



## USAID Diaspora Invest Project

### Call for Expressions of Interest RFA-2023-8 Nominations for Membership in Diaspora Business Advisory Council (DiaBAC)

Title:	Call for Expression of Interest for Nominations – Diaspora Business Advisory Council (DiaBAC)
Objective:	To leverage the expertise and influence of Bosnian and Herzegovinian business leaders residing abroad in promoting sustainable business practices, enhancing trade and investment, and facilitating knowledge transfer to foster socio-economic growth in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
Work Plan Reference:	Activity 3.5: Diaspora Advocacy and Public-Private Dialogue
Application Deadline:	20 September 2023 at 5:00 PM CEST
Start Date:	12 October 2023 (Launch of DiaBAC)
End Date:	12 October 2027
Languages:	English, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian

#### Background

The USAID Diaspora Project is a five-year program that aims to catalyze the potential of the BiH diaspora to advance the country's socio-economic development. The Project is fostering local communities' engagement with the diaspora and mobilizing diaspora investment and knowledge transfer to stimulate economic growth and create jobs. The Project builds on USAID's past successes in diaspora engagement in BiH.

The Project aims to achieve its purpose through a combination of interconnected technical interventions structured across four main components: (i) strengthen local governments' abilities to engage diaspora in local economic development; (ii) expand direct investment to high-potential diaspora and/or diaspora-related MSMEs, startups, and joint ventures; (iii) stimulate transfer of diaspora knowledge and investment capital to local companies to support business growth and inspire social change; and (iv) expand access to existing and new financial instruments that enable flow of private capital to MSMEs and startups operating in BiH.

The USAID Diaspora Invest Project provides support in connecting BiH diaspora professionals with MSMEs locating in BiH to support their investment in BiH, enhance company performance, improve or expand developmental impact, and strengthen market linkages with local and international buyers and suppliers.

The objective of this program is to leverage the knowledge, skills, and networks of BiH diaspora members to enhance entrepreneurship, business development, and export capabilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The program aims to establish a pool of mentors and export agents who can guide and assist aspiring entrepreneurs, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), and startups in BiH in expanding their businesses and accessing international markets.

## **Call for Expression of Interest**

We are actively seeking expressions of interest from distinguished members of the BiH diaspora community. Individuals are encouraged to either nominate themselves or recommend other deserving members from the BiH diaspora for potential inclusion in the Diaspora Business Council (DiaBAC). This council will foster a symbiotic relationship between diaspora members and local BiH entities, promoting mutual growth and development.

## **Purpose and Membership**

The Diaspora Business Advisory Council (DiaBAC or Council) will be launched as an informal group of senior business leaders of Bosnian and Herzegovinian heritage, who live and work beyond their homeland. The Council aims to play a pivotal role in bridging the gap between the local business community in Bosnia and Herzegovina and global markets. The primary objective of DiaBAC is to offer guidance and recommendations to key stakeholders within the country on fostering trade and investment opportunities, transferring knowledge and know-how, and nurturing talent within Bosnia and Herzegovina and its diaspora.

DiaBAC will emphasize the importance of social responsibility and advocate for positive business practices, recognizing these as crucial elements for the sustained growth of businesses and increased prosperity of citizens in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These values will be deeply ingrained within the practices of the Council as it endeavors to effect positive change within the business landscape.

The success of DiaBAC hinges upon securing support and active involvement from influential individuals within the business communities at home and abroad. Therefore, the Council will strive to create and propagate a compelling case for their continued engagement. DiaBAC promote a growth platform for Bosnia and Herzegovina that focuses on leveraging innovative technologies, adopting sustainable practices, and ensuring that the benefits of economic growth are distributed equitably across all segments of society.

DiaBAC will create and foster business linkages between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the rest of the world through targeted trade, investment, and knowledge exchange initiatives; and provide advice and recommendations to the business leaders and policymakers in the country on longer-term actions and initiatives to help BiH businesses successfully compete in the 21st century markets.

The Council is committed to inclusivity and diversity in its membership. It aims to reflect the broader Bosnia and Herzegovina's diaspora community, including the business sector, the academia, and the civil society. The membership of the Council is based on merit and DiaBAC will welcome applications from all eligible individuals.

In selecting new members, DiaBAC will consider a range of factors, including seniority, experience, expertise, representation, reputation, credibility, networking capacity, and commitment of potential members to contribute to the Council's mandate. DiaBAC is an apolitical group and, as such, members should refrain from promoting any political affiliations within the work of the Council.

The Diaspora Business Advisory Council recognizes the importance of regular and effective communication to achieve its mandate. DiaBAC will meet twice each year unless otherwise agreed upon by the membership, with at least one of these meetings taking place in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Meetings will take place by videoconference/teleconference or in person, when conditions allow for in-person meetings.

DiaBAC is committed to transparency and will distribute the meeting agenda and discussion documents four weeks before a meeting. Draft key messages from the meetings will be distributed to

members within two weeks after a meeting, with a summary of proceedings published within six weeks of a meeting.

## **Selection Criteria**

Selection Criteria are set in accordance with the mandate of DiaBAC to promote a growth platform for Bosnia and Herzegovina that focuses on leveraging innovative technologies, adopting sustainable practices, and ensuring that the benefits of economic growth are distributed equitably across all segments of society. This includes:

**Expertise** - DiaBAC seeks to have members with diverse expertise in a range of fields and industries that are relevant to the business community in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This includes individuals with experience and knowledge in areas such as manufacturing, information technology, finance, professional services, energy, environment, R&D, transport, health, and other areas. Members with varied professional backgrounds can provide insight into different industries and sectors, which can be critical to: (i) creating and fostering impactful international B2B connections, (ii) generating relevant recommendations for a more competitive private sector, (iii) identifying meaningful areas for advocacy of reforms that will promote smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth in BiH.

**Reputation** - The reputation of potential DiaBAC members is a critical part of the membership selection process. Public opinion and perceptions of the Council members should reflect their excellent performance, character, integrity, trustworthiness, and public image. As reputation is typically built over time, DiaBAC will aim to mobilize members who have established a long-term positive track record in their respective fields, which would inspire confidence and trust within the local business community.

**Credibility** - DiaBAC will be seeking members that are trustworthy and reliable, with a proven track record in their professional fields. Members should also display an inclusive and progressive mindset and be committed to working towards the Council's objectives in a constructive and collaborative manner. Individuals who have a reputation for being impartial, level-headed, and respectful of differing viewpoints will be favored in the selection process. Furthermore, the Council will also consider candidates who have a track record of building bridges between different communities, fostering dialogue and understanding, and promoting peaceful coexistence. These qualities are essential for creating a positive and productive environment for the Council to operate in and will help to ensure that its initiatives have a lasting and meaningful impact on the local business community.

**Networking Capacity** - DiaBAC aims to leverage the connections and networks of its members to promote business cooperation and investment between the diaspora and the local business community. Members who have extensive networks in their host countries and can foster connections beyond the participating members will be especially valuable to the Council. To ensure that members have the necessary networking capacity, the selection process will prioritize individuals who have experience working in cross-cultural environments and have a track record of building relationships and partnerships across borders and/or within BiH diaspora communities.

**Commitment** - The commitment of each DiaBAC member to contribute to the Council's objectives and volunteer their time and resources towards achieving these objectives is a key criterion for their selection. The success of the council depends on the active participation and engagement of its members in the various activities and initiatives that will be undertaken. Members are expected to attend meetings, actively participate in discussions, and provide constructive feedback and input towards achieving the Council's goals.

Additionally, members will be encouraged to actively promote the Council's initiatives and advocate for its objectives within their respective networks and communities. This level of commitment is

essential to ensure the Council's effectiveness and impact in promoting business, investment, and diaspora engagement in BiH.

### **Selection Process**

After reviewing the nominated candidates, the USAID Diaspora Invest Project will initiate contact with qualified individuals. Candidates will be approached through official channels and any available contacts we have on record.

These candidates will be provided with a set of Terms of Reference. This document will outline the project's expectations and will request the nominees' commitment by signing the DiaBAC membership pledge.

This pledge is being developed as a concise one-page statement. Moreover, all committed candidates will be invited to participate in an online launch session, which is tentatively scheduled for October 12, 2023.

### **Application Content and Contact Information**

The online application for the DiaBAC is available at: <https://bit.ly/diabc2023>. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Requests for additional information should be directed to [info@diasporainvest.ba](mailto:info@diasporainvest.ba) (please include the words "DiaBAC" in the subject line of the email).

The deadline for applications is September 20, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.