

# Turizam-G007-RFA: Enhancing the accessibility of services for people with disabilities in hospitality establishments

## Request for Applications (RFA) No. 5

Issuance Date: February 20, 2024

Closing Date: March 25, 2024

Funding available: BAM 30,000

Dear Applicant:

USAID Developing Sustainable Tourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Turizam) implemented by Chemonics International, is seeking grant applications for enhancing the accessibility of services for people with disabilities in hospitality establishments, primarily hotels and restaurants. The grants will be awarded and implemented in accordance with USAID and US Government regulations governing grants under contracts and Turizam's internal grant management policies.

The project will hold an online pre-application workshop on February 29 from 14:00 to 15:00. This workshop will allow eligible and interested applicants the chance to ask questions about the RFA and receive guidance on how to apply for a grant. Interested applicants that meet the eligibility requirements defined in Section III below and would like to attend this workshop must confirm their attendance by sending the participant's name and the organization's name to [grants@turizambih.ba](mailto:grants@turizambih.ba). When confirming attendance, please note if the person has any special needs to access the workshop. No reimbursement for costs of attendance will be met.

Project and Chemonics employees may not ask for, and applicants are prohibited from offering, any money, fee, commission, credit, gift, gratuity, thing of value, or compensation to obtain or reward improper favorable treatment regarding this solicitation. Any improper request from a project employee should be reported to the chief of party or [BusinessConduct@chemonics.com](mailto:BusinessConduct@chemonics.com).

Annexes included with this Request for Applications:

- **Annex A** – Grant Concept Paper
- **Annex B** – Grant Application Form
- **Annex C** – Grant Application Budget
- **Annex D** – Applicant Self-Assessment Form
- **Annex E** – Required Certifications
- **Annex F** – Mandatory and Required As Applicable Standard Provisions
  - Standard Provisions for U.S. and Non-U.S. Nongovernmental organizations receiving a fixed amount award can be accessed through the following URL: <https://www.usaid.gov/about-us/agency-policy/series-300/references-chapter/303mat>
  - Standard Provisions for Non-U.S., Nongovernmental recipients receiving all other types of grants can be accessed through the following URL: <https://www.usaid.gov/about-us/agency-policy/series-300/references-chapter/303mab>
- **Annex G** – Disability Inclusion Guide "Unaprijedimo pristupačnost i inkluziju u turizmu / Vodič za pružatelje turističkih usluga" – English description available here: <https://turizambih.ba/en/tourism-for-all-a-guide-for-tourism-service-providers/>

## **SECTION I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

### **IA. OBJECTIVE**

USAID Turizam is issuing a Request for Applications (RFA) from qualified and legally registered hospitality businesses and service providers in Bosnia and Herzegovina to submit applications for a grant funding aimed at enhancing the accessibility of services for people with disabilities in hospitality establishments, primarily hotels and restaurants. The objective of this grant is to facilitate and promote improvements within these businesses that will result in a more accessible, welcoming and inclusive environment for guests with disabilities. The grant can be utilized to implement various enhancements, such as more accessible facilities, the training of staff to assist (better) individuals with disabilities, or the procurement of assistive technologies or equipment. Ultimately, the goal is to make these businesses and service providers more accessible and accommodating to all guests, irrespective of their mobility or sensory impairments. Preference will be given to support hospitality businesses and service providers that demonstrate a strong commitment to sustainable inclusion and empowerment of individuals with disabilities.

### **IB. BACKGROUND**

Turizam is a five-year project financed by USAID and implemented by Chemonics International. The goal of the project is to support broad-based tourism-driven economic growth and promote social harmony by capitalizing on its rich cultural heritage and distinctive nature. In addition, the project seeks to support the Bosnia and Herzegovina tourism industry to quickly recover from the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and set it on a robust growth trajectory toward a sustainable tourism economy.

The project is built upon the following objectives:

- Objective 1: Enabling environment with the harmonized policies and regulations necessary for noticeable growth in the tourism sector established
- Objective 2: Tourism quality, services, and branding strengthened resulting in improved BiH tourism industry
- Objective 3: Tourism service providers, agriculture, and other tourism-related SMEs gain improved access to finance resulting in a substantial increase in investment
- Objective 4: Tourism and local agriculture products gain increased access to regional and global markets

As a cross-cutting objective, the project promotes inclusive tourism for youth, women, persons with disabilities, and other disadvantaged and underserved groups by: i) Expanding entrepreneurial opportunities in the tourism and agriculture value chains; ii) Promoting inclusive and safe working environments without occupational segregation; and iii) Improving the tourism offerings for tourists from those groups.

### **IC. DETAILED PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a beautiful destination with a globally competitive tourism offering. Demand to BiH has seen a steady growth since 2015 that peaked in 2019 with one of the highest global visitor's growth of around 12% compared to 2018. Though interrupted by the pandemic during 2020 and 2021,

2022 has witnessed a promising return to pre-pandemic levels that have evened out during 2023. In order to further improve the tourist offer of BiH, USAID's Developing Sustainable Tourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina Project (Turizam) invested efforts in the development of **Disability Inclusion Plan for Tourism in BiH** (available here: <https://bit.ly/3Cbu0lZ>). The Disability Inclusion Plan is the first document of its kind pioneered by USAID Turizam project to raise awareness on establishing an inclusive and accessible environment within the tourism industry in BiH. Based on the four pillars of the tourism value chain—enabling environment for competitiveness; human capital; tourism products and experiences; and destination branding and marketing—the key assumptions are outlined for a more inclusive tourism landscape.

Turizam's objective is to promote and facilitate a more inclusive and accessible tourism environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with a focus on the above areas. By supporting hospitality businesses in their efforts to improve accessibility, the program aims to create a more accessible, welcoming and inclusive atmosphere for all visitors, regardless of their abilities or disabilities. This small grant program is dedicated to supporting hotels and restaurants, who are keen to improve accessibility and inclusivity for tourists with disabilities. Grants are available to assist these establishments in implementing initiatives that contribute to a more accessible and welcoming environment for individuals with disabilities. A breakdown of the eligible activities for these businesses follows:

- **Accessible Accommodations:** Hotels can apply for grants to make their accommodations more accessible and ensure their facilities meet the required accessibility standards (such as installing wheelchair ramps,) elevators with Braille signage and audio announcements, accessible check-in counters, rooms equipped with visual alarms and grab bars, accessible parking spaces, etc.).
- **Barrier Awareness Initiatives:** Activities aimed at increasing awareness of barriers within the tourism industry and developing innovative solutions to counter them may receive grant support (such as organizing training sessions for hospitality staff on disability awareness, conducting accessibility audits of tourism facilities, implementing awareness campaigns through social media and public events, collaborating with disability advocacy groups to identify and address accessibility challenges, etc.).
- **Inclusive Dining Services:** Restaurants are encouraged to seek grants to enhance their dining areas, making them accessible and user-friendly to all guests, including those with mobility challenges or sensory impairments (such as installing accessible seating arrangements to accommodate guests with varying mobility needs, providing menus in braille or large print, implementing assistive listening devices or captioning services for guests with hearing impairments, offering staff training on serving customers with disabilities, implementing audio menus for visually impaired guests, ensuring clear pathways for wheelchair users, ensuring that lighting levels are appropriate for guests with visual sensitivities or conditions such as autism, developing online accessibility features, such as an accessible website and reservation system, to ensure all guests can easily access information and make bookings etc.).
- **Training and Staff Development:** Grants can encompass programs for training and development programs for staff members to provide better assistance to guests with disabilities (such as organizing training sessions for staff on communication with individuals with disabilities, for example, general communication in sign language, etc).
- **Social Bias Reduction Campaigns:** Grants can be awarded for campaigns and initiatives that work towards reducing social biases, prejudices, and stereotypes against people with disabilities, particularly within the hospitality and tourism sectors (such as promoting positive human stories and experiences of people with disabilities in tourism, partnering with local communities and disability organizations to promote inclusivity, etc.).

Potential applicants are highly encouraged to get acquainted with the Disability Inclusion Guide (Annex G), and use it as a basis for developing ideas and preparing their concept notes.

## **ID. AUTHORITY/GOVERNING REGULATIONS**

Turizam grant awards are made under the authority of the U.S. Foreign Affairs Act and USAID's Advanced Directive System (ADS) 302.3.5.6, "Grants Under Contracts." Awards will adhere to guidance provided under [ADS Chapter 303](#), "Grants and Cooperative Agreements to Non-Governmental Organizations" and will be within the terms of the USAID Standard Provisions as linked in the annexes, as well as the Turizam grants procedures.

Under the Turizam grant program, USAID retains the right at all times to terminate, in whole or in part, Turizam grant-making authorities.

## **SECTION II. AWARD INFORMATION**

Turizam anticipates awarding up to BAM 30,000 through total of 4-6 anticipated awards with each individual grant award in the range of BAM 5,000 -7,000, but the final amount will be dependent upon grant activities and final negotiation and may be lower or higher than that range. The duration of any grant award under this solicitation is expected to be no more than 6 months. The estimated start date of grants awarded under this solicitation is April 2024.

The type of grant will be determined during the negotiation process.

## **SECTION III. ELIGIBILITY**

### **IIIA. ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS**

Ideal applicants should possess a demonstrated history of delivering hospitality services, specifically in the area of tourism accommodations and restaurants.

- Applicant must be a registered BiH legal entity (private firm or company) formally constituted, recognized by and in good standing with appropriate BiH authorities, compliant with all applicable and fiscal regulations, and providing services for at least two years.
- Applicants may only submit one application per prime organization under this RFA.
- Applicants must be able to demonstrate successful past performance in implementation of integrated development programs related to USAID Turizam priority areas.
- Applicants must be financially sustainable, display sound management in the form of financial, administrative, and technical policies and procedures, and present a system of internal controls that safeguard assets; protect against fraud, waste, and abuse; and support the achievement of program goals and objectives. USAID Turizam will assess this capability prior to awarding a grant.
- Applicants must sign certain required certifications prior to receiving a grant. The certifications are attached to this solicitation (Annex E) and USAID Turizam will review them with applicants.
- The project will work with the successful grantee to draft a marking and branding plan which will be annexed to the grant agreement.

- Faith-based and community groups will receive equal opportunity for funding in accordance with the mandated guidelines laid out in ADS 303.3.28 except for faith-based organizations whose objectives are for discriminatory and religious purposes, and whose main objective of the grant is of a religious nature.

Turizam encourages applications from new organizations who meet the above eligibility criteria.

## **SECTION IV – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

### **IVA. INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANTS**

Applicants must propose strategies for the implementation of the program description described above, introducing innovations that are appropriate to their organizational strengths.

#### **IVA1. PRE-AWARD RISK ASSESSMENT**

All organizations selected for award are subject to a pre-award risk assessment conducted by Turizam, to ascertain whether the organization has the minimum management capabilities required to handle US government funds.

#### **IVA2. GRANT APPLICATION**

This is a two-stage application process. The first stage is for the applicant to submit a concept paper. Concept paper forms (Annex A) will be evaluated against the merit review criteria listed in Section V below. If the applicant successfully meets or exceeds the merit review criteria, they will be invited to submit a full application. Only those applicants who meet or exceed the merit review criteria at the concept paper stage, will be invited to submit a full grant application.

The template to be utilized when developing the concept paper is provided in Annex A. Applicants shall present their technical application and budget in the formats provided and shall follow the instructions and guidelines listed in these annexes. All grant activity costs must be within the normal operating practices of the Applicant and in accordance with its written policies and procedures. The concept paper must be signed by an authorized agent of the Applicant.

#### **IVA3. INELIGIBLE EXPENSES**

Turizam grant funds may not be utilized for the following:

- Construction or infrastructure activities of any kind.
- Ceremonies, parties, celebrations, or “representation” expenses.
- Purchases of restricted goods, such as: restricted agricultural commodities, motor vehicles including motorcycles, pharmaceuticals, medical equipment, contraceptive products, used equipment; without the previous approval of Turizam, or prohibited goods, prohibited goods under USAID regulations, including but not limited to the following: abortion equipment and services, luxury goods, etc.
- Covered telecommunication and video surveillance equipment or services – per the standard provision entitled “Prohibition on Certain Telecommunication and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment”, grant funds including direct and indirect costs, cost share and program income may not be used to (1) procure or obtain; (2) extend or renew a contract to procure or obtain; or (3) enter into a contract (or extend or renew a contract) to procure or obtain equipment, services, or

systems that use covered telecommunications equipment or services (“CTES”) as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as critical technology as part of any system. This prohibition covers certain telecommunications equipment and services, including, but not limited to, phones, internet, video surveillance, and cloud servers, produced or provided by Huawei Technologies Company, ZTE Corporation, Hytera Communications Corporation, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company, or Dahua Technology Company (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities) unless Turizam has determined that there is no available alternate eligible source for the CTES. For fixed amount awards, this restriction is only applicable if any of the milestones are for telecommunication or video surveillance services or equipment.

- Alcoholic beverages.
- Purchases of goods or services restricted or prohibited under the prevailing USAID source/nationality (Cuba, Iran, North Korea and Syria).
- Any purchase or activity, which has already been made.
- Purchases or activities unnecessary to accomplish grant purposes as determined by the Turizam Project.
- Prior obligations of and/or, debts, fines, and penalties imposed on the Grantee.
- Creation of endowments.

#### **IVB. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

Concept papers shall be submitted in English or local language and may not be more than 5 pages. Concept papers should be submitted in electronic copy to Turizam’s email address [grants@turizambih.ba](mailto:grants@turizambih.ba) and should reference RFA No. 5. Concept papers must be submitted no later than 17:00 Sarajevo time, on March 25, 2024. Late or unresponsive applications will only be considered at the discretion of Turizam.

Please submit all questions concerning this solicitation to the attention of Imano Panjeta, Grants and Procurement Manager, via email to [grants@turizambih.ba](mailto:grants@turizambih.ba). Turizam will assist applicants in understanding the application process, and can provide coaching in application development at the request of applicants.

Concept papers and applications will be considered on a rolling basis and until the allocated tranche of a cumulative estimated BAM 30,000 has been allocated. Turizam may increase or decrease the allocated amount for this program, as needed.

#### **SECTION V. APPLICATION MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA**

As described above, applications will be evaluated in a two-step evaluation process:

- The first step is for applicants to submit a concept paper.
- If the concept paper is accepted, you will be asked to submit a more detailed application.

All concept papers and applications will be reviewed by an internal review panel comprised of Turizam technical implementation staff, and recommendations may be vetted by a larger group. Concept papers will be evaluated against the criteria below.

- Does the organization meet the eligibility requirements?
- Does the proposed activity fit within the Turizam objectives described in the RFA?
- Is the request for funding commensurate with the potential impact?
- Is the product or service sustainable?

More specific criteria will be used for evaluating full applications for those whose concept papers have been approved to continue to the grant application step, as shown in the table below.

<b>Merit Review Category</b>	<b>Rating (Points)</b>
Feasibility of Design & Technical Approach	25
Impact on Target Group	25
Management & Programmatic Capacity	15
Sustainability/Financial Self-Reliance	15
Cost Effectiveness	10
Past Performance	5
Gender Awareness	5
<b>Overall Rating (out of 100 points)</b>	<b>100</b>

These merit review criteria elements are described more fully below.

*A. Feasibility of Design & Technical Approach.* The quality and feasibility of the application in terms of the viability of the proposed technical approach, (i.e., the proposed technical approach can reasonably be expected to produce the intended outcomes), appropriateness of the proposed methodology, innovativeness, and the work plan for achieving project objectives to offer significant impacts on enhancing and promoting a more inclusive and accessible tourism environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina and creating a more welcoming and inclusive atmosphere for all visitors, regardless of their abilities or disabilities. The technical approach must directly contribute to the achievement of USAID Turizam’s expected results and performance under the activity, and must be measurable under one or more of USAID Turizam’s indicators for development of sustainable tourism. Evaluation of approaches may include either approaches proven to be effective or new untried approaches with promise. Proposed mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation with objectively measurable indicators will also be appraised. **25 points**

*B. Impact on Target Group.* The extent to which the proposed activity corresponds to the needs of the tourism industry or relevant target group(s) and will directly benefit them. Also, the degree to which it will directly or indirectly stimulate other organizations and resources to replicate, develop, or implement activities supporting the objectives of USAID Turizam. **25 points**

*C. Management and Programmatic Capacity.* Evidence of the capability to undertake and accomplish the proposed activities and positively strengthen the tourism sector. The application should demonstrate the organization’s effectiveness in terms of internal structure, technical capacity, and key personnel, in meeting tourism development goals. In addition, the organization must demonstrate adequate financial management capability. The evaluation will be based principally on the background, qualifications, reputation, appropriateness and skills of its key personnel; and the “track record,” reputation, and achievements (including development of self-sufficient, sustainable activities) of the organization. **15 points**

*D. Sustainability/Financial Self-Reliance.* The extent to which the funded activity will result in building and strengthening the capacity of the community and local organizations, and whether the activity itself is sustainable or will promote sustainability of the organization. Factors considered also include ability of the Applicant to commit own or generate external funds from public, private or donor sources. **15 points**

E. *Cost Effectiveness*. The degree to which budgeting is clear and reasonable and reflects best use of organizational, third party and grant resources. **10 points**

F. *Past Performance*. Previous or ongoing experience implementing similar (industry) activities. This examines an Applicant's references and experience, which is a critical factor in assessing the capacity of the organization to implement the activity. **5 points**

G. *Promotes inclusive tourism for youth, women, persons with disabilities, and other disadvantaged and underserved groups* by: i) Expanding entrepreneurial opportunities in the tourism and agriculture value chains; ii) Promoting inclusive and safe working environments without occupational segregation; and iii) Improving the tourism offer for tourists from those groups. The extent to which the proposed activity expands opportunities and promotes inclusive environment for women, youth, persons with disabilities or other disadvantaged and underserved groups, or represents a strong commitment to women, youth, persons with disabilities or other disadvantaged groups as beneficiaries. **5 points**

Additionally, Turizam will ensure environmental soundness and compliance in design and implementation as required by 22 CFR 216.

## **SECTION VI. AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

All grants will be negotiated, denominated and funded in BAM. All costs funded by the grant must be allowable, allocable and reasonable.

Issuance of this RFA and assistance with application development do not constitute an award or commitment on the part of Turizam, nor does it commit Turizam to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Further, Turizam reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications received and reserves the right to ask further clarifications from the offerors. Applicants will be informed in writing of the decision made regarding their application.