



## ANNEX II: TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Trainers on Innovation for UfM Conference: "From Research to Business" - 21 - PRO583HER-2025

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## 1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### 1.1. Partner country

N/A

### 1.2. Contracting Authority

The Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfMS)

### 1.3. Region background

Created by the Euro-Mediterranean Heads of State and Government meeting in Paris on 13th July 2008, the UfM Secretariat is a multilateral partnership composed of 43 countries (27 EU Member States and 16 Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Countries) with the mandate of enhancing regional cooperation and integration between both shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

The Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean is the first permanent structure dedicated to the intergovernmental Mediterranean partnership. The Secretariat is the platform to operationalize and follow-up decisions taken at political level with a view to monitoring the progress in the implementation of Ministerial Declarations' commitments and promoting the initiatives, programs and projects intended to foster cooperation in the region.

Its multi-partner approach is crucial for seizing opportunities through the exchange of best practices sharing of experiences, identifying new and innovative methodologies and developing regional and sub-regional networks, following the principles of co-ownership and variable geometry and in collaboration with other key stakeholders in the Euro-Mediterranean area.

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The activities of the UfM Secretariat in the area of Higher Education and Research aim at contributing to the implementation of SDG 4 *“Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”*, but also SDG 8.6 *“Reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training (NEETs)”*. Furthermore, questions related to gender equality and women empowerment (SDG 5), reducing inequalities (SDG 10), environment (SDG 15) and climate action (SDG 13) will be mainstreamed throughout the UfM Secretariat action in this area. Gender equality will be highlighted in all the events and studies fostered by the UfM Secretariat, and bridging the gender gap on the STEM careers, for example, will be a constant concern.

In line with the conclusions set by the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Higher Education and Scientific Research ([Cairo, 2007](#)), the Ministerial Declaration of the UfM Employment and Labour Ministers ([Marrakech, 2022](#)), the UfM Ministerial Declaration on Research and Innovation ([Paris, 2022](#)) as well as the recommendations of the Joint Communication “Renewed partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood: A new Agenda for the Mediterranean” ([2021](#)), **supporting skills development and the employability of researchers and students of the region** are key priorities of the UfM.

The policy framework of the Union for the Mediterranean already identifies this topic as a priority since the UfM Ministerial Declaration on Research and Innovation (2022) wishes to “Promote cross-cutting and enabling actions that facilitate the R&I Roadmaps, and in particular the knowledge triangle comprising research, continuity of education, innovation, which includes the following key stakeholders: researchers, students, entrepreneurs, NGO officers, and policy-makers. Promote innovation as a tool for building knowledge, skills, vocational training, careers and economic inclusion



of Mediterranean graduates and researchers.” And calls the UfM Secretariat to “continue fostering linkages on research, innovation, education and skills in the Mediterranean region, fully utilising available tools promoting a level-playing field in researchers’ career, skills and mobility, supporting capacity building, coordination and joint actions, including on innovation and employability of Mediterranean students, graduates and researchers.”

In the light of all above-mentioned background, the **UfM 2025 Work Programme** stated that the UfM Secretariat would be implementing a “UfM Innovation Conference: from Research to Business”: “The main purpose of this conference will be exploring the pipeline between research and job market/startup creation, further bridging UfM areas of action. [...] A technical assistance would support its development and promotion. The Conference can associate the Mediterranean Innovation Partnership, PRIMA, among others.”

#### 1.4. Current situation in the sector

The Mediterranean region faces significant socio-economic challenges, including high youth unemployment rates and economic stagnation in certain areas. In particular, youth unemployment rates in many Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries remain alarmingly high, often exceeding 30%.

One of the reasons for these high levels of unemployment is a persistent gap between the skills acquired at universities and the requirements of business. More than 32 percent of enterprises in some Southern Mediterranean Countries have identified labor skill levels as a major constraint to hiring. High levels of unemployment hamper economic growth, and add stressors on Mediterranean societies, particularly youth and women not finding successful career options, worsening the deep roots of involuntary migration through brain drain.

Despite youth in the Southern Mediterranean being the most educated generational group ever, young graduates in the region, especially in North Africa, experience the highest level of unemployment among higher education graduates in the world, at 25% according to the United Nations Development Programme. This links with the issue of regional research being often very advanced, while impact and economic benefits resulting from it still being not enough for its potential, an issue currently being discussed also at EU level with the recent focus on innovation, for instance through the European Innovation Council.

In the Mediterranean region, there is a growing recognition of the need to bridge the gap between research outputs and their economic potential. While there is no shortage of innovative research, especially in sectors such as sustainable agriculture, blue economy, water, renewable energy, and health, researchers often face challenges in translating their findings into viable business ventures or market-ready products. This disconnect hampers the development of startups, job creation, and overall economic growth.

The development of high-level skills through university degrees, PhDs, and research initiatives is an essential cross-cutting tool for supporting the implementation of an inclusive economy in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Additionally, the development of new regional solutions supported by the daily work of young researchers and students creates new business opportunities out of challenges, benefiting society at all levels.



The region benefits from many research institutions and initiatives, universities and research centres, which offer an untapped potential for innovation and research-based economic growth. There is a pressing need to transform this research into real-world applications that can create startups, new industries, and ultimately jobs for young people.

Translating research outputs into commercial products and services, or to a wider benefit to society, is a key lever to foster regional sustainable economic growth. By bridging the gap between research and the business market, it is possible to unlock new economic opportunities, especially in areas underperforming economically. Additionally, this allows innovation to be a bridge for achieving wider societal goals, such as the Sustainable Development Goals, which needs to be supported by green innovation. However, this process is hindered by several systemic barriers, including:

- **Lack of commercialization expertise among researchers:** While researchers may excel in their fields, many lack the entrepreneurial skills and knowledge necessary to bring their innovations to market. They often struggle with aspects such as intellectual property rights, market analysis, and pitching to investors.
- **Insufficient access to support structures:** Access to the startup incubators, accelerators, and funding mechanisms needed to help researchers transition their ideas into viable businesses. Furthermore, the research-to-business pipeline often suffers from a fragmented approach, with policies, programmes and institutions offering a scattered panorama, without any real coordination when it comes to collaboration between academia, government, and industry.
- **Disconnect between academia and the business sector:** A significant gap between what researchers are developing in labs and what the market actually needs prevents industry stakeholders from capitalizing on research results, including those adapted to local needs.
- **Blockages in the innovation ecosystem:** Researchers often face regulatory hurdles, difficulty accessing venture capital, and a lack of knowledge regarding legal frameworks, including on patents. These blockages can slow down or completely halt the capitalisation process, preventing promising ideas from reaching the market.

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An efficient and supportive pipeline from research to business would not only help bring new products to market, but also have a direct impact on youth employability. Encouraging young researchers and entrepreneurs to engage with the business sector, and supporting them through targeted skills training and funding opportunities, could lead to the creation of new startups and job opportunities, driving local economies forward. These research-to-business policy pipelines have been analysed in three Member States through a report titled “Green Innovation and Employability in the Med through the Triple Helix”<sup>1</sup>

The Triple Helix Model of Innovation offers a framework that brings together three spheres that traditionally operate separately (academic, industry, and government). It theorizes that in a knowledge economy, boundaries between the different spheres are fading and knowledge exchange flows dynamically in all directions and creates an innovative environment. The Quadruple Helix adds a civil society component, and the Quintuple Helix adds sustainability for society which runs through all the spheres and links them intrinsically to a socio-ecological transition towards sustainable solutions.

<sup>1</sup> <https://ufmsecretariat.org/publication-speech/green-innovation-employability-in-the-med/>



Moreover, given the increasing relevance of the green and blue economies in the Mediterranean, research in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and water is particularly well-suited for being deployed and commercialised in societies, offering pathways to both economic growth and environmental sustainability.

While no one-size-fits-all solution can exist, exchanges among all representatives of the quintuple helix and capacity building aimed at researchers can contribute to a regional discussion improving this backdrop.

Different advanced research organizations and initiatives exist, like CIHEAM (International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies), PRIMA (Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area) and Horizon Europe's Mediterranean Initiative, in addition to networks such as UNIMED who are at the forefront of promoting research and innovation in the region. This points out to an advanced research cooperation field in the Mediterranean which should drive economic innovation. However, the commercialization process remains underexplored, with many researchers lacking the entrepreneurial skills, the coaching, industry connections, or understanding of intellectual property rights and venture capital needed to transition from research to business.

To detail best practices of interconnections between academia, business and governments, UfMS has commissioned in 2020 a publication titled "Reinforcing the Innovation-Employability Nexus in the Mediterranean – A Handbook for Academia, Industry and Policymakers"<sup>2</sup> and organised a series of national and regional trainings on applying the triple helix model of innovation, extended also civil society and sustainability. Recent publications by the UfM have included a report on "Science and Innovation Diplomacy in the Mediterranean"<sup>3</sup>, and a pamphlet on "Integrating Green Skills into Education and Research – The Role of Universities and Research Centres"<sup>4</sup>, which follows up a series of training for representatives of the four helixes, and explored more specifically the academia-business pipeline through a comparative study on Tunisia, Jordan and Italy titled "Green Innovation and Employability in the Med through the Triple Helix" in 2023.

**The UfM Innovation Conference aims to reflect on such challenges and capitalise on abovementioned previous work by bringing together high-level policymakers, researchers, industry leaders, and business representatives.** Through discussions and training sessions, the conference will provide a platform for stakeholders to explore how the UfM region can further bridge the gap between research and market, supporting innovation-driven growth in the region.

The initiative Med4Jobs, led by the Union for the Mediterranean, provides a backdrop against this Conference could be further strengthened. Additionally, the UfM Secretariat joined in 2024 the Mediterranean Innovation Observatory, led by CIHEAM Bari, with UNIMED and Businessmed.

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<sup>2</sup><https://ufmsecretariat.org/publication-speech/reinforcing-the-innovation-employability-nexus-in-the-mediterranean/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://ufmsecretariat.org/publication-speech/take-away-ideas-report/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://ufmsecretariat.org/publication-speech/integrating-green-skills-into-education-and-research-the-role-of-universities-and-research-centres/>



### 1.5. Related programmes and other donor activities

This initiative is being supported by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

## 2. OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE & EXPECTED RESULTS

### 2.1. Overall objective

The objective of this contract is to support the “UfM Innovation Conference: From Research to Business” by organizing training sessions and a high-level policy dialogue, by **1) Designing and implementing the training and high-level segment** to be delivered in Malta in October 2025; and **2) Preparing and delivering a synthetic outcome document** which will present the topic adapted to the region, summarise the results, ready to be published on UfM website.

### 2.2. Specific objectives

The technical assistance will provide support in designing and implementing training sessions focused on equipping researchers with entrepreneurial and commercialization skills, as well as organizing the high-level segment convening policymakers, industry leaders, and researchers to discuss best practices and policy recommendations.

#### Outcome 1: Training and high-level segments

The Union for the Mediterranean is convening an Innovation Conference “From Research to Business” at the margins of a major event on employment and labour, to be held in Malta in October 2025 (TBC during implementation).

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The Innovation Conference will be divided in two interrelated segments:

- A training for 30 stakeholders interested in moving research outputs to economic and societal impact, including through startup creation, over the course of two days.
- A high-level segment, policy oriented, that will take place on 13 October for half a day. The trainees may also attend as public the high-level segment.
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The purpose of the Conference is twofold: aiming to raise attention on commercialisation of research outputs at policy level, while training relevant experts with expertise that they might bring back to their fields.

The final design of the training will be defined by the Contractor, coherently with the regional framework and the needs of the research and business communities.

The high-level segment will include officials from international organizations, experts, national representatives, targeting the presence of Ministers as speakers for opening/closing.

Possible audience include staff from ministries, businesses, universities and research centers, career centers, non-governmental institutions and experts.

Logistical costs for the Conference, except those related to the contractor(s), and subcontractor(s) if any, will be covered by UfMS and its coorganising partner(s).



#### Outcome 2: Synthetic outcome document.

The purpose of the synthetic document is to briefly present the importance of valorising research for the Mediterranean region, providing positive examples, quick facts, definitions, and ideas.

The document is intended to give a synthetic overview of topics being addressed in the Conference, adapt global context to the Mediterranean region, present the results of the discussions and recommendations of the discussions. It is intended to be delivered both in editable and ready-to-print format. The document will follow UfM graphic guidelines.

The Contractor will formulate a proposal on the structure and content of the synthetic document (max 20 pages), which will be discussed in a digital steering committee, and will have to be shared with UfMS for approval after any modification requested by UfMS are implemented.

The contractor should prepare an editable presentation with visual aids to present the findings and publication afterwards.

Logistical, graphic, content and translation costs for the synthetic outcome document shall be borne by the Contractor.

#### **2.3. Results to be achieved by the Contractor**

The service will be paid on the basis of the delivery of the specified output(s). Payments might be totally or partially withheld if the contractual result(s) have not been reached in conformity with the detailed terms of reference. Payment(s) is/are based on the approval of this/these deliverable(s). Partial payment has to be determined according to the partial implementation.

The expected outputs of this contract are as follows:

- Preparation of training materials and concept notes.
- Organization and delivery of training sessions and high-level segment.
- Development of a final outcome document summarizing best practices, recommendations, and case studies from the conference.

### **3. ASSUMPTIONS & RISKS**

#### **3.1. Assumptions underlying the project**

Strong engagement from research institutions, policymakers, and private sector representatives.

Availability of key experts and trainers.

Support from UfMS and partner institutions in the organization of events.

#### **3.2. Risks**

Low participation due to scheduling conflicts/lack of interest.

Logistical challenges in event execution.

Limited funding for additional components such as study visits.





## 4. SCOPE OF THE WORK

### 4.1. General

#### 4.1.1. Description of the assignment

The Contractor will be responsible for designing, preparing, and delivering the training sessions and high-level discussions, ensuring the seamless execution of the UfM Innovation Conference.

The **UfM Innovation Conference** seeks to create a space for discussion and understanding in the UfM region about better capitalizing on the Mediterranean region's rich research output to spur economic development and create employment opportunities, particularly for youth and women. By focusing on commercialization, acceleration, fostering cross-sector collaboration, and equipping researchers with entrepreneurial skills, the conference aims to open the discussion for unlocking the innovation potential of the Mediterranean and contribute to more resilient and dynamic local economies.

The UfM Innovation Conference will be divided into two segments:

#### High-Level Session

This session aims to bring together decision-makers, research institutions, and private sector representatives to discuss the broader framework of research commercialization and innovation in the UfM region. Topics will include:

- **Promoting the commercialization of research:** How governments and institutions can support researchers in transitioning their innovations to the market.
- **Presentation and discussion of policies:** The perspective and initiatives from the European Union, Member States and international bodies on valorisation of research.
- **Capitalization of best practices:** Case studies of successful commercialization efforts, such as PRIMA-supported projects, or those supported from the Mediterranean initiative, and lessons from other regions.
- **Research-to-business initiatives:** Overview of key policies and initiatives that are helping researchers, such as accelerators, incubators, innovation spaces, and venture capital opportunities.
- **Private sector engagement:** Exploring how businesses can collaborate with researchers to co-create solutions, with dialogue from business organizations and startups.

This high-level segment will take place at the sidelines of the UfM Ministerial Conference on Employment and Labour, scheduled for 13-14 October in Malta (TBC).

#### Training Session

While mainly aimed at researchers, this hands-on session spanning will strive to include entrepreneurs as well, and industry professionals, focusing on the skills and tools needed to bring research to the market. It will span two days and include:

- **Skill development:** Training in entrepreneurial skills, business model generation, and networking for research commercialization.
- **Overcoming blockages:** Discussing common challenges in the research-to-business pipeline and practical strategies for overcoming them.
- **Partnerships academia-business:** Discussion on the quintuple helix and best examples.





The final design and content will be co-created by the Contractors based on their expertise and inputs from partners selected by UfM. The training will strive to be innovative and interactive, and will try to empower participants by building on their experience.

The Contractor will support the development and promotion of the conference at all stages, from design to ex-post promotion.

The Contractor will be:

- a) On the basis of a kick-off meeting with UfMS, prepare a working methodology that would benefit from already existing studies, identifying knowledge gaps.
- b) Discussing a finalised work plan to be agreed by UfM Higher Education and Research Division through an Inception Report.
- c) Following agreement on composition by UfMS, the Contractor shall establish and animate a digital steering committee for gathering feedback and recommendations on methodology, content and approach;
- d) Under supervision by UfMS, developing the final structure of the training and high-level segment to be performed with accompanying materials (eg. Slides).
- e) Prepare and implement an open selection process for trainees.
- f) Prepare an interim report which will include the final Conference proposal and the proposal for the synthetic document.
- g) Perform **missions up to 4 (four)** experts/trainers travelling to implement this technical assistance for the purposes of delivering the Trainings and the Synthetic publication. Support the organization of the Conference in all parts, including by preparing presentations and concept notes for UfMS as relevant, event reports, minutes and similar support activities.
- h) Collecting feedback during and after the trainings in order to finalise the synthetic document.
- i) Based on the recommendations of the Steering Committee, and the structure of the training and high-level segment, draft a synthetic document for promoting the topic among Mediterranean stakeholders.
- j) Produce a final document in printable format of maximum twenty pages (in English and French), taking into consideration SC remarks, and UfMS requests for modifications.
- k) Accompany the presentation with a slides presentation to be used by UfMS in order to present the topic in conferences and meetings as appropriate.
- l) Support UfMS on the topics of the project through minutes/brief articles/speeches/slides/further required inputs in order to support and promote the initiative; and
- m) Prepare final report documents with all required annexes.

#### **4.1.2. Geographical area to be covered**

UfM region.

#### **4.1.3. Target groups**

The direct beneficiaries will be stakeholders from the areas of higher education/ research and innovation, and complementarily stakeholders from the quintuple helix, including intermediary institutions and line ministry staff interested in best practices, existing policy tools, available opportunities and recommendations on employability of highly trained youth and NEETs.



The indirect beneficiaries of these activities are the researchers, young graduates and NEETs impacted by the institutions receiving the training.

#### 4.2. Specific work

- Design the methodology and agenda for the training sessions and high-level segment.
- Develop training materials, presentations, and support documents.
- Facilitate discussions and training during the conference.
- Engage with key stakeholders and experts to ensure relevant contributions.
- Prepare a post-event report summarizing key insights and recommendation

The assignment consists in two work packages:

1<sup>st</sup> work package is **Designing and implementing a training and a high-level segment** to be delivered in a Mediterranean country; and

2<sup>nd</sup> work package is **Preparing and delivering a synthetic outcome document.**

The main working language will be English.

Below are provided detailed minimum requirements from work packages. The Contractor is invited to develop and improve the proposal and suggest additional and complementary components to both services.

#### Work Package 1- Organisation of the Innovation Conference

**Objective:** The Contractor will support the development and promotion of the conference in all its components. This will include:

- **Pre-conference materials and engagement activities:** Preparing a Conference methodology, guides and resources on commercialization tools and best practices, selecting speakers, preparing concept notes and minutes, preparatory video conferences with speakers and partners.
- **Design of the training:** The contractor will design a coherent, innovative and engaging package of activities aimed at increasing knowledge and applications of valorisation/commercialization of research among the trainees. Preparatory digital activities of engagement with the beneficiaries can be integral part of the training design. The contractor will be the main implementer of the training itself.
- **Networking opportunities:** The technical team will facilitate networking both before and during the event to foster collaboration between participants and stakeholders.
- **Moderation and active execution of the Conference:** The experts are expected to attend in presence the conference, contributing when needed and performing different tasks, including the overall coordination of activities and engagement with partners, participants and providers as needed.
- **Post-conference follow-up:** A report summarizing the outcomes, key lessons, and recommendations, distributed to participants and UfM stakeholders at large. Forms for assessing satisfaction will be distributed and collected.

**Language:** The main languages will be English.



**Expected Outputs:** Visuals and documents used for the trainings, list of participants, information materials on best practices and possible instruments to be replicated, participant's evaluation forms. Social media cards.

**Proposed frame:**

UfM Innovation Conference: From Research to Business

Exploring the Pipeline Between Research and Job Market/Startup Creation

Following up on two successful UfM Conferences on Innovation-Employability Nexus held in 2020 and 2021, the UfM Innovation Conference: From Research to Business, planned for October 2025 TBC, aims to tackle the discussion on ways and means to bridge the gap between research outcomes and market needs, contributing to job creation and economic development across the Mediterranean.

The Conference will bring together researchers, startups, private sector representatives, and intermediary bodies, and shall include a host of partners to collaborate with (including possibly coorganisation) such as the Mediterranean Innovation Partnership, PRIMA, CIHEAM, UNIMED, BUSINESSMED and UNIMED.

This event will build on the UfM's commitment to fostering innovation and employability by focusing on how research can be capitalized into real-world business opportunities. The conference will explore tools, initiatives, and strategies that promote the commercialization of research, equipping researchers with the necessary skills to bring their ideas to the market. By examining blockages and needs in the research-to-business pipeline, the event will create a platform for dialogue and collaboration across sectors.

Segments of the Conference will include (final design up to elaboration by the Contractor):

*High-Level Session*

This segment will feature discussions on the current state of research commercialization in the Mediterranean, and successful initiatives that have advanced innovation. Key projects supported by PRIMA and institutes like CIHEAM and UNIMED will be presented, showcasing real examples of research projects that are ready to enter the market.

Roundtable discussions and keynote speeches will bring together policymakers, business organizations, and private sector leaders to discuss how to strengthen the pipeline from research to business, highlighting opportunities for job creation and startup growth.

Estimated duration: Half a day.

Estimated participants: 40/60 participants.

*Training Session*

This segment of the conference will be dedicated to training and skills development. Workshops will focus on entrepreneurial skills for researchers, including market analysis, intellectual property management, and strategies for pitching ideas to investors. Case studies will provide hands-on insights into how research can successfully transition into business ventures.

Estimated duration: Two days. Possibility of field visit according to local partners.

Estimated beneficiaries: 30 trainees.



*Focus Areas:*

Discussing the commercialization of research results to boost employment in sectors like sustainable agriculture, renewable energy, blue economy, and more.

Addressing blockages in the research-to-business pipeline, while identifying solutions to enhance innovation and startup creation in the region.

*Format and Logistics:*

The conference is planned to take place in a physical format (with contingency for hybrid/digital formats if needed) and will target participants from across the UfM region, including researchers, entrepreneurs, businesses, and policymakers. The program will be highly interactive, focusing on peer-learning, networking opportunities, and fostering collaboration across sectors to maximize impact.

**Work Package 2 – Synthetic outcome document**

**Objective:** to briefly present the importance of valorising research output for the Mediterranean region through a synthetic document with professional layout according to UfMS standards, up to 20 pages and presented in two versions (English and French)

**Language:** An English and a French version will be provided.

**Expected Outputs:** A study in ready-to-be-printed format, ready for being distributed digitally, prepared in two languages, with 100 copies printed by the Contractor and shipped as requested. Promotional presentations summarising the topic to be used in other conferences. Social media cards.

**Proposed frame:**

The document will synthetically and in graphically attractive way present definitions, policies, strategies, policies, programmes, key projects and recommendations on the importance of bringing research impact to society as a solution for regional development.

The document will promote the potential of innovation in the Mediterranean.

A Steering Committee of UfM partner will give guidance and ensure overall soundness.

The Contractor will also prepare social media cards (graphics with text) and a promotional presentation for presenting the topic to a broader community of stakeholders (eg. supporting a communicational campaign).

**4.3. Project management**

**4.3.1. Responsible body**

The Higher Education and Research Division of the UfM Secretariat will be responsible for managing the contract.

All issues related to the technical elements in relation to this contract, mainly the specific activities as outlined in sections 4.1 and 4.2. of these Terms of Reference, shall be taken by the project manager nominated by the contracting authority pursuant to special conditions of contract Article 2.1. The project manager will ensure these tasks in accordance with UfM internal rules and procedures.



## 5. LOGISTICS AND TIMING

### 5.1. Location

Project management and training activities shall be carried out in the Contractor's premises or any other premises at the expense of Contractor. Any missions in UfM Member States or any other UfM Member States related to the purpose of the contract will be performed by the Contractor at his own expenses and cannot be subjected to expenses claims to the UfM Secretariat.

The locations of the events where the participation of the Consultant is expected is as follows but could change according to further discussion with coorganising partners: Steering Committee (digital), Innovation Conference (Malta, October 2024 TBC) and participation to promotional event (digital).

### 5.2. Start date & Period of implementation of tasks

The intended start date is 3 June 2025 and the period of implementation of the contract will be until November 2025, including preparations for trainings and reporting.

Proposed timeline, to be finalised in the Inception Report, is subject to approval by UfM.

## 6. REQUIREMENTS

### 6.1. Staff

Note that civil servants and other staff of the public administration of the partner country, or of international/regional organisations based in the country, shall only be able to provide input as experts if well justified. The justification should be submitted with the tender and shall include information on the added value the expert will bring as well on any potential interference or conflict of interest of the proposed expert in his/her function as expert and his/her present or previous functions working as civil servant. Moreover proof should be submitted that the expert is seconded or on personal leave.

#### 6.1.1. Experts

Given the complexity of the tasks and the specific expertise required to ensure the successful delivery of the training, the following minimum requirements for the team of experts as a whole are deemed necessary. These requirements ensure that the team possesses the essential skills and knowledge to achieve the expected outputs effectively.

**The minimum requirements covered by the team of experts as a whole are detailed below:**

#### **Expert in research commercialization**

**At least 7 years of experience in research commercialization, innovation management, or business development.**

#### Qualifications and skills

University degree in political science, business, environmental or economic fields. General professional experience: At least 7 years of experience in innovation, startups, skills, employability and sustainability with universities, career centres, and/or research centres, or similar topics, at both national and international levels.



#### Specific professional experience

Involvement in cooperation with universities, accelerators, startups, business centres, research centres, international institutions or relevant stakeholders for identifying, training and/or supporting projects and best practices in more Mediterranean countries, in the research and innovation, employability, start-up, business development fields.

#### Language skills

Fluent in English. Working knowledge of French is a plus.

#### Support expert

At least 4 years of experience in training facilitation, policy analysis, or project management in research and innovation.

Role in the project: Leading in the finalisation of outcome documents and training material, management of steering committee, trainer.

#### Qualifications and skills

University degree in political science, business, environmental, economic, or graphic fields. General professional experience: At least 4 years of experience in innovation, skills, employability and sustainability with universities, career centres, and/or research centres, or similar topics, at both national and international levels.

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#### Specific professional experience

Experience in designing processes, documents, or trainings.

The Organisation & Methodology must include a paragraph demonstrating that a gender sensitive experts' selection procedure has been applied<sup>5</sup>.

All experts must be independent and free from conflicts of interest in the responsibilities accorded to them.

The Organisation and Methodology should demonstrate how the contract will comply with these requirements to accomplish the desired output(s). The Organisation and Methodology may include the names of the experts and respective profiles. Compliance (yes/no answer) of the team (as a whole) with the requirements will be checked, but there will be no marks given to the experts.

#### **6.1.2. Other experts, support staff & backstopping**

CVs for experts other than the Contractor should not be submitted in the tender but the tenderer will have to demonstrate in their offer that they have access to experts with the required profiles. The Contractor shall select and hire other experts as required according to the needs. The selection procedures used by the Contractor to select these other experts shall be transparent, and shall be based on pre-defined criteria, including professional qualifications, language skills and work experience.

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<sup>5</sup> Note that gender balance refers not only to numerical parity, but also to the level of employment and remuneration, roles and functions.



The costs for backstopping and support staff, as needed, are considered to be included in the tenderer's financial offer.

## 6.2. Office accommodation

Office accommodation for trainers and team leader working on the contract is to be provided by the Contractor.

## 6.3. Facilities to be provided by the Contractor

The Contractor shall ensure that the Contractor is adequately supported and equipped. In particular, it must ensure that there is sufficient administrative, secretarial and interpreting provision to enable Contractor to concentrate on his/her primary responsibilities. It must also transfer funds as necessary to support their work under the contract and to ensure that its employees are paid regularly and in a timely fashion.

## 6.4. Equipment

No equipment is to be purchased on behalf of the UfM Secretariat nor the Contractor country as part of this service contract or transferred to the UfM Secretariat at the end of this contract. Any equipment related to this contract which is to be acquired by the partner country must be purchased by means of a separate supply tender procedure.

# 7. REPORTS

## 7.1. Reporting requirements

The Contractor will submit the following reports in English in one original and 2 copies:

Name of report	Content	Time of submission
<b>Inception Report</b>	Analysis of existing situation and work plan for the project. On the basis of the kick-off meeting and preliminary desk research, it will contain as annex an updated methodology for implementing the activities. UfMS keeps right to require revisions and improvement on the training material and presentation.	June 2025
<b>Interim report</b>	Presentation of the ongoing activities, including any adjustment, with full minutes and agendas of all meetings, draft outcome document, and training report for the first training. Slides and talking points produced so far as annex. Final training methodology.	September 2025
<b>Final report on the activities</b>	Reports with final agendas, methodology, training materials and videorecording (if applicable), detailing participants and outcomes. Short description of achievements including problems encountered and recommendations. Slides, talking points, social media cards with engagement data, and any document not included in the inception and the interim reports as annex. Proof of mission attendance (eg photos,	November 2025, or in any case by two weeks before the end of the contract.





	invoices). Additional annexes: Synthetic outcome document as ready-to-print document, in both editable and readable formats, in digital and printed copies, in English and French versions. Data collection of feedback from participants/trainees.	
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UfMS will keep the rights of reuse and of translation and adaptation of each report and videorecording.

## **7.2. Submission and approval of reports**

The reports referred to above must be submitted to the Project Manager identified in the contract. The Project Manager is responsible for approving the reports.