

Call for applications: External Evaluator for the EU-funded project DIALECT4: Enlarging DIALECT's Communities of Tolerance Through Football, focusing on Younger Children

ActionAid Hellas launches a call for professionals with proven experience in the evaluation of programmes and projects to carry out an external evaluation of a 24-month Erasmus+ Sport Cooperation Partnership entitled "Enlarging DIALECT's Communities of Tolerance Through Football, focusing on Younger Children" (DIALECT4, Grant No. 101184384), co-funded by the European Union. The project builds resilience against intolerance and radicalisation in children aged 10-12 through the football3 methodology combined with media and digital literacy, in Greece, Italy, Hungary and Serbia.

1. Summary

- 1.1.** ActionAid Hellas requests proposals from qualified individuals, groups of individuals or firms to conduct an evaluation study of the 24-month DIALECT4 project, implemented by five partners across four countries.
- 1.2.** The evaluation will require the selected applicant to facilitate and coordinate with project partners and staff, along with other stakeholders as needed, to collect and review qualitative and quantitative data. The project requires the applicant to submit the deliverables listed in Section 3. It is anticipated that this evaluation would involve extensive collaboration between ActionAid Hellas and the selected applicant.
- 1.3.** The selected applicant should preferably demonstrate:
 - Extensive evaluation and/or research experience on social development related projects, especially on the thematic areas of inclusion, anti-radicalisation, youth and children empowerment. Relevant background within the sports sector would be welcome.
 - The ability to generate and synthesise findings from academic and practitioner literature reviews and implemented interventions.
 - Expertise in qualitative and quantitative research design, methodology and analysis.
 - Familiarity with child safeguarding principles in research involving or adjacent to minors.
- 1.4.** ActionAid Hellas is not liable for any expenditure incurred by the responding applicant prior to the signing of the agreement with ActionAid Hellas.
- 1.5.** Submissions must be sent by email and must follow the guidelines of the section Submission Requirements.
- 1.6.** The assignment is expected to occur from 21/09/2026 to 24/12/2026.
- 1.7.** Any queries must be submitted in writing by 31/08/2026.
- 1.8.** The proposals must be submitted by email to ioanna.papadopoulos@actionaid.org and marina.kaloumenou@actionaid.org by 07/09/2026, at 23:59 Athens, Greece time. Subject line should read "DIALECT4 external evaluation proposal". The proposal must contain a technical proposal and a financial offer.

2. Scope of Work

2.1. Background

ActionAid is an independent international civil society organisation, fighting poverty and injustice in Greece and all over the world. Since 1972 it has been training people and supporting communities so that they can claim a life of dignity and a fairer world for all. In Greece it started the Child Sponsorship programme; in 2000 it launched its educational programme mainly based on Global Citizenship Education principles, aspiring to contribute to students developing the skills, knowledge and values they need to become active, responsible and responsive citizens who contribute to more peaceful, just and sustainable societies. From 2017 onwards it has been supporting vulnerable people who live in Athens, Greece, through the Kolonos Community Center. Established in one of the most deprived areas of Athens, the Community Center aims to empower, mobilise and properly equip children and adults at risk of poverty and social exclusion, and provides financial and accounting services, social services, employability support, educational programmes for children and adults, while promoting citizen engagement and community building. In 2020, the Youth Center in Thessaloniki was launched to foster the active engagement of young people in city life through employability, arts and volunteering.

2.2. The project

Over the past two decades, populist and far-right narratives have gained ground across Europe, polarising societies on the grounds of nationality, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and religion. Children and adolescents growing up in disadvantaged communities are particularly exposed to intolerant rhetoric and extremist beliefs, both offline and online. The Council of Europe (2022) and the Radicalisation Awareness Network (2021) both emphasise that resilience-building against these narratives must begin in childhood, in formal, informal and non-formal educational settings, and that sport can play a significant role in developing personality, social and cognitive skills at this age.

DIALECT4 builds on the partnership's five years of experience implementing the DIALECT methodology in disadvantaged communities in Greece, Italy, Hungary and Serbia to combat youth radicalisation. Its predecessor projects (DIALECT, DIALECT2, DIALECT3) worked with adolescents aged 13-17 and, in the case of DIALECT3, with school-based physical education. DIALECT4 responds to the emerging need for an earlier-age intervention. It adapts the DIALECT methodology and toolkits to the developmental stage of children aged 10-12, focusing on critical thinking, media and digital literacy, and understanding of values of tolerance, non-discrimination and gender equality. It does so through children's involvement in ethnically, culturally and gender-mixed football teams at community level, run by DIALECT4 trainers, mediators and sports/football coaches.

A significant component is the continued work with the established local youth DIALECT teams (13-17 years old) and the enlargement of youth and children local action groups, to facilitate inter-age learning and mentorship and promote a community-based approach to combatting racism and intolerance.

Under DIALECT4's general objective of enlarging DIALECT's communities of tolerance through football with a focus on younger children, the project's specific objectives are:

- To adapt the DIALECT methodology and training toolkits to respond to the developmental and educational needs of children aged 10-12 in the four partner countries.
- To develop the capacities of 20 DIALECT4 trainers and mediators across the four countries to engage and work with children aged 10-12, boosting the children's resilience to extremist views and their media and digital literacy skills through football for inclusion.

- To develop the life skills and media and digital literacy capacities of 95 children (10-12 years old) from the four partner countries through pilot testing of the adapted toolkits.
- To sustain and enhance the existing local youth DIALECT teams (13-17 years old) and to scale up youth-led initiatives with the active involvement of local children.
- To raise awareness at EU level and facilitate the transferability of DIALECT4 outputs and results to sports organisations, football academies, CSOs and community members across the EU.

The project is implemented by a consortium of five partners: ActionAid Hellas (coordinator, Greece), EKKE – National Centre for Social Research (Greece), ActionAid Italia (Italy), MESE 2.0 (Hungary) and Football Friends (Serbia). Common Goal and the UEFA Foundation for Children are associated partners. The work is structured across five work packages covering management and M&E (WP1), adaptation of the methodology (WP2), pilot testing with children (WP3), sustaining local youth teams and youth-led initiatives (WP4), and dissemination and transferability (WP5).

2.3. Aim and objectives of the external evaluation

The external evaluation is expected to achieve the following objectives:

- Establish a body of knowledge synthesising the project's evidence base and the data collected in the context of the evaluation and/or supporting secondary data, assessing the intervention's rationale and implementation.
- Assess the intervention's context relevance and coherence with other interventions, while considering the European added value of the project outcomes.
- Assess the project's efficiency, sustainability and transferability potential, integrating gender equality and child safeguarding considerations. Effectiveness and reach are covered by the internal evaluation; the external evaluator addresses them only on the basis of secondary data and does not duplicate that exercise.
- Identify good practices, challenges and barriers affecting the project's implementation and provide recommendations for future similar actions.

The external evaluation is complementary to, and distinct from, two other exercises: (a) the internal evaluation carried out by AAH's M&E Unit, which focuses on effectiveness and reach and will be combined with the external evaluation in Deliverable D1.2; and (b) the impact assessment led by EKKE under Task 4.5, which measures shifts in children's attitudes and skills and is reported separately in Deliverable D4.1. The external evaluator may draw on findings from the internal evaluation and the impact assessment as secondary data but is not asked to duplicate them.

2.4. Data and methods

The external evaluation is expected to use both primary and secondary research tools. Primary research activities (focus groups, interviews, online questionnaires) are expected to be carried out with the project's key beneficiaries and stakeholders, notably:

- The five consortium partners (AAH, EKKE, AAIT, MESE 2.0, Football Friends), through interviews or focus groups.
- DIALECT4 trainers and mediators involved in the pilot testing across the four countries.
- Sports and football coaches engaged in the pilot testing phase.

- Where feasible, representatives of associated members (Common Goal, UEFA Foundation for Children) and of local stakeholders reached through dissemination and transferability activities.

Direct contact with child participants (10-12 years old) is not permitted under this assignment, for safeguarding reasons. Any reference to children's experiences or outcomes must come from mediated sources: trainer, mediator and coach feedback, or secondary data shared by EKKE from the T4.5 impact assessment.

Applicants should note that the pilot testing with children is completed before the start of this assignment. The evaluation is therefore summative and ex-post in nature and relies on project documentation & monitoring data. Proposals built on baseline measurement or on direct observation of pilot activities will be considered unfeasible.

ActionAid Hellas will hand over a complete documentation pack, comprising the description of the project (Annex 1 of the Grant Agreement), the project handbook and monitoring plan, the deliverables produced to date, monitoring data and the material of the internal evaluation.

Candidates should provide detailed methodology in their technical offer.

3. Deliverables and Key Dates

3.1. Deliverables

The selected applicant will provide the following deliverables:

- An evaluation plan, detailing the approach, methods and tools to be used.
- A final external evaluation report, in English, electronic format, approximately 40 pages excluding annexes, addressing the evaluation objectives in Section 2.3 and including a methodology section, key findings, conclusions and recommendations to inform future programming.

The final structure and content of the deliverables will be finalised in cooperation with the selected applicant during the first phase of the assignment. The final report will feed into Deliverable D1.2 (Final Internal and External Evaluation Report), classified as Sensitive.

3.2. Key Dates

The assignment is expected to run for approximately 13 weeks, from 21/09/2026 to 24/12/2026.

07/09/2026: Proposals due

21/09/2026: Contract signature and starting day

25/09/2026: Kick-off meeting with AAH and start of desk review

09/10/2026: Detailed evaluation plan shared with AAH (evaluation questions, objectives, tools, focus areas)

05/11/2026: AAH shares the preliminary findings of the impact assessment with the evaluator

20/11/2026: Fieldwork completed across the four countries

12/12/2026: 1st draft shared with AAH for review

24/12/2026: Final deliverable submitted and accepted by AAH

4. Submission requirements

To be considered under this Call, please submit the following:

4.1. Technical Proposal

A narrative proposal (no more than 10 pages excluding annexes) including the following sections:

- **Methodology:** describe your overall approach and methodology including, but not limited to, research questions, research design, and data collection methods, with attention to the four-country scope.
- **Relevant Experience:** provide details of projects of similar scope, complexity and nature that you have worked on previously.
- **Specific Expertise:** describe your level of knowledge and expertise on social development projects, especially on inclusion, anti-radicalisation and children/youth empowerment, and relevant background within the sports sector. Also describe your expertise in desk reviews and data synthesis.
- **Key Personnel and Staffing:** describe the key personnel and a staffing plan. Include CVs (no more than 3 pages each, attached as annex) of key personnel who would be part of the proposed plan.
- **Timeline:** include a detailed timeline of key activities, aligned with Section 3.2.

4.2. Financial proposal

The financial proposal must be expressed in euro and must be all-inclusive, covering fees, travel, translation and any other cost necessary to deliver the assignment. It must set out separately the fees per team member and per day, any reimbursable items, and applicable VAT and withholding tax. Payment terms are set by ActionAid Hellas as follows: 30% upon written approval of the evaluation plan and 70% upon written acceptance of the final report. Invoices are payable within thirty (30) days of acceptance of the corresponding deliverable.

4.3. Declaration by the applicant

Applicants must submit, together with the technical and financial proposals, a signed declaration confirming that:

- they are not aware of any conflict of interest in relation to ActionAid Hellas or to any member of the DIALECT4 consortium, and undertake to declare immediately any such situation arising during the assignment;
- neither the applicant nor any of its personnel is subject to restrictive measures adopted under Article 29 of the Treaty on European Union or Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

5. Criteria of Selection

Applicants may be individuals, groups of individuals with a designated team lead, or firms. Proposals will be assessed against the following weighted criteria, out of a total of 100 points. Only proposals scoring at least 70 points in total, and at least 60% of the points available for the methodology criterion, will be considered for award.

- i. Methodology and evaluation design - 30 points
- ii. Demonstrated experience in conducting desk reviews and/or project evaluations - 15 points
- iii. Demonstrated relevant experience and familiarity with the thematic areas of interest, namely inclusion, anti-radicalisation, children and youth empowerment and sport - 15 points
- iv. Key personnel: composition, seniority and relevance of the proposed team - 15 points
- v. Capacity to conduct research in Greece, Italy, Hungary and Serbia, including language coverage, directly or through arrangements with local support - 10 points
- vi. Cost effectiveness - 15 points

6. Selection Process

All proposals submitted by the deadline will be carefully reviewed based on the established selection criteria. The selection process may involve interviews with applicants. The final decision will be based on the overall quality of the technical proposal and value for money.

ActionAid Hellas reserves the right to reject or cancel any submission at any time prior to agreement if it is in the best interests of the project and ActionAid Hellas.

Upon signature of the agreement, the selected applicant and any personnel it engages must sign and abide by ActionAid Hellas' Child Safeguarding Policy, Policy on the Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Harassment and Abuse (SHEA), Code of Conduct, Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy, which are annexed to this Call.

Applicants will be informed of the outcome in writing. ActionAid Hellas is under no obligation to award a contract under this Call and incurs no liability towards applicants should it decide not to do so.

Before signing the agreement, the selected applicant will be required to provide proof of legal establishment and tax registration.

The assignment will be formalised through a service agreement governed by Greek law, reflecting the obligations applicable to subcontractors under Grant Agreement No 101184384. In particular, the agreement will require the transfer to ActionAid Hellas of the economic rights in all results produced under the assignment, including the right to pass on equivalent rights of use to EACEA and the European Union.

7. Contact

Proposals related to the Call should be sent by email to ioanna.papadopoulos@actionaid.org and marina.kaloumenou@actionaid.org until 07/09/2026, 23:59 Athens, Greece time. Any queries should be submitted to the same addresses by the deadline set out in Section 1. Subject line should read "DIALECT4 external evaluation proposal". The proposal must contain a technical proposal and a financial offer.

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