

## ENHANCING JOURNALISTIC STANDARDS IN RUSSIA THROUGH THEMED PRESS TOURS

### STATEMENT OF REQUIREMENTS

#### Introduction

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (British Embassy Moscow) is looking for an implementer or consortium to scope, design, deliver and evaluate a programme of interventions that will enhance the skills and capacity of Russian journalists.

#### Objective

To support and develop quality, balanced journalism in Russia, enabling a greater understanding of the UK and UK media standards. The journalists who take part in this project, will as a result, develop a balanced and fact based/ethical approach to reporting on the subject as well as a clearer understanding of the UK and its values. This will in turn support media plurality and expose the wider Russian public to high-quality reporting, based on sourced information. The tours will also widen the knowledge of journalists, connections with the UK and create a network of project participants across Russia.

#### Background

Low quality journalism and the lack of established ethical standards in Russia are well documented. The ability of HMG to respond and to promote our message across Russia is therefore limited. In addition, reporting on the UK and wider foreign policy issues can be unbalanced and subject to bias. Nonetheless there are journalists/outlets with whom we can work.

This project will support a wider regional HMG programme to counter the Russian government's narrative and domination of the media and information space. While an increasing number of Russians consume news sourced from the internet, the majority continue to rely on the traditional print and broadcast media whose content and editorial policy is overwhelmingly set by the government. This project is not an attempt to change how Russians access news, but will work to influence the culture of journalism across Russia with a focus on taking an ethical and facts based approach to reporting.

This project will allow us to increase our capacity to promote positive engagement with more journalists on a regular basis, whilst contributing to improved Russian media standards more generally.

#### Scope

The FCO are asking the implementer to suggest an intervention or interventions that will make a positive impact on the journalistic skills, connection to, and perception of the UK of target individuals. The main target individuals for this project are journalists and on-line influencers at the beginning or middle of their careers. The scope for this project is limited to Russia.

**Please note:** Within this project there are two elements: mandatory and optional. Suppliers can choose whether to submit a proposal in response to the optional element. The mandatory proposal will be evaluated and scored. If suppliers wish to, they can submit the optional proposal as part of the Invitation to Tender documentation but this will not be evaluated or scored. The evaluation panel will not know if a supplier has submitted an optional proposal when evaluating the mandatory proposal. Please do not state or infer within your mandatory proposal whether you have or have not submitted a proposal in response to the optional element.

#### Mandatory:

### **A series of tours to the UK by journalists and on-line influencers.**

We envisage the successful implementer organising regular, week-long tours to the UK by groups of at least 8 Russian journalists and online influencers.

The themes and timing of each press tour should be ideally linked with identified communication/news “hooks” in the UK which are likely to resonate with Russian audiences.

The visits should be themed around relevant issues, touching on priority areas for the UK (as an example the present year’s tours have covered themes including the Rule of Law, Democracy and the Green Economy). The journalists taking part should, where possible, specialise in these areas.

Journalists and on-line influencers should be from as wide a range of media organisations as possible and from as many of Russia’s major cities as is possible.

These tours will provide for participants to travel to the UK and take part in a comprehensive tour. This must include as a minimum: meetings with relevant governmental and non-governmental interlocutors; access to journalists and/or relevant specialists (including academics, campaigners etc.) whom it would normally be difficult for individual journalists to access; and time set aside for discussion of the relevant topic.

Every press tour should result in generation of coverage/articles on the relevant topic, therefore, the implementer will need to stimulate the journalists to work on the articles during and after the press tour and ensure productive follow up after the visit.

The tour should also include a tutorial/educational element where participants are introduced to the best of UK journalism via either training or meeting influential journalists.

#### Optional:

### **A programme of training interventions for Russian journalists and online influencers with UK media institutions and/or universities.**

This could take the form of a programme of mentoring, fellowships in the UK, study visits to UK organisations/institutions and targeted at individuals who are already working as journalists or online influencers. It may also include a “train the trainers” element where we can target those teaching journalism in order to increase the long term the impact of the project. The programme could also propose visits to cities across Russia by UK media experts/figures to run short training programmes. Areas of potential focus might include (but are not restricted to) responsible journalism and fact-checking. This strand could be delivered in tandem with local media organisations and/or universities.

The project implementer will identify a wide range of media organisations across Russia, in consultation with the British Embassy Moscow, and conduct a Training Needs Analysis to identify skills gaps. They will then draw up a media tour and training programme.

The project implementer will be tasked with evaluating the project strands to measure impact of exposure to UK standards and attitudinal change amongst the participants and improved content quality. It will also be important to help those who pass through the programme to continue their development and to remain in contact with us through engaging with an alumni organisation.

The above descriptions are intended to give potential implementation partners an indication of the outcomes we envisage and we encourage bidders to be as innovative as possible.

#### Timeframe

The Project will commence in May 2019 and end on 31st March 2020.

There is the possibility of a 12-month extension based on supplier performance. The decision to extend the contract will be based on the performance of the supplier, agreement for each financial year's objectives and activity, availability of funding and the political situation on the ground. The FCO will aim to be predictable regarding the amount of funding available and will consult the implementing partner early on this matter.

#### Reporting and M&E

The implementer is expected to be in close contact with the team supervising the project in the British Embassy Moscow through written communication and conference calls on the stages of planning, execution and reporting on the project. The implementer will need to report on progress against their project plan, risks and impact.

The implementer will be asked to formally submit financial reporting, monitoring and evaluation reports on the project on a quarterly basis and annual/end of project reports in such format as shall be specified by the Head of the Programmes Team. It will also be expected to share a brief summary of the activities and results achieved following each inward/outward visit, and provide updates on progress achieved against the project work plan and the project results framework.

The implementing partner (and any potential sub-contractors) will need to allow access to HMG or third party monitors during the project's lifetime if requested by the Authority.

#### Financial Management and Payments

The supplier will be reimbursed as per the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund Framework contract on a call-down basis following the submission of monthly line by line fee and expense reports.

#### Estimated Budget

The available budget is up to £ 200,000 for the mandatory element of the project for FY 19/20.

If suppliers wish to respond to the optional element of the project, there is an available budget of up to £50,000 for FY 2019/20.

**Please note:** If you are submitting a proposal for the optional element of the project, then please submit two separate pricing models, one for the mandatory element and one for the optional element.

#### Gender

The UK sees gender equality and women's rights as central to promoting peace and stability overseas. This project will take into account any gender-related differences; consider its contribution to reducing inequality between persons of different gender; and ensure that the project does no harm to any particular gender group. If the project undertakes surveys, interviews or beneficiary analysis, the data must be gender disaggregated. Bidders should also be aware of the CSSF Approach to Gender.

#### Duty of Care

The FCO has no specific knowledge of any direct threat to the Implementer of this project.

The Supplier is responsible for the safety and well-being of their Personnel and Third Parties affected by their activities under this Call-Down contract, including appropriate security arrangements. They will also be responsible for the provision of suitable security arrangements for their domestic and business property.

HMG will share available information with the Supplier on security status and developments in-country where appropriate.

The Supplier is responsible for ensuring appropriate safety and security briefings for all of their Personnel working under this contract and ensuring that their Personnel register and receive briefing as outlined above. Travel advice is also available on the FCO website and the Supplier must ensure they (and their Personnel) are up to date with the latest position.

The Supplier is responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements, processes and procedures are in place for their Personnel, taking into account the environment they will be working in and the level of risk involved in delivery of the Contract (such as working in dangerous, fragile and hostile environments etc). The Supplier must ensure their Personnel receive the required level of training and safety in the field training prior to deployment.

Tenderers must develop their Tender response on the basis of being fully responsible for Duty of Care in line with the details provided above. They must confirm in their Tender that:

- They fully accept responsibility for Security and Duty of Care.
- They understand the potential risks and have the knowledge and experience to develop an effective risk plan.
- They have the capability to manage their Duty of Care responsibilities throughout the life of the contract.

Acceptance of responsibility must be supported with evidence of capability. In providing evidence Tenderers should consider the following questions:

- a) Have you completed an initial assessment of potential risks that demonstrates your knowledge and understanding, and are you satisfied that you understand the risk management implications (not solely relying on information provided by FCO)?
- b) Have you prepared an outline plan that you consider appropriate to manage these risks at this stage (or will you do so if you are awarded the contract) and are you confident/comfortable that you can implement this effectively?
- c) Have you ensured or will you ensure that your staff are appropriately trained (including specialist training where required) before they are deployed and will you ensure that on-going training is provided where necessary?
- d) Have you an appropriate mechanism in place to monitor risk on a live/on-going basis (or will you put one in place if you are awarded the contract)?
- e) Have you ensured or will you ensure that your staff are provided with and have access to suitable equipment and will you ensure that this is reviewed and provided on an on-going basis?
- f) Have you appropriate systems in place to manage an emergency/incident if one arises?

The Implementer will hold the duty of care responsibility for its staff and the security of the project; it is to ensure that all reasonable security measures (physical, information and communication) are taken to reduce the threat to as low as is reasonably possible, and to expose any risks that are identified. The project is overt, no attempt should be made to disguise activity.