

## Terms of References for an Individual Consultant

### Role/position title

## Lead Consultant for Curriculum Development for English Language Teaching and Learning at Preparatory Preschool Level in Serbia

### About the project

#### Background

Reform of pre-school education in Serbia has been strongly focused on improving preschool infrastructure and increasing involvement of children from disadvantaged families in preschool learning. As a result of relatively recent introduction of mandatory preparatory pre-school grade (5.5 – 6.5 years of age), more than 90 percent of all children in Serbia attend preschool at least at this stage. However, this is not the case with younger children, especially those who do not live in larger cities and/or are coming from families with low socio-economic status. The situation is particularly grave for children from ethnic minorities, especially for Roma.

#### Context

At this time, Serbian education authorities are embarking on a national scale reform of preschool system that is supported both by the World Bank (IBRD), on the one hand, and the European Union from the Instrument for Pre-Accession Funds (IPA II), on the other. Two projects are building on the most recent success of the past EU support and are looking at assisting the authorities in addressing the challenges of access, equity and quality of preschool provision in Serbia. Additional support to the preschool system is provided by UNICEF Serbia and the Novak Djokovic Foundation. New interventions will also cover the challenge of reforming preschool curricula as well as setting up a system for accreditation of preschool programmes.

Even though the British Council has had limited engagement in this area in the region of the Western Balkans in previous years, its global track record in preschool support is significant. In 2016 the British Council published a global best practices book '[Early Childhood Education in English for Speakers of Other Languages](#)'. In addition, the British Council owns a range of products relevant for this education sub-sector. Those include, for instance, the programme Teaching for Success, LearnEnglish Family, [LearnEnglish Kids](#), Premier Skills with the [PremierSkills English Website](#), Dreams + Teams, and various [Apps](#) for self-paced learning.

During 2016 and 2017, the British Council will be providing support to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MoESTD) of the Republic of Serbia in piloting an English language curriculum for preschool children attending preparatory preschool grade. Lessons learnt from this pilot will inform policy dialogue in the country on the approach(es) to be taken in integrating a specialised education programme for English language teaching and learning in the reformed preschool curricula.

This consultancy is a part of the British Council's support to MoESTD aimed at testing the hypothesis that the provision of English language programme(s) in preschools would increase attractiveness of preschool education more broadly and positively affect the willingness of parents to send children to preschools at an early stage (and before the start of the mandatory preparatory preschool grade) – whereby shifting parental



perceptions (attitudes and beliefs) about the role of preschools from provision of care to provision of education services/ early intellectual stimulation and development.

## **Role description – About the role**

The British Council is seeking a Lead Consultant/Curriculum Developer. He/she will take the lead, in cooperation with the British Council programme manager and other stakeholders, in developing an English language curriculum for pre-schoolers at the school preparatory level for the pilot project in Serbia. Lead Consultant should design a curriculum that can be implemented during the full school year at the school preparatory level in pre-school institutions in Serbia and an abridged/adapted version that could be piloted in 14 weeks. The version for the pilot should have all the characteristics of the full curriculum. For the curriculum development, the Lead Consultant should be using primarily, but not exclusively, existing British Council materials and resources (available online, such as LearnEnglish Kids or other available in hard copies). The design would require scoping, analysis of the Serbian education system with particular stress on language learning, methodologies and pedagogical approaches in Serbian pre-school education system. Apart from the curriculum, the Lead Consultant is expected to develop all the necessary guidebooks, training and pedagogical materials for both teachers and learners for successful implementation of the curriculum as well as a two day train the trainer workshop and supporting materials for the teachers who will be delivering the curriculum pilot.

Task to be carried out by the Lead Consultant:

- Scoping visit to Serbia with the aim of exploring the current situation in Serbian pre-school education system (a continuation of a desk research) and English language programmes and curriculum in both private and state schools
- Development of English language curriculum suitable for preschoolers aged 5.5 – 6.5, based primarily but not exclusively on existing British Council materials and resources
- Adaptation of developed English language curriculum suitable for a 14 week pilot
- Development or adaptation of all the necessary materials for learners for both full curriculum and the pilot
- Development of teacher book/manual and all the necessary materials for teachers for both full curriculum and the pilot
- Development of Teacher Training programme and all the necessary accompanying materials
- Delivery of a two-day *Train the trainer* programme for teachers delivering the curriculum and the pilot

Deliverables:

- English language curriculum for preschoolers aged 5.5 – 6.5 developed, reviewed and accepted by the project board
- All the necessary materials for learners developed and/or adapted from existing British Council resources
- Teachers' handbooks/manuals and all the necessary teaching materials related to the curriculum delivery
- Teacher training programme (a two day workshop) on how to deliver the curriculum developed and all the necessary training materials created.



## Qualifications and experience required

### Essential

- Minimum 10 years of experience in the design and development of English language curricula preferably for very young learners
- Good knowledge of British Council content and resources for young learners
- Ability to work efficiently and effectively with project members in various locations and from multiple organisations, including remotely writing
- Ability to integrate different experiences, methodologies, and approaches
- Willingness and ability to travel to the field to conduct assessments and gather primary data.

### Desirable

- An advanced university degree (masters or equivalent) in ELT/Education/TESOL
- Knowledge of local education context in Serbia and/or Western Balkans countries

**NOTE: The Lead Consultant is expected to closely work with locally appointed Consultant to ensure alignment of the proposed curriculum to the local educational standards and requirements.**

The Lead Consultant should apply the necessary prior knowledge and experience in early years language teaching and learning, contemporary methodologies and best practices. He or She should also have a demonstrated success in designing English Language curriculum especially for very young learners.

Both National and International applicants are encouraged to apply.

