



dRural

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR EXTERNAL EVALUATORS



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History of changes

Disclaimer

This document has suffered changes. Please, read the document carefully. These changes do not affect in any way the conditions to express interest nor the criteria that will be followed for selecting the evaluators.

The opinions expressed and arguments employed in this document do not necessarily reflect the official view from the European Union and other dRural consortium partners. Responsibility with the views and data expressed therein lies entirely with the authors.

v	Date	Changes
v1	October 2022	First version released
v2	December 2022	Second version released. It includes changes regarding the payments to evaluators. Evaluators are NOT required now to provide an invoice for the services rendered. Instead, evaluators will only have to provide a request for payments. These changes do not affect in any way the conditions to express interest nor the criteria that will be followed for selecting the evaluators.
v3	January 2023	Third version released. The changes are related to the extension of the Call for Expression of interest for External evaluators until the 15 th of January 2023. As a result of the extension of the Call, the timing of some activities explained in "2.8 Indicative timeline" has also been altered.



1. About dRural

dRural overall goal is to co-develop and implement a digital solution **based on the exploitation of data from existing service platforms** that deliver multiple innovative services to rural citizens while creating opportunities for economic growth and quality of life improvements. As such, **the project aspires to become the service marketplace of reference for European rural areas.**

dRural will build a service marketplace for rural areas and communities that will be demonstrated in four pilots in rural regions of Europe, namely:

- Extremadura (Spain),
- Jämtland Härjedalen (Sweden),
- Dubrovnik-Neretva County (Croatia) and
- Region Gelderland Midden (Netherlands).

Each of these settings is called a **Regional Demonstrator**.

dRural Open Call for Regional Demonstrators

dRural will organize an Open Call for innovative services to be deployed in the above Regional Demonstrators. This Open Call focuses on two types of services: **Complex Services** and **Simple Services** with the objective: to attract, select and fund the best solutions IT developers on one hand, and direct service providers with no technical infrastructure on the other hand, to enhance the quality of life in rural areas by establishing stronger links in communities and extending the reach of services provided.

Simple Services – The target Simple Service Providers of the dRural Open Call for Regional Demonstrators are small businesses and sole entrepreneurs that aim to offer their services on the dRural platform in order to extend the reach of their services to new customers and in turn create traction for more services to be offered. The applicants will need to have digital literacy in publishing, marketing and selling services through online marketplaces and some basic skills such as email customer service, setting up and maintaining its own store inside dRural marketplace and management of payments and refunds.

Complex Services – The target Complex Service Providers of the call are existing data platform operators that aim to build new services through the dRural Core Meta Platform. These applicants will contribute to the dRural project by providing additional requirements to the dRural Meta Platform, testing and validating the platform under a large variety of environments and testing its capacity to encompass many types of different services. These applicants will need senior software development skills.

dRural **Open Call for Regional Demonstrators** will start on 15.10.2022 and close on 15.01.2023.

dRural Arenas of Services

dRural is looking for experts that will provide services in the following arenas:

1. **Health and Social Care** - This arena is concerned with the Health and Social Care in the rural areas. The focus is on connecting health care actors and complementary services, as well as orchestrating the social and health care systems as a whole, from those who aspire to work in



- the industry to those aiming to find the right care worker to meet one's own needs. **Regional Demonstrators:** Dubrovnik-Neretva, Gelderland Midden, Extremadura.
2. **Tourism** - This arena refers to the tourism sector in rural areas as a whole, from offering listings of activities to do, places to stay, and what to visit, making these places and services more visible to book, pay and rate. In addition, selling and buying local products and providing professional services, such as guided tours, can be linked to this Arena. **Regional Demonstrators:** Dubrovnik-Neretva, Extremadura, Jämtland-Härjedalen.
 3. **Local Food Systems** - This arena meets the needs of buying and selling locally produced food, connecting food producers to end-users in improved ways, including an external marketplace connected to dRural. In the dRural project, more focus will be on solving the logistics and distribution through peer transport services (see Transport and Mobility Arena). **Regional Demonstrator:** Dubrovnik-Neretva.
 4. **Business Development** - This arena is concerned with local Business Development, hence how business entities can have access to targeted services such as developing new professional skills for business owners, being informed about the available business development options, book, pay, and rate services, while having the possibility to seek for mentors and professionals to grow and reach other markets. **Regional Demonstrators:** Dubrovnik-Neretva, Extremadura, Jämtland-Härjedalen.
 5. **Transport and Mobility** - This arena is an all-round exploration of transportation options, not only intended for citizens, but also for local public authorities and other entities looking to improve the local transport and mobility arena. The arena encompasses different potential entities, such as taxi services, one-off/subscription services for Peer-to-Peer ride-sharing and vehicle rental (not only cars), business owners needing distribution and logistics services and/or certified drivers and/or vehicles for their employees, and, finally, private citizens willing to drive or provide unused vehicles in exchange for compensation. **Regional Demonstrator:** Dubrovnik-Neretva.
 6. **e-Government** - This arena deals with services delivered in accordance with law and regulations, using data to improve services. It ensures that the relevant services are accessible by the one-stop-shop portal. It helps entrepreneurs and citizens to understand if their businesses or other activities comply with the existing laws while helping both municipalities and private citizens to spend less time on the phone and have more efficient processes, partly through data analytics. **Regional Demonstrator:** Jämtland-Härjedalen.



2. We are looking for evaluators

2.1. Evaluators' profile

We are looking for independent evaluators, who are able to assess the quality of applications received within the dRural Open Call for Regional Demonstrators, shortly after it has been closed.

- Evaluators must have a good knowledge of English language AND of the language of the Regional Demonstrator(s) in which they wish to evaluate applications, to be able to review the applications and participate in discussions with other reviewers and dRural partners.
- Evaluators must not be in a situation of conflict of interest to participate in the evaluation and must inform the dRural consortium of any conflict that might arise after expressing their interest to become evaluators. An evaluator must not work for an organisation that is a part of the dRural Consortium, nor an organisation which has applied for the dRural Open Call for Regional Demonstrators.

The evaluators should have the following competencies:

- Software development or technical expertise in digital solutions based on data platforms. Especially for evaluating applications from Complex Service Providers, experience with FIWARE components will be considered an asset.
- Business expertise with focus on rural development, and knowledge of at least one of the defined arenas of service for the Regional Demonstrator they are applying for. The evaluator must demonstrate knowledge and experience in the region of choice.

Experience in evaluating innovation proposals or similar experience will be considered an asset.

2.2. Benefits to become an evaluator

The number of applications assigned to each evaluator selected to take part in the evaluation of dRural Open Call applications will depend on the number of applications that pass the eligibility check carried out by dRural Consortium partners.

The compensation for evaluators will depend on which type of application they are evaluating:

- Applications of Simple Service Providers – 10 EUR per application evaluated.
- Applications of Complex Service Providers – 40 EUR per application evaluated.

Other than monetary reward, evaluators of the dRural Open Call for Regional Demonstrators will enjoy numerous other benefits, such as:

- ✓ Learning about innovative solutions that will be the main drivers of European regional development,
- ✓ Participation in the selection of the best applicants that will provide most value to their respective region,
- ✓ Connecting with innovative SMEs, start-ups and entrepreneurs, as well as other experts who will be evaluating the applications,
- ✓ Being an integral part of the dRural ecosystem, thus boosting regional development across Europe etc.



2.3. Evaluation procedure

The evaluation of the applications will be carried out between 01st and 28th of February 2023.

1. **Eligibility check.** After the Open Call for Regional Demonstrators, the applications that do not comply with the eligibility conditions will be discarded. This will be done by the dRural partners.
2. **Evaluation.** The applications that pass this procedure will be forwarded to the relevant Leading Promoters of Regional Demonstrators, who will then assign their evaluation to the appointed external evaluators. In order to receive the applications to evaluate, each of the selected evaluators will have to complete the contracting phase with Regional Demonstrator and TICBIOMED as coordinating legal entity in charge of the payments to evaluators.
 - a. **Individual evaluation.** The evaluation of the assigned applications will be carried out remotely, without the need for physical meetings. Each application will be assessed based on the relevant evaluation criteria (see Section 5 - Open Call Guidelines for Simple/Complex Service Providers for more details). After the evaluation has been completed, each evaluator will insert their comments regarding the specific sections (optional) and the overall application (mandatory), as well as a mark between 1 and 5 for each of the criteria.
 - b. **Consensus meetings.** A Consensus meeting may be held between the relevant evaluators and the leading local promoter of the Regional Demonstrator in question, to agree on the final ranking of the applications set to receive funding, and to discuss major differences in total scores (see Section 5 - Open Call Guidelines for Simple/Complex Service Providers for more details).

After the evaluation process has concluded, the Evaluation Summary Reports will be created and sent to the applicants. The applicants that have been selected as winners will be contracted by the dRural project representatives regarding the next steps.

The number of applications that each evaluator will be asked to assess will depend on the number of applications received per type of applicant (i.e. how many applications from Simple Service Providers and how many applications from Complex Service Providers).

The number of applications assigned to each external evaluator will be specified in the contract that the evaluator will sign with the dRural representatives (TICBIOMED as the Project Coordinator and the leading promoter of the relevant Regional Demonstrator).

2.4. Evaluators selection process

The leading promoters of Regional Demonstrators will be appointing the external evaluators based on the number of applications received, with respect to types of service the applicants have applied for. Evaluators will be selected based on their competencies listed in the call and special emphasis will be put on achieving a balance of competences in technical and business sectors.

2.5. Expression of interest

If you are interested in being an evaluator, please apply using the form on this page: <https://www.f6s.com/drural-call-for-evaluators/apply>

Deadline to apply is January 15th 2023, 17:00 CET. Selected applicants will be contacted by January 20th 2023.



If you have any questions, you can contact us via email: druralopencalls@foodscalehub.com

2.6. Evaluators' liability

All evaluators will be required to sign a declaration of no conflict of interest and non-disclosure agreement with the dRural project coordinator prior to the evaluation start.

Conflict of interest

Evaluators must not have a conflict of interest at the time of their appointment and must sign a contract with a declaration that no such conflict exists. They also must inform the dRural consortium should such a conflict arise in any of the applications they have been assigned. When a potential conflict of interest is reported by the evaluator or brought to the attention of the dRural consortium by any means, dRural will analyse the circumstances and any objective elements of information available. If dRural concludes that there is conflict of interest, the evaluator will be excluded from the evaluation of that application.

Confidentiality

Evaluators are bound by confidentiality, as all information relating to the assessment process is strictly confidential. They are not allowed to disclose any information about the applications submitted and results of the assessment and selection to anyone. They are also not allowed to use the ideas of the application for own purposes.

2.7. Important notice

Please note that your expression of interest to participate in the open call evaluation process as external evaluator is NOT binding in any way and does NOT automatically mean that you will be selected to participate. The final selection of the evaluators will be taken at a later stage as it depends on the number of applications received and the number of expressions of interest from evaluators.



2.8. Indicative timeline

Milestone	Deadline
Deadline to apply to the Call for Expression of interest	15/01/2023
Contacting the external evaluators	20/01/2023
Appointment of external evaluators	25/01/2023
Assignment of eligible applications to the appointed evaluators	31/01/2023
Evaluation of the applications received and notifying the dRural consortium	28/02/2023
Consensus Meetings (conditional)	03/03/2023
Payment made by dRural (upon reception of the invoice)	16/04/2023

