

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Engagement of an External Implementer for a Regional Online Hackathon

within the SheSafe Online project

Contracting Authority	ICT Hub
Subject of the Engagement	Programmatic, technical, and operational implementation of a regional online hackathon within the scope defined in this RFP.
Format	Online, with a regional reach across the Western Balkans
Planned Period	November 2026; the bidder shall propose specific dates and the implementation schedule.

1. Background and Context

SheSafe Online is implemented under the regional program “EU 4 Gender Equality: Women’s Economic Empowerment and Ending Violence against Women,” funded by the European Union and jointly implemented by UN Women and UNDP. The project aims to strengthen the capacities, coordination, and practical tools of civil society organizations across the Western Balkans to prevent, recognize, and respond to technology-facilitated violence against women and girls (TF VAWG).

The project covers all six Western Balkan economies. In its implementation, ASTRA and ICT Hub combine ASTRA’s expertise in protecting women and girls and in survivor-centered approaches with ICT Hub’s experience in developing innovation, working with the tech community, and creating digital solutions.

The regional online hackathon is one of the project activities, bringing together participants from the Western Balkan economies to develop practical, safe, and user-oriented MVP solutions with potential for further development and regional application.

2. Subject of the Engagement

The subject of this engagement is to engage an external implementer to design and deliver the programmatic, technical, and operational implementation of a regional online hackathon within the scope defined in this RFP, including regional mobilization of participants, organization of online work, provision of an expert jury, the final pitch, and the awarding of prizes. Expert mentoring support for teams during and after the hackathon is not within the subject of this engagement.

Promotional campaigns, paid advertising, PR, media activities, and the production of visuals and promotional content are not within the subject of this engagement.

3. Objective of the Engagement

The objective of the engagement is to use a well-designed regional online hackathon to bring together as many relevant participants and teams from the Western Balkans as possible and to direct their work toward developing functional MVP solutions in line with the objectives and project activities of SheSafe Online.

- at least 30 participants and at least 10 teams;
- at least 50% of participants should be women;
- active mobilization of potential participants from all six Western Balkan economies, with mandatory representation of actual participants from at least five economies and the goal of representing all six economies;
- development of at least two functional MVP solutions that meet the eligibility requirements for awards.

4. Scope of Work and Responsibilities of the Selected Bidder

4.1. Concept, Methodology, and Program Delivery

- based on the broader thematic framework defined by ICT Hub and ASTRA, propose specific challenges and the hackathon program format;
- propose the format, duration, schedule, and specific implementation dates in November 2026;
- organize and run the online hackathon in a way that enables efficient teamwork, solution development, and final presentation of results;
- English is the official working language for joint sessions, official communication, the final pitch, and evaluation; teams may work and communicate internally in other languages;
- AI tools and vibe coding may be used to support accelerated development of prototypes and MVP solutions, but their use is not mandatory.

4.2. Regional Mobilization, Applications, and Participant Selection

- actively use its own networks, communities, partners, and direct contacts to mobilize relevant participants in the Western Balkan economies;
- clearly specify in the proposal the specific networks, communities, partners, and direct channels that can be activated for regional mobilization;
- manage the application and participant selection process in line with the objectives and project activities of SheSafe Online;
- manage operational communication with applicants and selected participants, including notifications, instructions, and coordination of participation.

Mobilization under this engagement entails direct work with relevant networks and communities.

Promotional campaigns, paid advertising, PR, media activities, visuals, and promotional content remain outside the scope of this RFP.

4.3. Technical and Operational Delivery of the Online Hackathon

- provide online infrastructure and a technical model that supports joint sessions, teamwork, communication, solution submission, the final pitch, and technical support for participants;
- independently propose and use appropriate platforms and tools in line with the program's functional needs;
- ensure operational coordination of the program, schedule, participants, and final presentation of solutions.

4.4. Expert Jury and Evaluation of Solutions

- provide at least three expert jury members;
- ICT Hub and/or ASTRA may additionally appoint their own representatives to the jury;
- the evaluation should, at a minimum, take into account the relevance of the problem, MVP functionality, safety, usability, and regional applicability of the solutions;

- the bidder shall propose a detailed scoring model, criteria, and jury working procedures, to be approved by ICT Hub and ASTRA before application, so that the evaluation framework is agreed and documented in advance;
- the jury's decision must be documented and included in the final report.

4.5. MVP Solutions and Prizes

For the purposes of this RFP, an MVP is a functional version of a digital solution that has a clearly defined problem, at least one functional user flow, demonstrable functionality, and basic technical documentation. Basic technical documentation includes a brief description of functionality, instructions for accessing or running the solution, and known limitations.

- only solutions developed to a functional MVP level may be considered for a prize;
- only MVP solutions that support Albanian, Macedonian, and BCMS language versions (Bosnian/Croatian/Montenegrin/Serbian) may be considered for a prize;
- the goal is for at least two MVP solutions to meet the eligibility requirements for awards and be awarded;
- in its proposal, the bidder shall propose the number of prizes and the prize fund allocation model, which must provide for at least two awarded MVP solutions.

4.6. Documentation, Reporting, and Visibility

- collect and maintain records of registered and actual participants, including at a minimum first and last name, contact details, team, gender, age, city, economy, role in the team, selected challenge, initial status of the solution, and participation status;
- the implementer shall submit one final report with annexes: the final agenda, records of actual participants supported by available online participation records, an overview of the solutions developed and access to their demonstration, the consolidated jury decision with evaluation results, and the calculation of and proof of payment of prizes. Additional documentation shall be submitted when required to verify contracted deliverables or to meet donor and audit requirements;
- align all materials, the online platform, official communication with participants, and hackathon documentation with the relevant UN visibility rules, as well as with the Communication Strategy and Operational Communication Plan of the SheSafe Online project, which will be provided to the selected bidder after selection and contract signing.

The obligation to comply with visibility rules does not entail conducting a promotional or PR campaign under this engagement.

5. Expected Minimum Results

1. Successfully implemented regional online hackathon.
2. At least 30 participants and at least 10 teams, with at least 50% women among participants. Participants must represent at least five Western Balkan economies, with the goal of representing all six economies and the obligation of active mobilization in each of them.
3. At least two functional MVP solutions that meet the eligibility requirements for awards.
4. One final report with annexes: the final agenda, records of actual participants supported by available online participation records, an overview of the solutions developed and access to their demonstration, the consolidated jury decision with evaluation results, and the calculation of and proof of payment of prizes. Additional documentation shall be submitted when required to verify contracted deliverables or to meet donor and audit requirements.

6. Budget

Implementation Budget	6,000 EUR - maximum budget
Prize Fund	3,000 EUR - total gross fund

Payment Schedule	To be defined in the contract with the selected bidder
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The maximum implementation budget is EUR 6,000, including applicable taxes and VAT where charged. The implementation budget is a maximum amount and is the same for all bidders. Bidders compete on both lower price and the quality of the proposed concept, methodology, regional mobilization, organization, budget allocation, and prize model.

The implementation budget of up to 6,000 EUR must cover all of the bidder's costs necessary to deliver the activities and services that are the subject of this RFP, including technical tools and platforms, the bidder's operational team, the expert jury, technical support, and all other costs within the defined scope of the engagement. The prize fund of 3,000 EUR is the only separate budget.

The prize fund of 3,000 EUR is a total gross fund. All taxes, bank fees, and any other costs related to prize payments shall be borne by the implementer and must be covered within that amount. The implementer is responsible for paying out the prizes.

The bidder shall submit a clear breakdown of the implementation budget by main items and services, with corresponding amounts and a justification of the proposed allocation, so that costs can be directly linked to the contract, invoice, and implemented activities, as well as a proposed model and allocation of the prize fund. The invoice and its breakdown shall follow the items of the accepted financial proposal, clearly indicating the related deliverables and proof of performance.

7. Role and Obligations of ICT Hub

- defines the broader thematic framework of the hackathon and the relevant project objectives;
- provides the selected bidder with relevant project information, UN visibility guidelines, the Communication Strategy, and the Operational Communication Plan;
- may additionally appoint its own representatives to the expert jury;
- provides project, expert, and technical coordination and oversight by giving input guidance, reviewing and approving the proposed challenges, program approach, evaluation model, and contracted results, as well as monitoring implementation and quality control. ICT Hub does not assume the operational implementation of the hackathon, mentoring support, communication and promotional activities, or other services entrusted to separate providers.

8. Intellectual Property, Confidentiality, and Data Protection

In accordance with the project rules, all intellectual property rights and other proprietary rights to solutions developed during the SheSafe Online hackathon belong to UN Women. The selected bidder is obliged to clearly include this rule in the terms of participation and to ensure that participants are informed of it and accept it.

The bidder and its engaged personnel are obliged to maintain the confidentiality of unpublished information obtained during implementation and to process participant data solely to the extent necessary for carrying out the activities and reporting.

9. Bidder Requirements

9.1. Legal Status

- the bidder must be a duly registered legal entity or sole proprietor;

9.2. Relevant Experience and Capacity

- the bidder must have at least three relevant references completed in the last five years, calculated up to the proposal submission deadline, for the organization and implementation of tech, innovation, startup, or other similar programs or events, at least one of which was delivered in an online format;

- the bidder must have the team and operational capacity to organize an online tech event; experience working with participants from multiple countries and on regional programs is not an eliminatory requirement but will be given additional weight.

10. Proposal Content

The proposal may be submitted in Serbian or English and should include:

- an overview of relevant experience and capacity under Section 9.2;
- the concept and methodology of the regional online hackathon;
- a regional mobilization plan, with the specific networks, communities, partners, and direct channels the bidder can activate;
- the proposed implementation price within the maximum budget and a clear budget breakdown by main items and services, with corresponding amounts and a justification of the proposed allocation;
- a proposed model and allocation of the 3,000 EUR prize fund;
- a brief timeline with the main phases: mobilization, selection, preparation, hackathon implementation, and final reporting.

11. Evaluation and Selection Criteria

Only timely and complete proposals that meet the requirements of this RFP will be considered. The selection will be made by a committee based on the overall quality and feasibility of the proposal. Criterion 4 – Price and Budget Allocation carries a total of 20 points and is evaluated through the two sub-criteria listed in the table.

#	Criterion	Points
1	Regional participant mobilization - quality and specificity of the proposed networks, communities, partners, and direct channels, and the ability to activate participants from the region.	30
2	Quality of the hackathon concept and methodology - alignment with the SheSafe Online objectives, feasibility of the online format, and ability to achieve the minimum results.	30
3	Relevant experience and operational capacity of the bidder – quality and relevance of the submitted references, experience with the online format, and experience working with participants from multiple countries and on regional programs.	20

#	Criterion	Points
4.1	Price – the lowest acceptable price offered receives 15 points, and other acceptable proposals receive proportionally fewer points according to the formula: (lowest price offered/price of the proposal being evaluated) × 15.	15
4.2	Budget allocation and justification – the realism and justification of the proposed costs are evaluated, as well as their alignment with the proposed concept, methodology, and scope of work.	5

12. Timeline and Proposal Submission

12.1. Timeline

- RFP publication: October 5, 2026;
- deadline for submitting questions: October 9, 2026, at 12:00;
- publication of answers and any clarifications: no later than October 13, 2026;
- proposal submission deadline: October 20, 2026, at 12:00, Belgrade local time;
- administrative review and evaluation of proposals: October 20–21, 2026, after the proposal submission deadline;
- planned notification of bidder selection: October 22, 2026;
- planned contract signing and kick-off meeting: October 23, 2026;
- implementation of the regional online hackathon: November 2026, according to the dates agreed in the accepted proposal and the contract.

12.2. Proposal Submission Method

- electronic submission: info@icthub.rs, with the subject line “Proposal - Regional Online Hackathon SheSafe Online”;
- physical submission: ICT Hub, Kralja Milana 10, 11000 Belgrade, in a sealed envelope with the same marking;

13. Questions and Clarifications

Interested bidders may submit questions regarding this RFP exclusively in writing to info@icthub.rs by the deadline specified in Section 12.1. ICT Hub will publish the answers to the questions received, together with the content of the questions without identifying the sender, within the deadline specified in Section 12.1, in the same manner in which the RFP was published. Questions received after the specified deadline will not be considered.

14. Final Note

ICT Hub reserves the right to request additional clarifications of submitted proposals from bidders. ICT Hub reserves the right not to select any proposal and/or to cancel the procedure if the proposals received do not meet the requirements of this RFP or if there are other justified reasons, without any obligation to reimburse

bidders for costs incurred in preparing and submitting proposals. The selected bidder is obliged to implement the engagement in accordance with the accepted concept, methodology, budget allocation, and prize model, with possible minor adjustments agreed with ICT Hub and ASTRA after selection, without changing the basic scope of the engagement or the approved budget.