

## Open Call for Services

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Support to the RCC for Regional Recognition Database - Migration, Expansion, and Secure Hosting</b>
<b>RCC Department:</b>	<b>Programme Department</b>
<b>Eligible applicants:</b>	<b>Companies from the information technology sector</b>
<b>Reporting to:</b>	<b>RCC Secretariat</b>
<b>Duration:</b>	<b>August-December 2025 (with maintenance period throughout 2026)</b>
<b>Reference Number:</b>	<b>060-025</b>

### TERMS OF REFERENCE:

#### 1. Background

The *Regional Recognition Database (RRD)* is a regional digital tool developed to support the implementation of the Agreement on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications in the Western Balkans Six (WB6). Its primary function is to facilitate the exchange and verification of information on recognised higher education institutions and qualifications among participating economies.

To ensure its continued functionality, sustainability, and alignment with the Common Regional Market agenda, the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) seeks to assume operational responsibility for the RRD. This includes the transfer of the system to RCC-managed infrastructure and the expansion of its capabilities to support broader regional recognition frameworks and improved user access.

Additional technical details and contextual information will be shared with the selected service provider upon engagement.

#### 2. Objective

This engagement has a twofold objective:

**2.a Migration** of the existing RRD to a secure and scalable RCC-managed infrastructure, including:

- Dedicated web server

- Dedicated IP address
- Full administrative access

**2.b Expansion** of the RRD’s functionalities and scope, ensuring alignment with the Common Regional Market (CRM 2.0) agenda and integration of robust security protocols.

### 3. Scope of Work

The engagement will be structured as follows:

#### *3.a Migration and Infrastructure Setup*

- Procure and configure a dedicated web server under RCC management.
- Secure a dedicated IP address for hosting the RRD.
- Create an RCC subdomain for the RRD (e.g. rrd.rcc.int).
- Verify technical compatibility and system integrity post-migration.
- Coordinate with the RRD developer to migrate all system components, including the database.

#### *3.b System Integration, Development and Administration*

- Ensure access for WB6 ENIC/NARIC centres, including additional training for their staff, potential upgrades to the database based on the proposals from ENIC/NARIC offices, and resolution of any technical issues that may arise during the service contract period.
- Secure transfer of user roles while preserving existing access rights.
- Provide documentation of current system architecture and account management protocols.
- Redesign the public-facing interface to improve usability, aligned with RCC visual identity.
- Enable user-friendly data entry, filtering, and statistics presentation.

#### *3.c Security and Data Protection*

In line with the best practices for institutional data management:

- Implement enhanced access control protocols:
  - Institution-level logins
  - Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) for administrators and sensitive roles
  - Audit logs and usage tracking

- Ensure full compliance with GDPR and regional data protection standards.
- Develop secure backup and recovery protocols.

### 3.d Backup and Recovery

The service provider shall establish:

- Automated periodic backup procedures for both application and database layers.
- Secure encrypted storage of backups.
- Recovery protocols to ensure fast restoration in the event of system failure.
- Routine verification of backup integrity.

## 4. Deliverables

The service provider is expected to deliver:

- A fully migrated and operational RRD, hosted on RCC-managed infrastructure.
- An expanded and modular database architecture ready for additional instruments.
- A user-friendly public interface and robust admin controls.
- A security framework in line with EU data protection standards.
- Comprehensive documentation, including:
  - System architecture and components
  - Admin and user access guidelines
  - Security and recovery protocols
- A basic user training session and troubleshooting guide for RCC staff.
- A maintenance and support plan valid for at least 24 months post-deployment, including:
  - Email-based support (response within 24 hours)
  - Platform updates
  - Minor technical assistance

## 5. Timeline

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Indicative Timeline</i>
Infrastructure setup and migration	29 September 2025
Development / expansion	December 2025
Maintenance and support	Minimum two-year period

*Note: Timeline subject to adjustment based on contracting procedures and technical dependencies.*

## 6. Roles and Responsibilities

- RCC Secretariat: Project coordination, contracting authority, stakeholder liaison, and approval of deliverables.
- Service Provider: Technical execution across all phases, documentation, and post-deployment support.
- Original Developer: May be consulted for transitional support and clarification of system architecture.
- ENIC/NARIC Centres: End-users and data contributors for domestic recognition data.

## 7. Profile and Competencies of the Company and Team Members Qualifications

### Company requirements:

- The company must have previous experience in similar assignments, i.e. experience in developing similar platforms and systems

### Qualifications of personnel:

<b>Education:</b>	Relevant undergraduate degree in Computer Science, Software Engineering, Information Systems or equivalent academic credentials
<b>Experience:</b>	<p>Qualifications and Skills Required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minimum 5 years of proven experience in database migration and leading frameworks for software / application development and secure web hosting.</li><li>• Experienced with GDPR and data protection principles.</li><li>• Prior engagement with intergovernmental or regional organisations (preferably in the Western Balkans Six).</li><li>• Capacity to support future scaling of the platform.</li><li>• Experience working with international clients is preferred.</li><li>• Able to interact with professionals of and representatives from the national administrations in the Western Balkans Six region.</li></ul>
<b>Language requirements:</b>	Fluency in English, as the official language of the RCC. Knowledge of other languages of the region desirable.

## 8. Application Rules

Applications need to be submitted by **25 August 2025**. The offers should be submitted through the website link [Apply now](#).

## 9. Technical Offer

The Technical Offer must include the following documents:

- Company profile including a brief description (up to 2 pages) of the company;
- Copy of company's registration;
- Financial records - company's balance sheet and profit-and-loss statement for the past 2 years;
- CV(s) of **the assigned staff**, outlining relevant knowledge and experience;
- Concept note outlining the proposal of the methodology, timeline, research analytical tools to be used in carrying out the assignment as well as at least one sample of similar work, based on your experience or an explanation of how you would deliver the product based on the information provided in the Terms of Reference;
- List of references for relevant activities implemented over the past 5 years demonstrating relevant experience in the subject matter.

## 10. Financial Offer

The proposed offer should be broken down as per the deliverables envisaged in the Terms of Reference.

The proposed offer should be broken down as per the deliverables envisaged in the Terms of Reference, specifically:

- Infrastructure setup and migration
- Development/expansion
- Maintenance and support for minimum two-year period.

The financial offer should reflect the following:

- All figures should be expressed in EUR;

## 11. Evaluation and Selection

The assignment will be awarded to the highest qualified applicant based on the skills, expertise, and the quality of the concept note, and the cost-effectiveness of the financial offer.

The best value for money is established by weighing technical quality against price on a 80/20 basis.

*Technical Evaluation*

Evaluation grid	Maximum score
Professional capacity of the Staff	
- Education	10
- Qualifications and Skills Required	50
Concept Note/proposal	40
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>100</b>

In addition to the results of the application, a competency-based interview will be held with the selected candidates.

#### *Financial Evaluation*

Financial Proposal / cheapest price has maximum score	<b>100</b>
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**In addition to the results of the technical and financial evaluation, a competency-based interview may be held with the selected bidder.**

#### **Information on selection of the most favourable bidder**

The RCC Secretariat shall inform candidates and bidders of decisions reached concerning the award of the contract as soon as possible, including the grounds for any decision not to award a contract for which there has been competitive tendering or to recommence the procedure.

Standard letter of thanks for participation to unsuccessful bidders shall be sent within 15 days after the contract is signed with the awarded bidder.

The candidates and bidders wishing to receive a feedback may send a request within 15 days after receipt of the standard letter of thanks.

The request may be sent to the e-mail address [ProcurementforRcc@rcc.int](mailto:ProcurementforRcc@rcc.int) or to the address of the RCC Secretariat:

Regional Cooperation Council Secretariat  
Attention to: Administration Department  
Building of the Friendship between Greece and Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Trg Bosne i Hercegovine 1/V  
71000 Sarajevo  
Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Appeals procedure**

Bidders believing that they have been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may petition the RCC Secretariat directly. The RCC Secretariat must reply within 15 days of receipt of the complaint.

The appeal request may be sent to the e-mail address [ProcurementforRcc@rcc.int](mailto:ProcurementforRcc@rcc.int) or to the address of the RCC Secretariat:

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Attention to: Administration Department

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