Terms of Reference
Grant Manager (Operational Support)
for the support in the implementation of the Municipal Exchange Fund Austria for Ukraine

1 Background

KDZ - Centre for Public Administration Research is a Vienna-based competence centre and knowledge platform specialising in public administration reform, local governance, public management, European integration and multi-level governance. Founded in 1969, KDZ combines applied research, consultancy and capacity development for public administrations at local, regional, national and European level.

KDZ has long-standing experience in managing grant schemes and municipal exchange programmes, including the Know-How Transfer Centre (KTC), the BACID Programme, and EU-funded cooperation projects. A core focus of KDZ's work is the strengthening of local self-government, service quality, administrative capacity and EU-aligned governance, particularly in reform and transition contexts.

Within this framework, KDZ is implementing the Municipal Exchange Fund Austria for Ukraine (A4U) in cooperation with the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns (AACT). The two-year programme (01.12.2025 - 30.11.2027) is co-funded by the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) and supports Ukrainian municipalities in the context of decentralisation reform, post-war recovery and EU integration through Austrian–Ukrainian municipal partnerships

The Municipal Exchange Fund - A4U establishes a competitive grant scheme to finance 10-20 bilateral municipal partnership projects, combined with mentoring, capacity development, study visits and peer exchange. The programme follows principles of good governance, transparency, conflict sensitivity, gender equality, social inclusion and "Do No Harm", and is closely coordinated with U-LEAD with Europe and Ukrainian local government associations.

For the implementation of the grant scheme, KDZ seeks to engage a Grant Manager who will be responsible for the operational management, monitoring and quality assurance of the funded partnership projects.

2 Purpose and the description of the assignment

The purpose of this assignment is to ensure efficient, transparent and compliant management of the A4U grant scheme and to support high-quality implementation of the funded municipal partnership projects.

Together with the A4U Program Manager of KDZ, the Grant Manager will be responsible for the full grant cycle, from preparation and launch of Calls for Proposals to contracting, monitoring, reporting, risk management and closure of grants.

KDZ, as contracting authority and fund manager, retains full responsibility vis-à-vis ADA. The Grant Manager supports KDZ in meeting all contractual, financial, reporting and audit obligations, while ensuring that all funded municipal partnerships:

- comply with ADC requirements,
- deliver agreed outputs and results,
- manage risks appropriately in a volatile context, and
- are in line with EU governance standards, principles of transparency, conflict sensitivity, gender equality, social inclusion and "Do No Harm".

The Grant Manager supports KDZ's Program Manager, Finance Officer and Communication Officer and contributes to the smooth, transparent and compliant implementation of the municipal partnership grants.

3 Tasks and responsibilities

The main tasks and responsibilities of the Grant Manager will be the following:

3.1 Grant Scheme Management

The Grant Manager will:

Support KDZ in the design, tendering and implementation of two Calls for Proposals. This includes:

- Designing application guidelines, application form, templates, checklists, and annexes (e.g. conflict sensitivity guidance note, standardized MoU) based on KDZ templates and aligned with the project requirements. Ensuring that conflict sensitivity, gender equality and environmental standards (Do No Harm Principle) are embedded and reflected in the application documents.
- Developing of eligibility and evaluation criteria, and designing of a structured assessment form.
- Supporting the tendering of the two Calls for Proposals in close coordination with the KDZ Communication officer.
- Supporting the matching of partnerships between Austrian and Ukrainian municipalities.
- Supporting applicants during the project development phase, in close cooperation with KDZ, AACT, U-LEAD and Ukrainian local government associations.
- Supporting the assessment of applications (formal checks, completeness, eligibility).

- Preparing the Grant Agreements and the Grant Award Decisions based on the eligibility and evaluation criteria.
- Managing the administrative process for applications, ensuring procedural transparency.
- Supporting clarification with applicants in coordination with KDZ, AACT, U-LEAD and Ukrainian local government associations.

3.2 Contracting and Financial Oversight

The Grant Manager will:

- Prepare and manage grant agreements with selected municipal partnerships based on KDZ templates.
- Ensure that grant contracts clearly define:
  - work plans and timelines (6 -10 months),
  - deliverables and indicators,
  - reporting obligations,
  - financial rules and eligible costs.
- Monitor financial compliance, including:
  - budget reviews,
  - verification of expenditure through monitoring eligible costs, budget lines and expenditure against approved budgets.
- Checking and processing financial reports from the funded municipal partnerships in alignment with ADC financial regulations.
- Coordinating closely with KDZ's Finance Officer and supporting the preparation for financial reporting, audits and payments.
- Preparing overviews of grant disbursements and expenditures for internal monitoring.

3.3 Monitoring, Reporting and Quality Assurance

The Grant Manager will:

- Monitor the implementation progress through:
  - regular communication with grantees,
  - review of narrative and financial reports,
  - tracking of indicators, milestones and deliverables.
- Identify risks and implementation challenges early and propose corrective measures, especially in relation to:

- security constraints,
- administrative capacity limitations,
- environmental, gender and social inclusion targets.

- Ensure systematic collection of disaggregated data (gender, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), Youth, people with disabilities).
- Contribute to annual progress reporting and the final project review.

3.4 Communication and Partner Support

The Grant Manager will serve as the main contact person for the funded municipal partnerships, with a particular focus on Ukrainian partners:

- Responding to questions from Austrian and Ukrainian municipalities regarding for example
  - grant rules,
  - reporting,
  - eligible costs,
  - implementation procedures.
- Providing clear and practical guidance in a supportive manner.
- Facilitating communication between KDZ, AACT and project partners.
- Supporting coordination with U-LEAD and Ukrainian local government associations, as needed.
- Supporting the KDZ Communication Officer in website, social media, blogs and further media presentation.

3.5 Coordination and Learning

The Grant Manager will:

- Coordinate closely with:
  - KDZ Programme Manager,
  - Austrian Association of Cities and Towns,
  - U-LEAD with Europe,
  - Evaluation Committee and Advisory Board (as required).
- Contribute to the preparation of the Final Event, Workshops or Study visits by providing grant-related inputs.

- Clarify with the grantees if additional support from KDZ experts (e.g. via trainings, study visits, analysis for public administration reform, local governance and EU integration) can be provided based on the Municipal Exchange Fund A4U programme.

4 Deliverables

The Grant Manager will deliver, inter alia:

- Two complete Calls for Proposals, including:
  - application guidelines
  - application form
  - Memorandum of Understanding template
  - conflict sensitive guidance note
  - needs and baseline assessment form
- Standardised reporting package for grantees, including:
  - narrative report template
  - financial report template
  - disaggregated data collection framework[1]
  - feedback forms
- Structured application assessment form aligned with eligibility and evaluation criteria
- Sub-grant contracts for all awarded projects
- Periodic grant financial monitoring report (one during the implementation of the projects and one final report)[2]
- Validated and consolidated narrative reports of funded municipal projects (one Progress Report during the implementation of the projects and one final narrative report)[3]
- Consolidated monitoring dataset and summary report[4]

[1] Collection of disaggregated data (gender, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), Youth, people with disabilities, environment).

[2] Providing a consolidated overview of grant disbursements and reported expenditures across all funded municipal partnerships. The reports shall be prepared in line with the financial reporting and disbursement cycles of the projects and shall include approved budgets, amounts disbursed, expenditures reported, remaining balances, and identification of significant variances or financial risks. All grant-related documentation required for audit and evaluation purposes shall be systematically collected, organised, and maintained in a structured and accessible format, and shall be compiled and presented in the final financial report.

[3] Narrative reports submitted by funded municipal partnerships shall be reviewed and consolidated for completeness and consistency against approved objectives and indicators.

[4] Presenting data collected from funded projects to the Programme Manager.

5 Required Qualifications and Selection Criteria

The Grant Manager shall possess the following profile:

5.1 Education and Professional Background

- A university degree (Bachelor's or higher) in Public Administration, European Studies, Political Science, Business Administration, Economics, or another relevant field.

5.2 Professional Experience:

- Minimum of 2 years of relevant work experience in project or administrative support, ideally in the context of donor-funded or international cooperation projects.
- Experience in supporting grant applications, particularly in EU-funded programmes (e.g. Horizon Europe, Interreg/Danube Region Programme etc.) is required.
- Previous work experience with donor-funded initiatives (e.g. foundations, bilateral donors, EU projects).
- Experience coordinating or supporting activities involving Ukrainian public institutions or civil society organisations.
- Experiences of public administration structures in EU Member States and Ukraine.

5.3 Skills and Competencies

- Good knowledge of grant processes including application support, documentation, contracting, and follow-up.
- Excellent organizational, administrative, and time-management skills, with the ability to handle multiple priorities and meet deadlines.
- High attention to detail and accuracy in handling documentation and budgets.
- Strong interpersonal and intercultural communication skills.
- High organisational skills.
- Proficiency in MS Office (especially Excel and Word); familiarity with project or grant management tools is an asset.
- High training and presentation skills.
- Ability to write clear and coherent documents/reports.
- Teamwork.
- Ability to work with people of different nationalities, religions and cultural backgrounds.

5.4 Languages

- Fluent Ukrainian (spoken and written) is required.
- Excellent English is required.
- German is an asset.

5.5 Other Requirements

- Sound knowledge of political and administrative systems in Ukraine and EU countries.
- Ability to work independently while contributing to a team-oriented environment.
- High level of integrity, reliability, and service orientation.
- Willingness to travel occasionally, where feasible and in line with security assessments.

5.6 Selection criteria

The weight given to the selection is:

- 50% financial offer,
- 40% education, professional experience and languages,
- 10% skills and competencies and other requirements.

6 Timing and Location

The expert may work in the premises of KDZ and/or home based-remotely.

The assignment will be realized within the following timeframe: January 2026 (depending on availability) - November 2027. The maximum envisaged number of working days for the assignment is 250 days.

7 Application Procedure

The interested candidates shall submit their CV, a motivation letter, supporting documents which prove the required qualification (e.g. employment certificates, relevant publications or similar) and the financial offer (working days and fee) until January 10th**,** 2026 at: tender@kdz.or.at.

The maximum level of fee foreseen for the assignment is 500 EUR per day. Travel costs are refunded separately. No employment relationship with KDZ shall be established under this Agreement. The Contractor shall be solely responsible for the payment of all applicable taxes and social security contributions, as well as any other statutory charges related to the performance of the services.

Qualified women are especially encouraged to submit an offer. KDZ is commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

Questions to the ToR: Questions about the ToR shall be submitted to Sofia Calzola, KDZ, via e-mail: calzola@kdz.or.at.