

GRAPES OF CHANGE

Grant Agreement No. 101195380 — CERV-2024-DAPHNE

CALL FOR SERVICES

External Quality Assessment Evaluator (EQAE)

Subcontract S1.1 — Work Package 1

Issued by: Sistemi Formativi Confindustria (SFC)

Introduction

Grapes of Change is a three-year project funded under the EU CERV-2024-DAPHNE programme (Grant Agreement No. 101195380), running from May 2025 to April 2028. The project brings together 14 partners across 8 European countries, including training organisations, women's associations in the wine sector, business support organisations, and a university research partner. Its focus is gender-based violence and workplace discrimination in the European wine industry, a sector where structural inequalities remain widespread and underreported. The project develops practical tools to address this: an online Observatory mapping the state of GBV and gender inequality across partner countries, a training programme including serious games designed for HR professionals and company managers, and a network of signatory companies committing to concrete internal improvement actions. By the end of the project, the consortium aims to have established a lasting infrastructure for monitoring and improving gender equality standards across the European wine sector.

The project operates under a lump sum funding model and is structured around four work packages covering observatory and research activities, training tools including serious games, network and advocacy development, and communications.

Object of the service

SFC, acting as project coordinator, is seeking to appoint an External Quality Assessment Evaluator (EQAE) for the full duration of the project. This is Subcontract S1.1, as defined in the Grant Agreement, Annex 1, under Work Package 1.

The EQAE is responsible for providing independent and impartial evaluation of project implementation. The rationale for externalising this function is explicitly grounded in the need for objectivity: consortium partners cannot credibly evaluate activities in which they are directly involved. The EQAE operates alongside, and independently from, the consortium's internal quality assurance procedures.

The selected expert will support the consortium in monitoring the Quality Assurance Plan (QAP), providing structured assessments at four intervals throughout the project lifecycle and producing a corresponding report after each evaluation round.

Scope of work

Overview

The EQAE will conduct four independent evaluation rounds across the project duration, timed to coincide with key implementation milestones. Each round involves a review of project progress against the four quality dimensions defined in the QAP:

- Timelines: percentage of tasks completed on schedule (target: 100%)
- Budget: variance from projected expenditure per activity (tolerance: 5%)
- Quality: percentage of deliverables requiring rework after internal quality check (tolerance: 10%)
- Effectiveness: percentage of milestones achieved on time (target: 90%) and tasks completed within allocated person-months (target: 100%)

Activities per evaluation round

For each of the four evaluation rounds, the EQAE is expected to carry out the following activities:

- Desk review of project progress documentation, including partner reports, deliverables submitted or in preparation, and financial monitoring data provided by the coordinator
- Structured interviews or written consultations with project partners, ensuring full consortium participation (100% partner response is a project target)
- Independent assessment of whether implementation is proceeding in line with the project's objectives, work plan, and quality indicators
- Strategic fit analysis: assessment of whether activities remain coherent with the project's broader goals in gender-based violence prevention, stakeholder engagement, and sector transformation
- Production of a written assessment report (D1.3) containing findings, recommendations, and any proposed corrective actions for the coordinator and Steering Committee

Interaction with project governance

The EQAE's outputs feed directly into the project's governance cycle. Assessment reports are used as inputs to Project Charter reviews at months M18, M24, and M36, which serve as formal review checkpoints with the European Commission. The EQAE may be invited to present findings at Steering Committee in presence meetings where relevant (maximum 2 travels). All interaction with the consortium will be coordinated by SFC.

The evaluation methodology will be agreed with the selected expert at the start of the assignment, in consultation with project partners, in accordance with the grant provisions.

Deliverables and timetable

The contract covers four evaluation rounds producing four assessment reports (collectively referenced as D1.3 in the Grant Agreement). The indicative schedule is as follows:

Evaluation round	Timing	Deadline	Output
Round 1	M17	September 2026	External Quality Assessment Report 2
Round 2	M23	March 2027	External Quality Assessment Report 3
Round 3	M29	September 2027	External Quality Assessment Report 4
Round 4	M35 / M36	March/April 2028	External Quality Assessment Report 4/final QA Report

All reports must be submitted to SFC within 15 calendar days of completing each evaluation round. Reports should be produced in English. Indicative length: 8 to 15 pages per report, excluding annexes.

Candidate profile and selection criteria

Applications may be submitted by individual experts or by organisations proposing a named lead evaluator. In either case, the offer must clearly identify the person who will conduct the evaluations. The EQAE must have no current or recent professional affiliation with any consortium partner and must declare the absence of any conflict of interest as part of the application.

Subcontractors must be aware of, and commit to, the principles of gender mainstreaming and non-discrimination mainstreaming, as required by the CERV programme rules.

Required profile

The Grant Agreement specifies the following selection criteria, which will form the basis for evaluation:

- Demonstrated experience in the evaluation of EU-funded projects, with at least two verifiable references
- Expertise in gender equality, gender-based violence prevention, or non-discrimination in workplace or organisational contexts
- Knowledge of or demonstrable familiarity with the agricultural, agri-food, or wine sector (desirable but not mandatory)
- A clear and credible evaluation methodology tailored to the scope and objectives of this project

Award criteria

Offers will be assessed on a quality/price basis according to the following scoring grid:

Criterion	Maximum score
1. Relevant experience in EU-funded project evaluation (at least 2 references required)	25 points
2. Expertise in gender equality and/or GBV in professional or organisational contexts	25 points
3. Knowledge of or demonstrable familiarity with agricultural, agri-food, or wine sectors	20 points
4. Quality and clarity of proposed evaluation methodology	15 points
5. Value for money (financial offer vs. scope proposed)	15 points
Total	100 points

A minimum threshold of 60 points on quality criteria (criteria 1 to 4) must be reached for the financial offer to be considered. SFC reserves the right not to award the contract if no offer meets the minimum quality threshold or if all offers exceed the available budget.

Financial conditions and submission

Financial conditions

The total budget available for this subcontract is €15,000 (fifteen thousand euros), inclusive of all fees, expenses, and taxes. This is the maximum amount eligible under the Grant Agreement. Applicants must submit a detailed financial offer covering the full scope of work across all four evaluation rounds. The offer must specify the proposed fee structure (estimated working days, or lump sum per round of evaluation), and any anticipated reimbursable expenses should be itemised separately. Travel costs, if any, must comply with the applicable EU grant rules.

Payment will be made by SFC in four tranches linked to the acceptance of each evaluation report. The precise payment schedule will be agreed with the selected expert and formalised in the subcontract.

Submission requirements

Applicants must submit the following documents in PDF or Word format, by email to the addresses indicated below:

- A curriculum vitae or organisational profile of the evaluator who will lead the assignment, including a list of at least two relevant EU-funded project evaluation references
- A brief technical proposal (maximum four pages) describing the proposed evaluation methodology, approach to partner consultations, and any adaptations to the four-round structure proposed by the applicant
- A financial offer, including an estimation of working days and anticipated expenses

All documents must be submitted in English. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

PROCEDURE AND CONTACTS

This call follows a request for quotes procedure in line with EU subcontracting rules. The selection will be based on the criteria set out in this document and will be documented in a selection record available for inspection.

The deadline for submitting offers is 19/06/2026. SFC expects to notify the selected expert by 26/06/2026 and to sign the subcontract by end of June 2026.

Questions and offers should be directed to:

Francesco Lembo

Project Manager: f.lembo.con@confindustria.it

and

Ivana Russiello

International Projects Director: i.russiello@confindustria.it

This call for services is issued under Grant Agreement No. 101195380 (CERV-2024-DAPHNE). The information contained herein is intended solely for the selection of a subcontractor and does not constitute a binding commitment on the part of SFC or the European Union.