

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS
FOR COMPETITIVE SELECTION OF
AN IMPLEMENTING PARTNER
FOR
PROJECT: LEGAL RESOURCE CENTRES IN THE REGIONS 2013**

COMPONENT: SUMGAYIT LEGAL RESOURCE CENTRE

No. RFA/AZE/01/2013



**Office in Baku
Fund Administration Unit**

The Landmark III, 96 Nizami St., AZ1010 Baku, Azerbaijan

Date: 17 December 2012

**Request for Applications
No. RFA/AZE/01/2013**

**Implementing partner for
SUMGAYIT LEGAL RESOURCE CENTRE**

The Office 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: Legal Resource Centres in the Regions 2013, Component: Sumgayit Legal Resource Centre (hereinafter called “the Implementing Partner”), to be located at Sumgayit, Azerbaijan, covering the regions of Sumgayit, Shabran, Khizi and Siyazan..

The Request for Applications documentation includes:

- Section I: The OSCE Legal Resource Centres in the Regions - 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
- Annex III: Certificate of Compliance for Potential Implementing Partner
- Annex IV: 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)
Office in Baku
Attn: Ms. Irina Krapivina
Fund Administration Unit
The Landmark III, 96 Nizami St.
AZ1010 Baku, Azerbaijan**

Applications shall be delivered on or before **3 January, 2012, 12:00 hrs (GMT+4)** in a sealed envelope marked with “**RFA/AZE/01/2013– Implementing partner for the Legal Resource Centres, Sumgayit - Do Not Open before 3 January 2012, 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.

Funding for this project is subject to the approval of the OSCE Unified Budget for 2013. 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 <http://www.osce.org/baku/84066>. 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.

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SECTION I: THE OSCE LEGAL RESOURCE CENTRES IN THE REGIONS

1.1 BACKGROUND

The objective of the Rule of Law and Human Rights (RoL) Programme within the OSCE Office in Baku (Office) is to assist the government's legal and judicial reform process in accordance with OSCE commitments, related international standards and domestic legislation. The OSCE commitments regarding the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms support and advance principles of justice that are the basis of the rule of law. Among other principles, they include the guarantee of effective remedies to obtain redress in case of violations of individual rights¹. OSCE participating States have committed themselves to ensuring that everyone will have effective means of redress against administrative decisions, to guaranteeing respect for fundamental rights and ensuring legal integrity². Participating States have also affirmed that effective available remedies include the right of the individual to seek and receive adequate legal assistance³.

Currently, the Office supports four Legal Resource Centres that operate in Sumgayit, Lankaran, Ganja and Sheki and cover surrounding regions respectively. The Legal Resource Centres provide free legal advice and assistance on a broad range of legal matters, including representation in court cases. The Office also supports through the Legal Resource Centres awareness raising and training/capacity building activities for the benefit of the local population, civil society and legal professionals, judges and prosecutors in the regions.

The Office selects Implementing Partners, i.e. non-governmental organisations specialised in human rights and rule of law, to run the Legal Resource Centres in the regions on a daily basis⁴. The Office will continue supporting Sumgayit Legal Resource Centre for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2013. In connection with this, the Office is seeking an Implementing Partner to run the Sumgayit Legal Resource Centre.

1.2 OVERALL OBJECTIVES OF THE LEGAL RESOURCE CENTRE IN THE REGIONS

The overall objective of this project is to increase public access to justice and improve the quality of publicly available legal services and resources in Sumgayit and neighbouring regions⁵.

1.3 PROJECT OUTPUTS

- Provide legal assistance to the local population in Sumgayit and neighbouring regions

The Implementing Partner will provide the following types of legal services:

- Legal advice (in verbal or written form);⁶
- Information requests to various public agencies on behalf of the applicants;
- Representation in courts (civil, criminal, administrative cases);
- Provision of toll-free telephone services⁷

¹ See OSCE Human Dimension Commitments, Vienna Document 1989, para. 13.9.

² See OSCE Human Dimension Commitments, Copenhagen Document 1990, para. 5.10.

³ See OSCE Human Dimension Commitments, Copenhagen Document 1990, para. 11.1.

⁴ The Office selected the Implementing Partners following an OSCE competitive bidding process outlined in Provisional Financial Administrative Instruction No.15. The Office will also support the LRCs located at Sheki and Lankaran through extra budgetary resources.

⁵ Sumgayit, Shabran, Khizi and Siyazan

⁶ As illustration, in the past years of the Legal Resource Centers' activities in the regions, applicants asked for legal advice about property rights, divorce procedures, social allowances *inter alia*,

⁷ In order to facilitate prompt legal assistance to the population in remote areas

The Implementing Partner's lawyers will provide free⁸ and qualified legal assistance to the population in the regions on a broad range of legal issues, including *inter alia* civil law, family law, and administrative law.

- Organise and facilitate awareness raising events

With the support of the Office the Implementing Partner will organise and facilitate awareness raising events for the benefit of the local population on their rights and the ways of effective redress of human rights violations. Public outreach and human rights educational activities will include *inter alia* seminars, workshops and lectures, and will pay special attention to engaging women and youth in these activities. The Implementing Partner's awareness raising activities will address those areas and institutions, which will be subject of the majority of complaints and alleged violations and will raise the Implementing Partner's visibility among the public.

The Implementing Partner will organise on-site legal aid sessions in each of the regions of its respective coverage⁹ at least once during project implementation period. During these sessions, the Implementing Partner will conduct awareness raising activities and will provide legal assistance in case of necessity to the population of the respective regions.

The Implementing Partner will broadly advertise its activities through dissemination of information leaflets, press releases and local media.

The Implementing Partner will also serve as a legal resource facility for the benefit of the local population and the legal community in the regions. For this purpose, the Implementing Partner will maintain a legal library of the relevant domestic legislation, applicable international instruments, law books, case law, various legal and information materials, which will be available to the population and the practitioners in these regions. The Implementing Partner will also offer computer and internet facilities to interested legal professionals, as well as to volunteers and students. In particular, the LRC will provide an electronic legal database with legal materials relevant to national legislation and international standards and will encourage meetings and discussions of legal professionals at their premises.

- Organise capacity building activities for the legal community and civil society.

The Implementing Partner will support the Office¹⁰ in the organisation of the training sessions by liaising with the relevant stakeholders for the training needs assessments, identifying trainers and trainees in the respective regions, sending out invitations as well as preparing the training facilities. Those training activities¹¹ may include, *inter alia*, trainings for legal professionals, law students.

As a result, the Implementing partner will produce the following results:

- The local population in Sumgayit and neighbouring regions has access to free high quality legal services;
- The local population in the respective regions become more aware of their rights and of how to redress their violations effectively;
- The legal professionals in the respective regions strengthen their capacities through training activities facilitated and organized by the Implementing Partner in consultation with the Office.

⁸ The Implementing Partner's services will be free of charge to the client, although as a general rule the Implementing Partner requires the client to pay the additional expenses such as court costs, compensation for expert, witnesses, document copying and delivery.

⁹ Sumgayit, Shabran, Khizi and Siyazan

¹⁰ The OSCE Office in Baku will support those capacity building activities through its other projects to be implemented in 2013, *inter alia*, Trainings and Capacity Building Activities Project 2013.

¹¹ Up to two trainings during the project implementation period

1.4 FINANCIAL ALLOCATION AND TIMEFRAME

1.4.1. Financial Allocation

OSCE will allocate limited funds to support the project activities which will cover the project staff and direct operational costs of the Implementing Partner.

The OSCE Office in Baku will not fund the equipment necessary for the operation of the implementing partner. The Implementing Partner is therefore required to provide an in-kind contribution in this regard.

1.4.2. Time Frame

The Project is designed for a twelve (12) months implementation period.

Activities/Time	2012	2013												2014	
	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	
Bidding Process															
Identification of IP															
Contracting Selected IP															
Project implementation															
Report Section 1.01		Section 1.02	Section 1.03			Section 1.04	Section 1.05			Section 1.06	Section 1.07			Section 1.08	Section 1.09
						Section 1.10				Section 1.11				Section 1.12	Section 1.13

SECTION II: TERMS OF REFERENCE

The OSCE Office in Baku seeks Implementing Partners 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 overall objective and project outputs.

2.1 TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF IMPLEMENTING PARTNER

The OSCE Office in Baku seeks 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 overall objectives.

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, such as maintaining the Implementing Partner's premises¹² and their equipment. The project implementation is to be carried out under the close supervision of the OSCE Office in Baku. The Implementing Partner is expected to operate 8 (eight) hours per day during working days;
- Provide free legal advice and assistance to the applicants in the respective regions through adequately qualified lawyers¹³, to be selected in cooperation with the OSCE Office in Baku;
- Facilitating awareness raising and capacity building activities, in cooperation with the OSCE Office in Baku, inter alia, to legal professionals in the aforementioned regions. The training topics are to be defined on a case by case basis in view of the actual needs, being a priori criminal and civil substantive and procedural law related issues as well as European standards and the case law of the European Court of Human Rights;
- Establishing a special hotline in the Implementing Partner to facilitate prompt legal assistance via telephone to the population in remote areas. Hotline services should be available 8 (eight) hours per day during working days;
- Establishing a legal library in the Implementing Partner to provide the legal community in the respective regions with free access to books on law, legal materials, legal databases, regional and municipal legislation, acts of the executive authorities, and municipal authority decisions;
- Reporting to the OSCE on the status of the project's implementation and fund administration in accordance with the Implementing Partner Agreement.

See Section 1.3, Project Outputs, for guidance.

¹² The IP is expected to select suitable premises in co-ordination with the Office for the LRC with easy access for individuals seeking free legal advice, as well as in proximity to the court buildings

¹³ The IP staff includes a project coordinator, a project assistant and at least two legal advisers, who will implement all project related activities. At least one of the legal advisers shall be a member of the Bar Association.

2.2 CRITERIA FOR ELIGIBILITY

In order to be eligible as an Implementing Partner for this Project, the applicant must be a non-governmental and not-for-profit organization having at least three years project management experience and a demonstrated capacity to manage activity in the scale corresponding to the size of the Project.

Necessary qualifications include the following:

- The applicant shall have a legal background as well as proved knowledge of the Azerbaijani legal and judicial system, including both substantive and procedural issues;
- Prior experience of staff as practicing lawyers, judges or prosecutors before any jurisdiction (civil, criminal and administrative) will be an asset;
- Prior experience running legal clinics or a centre for free legal services will be an asset;
- Proved knowledge of international fair trial and 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) At least three (3) desktop computers or laptops;
- (b) A photocopying machine;
- (c) A fax machine;
- (d) Telecommunication equipment;
- (e) Proper facilities and book shelves in the Office of the Implementing Partner to serve as a library for the legal community of the region

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:

- **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.

- **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. The OSCE Office in Baku will not fund the equipment necessary for the operation of the implementing partner. The Implementing Partner is therefore required to provide an in-kind contribution in this regard. All costs shall be quoted in AZN.

- 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.

- **Copy of Certificate of the State Registration**
- **Copy of the official Statute/Charter in the original language and in English**
- **A list of all key management personnel of the organization**
- **CVs of 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).**

The applicant should also consider the **Form of Agreement** (*See Annex IV*), 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.

The project proposal 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:

Fund Administration Unit
OSCE Office in Baku
Att: Ms. Irina Krapivina
Fund Administration Unit
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/01/2013– Implementing partner for the Legal Resource Centres, Sumgayit - Do Not Open before 3 January 2013, 12:00 hrs (GMT+4)”.

3.3 DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS

The deadline for receiving applications is **3 January 2013, 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 **24 December 2012** to the following address: Ilgar Hasanov, ilgar.hasanov@osce.org with a copy to Leyla Madatli leyla.madatli@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 below.

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 legal background and proven substantial knowledge of the Azerbaijani legal and judicial system (proven knowledge of international fair trial and human rights standards would be an asset)?	5
Do the relevant representatives of the applicant have prior experience as practicing lawyers, defence counsels?	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 legal clinic or a centre for free legal services?	5
Does the applicant have experience and capacity in facilitation and delivery of trainings for legal professionals?	5

2. Project Implementation and Methodology	30
Does the project proposal adequately address both project objectives, i.e. provision of free legal advice to the population, as well as strengthening the capacity of judges and legal professionals?	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	5
Is the proposed implementation approach and the expected results of the proposed action sustainable?	5

Maximum total score	70
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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?	

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 proposal¹⁴ (*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*);
- 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 applicant's interest to provide the OSCE with accurate contact details, preferably an e-mail address.

¹⁴ Project proposal, including budget should not exceed ten (10) pages.