strengthening the capacity of ARA at managing the bridge and culvert assets, including, aligning the Albanian bridge design codes, construction and maintenance, with those of the EU (Eurocodes) and international practices with specific focus on resilience to climate change and natural disasters, and road safety; (ii) equipment and software and the collection of road and bridge condition data to support the upgrade of the bridge management system (BMS) module and of the umbrella Road Asset Management System (RAMS); (iii) the training of ARA’s staff to properly use the RAMS, and BMS as part of it, for future monitoring and for the maintenance planning of assets; (iv) development and implementation of a female internship program by MoIE for students or graduates; and (v) technical assistance for defining between MoIE and ARA the Service Level Requirements (SLR) with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to improve budget planning for maintenance.

Component 3: Project Management (estimated total cost: US\$ 4 million) will finance incremental operating costs for project implementation in ARA by the Project Implementing Team (PIT), including for overall project administration and management, financial management, project financial audits,

procurement, contract administration, and management of social and environmental safeguards. In addition, this component will finance the collection and analysis of project data for the project monitoring and evaluation including to report on the progress of the project indicators in the results framework. This component will also finance equipment to sustain and facilitate PIT to complete its functions, including transportation means, information technology (IT), and office equipment.

ARA will be responsible for implementation of the Project, as the bridges to be intervened under the project as of the NRN (including their maintenance) fall under ARA responsibility and mandate. The BRB Program will be implemented with the support of a Project Implementing Team (PIT) within ARA. The PIT is expected to be supported by ARA's departments in terms of (i) planning/budgeting the annual funds (either from the loan, or counterpart funding); (ii) technical and engineering expertise and subsequent approval of designs, specifications, bidding documents, contractual aspects of works, goods and services financed by the project; and (iii) hand/take over processes and procedures of deliverables from project activities.

PIT will be composed by ARA staff and outsourced consultants to support fiduciary activities, E&S requirements, M&E etc. PIT, among others will include a Financial Management Specialist (under the present ToRs) who will work under the supervision of Project Director and will support in the daily implementation of the Program.

2. Scope of the Assignment:

The key objective of this assignment is to assist ARA, and its Budget Planning and Finance department, in carrying out financial management responsibilities in accordance with provisions stipulated in Loan Agreement signed between World Bank and Albania and procedures described in the Project Operational Manual (POM).

The Consultant will work in a dynamic environment dealing with budget, financial management and disbursement procedures and needs to be able to prioritize his/her activities accordingly

3. Duties and responsibilities

The Financial Management Specialist will be responsible for the following tasks:

- In cooperation with ARA Budget Planning and Finance Department (BFD), establish and maintain the financial management systems as required in the Loan Agreement.
- Execute all necessary work related to planning, disbursements, payments, accounting and financial reporting in coordination with ARA, Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy and the Ministry of Finance and Economy.

In general, the specific tasks to be undertaken by the consultant will include but not be limited:

- Implement a fully documented and operational accounting and financial management, satisfactory to the World Bank which includes proper accounting procedures and internal controls to ensure that Project assets are properly safeguarded;
- Manage financial short- and long-term planning process of the project under the supervision of General Director and Director of Budget Planning and Finance;
- Carry out financial performance review of Project activities, in accordance and in connection with Bank requirements.
- Review, verify and process for approval all requests for payment for project activities, contractors and consultants.
- Ensure that order of payments are made in proper and timely manner, that all sources of financing are available for the project and that the contract payment monitoring function is ensured, working in close collaboration with procurement specialist;
- Properly file all financial documents (payment authorization forms, bank statements, invoices,

acceptance and approval documents, other supporting evidence, deliverables and reports for all types of project expenditure, including advances to staff and business trips);

- Assist ARA in all financial management aspects of the Projects, ensuring that transactions are entered into the accounting system in a timely and proper manner and that updated accounting records are kept, that are essential for promptly producing project financial management reports.
- Prepare and submit for approval financial reports, budget report, financial projections, cash flow forecast, and all other project reports as requested by World Bank, ARA and MOF.
- Ensure timely preparation of the interim financial reports and annual financial statements and other reports requested by GoA regulations; and withdrawal applications to the bank, and ensure adherence to all statutory requirements, World Bank guidelines and audit requirements, as further described in the Project Operations Manual;
- Participate in the preparation of quarterly and annual progress reports;
- Provides timely inputs to the Project Team Coordinator and Project Procurement Specialist for the review of financial aspect of bidding document, preparation of contract payments terms, etc. and supervises their conformity with project requirements and budget.
- Advise the PIT on issues related to local taxation, banking and other pertinent regulations that affect the financial activities;
- Facilitate the work of the independent auditors; assess reports received from the auditors and following up any audit queries /management letters;
- Participate and be actively involved in trainings/workshops/seminars concerned to the project components and implementation categories.
- Conduct the periodic physical inventory of fixed assets procured during the project;
- Back up financial data and records on regular basis
- Performs any other duties requested by the Project Management.

4. Duration and Location

The Consultant will work in the ARA/PIT premises in Tirana on full time basis during the assignment time, 8 hours/day from Monday to Friday. The initial duration of the assignment is 12 months, with 3 months of probation period, from contract signing and/or entry into force of the contract. Based on satisfactory performance the contract will be renewed for the entire duration of the program. The Consultant will be offered opportunities to develop professionally by attending relevant training events and courses during the term of the assignment. The Services will be performed in Tirana, with visits to works sites as necessary.

5. Reporting Requirements:

The Consultant will work as part of the PIT at ARA. He / She will report to and work under the direction of the General Director, Director of Budget Planning and Finance and those assigned with overall project management. The Consultant will work in close cooperation with PIT members and other relevant stakeholders to ensure that the project is managed efficiently and in compliance with the Loan Agreement and Project Operational Manual (POM).

S/he will deliver but not limited to: a) monthly timesheets indicating tasks performed, b) quarterly un-audited Interim Financial Reports, c) Financial Management information as part of the Procurement Status Report; d) Annual and Periodic Project Disbursement Report; e) Annual and Periodic Project Disbursement Plan; f) Contracts monitoring report, and g) annual project financial statements, and any other ad hoc reporting requirements in coordination with the Project Director and Project Coordinator.

6. Institutional Arrangements and Working Relationships:

- a. Within ARA, the Consultant will work in close coordination with the Director of Budget Planning and Finance, the General Director, and members of the PIT, as well as other relevant internal units of ARA, as required for effective project implementation.
- b. Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy, Director of Budget Planning and Finance, Sector directors, as required
- c. Other Government Institutions: The Consultant will liaise with the State Treasury and other relevant government agencies, as required.
- d. The Consultant will maintain working relations with the World Bank and commercial banks involved in project financial transactions, as required

7. Knowledge, Experience, Skills and Competencies:

a) Educational qualifications:

Have a relevant university education in accounting, business administration, finance, and economics;

b) Area of professional expertise:

Good knowledge of Government accounting, financial management systems, budgeting system, and tax and legal requirements in Albania.

Good knowledge of financial and accounting policies, rules and regulations pertaining to international organizations.

c) Years of experience:

Professional experience in accounting/budget management in a full-time position, preferably on the World Bank other donor Projects (at least 10 years)

d) Additional qualifications and training:

Knowledge in financial management, financial reporting and disbursement procedures in donor financed projects

e) Required skills and competencies

Skills / Competencies	Critical	Required
Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Accounting, Financial Management, Financial Reporting, Tax filing.▪ Advanced user of MS Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), and accounting software solutions (Alpha, etc)	Disbursement and financial management in an international environment
Management	Planning & Management organization.	Communication, problem solving, Teamwork.
Business	Good Business Working knowledge of English and Albanian (spoken and written)	

8. Evaluation Criteria

- a) General Qualification – 30 points
- b) Adequacy for the assignment – 60 points
- c) Language – 10 points

9. Selection

The service will be selected under the provisions of the World Bank Procurement Regulations for Borrowers under Investment Project Financing” dated July 1, 2016, revised on November 2017, August 2018, and November 2020, based on the method of Selection of Individual Selection (IC) under time-based contract.