

Call for proposals

Consultant to support the 7th European Microfinance Award

“Microfinance and access to education”

1. Background

The [European Microfinance Award](#) was launched in October 2005 by the Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs - Directorate for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs, to support innovative thinking in the microfinance sector. Awarded for the first time in 2006, it is jointly organised by the Luxembourg Development Cooperation, the European Microfinance Platform (e-MFP) and the Inclusive Finance Network Luxembourg (InFiNe.lu).

The subject of the 7th European Microfinance Award is “Microfinance and access to education”, which is intended to recognise the role of microfinance in enabling families to access education for their children as well as facilitating adult education to enhance job opportunities. The Award will be presented in November 2016, during the [European Microfinance Week](#) in Luxembourg.

Previous editions of the Award were devoted to the following subjects:

2006, Innovation for Outreach

Microfinance breakthrough initiatives deepening or broadening rural outreach
Winner: The Zakoura Foundation (Morocco), for its programme on rural tourism

2008, Socially Responsible Microfinance

Microfinance innovative initiatives to promote social performance
Winner: Buusaa Gonofaa (Ethiopia), for the development of its client assessment system

2010, Value Chain Finance

Outstanding microfinance initiatives in productive value chain schemes
Winner: Harbu (Ethiopia), for an initiative financing a soybean value chain

2012, Microfinance for Food Security

Microfinance initiatives contributing to improve food production and distribution conditions in developing countries
Winner: ASKI (Philippines), for serving smallholder farmers and fostering effective market linkages

2014, Microfinance and the Environment

For institutions that integrate environmental governance into the DNA of their business and that promote initiatives to improve environmental sustainability.
Winner: Kompanion (Kyrgyzstan), for its Pasture Land Management Training Initiative

2015, Microfinance in Post-disaster, Post-conflict Areas & Fragile States

To recognise institutions that operate in exceptionally difficult environments and circumstances, helping increase the resilience of the affected communities.
Winner: Crédit Rural de Guinée S.A (Guinea), for its innovative response to the Ebola outbreak in Guinea

2. Selection process

The European Microfinance Award will be granted to a microfinance organisation based in a developing country. Various types of microfinance institutions are eligible including NGOs, cooperatives, commercial banks, local development banks, leasing firms, insurance companies, etc. The applicant institutions must be directly engaged in serving retail clients. Organizations that play a supporting role or collaborate with such institutions (e.g. wholesale lenders, investors, networks, etc.) may apply jointly with their partners. For such joint applications, the Award may recognize both organizations, but the Award funds will be disbursed only to the retail institution.

For the sake of transparency and accountability, the Award selection process is organised in three stages:

1. Preselection phase: applications are assessed based on eligibility, minimum standards of relevance and quality of the application and sound financial and social performance. The assessment is done jointly by the e-MFP and InFiNe.lu Secretariats and the consultant.
2. Selection phase: a committee composed of e-MFP & InFiNe.lu members and microfinance experts nominates 3 finalists for consideration for the prize, along with up to 7 semi-finalists.
3. High Jury phase: a High Jury chooses the winner from the 3 finalists.

The Award is presented in a ceremony which in the past has been in the presence of Her Royal Highness the Grand-Duchess of Luxembourg. The ceremony takes place during the European Microfinance Week.

3. Consultant's assignments and deliverables

ASSIGNMENT A

In consultation with the e-MFP Secretariat and experts from among the e-MFP members, the consultant is required to:

1. **Produce a methodology** and **define an evaluation model** for the Award selection process.
2. Based on the methodology and evaluation model, produce the 7th European Microfinance Award **application form** and **explanatory note** addressing the role of microfinance institutions to facilitate access to education.

Deadline: 17th February 2016

ASSIGNMENT B

Following the successful delivery of ASSIGNMENT A, a second assignment (ASSIGNMENT B) will be given. It consists of the following:

1. **Preselection Phase** (June - July 2016)

In collaboration with e-MFP & InFiNe.lu Secretariats:

- a. **Check the eligibility** of all applicants
- b. **Evaluate the relevance and quality** of the applications
- c. **Evaluate the financial and social performance** of all applicants
- d. **Preselect the applications** qualifying for the Award
- e. **Identify clarifications and additional information needed** from applicants

A meeting of the Preselection Committee (e-MFP & InFiNe.lu Secretariats and the consultant) is planned to take place on the 3rd or 4th week of June.

2. **Award Selection process** (July – November 2016)

- a. **Prepare a report** with an overview and analysis of the received applications, the proceedings of the Preselection Phase and one-page summaries of the preselected applications – Mid-August 2016
- b. **Support the Selection Committee** evaluations of the preselected applications – September 2016
- c. **Draft a document synthesizing the Selection Committee members' evaluation scores** to be distributed at the Selection Committee meeting – planned for the 3rd week of September 2016
- d. **Participate in the preparatory meeting** of the Selection Committee meeting – planned for the 3rd week of September (usually the day before of the Selection Committee meeting)
- e. **Moderate the Selection Committee meeting** – planned for the 3rd week of September 2016
- f. **Prepare detailed summaries** (approx. 3 pages) on the three finalists' initiatives **to be delivered to the High Jury** by mid-October 2016
- g. Prepare a separate **evaluation methodology appropriate for the High Jury**
- h. If requested, **attend the High Jury meeting** scheduled during the European Microfinance Week, 17-19th November 2016

Communication tasks

In addition to the above assignments, the consultant might be asked to support e-MFP in preparation of communication materials throughout the selection process and afterwards.

Should the required support be meaningful, additional days will be negotiated for the contract.

4. Profile of Consultant

- Consultants are encouraged to apply in teams (2-3 people).
- Minimum of 3-5 years relevant experience within the microfinance field, prior experience with the topic of the Award is a plus.
- Strong analytical, organisation and moderating skills.
- Experience in producing reports and other material relevant to a selection process.
- Excellent written English language proficiency; working reading proficiency of French and Spanish is required (in order to assess the Award applications submitted in those languages).
- The consultant will be required to sign a confidentiality clause and neutrality agreement.

5. Available resources

This call is published together with the explanatory note and the application form used for the European Microfinance Award 2015. The evaluation model can be provided by the e-MFP Secretariat upon request.

Communication materials on previous Awards are available on [e-MFP website](#).

6. Contact and deadline

If you are interested, please send your CV with a proposal for Assignment A together with the budget. For Assignment B, please provide the estimated work time and budget assuming 25 applications are received. Proposals from e-MFP members are encouraged.

Contact person: Gabriela Erice, gerice@e-mfp.eu

Deadline: **January 10th 2016**