

# Terms of Reference

## Impact Assessment Concordia Academia (CA)

### Context and Background:

CONCORDIA Academia (hereafter CA, [www.concordia-academia.org](http://www.concordia-academia.org)) is the training department of CONCORDIA Humanitarian Organisation in Eastern Europe. It started in 2014 to meet the internal training needs of the organisation (more than 600 staff at the time) and gradually expanded its training services to external partners in the social field.

CA is driven by the vision to equip social service professionals in Eastern Europe with the best possible tools, resources and networks, so that they can provide consistently high-quality and sustainable support services for people in need. To this end, CA offers certified training courses in an experiential learning environment as well as consultancy, coaching and supervision to social service professionals in Romania and the Republic of Moldova. CA plans to extend its activity furtherly in Moldova by opening a local office and, in the future, to Bulgaria as well.

CA currently offers three main training products with a duration of 5-12 months each. These are: (1) Social Management, (2) Practitioners in the Social Field and (3) Supervision in the Social Field. What makes them unique is the fact that these courses can be open to entire multidisciplinary teams rather than being tailored to one specific professional group (e.g., psychologists, social workers, pedagogues, etc.). Out of these main products, different other short/long trainings are developed based on linked topics. Besides these courses, CA also provides training participants a platform for networking and exchange, building up a Community of Practice, as well as support services (coaching and supervision).

CA is managed by a core team of 7 key staff. 3 training product managers (each being responsible for one of the main products), 1 project assistant (also responsible for communication), 1 responsible for financial issues, 1 manager responsible for the development of CA in the Republic of Moldova and 1 director (for overall coordination across both countries).

CA has only recently started into its 2<sup>nd</sup> strategy cycle (1<sup>st</sup> cycle: 2017-2020) with its own strategic approach based on six strategic pillars (current cycle: 2021-2024)<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The strategic objectives are as follows: (1) CA has a reliable pool of well skilled and highly motivated trainers and supervisors; (2) CA has the relevant management capacities and infrastructure to deliver its services; (3) CA engages in strategic partnerships; (4) CA Trainings and consultancies are highly qualitative in terms of content and methods; (5) CA is seen as a reliable, competent service provider of choice; and (6) CA has the needed financial resources in order to cover all planned activities.

## **Purpose and Objectives of the Impact Study:**

The **purpose** of this planned impact study is to assess the changes (intended, unintended, positive and negative) that have occurred (1) on the individual level (i.e., in the professional lives of former training participants; CA core team members, trainers and supervisors; network partners); and (2) the organisational/institutional level (i.e., the organisation's departments/units/divisions, where the training participants work).

The **specific objectives** are:

- (1) To assess the individual skills and capacity development of former training participants, the CA core team and CA trainers and supervisors and determine to what extent these have led to changes in their organisations (i.e., teams, units, departments, etc.).
- (2) To identify specific recommendations for future activities.

The study therefore has a strong learning focus.

The findings of this impact study will provide insights into the change processes triggered and/or contributed to by CA and, in so doing, will help us to continuously learn and navigate our interventions towards reaching our six strategic objectives.

The findings will also provide the basis for setting up a MEL (Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning) Framework starting in 2022 to foster continuous learning within CA.

The intended primary users of this impact study are the CA core team and CA national and international staff (e.g., national directors). Secondary users will be other training and capacity development organisations similar in scope and size to CA as well as the donor organisations– all of these will be able to use the findings for future programming.

## **Scope and Timing of the Impact Study:**

The impact study will cover activities that have taken place since 2019.

The impact study will take place between September and December 2021 – to have sufficient time to develop and fine-tune a MEL framework that will be launched in the first quarter of 2022.

## Evaluation Questions (EQs):

**EQ 1:** To what extent have the training participants enhanced knowledge or improved skills or attitudes? What is their self-perception?

**EQ 2:** To what extent do the (former) training participants apply the methods and tools they have learnt in the training in their day-to-day work? How valuable are they perceived?

**EQ 3:** How well do the skills participants have learnt in the training match the needs of their working environments?

**EQ 4:** Can any day-to-day work practices/routines in the participants' work contexts be observed for which the CA training (and support services such as coaching/supervision) has been a strong enabling force? What are the barriers, if any?

**EQ 5:** To what extent have team dynamics of the training participants changed as a result of CA's training/support services (coaching or supervision)? What were the particular aspects that made a difference?

**EQ 6:** Which new partnerships have emerged as a result of being part of the training programs/services? Which have produced the most positive impacts and why? What helped or hindered to achieve these impacts?

**EQ 7:** What unintended effects – positive and negative – has CA's training programme produced with the different stakeholder groups?

## Design and Approach:

This impact study will use a non-experimental design in order to assess the causal links between CA's activities and the observed changes (*causal attribution*). We will use a theory-based approach – meaning that the evaluator(s) will base their evaluative framework on a Theory of Change model (which shall be refined by the evaluator(s)).

We propose a mixed-methods approach (combining quantitative and qualitative methods and tools) to increase the variety of information and insights, and to allow for method and data triangulation in order to enhance the reliability and credibility of findings.

We look forward to receiving a fully detailed evaluation methodology and set of data collection methods from the evaluator(s) with their inception report.

## Workplan and Deliverables:

The evaluator(s) has to deliver the following report within the timeframe proposed below.

- Inception Report (max. 10 pages, without annexes)
- Draft Impact Study Report (max. 30 pages, without annexes)
- Final Impact Study Report

The evaluator(s) shall submit the deliverables in English, making them reader-friendly by including tables, boxes and graphs when appropriate. The recommendations shall be concrete, specific and addressed to clearly identified recipients.

The following timeframe is tentative and will be finally agreed with the contractor in the contracting phase.

<b>Date of deadline</b>	<b>Phase</b>	<b>Responsible person</b>
05.09.2021	Deadline for applications	CA
15.09.2021	Selection of evaluator and contracting	CA
30.09.2021	Desk study: Inception phase (review of documents, preliminary interviews)	Evaluator
15.10.2021	Deadline submission Inception Report	Evaluator
Oct/Nov 2021	Field Study: Data collection, analysis, interpretation & synthesis	Evaluator
15.11.2021	Deadline submission of Draft Evaluation Report to CA for feedback and quality assurance	Evaluator
30.11.2021	CA provides feedback	CA
15.12.2021	Deadline submission Final Evaluation Report	Evaluator

We estimate a total of 25 working days for this impact study. The total budget available for this study is € 13.500.- (incl. VAT).

## Impact Study Management Arrangements:

CA will set up a small steering group for the management of the impact study. The core team will consist of the Product Manager and the Director of CA. The core team will also be backed up by an advisory team consisting of the CA Country Directors and an external evaluation expert.

## Requirements for the Evaluator(s):

A single evaluator or an evaluation team of two persons can apply for this assignment.

### Key Qualifications of the single evaluator or the evaluation team should be:

- Relevant academic degree (master level) in social/economic studies or similar
- A minimum of three years' experience and expertise in the social field/sector in Romania
- Team leader (if a team of two – otherwise this applies to single evaluator) has led at least three evaluations in the last five years ideally in relevant field and has solid expertise in evaluation/impact study design as well as methods, including online
- Knowledge of the Romanian social field context
- Experience in project cycle management and impact measurement
- Experience in social science methods
- Excellent oral and written English skills (the evaluation team should be also capable of communicating in Romanian with the participants to the evaluation)
- Sound MS Office and IT skills

## Specification for the Submission of Offers:

The application that will be submitted in english should include:

- Motivation letter
- CV of organisation and/or evaluator incl. references
- Description of the evaluation team
- Expected costs (total price, differentiated in working days and number of staff, travel costs, other costs).

All **applications should be sent until 05.09.2021** to Bianca Buzetto, CA Product Manager:

[bianca.buzetto@concordia.org.ro](mailto:bianca.buzetto@concordia.org.ro)

Date 12 August 2021

Irina Adascalitei  
Director of CONCORDIA Academia

