

Research Project Coordinator in the Western Balkans Shared Horizons Project Request for Quotation

As part of the “Shared Horizons” project, which looks to strengthen public debate and research on contemporary issues in the Western Balkans (October 2024-October 2026), the French Institute (the cultural agency of the French Foreign Affairs Ministry) would like to bring together early career researchers from the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia) and French researchers, to reflect on the opportunities offered by collectively researching and writing history, as well as by new methods of dissemination and mediation. This group will meet regularly, on-site and virtually (3 on-site workshops in 2025, 3 on-site workshops in 2026).

The French Institute is looking for a project coordinator to lead the research group and support the organization of workshops during the period from March 2025 to November 2026.

The French Institute

The French Institute is a public industrial and commercial establishment (EPIC). Under both supervision of the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Culture, it is the operator of France's external cultural action. As such, it helps to disseminate the French language, the arts, culture and knowledge throughout the world. It relies on a vast network of embassies, French institutes abroad and *Alliances françaises* in most countries of the world. Within this network, the ‘Public Debate and Civil Society’ unit promotes French intellectual life and support its dialogue with foreign civil societies.

Shared Horizons Project

In 2025, the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs and Expertise France are launching the ‘Shared Horizons’ project, which focuses on young people and promoting the reconciliation of historical narratives in the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Northern Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia). This project will address issues of historical memory and help outline common perspectives, particularly within the European context. The project is based on four components: the development of exchanges between young people of the Western Balkans (I), the development of a shared historical heritage (II), the fight against nationalist hate speech and the promotion of a positive European narrative (III) and the fostering of a conversation around a shared European future (IV).

The Institut français is responsible for implementing the fourth component through three activities:

- Two large public debate events, the ‘European Dialogues’, in 2025 and 2026;
- Advocacy training for a group of sixteen young people from the Western Balkans and France;
- Research workshops for early career researchers to reflect on the opportunities offered by collectively researching and writing history, as well as by new methods of dissemination and mediation.

This third activity will bring together early career researchers (12) from the Western Balkans and French researchers (4). They will work in the following way:

1. Participants will **meet virtually several times during 2025**. The frequency and dates of the meetings will be decided according to need and in consultation with the whole group;
2. **Twice during 2025**, the group of researchers will meet in two of the six countries in the region for private workshops. The two sessions will take place in the **spring (end of March) and the summer (June) 2025**. These two sessions will consider the methodological and epistemological issues involved in collective and global history in the Western Balkans (1), identify the main challenges and the possible limitations of such projects, before listing the subjects of study (2);
3. During a large public debate event to be held in Sarajevo **in the last quarter of 2025, as part of the European Dialogues series**, the group will propose a special program intended as an introduction to the work already undertaken. This program will take the form of a one-day conference, open and/or closed to the public. The project manager and the group of researchers will design the program for this day.
4. **In 2026**, a similar work schedule will be set. Depending on the progress of the discussions and the dynamics of the working group, a publication project could be pursued.

Type of Service Expected

Dates: 1 February 2025 to 30 October 2026

Participants: early career non-native English-speaking researchers (PhD in progress or defended within the last 5 years)

Number of participants: 16

Number of sessions: 6 sessions (three per year)

The French Institute is looking for a service provider to provide the following services:

1. Facilitation of research workshops for early career researchers: facilitation of discussions, collective intelligence exercises, definition and facilitation of sub-groups (28 hours of face-to-face workshops + 8 hours of participation in the European Dialogues + preparation time for the workshops);
2. Logistical support for the organization of the face-to-face workshops, with the support of the French Institute team (10 hours per workshop);
3. Follow-up of research workshop deliverables (publications, podcasts, maps, etc.) (20h per workshop);

Skills and prerequisites

- Knowledge of the higher education and research ecosystem and stakeholders in the Western Balkans;
- Commitment to the human and social sciences;
- Group and/or community management ;
- Proven experience in organising events;
- Fluency in English (C1) and preferably French.

Budget

The estimated maximum amount for carrying out the above services is €8,000 excluding VAT per year. The service will be the subject of an order form. 50% of the payment will be made on presentation of the quotation, 50% on completion of the service.

Deadline and contacts

The deadline for submitting applications is 15 January 2025 at 20:00, Paris time. Proposals should be sent to:

Zara Fournier, Project Manager, Public Debate
Zara.fournier@institutfrancais.com

Baptiste Gaich, Project Officer, Youth and Civil Society
baptiste.gaich@institutfrancais.com

Please copy your email to:

François-Ronan Dubois, Head of the "Public Debate and Civil Society" team
Francoisronan.dubois@institutfrancais.com

For any questions regarding this call for interest, please write to Zara Fournier.

The results will be notified during the week of January 15, 2025. Work on workshops with the French Institute will begin early February.

Needed Documents

The French Institute would like to receive the following documents:

1. CV of the service provider (he/she must be attached to a company or have a self-employed status)
2. A detailed action plan (interpretation of the research workshop theme, group progress, proposed deliverables - 4 pages maximum);
3. Detailed quote;
4. Project schedule;

Applicants are free to provide any additional documentation they feel would be helpful to the Institut Français during the selection process.

Selection criterias

The criteria used to analyse the proposals are the following:

- Candidate's profile (CV, experience) (20 points)
- References provided by the candidate (20 points)
- Quality of the detailed action plan, its innovative nature and its relevance to the Western Balkans (20 points)
- Quality of the proposal in terms of work methodology (20 points)
- Amount of the estimate (20 points)

The selected proposal may be subject to adjustments at the request of the Institut français.