

Terms of Reference

Mid-Term Evaluation of the Maharat Project

Project Title: Maharat: Building Careers in Performing Arts

Implementing organisation: Ettijahat – Independent Culture

Funding agency: DROSOS FOUNDATION

Location: Beirut, Lebanon

Deadline for submission: 25 February 2024

Implementation Period: March-May 2024

Duration: 20 days

1. Introduction

DROSOS FOUNDATION is a non-profit entity dedicated to unlocking the potential of young people by supporting them to become economically empowered and resilient. Established in 2003 and based in Zürich, Switzerland, DROSOS seeks long-term impact through its supported projects in Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Switzerland and Germany. In Lebanon, DROSOS is operational and active since 2005, serving a wide range of beneficiaries including children, youth, women and adults in marginalized communities.

Ettijahat is a cultural organisation working to promote independent culture across the Arab world. Founded in 2011, Ettijahat's goal is to activate the role of independent artists in enabling cultural and social change by supporting artists and cultural entrepreneurs, empowering young researchers, building consensus and alliances between individuals and cultural institutions, promoting art and artists through regional and international platforms, and making art and culture more accessible to local and international communities and audiences.

DROSOS FOUNDATION supports Ettijahat Independent Culture in the implementation of the project titled '*Maharat: Building Careers in Performing Arts*', running from 1 May 2019 until 30 April 2025. As part of this support, DROSOS FOUNDATION seeks to evaluate the impact of a specific component of the project – the technical production skills training (Objective 1 of the project).

2. Project summary

The Maharat project provides the opportunity to develop knowledge and to apply it practically through training, according to a curriculum designed and conducted by the best experts in Lebanon and the Arab region. In addition, the programme provides intensive training opportunities, artistic residencies and lectures in collaboration with well-respected artistic organizations and entities operating in the Arab Region, which are open for the public to attend, particularly

university students, artistic entities, and artists seeking to further develop their craft. Maharat focuses on the interaction between the independent cultural sector and the private sector, to enhance the role of the performing arts on a social level, which eliminates the concept of centrality, reduces the chances of unemployment, increases the stability of the creative sector, and strengthens the local experience. The project has the following objectives:

- a) *Objective 1: Young people from underprivileged backgrounds gain the technical skills in production arts to find gainful employment in the independent or commercial arts sectors in Lebanon.*
 - 80 young people undergo an intensive programme focusing on technical production skills (e.g. light/sound design, stage mechanics, scenery installation and construction, production and set design, stage/production management, etc.), as well as trainings entailing theoretical and practical sessions (history of theatrical arts, concepts on performing arts, such as scenography, architecture, concepts and history of lighting, sound and its relationship with performance, theatre space, traditions and customs). After the training, trainees choose the technical area in which they want to specialize and they are placed in internships with 35 artistic companies, productions or events.
- b) *Objective 2: Production technicians develop their skills and expand their knowledge, and raise the level of professionalism across artistic and cultural sectors, through free online access to educational resources in Arabic.*
 - A user-friendly, stable, and secure web-series content is established to serve as a free digital library of resources accessible to at least 4'000 Arabic speaking production artists. The platform serves as an important tool for the training programme participants.
 - Production of 3 series of digital and knowledge-based resources that promote the democratization of art and creativity, documenting Lebanon's and the Arab region's experiences in the field of production and strengthening the contribution of the creative sector to public life, in addition to sharing production experiences in difficult circumstances in the Arab region and in the context of the Global South.
- c) *Objective 3: New links are established between project trainees, arts and culture professionals, and employers in the independent or commercial arts sectors, providing opportunities for employment, collaboration and the sharing of knowledge.*
 - Develop an exploratory framework to develop business models for ten small and medium-sized performing arts enterprises in the Levant and strengthen their skills, expertise and knowledge to better reach at least 3,000 people from the communities in which they operate and reduce the economic marginalization of these communities.

3. Purpose and objectives of the assignment

DROSOS FOUNDATION, in collaboration with Ettijahat, is seeking the expertise of a consultant to conduct a comprehensive assessment of Objective 1 of the project titled 'Maharat: Building Careers in Performing Arts'. The specific objectives of the assignment are as follows:

1. Evaluate the current status of the technical training programme and its effectiveness in achieving the objectives of the Maharat project;
2. Examine the impact of the technical training on the development and sustainability of the performing arts sector, especially in Lebanon; and
3. Consolidate the lessons learned and provide recommendations to enhance the performance of the future editions of the training.

The assessment is expected to be guided by the following key questions:

- To what extent does the design of the training programme take into account the different training needs of the target group?
- Do the different components of the training programme allow for increased engagement of the beneficiaries within the creative sector in Lebanon?
- Does the design and implementation of this programme take into account the specific circumstances of the economic collapse in Lebanon and to what extent does it adapt to its consequences for the production scene?
- To what extent has this programme provided additional expertise for the performing arts scene in Lebanon and its needs?

The consultant will work closely with the Ettijahat team, under the overall guidance of the DROSOS Programme Manager.

4. Methodology

The evaluation will draw data from the following sources:

- Desk-based review of relevant documents, including: Maharat's project document and interim reports submitted to DROSOS FOUNDATION, syllabus of the training, internal yearly evaluations of the training and evaluation by the beneficiaries, information on beneficiaries, list of partnerships, videos and photos of the training, 2019 Needs Assessment, Ettijahat's 10 year Evaluation Report;
- Interviews with Ettijahat staff, students, alumni, trainers and partners; and
- Qualitative and quantitative analysis of collected data.

The estimated duration of this assignment is 20 working days, which includes activities such as desk-based reviews, interviews (in person and/or online), and preparation and writing of the inception, draft and final reports in English.

Ettijahat and DROSOS FOUNDATION will be responsible for the following:

- Providing the necessary documentation;
- Reviewing and providing feedback on findings and reports;
- Identifying and engaging relevant stakeholders (trainees, trainers, stakeholders and others); and
- Assisting in coordinating meetings with beneficiaries and stakeholders; and

- Approval of the final report.

5. Deliverables

- Inception report: To be submitted by 15 March 2024. The report will consist of the project's intervention logic, an evaluation plan, including a list of stakeholders to be reviewed and the reviewed documents. The evaluation plan will outline the proposed data collection methods and sources for each evaluation question/dimension, accompanied by an evaluation matrix connecting the questions to the data collection methods/sources.
- Draft evaluation report: To be submitted by 1 May 2024. The draft evaluation report will be shared and discussed with DROSOS FOUNDATION and Ettijahat.
- Final evaluation report: to be submitted by 31 May 2024. The final evaluation report will incorporate feedback and other relevant comments received during the review of the draft report.

The final report should include, but is not limited to, the following elements: an executive summary, project description, evaluation purpose and methods, major findings presented in terms of achievements and challenges, conclusions and recommendations, lessons learned, and factors contributing to the achievement or lack thereof of results. All documents, such as the Terms of Reference, interview list, data collection instruments, and key documents consulted, should be included as annexes.

6. Timeline

The assignment is expected to take place between March and May 2024. The findings of the evaluation will be a key element for the development of the fourth edition of the training programme. For this reason, it is essential that the evaluation is concluded by 31 May 2024. The total effort for the consultancy is expected to amount to maximum 20 days.

7. Expected experience

The consultancy team is composed of one or more experts with specific profiles and qualifications:

- A solid understanding and practical experience in applying action research
- Strong experience in project design, monitoring and evaluation
- Extensive experience in the field of performing arts
- Comprehensive and accurate knowledge of the working conditions in Lebanon and its current challenges: security, social and economic
- Ability to work with an artistic organisation
- Excellent report writing and presentation skills in English and in Arabic.

8. Consultants' proposal

Interested individual consultants or a team of consultants are invited to submit a technical and financial offer including the following:

- Capability statement describing the profile and expertise of the consultant(s) and similar tasks performed in the past, including references and previously drafted reports or extracts thereof;
- CV(s) of the proposed consultant(s);
- If a team, the composition of the evaluation team appropriate to complete the required tasks;
- Technical proposal including the evaluation methodology proposed, the estimated level of effort (broken down per person) and tentative work plan with deliverables; and
- Financial proposal with a detailed budget in USD.

9. How to apply

Deadline to submit proposals is 25 February.

The complete technical and financial proposal should be submitted by email to:

- Giulia Pianigiani, DROSOS FOUNDATION Programme Manager
pianigiani@drosos.org

Please state – “Mid-Term Evaluation Maharat Project” in the subject line.

Kindly include in your email how you heard about these ToRs.
