

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS
FOR COMPETITIVE SELECTION OF
AN IMPLEMENTING PARTNER
FOR
EXTRA-BUDGETARY PROJECT No. 4300293
FUNDED BY USAID/AZERBAIJAN**

**“SUPPORTING ANTI-TRAFFICKING EFFORTS IN AZERBAIJAN
PROJECT II”**

**COMPONENT: ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN GANJA
CITY**

No. RFA/AZE/04/2015

BAKU, AZERBAIJAN

**Request for Applications
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**Implementing partner for
EXTRA-BUDGETARY PROJECT NO. 4300293
FUNDED BY USAID/AZERBAIJAN**

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PROJECT II”**

COMPONENT: ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN GANJA CITY

The Project Co-ordinator in Baku of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (hereinafter called “the OSCE”) invites sealed applications from non-governmental, not-for-profit organizations legally registered in Azerbaijan for the purpose of finding an implementing partner for the Project: Supporting Anti-Trafficking Efforts in Azerbaijan Project II, Component: Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Ganja city.

The Request for Applications is funded under a Grant Agreement signed between the OSCE and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Azerbaijan for a project designed at assisting the Government of Azerbaijan and civil society organizations (CSOs) to further improve Azerbaijan’s effectiveness in preventing and combating trafficking in human beings (CTHB) and forced labour through raising public awareness on trafficking in human beings and providing technical and financial support to the civil society organizations operating shelters for assisting potential and actual victims of human trafficking and forced labour.

The Request for Applications documentation includes:

- Section I: Project “Supporting Anti-Trafficking Efforts in Azerbaijan Project II” - Outline
- Section II: Terms of Reference
- Section III: How to apply and the procedures to follow
- Section IV: Evaluation and Selection of Applications

- Annex I: OSCE Project Proposal Template
- Annex II: Budget Template
- Annex III: Certificate of Compliance for Potential Implementing Partner
- Annex IV: Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing Implementing E.O. 13224
- Annex V: Standard form of the Implementing Partner Agreement (for reference purposes only)

Any Agreement reached as a result of this Request for Applications shall be bound by the enclosed standard form of the Implementing Partner Agreement.

Applications shall be delivered at the following address:

**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)
Project Co-ordinator in Baku
Attn: Chief of Fund Administration
The Landmark III, 96 Nizami St.
AZ1010 Baku, Azerbaijan**

Applications shall be delivered on or before **1 April 2015, 12:00 hrs (GMT+4)** in a sealed envelope marked with **“RFA/AZE/04/2015– Implementing partner for Project “Supporting Anti-Trafficking**

Efforts in Azerbaijan Project II’ - Assistance to victims of trafficking and forced labour in Ganja city - Do Not Open before 1 April 2015, 12:00 hrs (GMT+4)’.

To ensure procurement integrity, OSCE will not accept applications sent by e-mail and fax.

The application shall be submitted in English language using the standard OSCE project proposal template. All costs shall be quoted in AZN. Please submit complete application packages.

This project is funded from extra-budgetary resources and, therefore, funding for this project and for OSCE Implementing Partners under this project is subject to the timely receipt of sufficient funding from extra-budgetary donors.

The OSCE reserves the right to accept or reject any Application, and to annul, in whole or in part, or to suspend the selection process and reject all applications at any time and without reason prior to award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Applicant or Applicants.

A complete set of the Request for Applications documentation may be obtained at www.osce.org/baku in the Highlights section.

Please address all your queries or questions in writing at the e-mail addresses given below and kindly refrain from any telephone calls or personal visits:

ilgar.hasanov@osce.org
mathilde.nguyen-panigel@osce.org

CONTENTS

SECTION I: SUPPORTING ANTI-TRAFFICKING EFFORTS IN AZERBAIJAN PROJECT II	5
1.1 BACKGROUND.....	5
1.2 OVERALL OBJECTIVES OF COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT TO THE EFFECTIVE ANTI-TRAFFICKING AND FORCED LABOUR – ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN GANJA CITY PROJECT.....	5
1.3 PROJECT OUTPUTS.....	6
1.4 FINANCIAL ALLOCATION AND TIME FRAME	6
SECTION II: TERMS OF REFERENCE.....	7
2.1 TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	7
2.2 CRITERIA FOR ELIGIBILITY	8
2.3 IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS	8
SECTION III: HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW	9
3.1 OSCE STANDARD PROJECT PROPOSAL TEMPLATE AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	9
3.2 WHERE AND HOW TO SEND THE APPLICATIONS.....	10
3.3 DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS.....	11
3.4 FURTHER INFORMATION.....	11
SECTION IV: EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS.....	12
4.1 APPLICATION OPENING SESSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE CHECK	12
4.2 QUALITY EVALUATION OF THE PROPOSALS	12
4.3 APPLICATION CHECK LIST	14

SECTION I: SUPPORTING ANTI-TRAFFICKING EFFORTS IN AZERBAIJAN PROJECT II

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Republic of Azerbaijan has committed itself to preventing and prosecuting trafficking in human beings and protecting trafficked victims through a number of OSCE mechanisms.

In addition to the OSCE commitments, including Moscow 1991, Istanbul 1999, Vienna 2000, and Bucharest 2001, participating States recommended specific actions to be taken at the national level during the Ministerial Council (MC) meeting in Maastricht. These actions address the criminalization, law enforcement response, law enforcement co-operation and information exchange between participating States, assistance and protection of witnesses and victims in the criminal justice system, training of law-enforcement, border measures, security and control of documents and legitimacy and validity of documents¹.

The project further builds on the OSCE MC Decision No. 14/06 on “Enhancing Efforts to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings”, including for labour exploitation, through a comprehensive and proactive approach, as well as on the OSCE MC Decision No. 8/07 on combating trafficking in human beings for labour exploitation.

The Republic of Azerbaijan is a source, transit and destination country for men, women and children subjected to trafficking, specifically those vulnerable to threats of forced labour, and for women and children’s involvement in forced prostitution and forced begging.

The Government has adopted relevant instruments to address trafficking, including the third National Action Plan for the period of 2014-2019, which was adopted in July 2014; the National Referral Mechanism; and Rules for Identification of Victims of Trafficking. It also adopted the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, which entered into force on 1 October 2010. In September 2013, the Government adopted the Rules on Return of Trafficked Victims.

In 2013 Azerbaijan has been elevated to a “Tier 2”² status in the United States, Department of State’s Trafficking in Persons Report (U.S. TIP Report), after being in a “Tier 2 Watch List” position for the previous five years. The elevation marked the country’s first conviction of forced labour involving ten Azerbaijani victims exploited in the Russian Federation.

According to the report of the National Co-ordinator made to the Parliament on 4 April 2014³, in the last ten years, the Government identified and assisted 566 victims of human trafficking and 14 victims of forced labour and indicted 385 traffickers on the charges of human trafficking and forced labour.

1.2 OVERALL OBJECTIVES OF COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT TO THE EFFECTIVE ANTI-TRAFFICKING AND FORCED LABOUR – ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN GANJA CITY PROJECT

The objective of the project is to assist the Government of Azerbaijan and civil society organizations to improve Azerbaijan’s effectiveness in preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and forced labour through raising public awareness and providing technical and financial support to civil society organizations operating shelters for assisting potential and actual victims of human trafficking and forced labour. In addition, the project will aim at enhancing multi-stakeholder co-ordination and co-operation on

¹ Maastricht 2003 Annex to Decision 2/03 on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings.

² In the TIP Report, the Department of State places each country onto one of three tiers based on the extent of their governments’ efforts to comply with the “minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking” found in Section 108 of the TVPA. Tier 2 ranking is giving to countries whose governments do not fully comply with the TVPA’s minimum standards, but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards.

³ <http://iaqmi.gov.az/?/az/news/view/635/> < accessed on 30 April 2014>

tackling emerging forms of human trafficking and forced labour through facilitating round-table discussions and developing recommendations to the Government.

The implementation of this project should ultimately assist the competent Azerbaijani authorities to successfully identify, assist and protect victims of forced labour.

1.3 PROJECT OUTPUTS

The following activities shall be essential in reaching the expected results:

- Conducting outreach activities to identify victims of trafficking and forced labour among vulnerable communities;
- Providing immediate relief assistance to the potential and presumed victims of trafficking in Ganja city;
- Providing necessary social, medical, psychological and legal assistance to potential and presumed victims of trafficking and forced labour with the particular focus on registering undocumented victims of Ganja in the relevant state structures.

1.4 FINANCIAL ALLOCATION AND TIME FRAME

1.4.1. Financial Allocation

This Project allocates limited funds of 82,215 AZN to cover the project staff, operational and other costs (specifically the ones pertaining to potential and presumed victims in Ganja city of the implementing partner for the period of 30 months.

All costs funded by the grant must be allowable, allocable and reasonable⁴.

In order to ensure strong sustainability of the project, the financial allocations will be decreasing over the implementation period. The financial allocation will be divided as follow:

- By 12th months of implementation, 50% of total grant will be allocated (43%), or no more than 35,352 AZN
- By 24th months of implementation, 88% of total grant will be allocated (39%), or no more than 32,064 AZN
- By 30th month of implementation, 100% of the grant will be allocated (18%), or no more than 14,799 AZN

Payments will be made on a reimbursement basis in tranches corresponding to achievement of agreed upon milestones, or in exceptional cases, on a periodic (monthly) advance and liquidation basis. The decision on funding type will be made by the OSCE through an analysis of the applicant's organizational capability to manage grant funds and grant needs.

The project will require a clear presentation of the cost-share throughout the envisaged years of operation. The cost-share will have to be proportional to compensate the decrease in funds over time. The cost-share may be met through in-kind (non-cash) contributions or financial support from the applicant organization, other donors, program income, or a combination of the three.

The OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Baku will not fund the equipment, utilities and rental of premises necessary for the operation of the implementing partner.

In addition, USAID grant funds cannot be utilized for the following:

- Private ceremonies, parties, celebrations, etc.

⁴ (1) "Reasonable" means the costs do not exceed those that would ordinarily be incurred by a prudent person in the conduct of normal business.

(2) "Allocable" means the costs are necessary to the award.

(3) "Allowable" means the costs are reasonable and allocable and conform to any limitations set forth in the award.

- Previous obligations and/or bad debts
- Fines and/or penalties
- Creation of endowments
- Subcontracts and subgrants
- Purchases of goods or services from a country that is a “prohibited source”. The list of countries designated as prohibited sources may be found at <http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/310mac>. Currently, there are no countries on the list of prohibited source, however countries may be added to or removed from this list by the USAID Administrator and upon receiving foreign policy guidance from the Department of State, as appropriate.
- Prohibited goods under USAID regulations, including, but not limited to: police or law enforcement equipment, abortion equipment and services, weather modification equipment, luxury goods, and gambling equipment
- Restricted goods without previous approval by USAID, including, but not limited to, motor vehicles, pharmaceuticals, contraceptive products, used equipment, and agricultural commodities such as seeds, pesticides, and fertilizer
- Other costs unallowable under USAID and/or federal regulations

1.4.2. Time Frame

The Project is designed for a thirty (30) months implementation period; however, regardless of the start date of implementation, it has to be completed not later than 31 August 2017.

SECTION II: TERMS OF REFERENCE

The OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Baku seeks a suitable implementing partner to carry out this project, in line with the above-mentioned project’s objectives and outputs. While applicants may formulate additional specific objectives, these shall be in accordance with and support the specified objectives identified by the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Baku.

2.1 TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE IMPLEMENTING PARTNER

The tasks and responsibilities of the implementing partner will include the following:

- Overall coordination of the project’s implementation and fund administration, including all logistical issues. The project implementation is to be carried out under close supervision by the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Baku;
- Conducting outreach activities to identify victims of trafficking among vulnerable communities in Ganja city;
- Providing immediate relief assistance to the potential and presumed victims of trafficking in Ganja city;
- Providing necessary social, medical, psychological and legal assistance to potential and presumed victims of trafficking and forced labour with the particular focus on registering undocumented victims in the relevant state structures.
- Provide expertise during the roundtable discussions regarding prevention and prosecution of trafficking, protection of presumed and actual victims of trafficking;
- Develop a set of recommendations for improving the mechanisms to protect vulnerable population at risk, and assist support to victims of trafficking;
- Develop sustainable exit strategy for the shelter to be fully functional after the project’s completions.
- Providing the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Baku with regular progress, financial and narrative reports on the status of fund administration and of the project’s implementation, respectively in accordance with OSCE quality standards, on a quarterly basis, not later than 20th day of last month of each quarter.

2.2 CRITERIA FOR ELIGIBILITY

In order to be eligible as implementing partner for this project, the applicant must be a non-governmental and non-profit organization duly registered in the Republic of Azerbaijan and having at least three years project management experience and a demonstrated capacity to manage the activity in the scale corresponding to the size of the project.

Necessary qualifications include the following:

- The applicant shall have a background as well as proved knowledge of the Azerbaijani legal and judicial system, including both substantive and procedural issues in the field of trafficking and forced labour;
- Prior experience in working with the trafficking victims and vulnerable communities;
- Proved knowledge of international human rights standards will also be an asset.

2.3 IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

The successful selected implementing partner(s) must include in the project budget its in-kind contribution. The proposition about the in-kind contributions shall include, but shall not be limited to:

- (a) Facilities to be used for a shelter including equipment, furniture and utilities;
- (b) Support staff;
- (c) Activities related to other groups residing in the shelter, e.g. victims of violence, persons in crisis.
- (d) Special programs aimed at educating and increasing livelihood skills of victims.

SECTION III: HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

3.1 OSCE STANDARD PROJECT PROPOSAL TEMPLATE AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

An applicant shall submit the following documents:

1. Project Proposal (See Annex I)

The project proposals shall be submitted using the standard **OSCE Project Proposal Template**. Applicants shall comply with the project proposal format and fill in the form as explained in the template. The project proposal should be formulated carefully and the respective forms should be filled as clearly as possible, so that the received project proposal can be assessed. The received application and the related material should be precise and provide enough detail to ensure the clarity of the project proposal. This concerns particularly the project background and justification, how will the set objectives be achieved, the description of the anticipated results, that of the benefits gained and their relevance to the programme's objectives, as well as to the key activities and timescale.

The applicant should use the following indicators to design its proposal and develop a roadmap to present an action plan to achieve the project results:

- 1) Number of victims assisted;
- 2) Number of potential trafficking/forced labour cases referred to state bodies;
- 3) Number of undocumented victims registered with authorities;
- 4) Number of potential victims assisted by shelters;
- 5) Number of cases logged with the national courts.

2. Budget (See Annex II)

This Project allocates limited funds to support the project activities which will cover the project staff and direct operational costs of the implementing partner. OSCE will not fund the equipment and rental of premises necessary for the operation of the implementing partner.

The Implementing Partner is therefore required to provide a detailed budget, indicating monthly and annual budgetary requirement of the shelter. A special attention will be given to the sustainability of the activities towards the completion of the project, i.e. the budget should reflect increasing cost-share of funding resource(s). All costs shall be quoted in AZN.

The budget should avoid using broad cost categories and lump-sum amounts. Instead, it should be rather detailed and as much as possible quantity-based. For example, with regard to the salary budget line, for each position relating to the project you should include the gross figure that takes into account tax; you should indicate for each position what percentage of time the person will spend working on the project; you should also provide a description of what the roles and responsibilities are for each position. In the event that a member of the proposed project team will also be working on another project or initiative, you should declare this.

The Budget should also include a narrative section which adds explanation to the budget. Specific details may be clarified, such as instances where unit calculations (e.g. the number of experts multiplied by the number of days worked multiplied by the daily fee.) outnumber the columns in the budget matrix, and thus are not completely reflected. More general aspects of the budget may also be expanded on.

3. The applicant should fill in the Certificate for Compliance (See Annex III)

The Certificate of Compliance will affirm that the Project is not funded by other donors, or identify the donor(s) and amounts where there is co-funding. It will also contain a declaration of compliance with the laws of Azerbaijan, or an explanation of problems encountered in complying with specific laws.

4. **Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing Implementing E.O. 13224** (Annex IV)
5. **Copy of Certificate of the State Registration**
6. **Copy of the official Statute/Charter**
7. **A list of all key management personnel of the organization**
8. **CVs of all proposed project staff**
9. **Evidence of a legally registered bank account**
10. **List of previous projects, carried out by the applicant, including information about the donor, implementation period and respective values;**
11. **If applicable, support letters from organisations, i.e. institutions (letters of cooperation).**

The applicant should also consider the **Form of Agreement** (See Annex V), which will govern the agreement to be signed between the OSCE and the applicant. As part of the Agreement, the applicant will agree to submit original invoices to the OSCE and allow the OSCE to stamp them as paid and that all significant procurement activities will be conducted by the OSCE.

Please note!

Project proposal, including budget, but excluding other required attachments, should not exceed ten (10) pages.

All documents, except for requested copies of official documents No. 5, 6 and 9 above and No. 11, must be submitted in English language.

Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

Please submit complete application packages.

3.2 WHERE AND HOW TO SEND THE APPLICATIONS

Organizations wishing to apply for the Project should submit before the relevant deadline a complete application package, i.e. OSCE Standard Project Proposal Template, Budget and the above-listed supporting documents. The applications must be received in a sealed envelope by mail or by hand-delivery to the following address:

OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Baku
 Att: Chief of Fund Administration
 Landmark 3, 2nd Floor
 96 Nizami Street
 Baku AZ1010, Azerbaijan

Please note! Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered at other addresses other than the one above will be automatically rejected.

The outer envelope must bear the:

- full name of the applicant;
- address of the applicant; and
- marked with **“RFA/AZE/04/2015– Implementing partner for Project “Supporting Anti-Trafficking Efforts in Azerbaijan Project II” - Assistance to child victims of trafficking and forced labour - Do Not Open before 1 April 2015, 12:00 hrs (GMT+4)”**.

3.3 DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS

The deadline for receiving applications is **1 April 2015, at 12:00 hrs (GMT+4)**.

Please note! Any application received after the deadline will automatically be rejected.

3.4 FURTHER INFORMATION

For any further information please address your queries by e-mail, not later than **17 March 2015** to the following address: ilgar.hasanov@osce.org with a copy to Mathilde Nguyen Panigel Mathilde.Nguyen-Panigel@osce.org, indicating clearly the reference Request for Applications.

SECTION IV: EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the OSCE. The submitted applications will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

4.1 APPLICATION OPENING SESSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE CHECK

Eligibility of applicants

At the application opening session an administrative check will be conducted. Namely, it will be verified whether that applicant is eligible according to the criteria as set out in this Request for Applications.

Please note! If the application does not meet the criteria as set out in section 2.2 and does not include all documentation required in section 3.1, it will be automatically rejected.

The application will also be automatically rejected if:

- the application is received after the closing date;
- the application does not comply with the requirements for minimum or maximum amounts or minimum or maximum duration;
- the project proposal is not submitted in English language using the OSCE Standard Project Proposal Template (*Annex I*);
- the project budget is not submitted in the requested format (*Annex II*).

4.2 QUALITY EVALUATION OF THE PROPOSALS

All applications will be subjected to quality evaluation by the OSCE, except those dismissed following the administrative check.

Quality evaluation of the proposal, including the proposed budget, will be carried out in accordance with the evaluation criteria set out in the Evaluation Matrix on the following page.

Evaluation Matrix

1. Operational Capacity and Professional Resources	35
Does the applicant have sufficient experience of project management (not less than 3 years)?	5
Does the applicant have sufficient management capacity in terms of staff, equipment and ability to handle the budgetary resources involved?	5
Does the applicant have a background and proven substantial knowledge of the Azerbaijani anti-trafficking and child protection system (proven knowledge of international human rights standards and the national laws would be an asset)?	5
Do the relevant representatives of the applicant have prior experience as social workers, psychologists and lawyers?	5
Does the applicant have sufficient technical expertise? (notably knowledge of the issues to be addressed and good working relations with local authorities and relevant state agencies)	5
Does the applicant have prior experience running a shelter for child victims of violence and risk groups?	5
Does the applicant have experience and capacity in rehabilitation of child victims of violence?	5

2. Project Implementation and Methodology	30
Does the project proposal adequately address project objectives, i.e. management of shelter, as well as provide reintegration and rehabilitation services to actual and potential child victims of trafficking?	5
Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results?	5
How coherent is the overall design of the action? (in particular, does it reflect the analysis of the problems involved, take into account external factors and anticipate an evaluation to track progress and results?)	5
Does the project proposal address the needs of the target groups and the final beneficiaries appropriately?	5
Is the action plan clear and feasible?	5
Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outcome of the action?	5

3. Sustainability	25
Is there a clear sustainability plan?	5
Is the proposed sustainable exit strategy realistic?	5
Is the proposed sustainability exit strategy considers third party support inter alia?	5
Is the proposed sustainability exit strategy developed within the appropriate timeframe?	5
Does the project proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the shelter's sustainability?	5

Maximum total score	90
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Only those proposals that receive a score higher than 55 points will be considered for award. The final selection will be based on the evaluation of the budget and cost effectiveness, as follows:

Budget and cost effectiveness	
Are the proposed expenditures appropriate and in line with market prices?	
Are the proposed expenditures necessary for the implementation of the project activities?	
Are the proposed expenditures cost effective and adequate?	
Are the proposed expenditures detailed and transparent?	
Are the proposed in-kind contributions relevant and sufficient?	
Is the cost-share of funding clearly presented and in line with decreasing funding?	

Please note the following important information:

Scoring

The evaluation criteria are divided into sections and subsections. Each subsection must be given a score between 1 and 5 in accordance with the following guidelines: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good. The applications with the highest scores will be given priority when grants are awarded.

Costs incurred for the preparation of the application will not be covered by the grant and will not be included in the budget.

4.3 APPLICATION CHECK LIST

Prior to sending the Application, check if you have all the needed documentation:

- Stamped project proposal⁵ (*Annex I*)
- Stamped budget (*Annex II*) – **budget should be submitted on a separate page from the proposal** as it will be evaluated separately;
- Stamped and signed Certificate of Compliance (*Annex III*);
- Stamped and signed Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing Implementing E.O. 13224 (*Annex IV*)
- Copy of Certificate of the State Registration;
- Copy of the Statute/Charter in the original language and in English;
- A list of all key management personnel of the organization;
- CVs for all proposed project staff;
- Evidence of a legally registered bank account;
- List of previous projects (in English), carried out by the applicant, including information about the donor, implementation period and respective values;
- If applicable, support letters from organisations, i.e. institutions (letters of cooperation).

NB: *it is in the applicant's interest to provide the OSCE with accurate contact details, preferably an e-mail address.*

⁵ Project proposal, including budget should not exceed ten (10) pages.