

**CRDF GLOBAL
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
RFP-24-UA-2022**

Seeking Subject Matter Experts (SME) on countering disinformation in Ukraine

Summary

CRDF Global seeks a **Subject Matter Experts (SME) in the field of Counter-Disinformation** to serve as an advisor, thought leader and project design specialist to support the organization in designing and delivering effective, adaptive, and innovative Ukrainian capacity-building programming to counter disinformation.

Information operations are a core feature of modern hybrid warfare, whereby malign actors seek to disrupt and destabilize populations, undermine confidence in institutions, and make it difficult to differentiate fact from fiction. Disinformation works not by creating new fears; rather it exploits and amplifies existing issues.

The challenge of disinformation is evidenced by Russia's information operations in Ukraine, the Balkan states, Eastern Europe, and globally. CRDF Global offers trainings, grants, consulting, and technical applications to build whole-of-society capacity to counter such disinformation.

The ability to communicate effectively and to interact with subject matter experts in the field in the government, academic, non-profit, and private sectors is essential for successful performance. The ideal candidate will have a comprehensive understanding of how states use information operations to achieve broader strategic and political objectives and how online networks spread false narratives.

The ideal candidate should have experience and expertise with multiple facets of countering disinformation including governmental strategic communications, developing technical applications to detect the spread of false narratives, factchecking and debunking by media and civil society, and the intersection with digital governance and cybersecurity.

Scope, Tasks and Deliverables:

The selected SME(s) are expected to provide contracted services such as, but not limited to:

- 1) Mapping of ongoing initiatives and actors involved in countering disinformation activities in Ukraine.
- 2) Serving as a technical advisor on counter-disinformation topics through strategy development, thought leadership, and policy recommendations;
- 3) Providing technical leadership in the design, development, planning, and implementation of counter-disinformation programs and projects in coordination with program leads in Ukraine;
- 4) Leading discussions with program leads in developing new business opportunities and required capabilities to expand our counter-disinformation portfolio;
- 5) Providing guidance to ensure that program implementation adheres to appropriate technical standards and guidelines and that programs are technically sound;
- 6) Developing frameworks and tools for the design, implementation, and evaluation of specific technical components including monitoring & evaluation;

- 7) Maintaining a constructive dialogue and technical exchange with field counterparts and technical staff of implementing partners;
- 8) Developing and maintaining collaborative relationships with donor/client organizations, in-country partners (media and civil society organizations, universities), relevant Ukrainian government agencies, and other NGOs;
- 9) Representing CRDF Global at external events such as roundtables and business conferences and making presentations to educate others about programs; remain current on relevant program topics;
- 10) Suggesting a Concept note/Terms of reference for establishing a long-lasting multi-stakeholder system/working group/cluster on countering disinformation;
- 11) Leading research and analysis of existing trends and threats, disinformation campaigns (domestic and cross-national) on digital and traditional platforms for key stakeholders and actors;
- 12) Designing a Concept note for awareness raising campaigns on countering disinformation for different target audiences, age, and gender groups;
- 13) Domestic travel depending on program needs.
- 14) Other relevant tasks and duties as assigned.

Contract for Services:

Following selection, CRDF Global will negotiate a General Services Contract (GSC) with the selected experts – the SME(s).

While the GSC is not a guarantee of any work, the selected SME(s) on a GSC can be engaged by CRDF Global staff with an abbreviated selection process. This allows CRDF Global to potentially leverage the partnership with the SME for strategic initiatives, proposal submissions, and programmatic responses to urgent timelines. The GSC will be structured to allow CRDF Global Agreement Officer(s) to issue Task Orders to the SME upon successful negotiation of scope and budget.

The specific duration of the GSC can be negotiated following selection but is expected to be between 3 – 5 years.

The GSC would seek to negotiate and lock in elements of pricing and cost that are agreeable to both parties.

Selection Requirements and Criteria:

Selection will be based on CRDF Global's evaluation of the Proponent's ability to meet CRDF Global's requirements described below, as well as factors such as competitive pricing, quality of proposal, past performance, and other intangible factors. CRDF Global reserves the right to accept or reject any and all proposals, and to negotiate the terms of any subsequent agreements at its own discretion.

This RFP is open for individual SMEs as well as for entities/companies/organizations offering a single expert or a team of experts to cover the tasks of the assignment.

A successful proposal requires the following qualifications:

Mandatory requirements:

- 5+ years of progressively responsible work experience in counter-disinformation or strategic communications;

- English language full professional proficiency: written and spoken.

Preferable requirements:

- Proven experience and understanding local disinformation context, current disinformation and counter-disinformation trends, issues, and challenges in a global context, including threat actors, vulnerabilities, and effective practices (please include a list with links to relevant publications, articles, editorials etc.);
- Experience in building interagency relationships: between local government officials, private sector, research institutions, academia, and other;
- Experience in successful planning and/or implementation and/or participation in impactful programs in Ukraine;
- Previous experience in presenting ideas/strategies/action plans to senior managers/decision-makers /various stakeholders in multilateral setting. Said experience in a setting would be an asset;
- Demonstrated track record of strategic, holistic, and systemic thinking, and understanding of organizational culture, learning and change management.

Proposal Requirements:

Each proposal must include:

- 1) Technical proposal (according to the attached template), including:
 - Statement of Interest;
 - List of RFP related capabilities and applicable experience (please list project titles, links, etc. to support your application);
 - For individual SMEs:
 - CVs of the SME(s) applying for the assignment;
 - For entities/companies/organizations:
 - General presentation of the company/organization (free form);
 - CVs of the SME(s) offered for the assignment;
- 2) Financial proposal – description of the pricing and cost factors (e.g. hourly rates, fixed-cost pricing on standard services, etc.), that the Proponent would be willing to negotiate i.

All Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated on a rolling basis.

Proposal Submission:

Proposals must be submitted as electronic documents in PDF, Word or Excel format. Proposals should be submitted to procurement@crdfglobal.org with CC to mkoshel@crdfglobal.org and iloik@crdfglobal.org, no later than:

6:00 PM (EEST), March 31, 2023.

The subject line of the email must read:

RFP-24-2022 – (Name of the Proponent) – Proposal

CRDF Global reserves the right to disqualify any proposal submitted after the submission deadline and to annul this RFP at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected proponents or any obligation to inform the affected proponents of the grounds for CRDF Global's action.

Background:

CRDF Global is an independent nonprofit organization founded in 1995 in response to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the threat of large-scale proliferation of weapons technology from the region. With support authorized by the Nunn-Lugar Act of 1991 and the Freedom Support Act of 1992, as well private foundation contributions, CRDF Global embarked on bolstering the global scientific community and fostering alternatives to weapons research.

In the past 25 years, our work has expanded to address ever-changing global concerns, but our commitment to ensuring the success of our partners remains the same. We are a leading provider of flexible logistical support, program design and management, and strategic capacity building programs in the areas of higher education, CBRNE security and nonproliferation, border security, cybersecurity, global health, technology entrepreneurship, and international professional exchanges.

With offices in Arlington, VA; Kyiv, Ukraine; and Amman, Jordan, CRDF Global's diverse staff and networks of local community and government stakeholders deliver tailored programs that meet specific regional needs in over 100 countries across the globe.

Vision Statement:

Our world, healthy, safe, and sustainable.

Mission Statement:

Safety, security, and sustainability through science, innovation, and collaboration.

Values:

We do the right thing.

We care about each other and the people we work with.

We work together to deliver excellence

CRDF Global provides equal opportunities to all qualified individuals without regard to age, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, protected veteran, or disabled status. We are committed to prioritizing an inclusive and collaborative space in which diversity and equity is discussed, championed, and supported. We acknowledge and honor the fundamental value and dignity of all individuals. We pledge ourselves to creating and maintaining an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, and experiences.

More information is available at www.crdfglobal.org.

Solicitation Terms & Conditions:

Right to Select Suppliers. CRDF Global reserves the right to negotiate with and select all qualified suppliers at its own discretion and is not obligated to inform suppliers of the methods used in the selection process. CRDF Global reserves the right to dismiss any and/or all suppliers from the bid process and reject any and/or all proposals.

Obligation. This RFP does not bind nor obligate CRDF Global in any way. CRDF Global makes no representation, either expressed or implied, that it will accept or approve in whole or in part any proposal submitted in response to this RFP. CRDF Global may reward, in whole or in part, the proposal at its sole discretion.

Notification. CRDF Global will notify bidders following completion of the evaluation process, as to whether or not bidders have been awarded the contract. The only information regarding the status of the evaluation of proposals that will be provided to any inquiring bidder shall be whether or not the inquiring bidder has been awarded the contract. CRDF Global may, at its sole discretion, inform any inquiring bidder of the reason(s) as to why it was not awarded the contract

Binding Period. Following the due date of submission of this Proposal, the pricing included in this RFP shall be binding upon the supplier for the duration of the contract.

Hold Harmless. By submitting a response to the RFP, bidder agrees that CRDF Global has sole discretion to select any and/or all suppliers. During or following the conclusion of this process, bidders waive their rights to damages whatsoever attributable to the selection process, materials provided, supplier selection, or any communication associated with the RFP process and supplier selection.

Transfer to Final Contract. The terms and conditions of the RFP, including the specifications and the completed proposal, will become at CRDF Global's sole discretion, part of the final contract (the "Agreement") between CRDF Global and the selected bidder. In the event that responses to the terms and conditions will materially impair a bidder's ability to respond to the RFP, bidder should notify CRDF Global in writing of the impairment. If bidder fails to object to any condition(s) incorporated herein, it shall mean that bidder agrees with, and will comply with the conditions set forth herein.

Exceptions. Any exceptions to the terms and conditions or any additions, which bidder may wish to include in the RFP, should be made in writing and included in the form of an addendum to the applicable Section in the RFP.

CRDF Global Proprietary Information. Supplier agrees that all non-public information contained in this document and communicated verbally in reference to this RFP by CRDF Global shall be received for the sole discretion and purpose of enabling the supplier to submit an accurate response to this RFP. The information contained in this RFP and disclosed during the course of negotiations and communications are proprietary in nature and under no circumstances to be disclosed to a third party without prior written consent from CRDF Global.

Supplier Proprietary Information. Information contained in the response to this RFP will be considered proprietary in nature if marked "confidential" or "proprietary". Such marked documents will not be disclosed to third parties outside CRDF Global with the exception of retained consultants under contractual confidentiality agreements.