

SECTION 1 – Our operating model to complete the project on-time and on-budget

Our ability to deliver the project on-time and on-budget is based on international expertise and supported by tried and tested project management structures, proven methodologies and resources. Our approach leverages our extensive knowledge of the Baltics' media, cultural and political landscape, and existing relationships with a broad number of media actors, organisations and CSOs. We have collectively worked there for more than 35 years and have delivered numerous successful project implementations both in the region and abroad, including the following:

- **Zinc Network** is currently implementing the FCO's flagship £9m *EXPOSE* project to counter and build resilience to disinformation by working with 40+ media outlets in Europe and the Baltics (e.g. Latvian Elves, Demaskuok and Propastop). We have so far delivered activities on-time and on budget. Zinc was also a key delivery partner in the previous FCO-funded Baltics Independent Media project, delivering the project to high client satisfaction.
- **British Council** are successfully implementing the FCO's £10m *People to People (P2P) Cultural Engagement* programme to strengthen community cohesion in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, successfully starting in 2016 with very positive feedback on implementation from the FCO.
- **Thomson Reuters Foundation** successfully manage and implement around 200 training workshops every year, including implementing large-scale training workshops and study workshops for Russian journalists and newsroom consultancies across Eastern Europe.
- **Baltics Centre for Media Excellence** has begun delivering the US State-funded *Strengthening Independent Media in the Baltics Action (SIMBA)* programme, working with broadcasters and regional media players in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. This project has started on-time and within budget for FY1.

To ensure we will deliver on-time and on-budget, we have begun implementation planning during this procurement process. The consortium has gathered a core team of Technical and Operational Staff to outline the planned delivery model and refine a Theory of Change. A Project Implementation Document (PID) is currently in production (outlining workstream leads, key milestones, staffing requirements, risks and mitigating actions and contingency plans). This will be tested and approved by the Technical and Operational Staff and signed off by named accountable leads within each consortium partner. The project will be entered onto our project management system to facilitate fast, accurate project costing and resource scheduling. On contract award, our Senior Account Director and Technical and Operational Staff will review and update the PID to reflect project changes, including those made during the inception phase (e.g. after reviewing the Target Audience Analysis), with sign off by the Project Director and ultimately the FCO.

SECTION 2 – Our proposed team members' skills and experience to meet the requirements

Our core project team combines staff that have worked throughout the Baltics region, who bring the necessary relationships, experience and contextual understanding, with innovative thinkers, who will inject a fresh perspective to ensure that this project not only continues the success of the previous programme but also builds significantly on that success. Our team structure is reflected in Section 5 (Organogram graphic).

Advisory Panel	
Overall Responsibilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee and maintain the strategic direction of the programme to ensure that it meets the strategic aims and objectives set out in the plan, and provide leadership and motivation across the entire programme team • Monitor progress, including key benchmarks and adjust where necessary • Meet with the Baltics Board on a quarterly basis 	
Value add + Examples of regional and/or thematic work	
Louis Brooke (Zinc Network)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 10 years' experience working in complex strategic communications and has managed projects across the world, including the Baltics, East Africa, the Balkans and the Middle East. • Delivered counter-disinformation projects in the Baltics, Ukraine, Georgia and Russia. • On the board of NATO's Centre of Excellence for Strategic Communications.
Urve Eslas (Zinc Network)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strategic communication and foreign policy expert with more than 13 years' experience. • Worked for Estonia's largest daily newspaper, Postimees, the Estonian Public Broadcaster, Center for European Policy Analysis and the Office of the former President of Estonia. • Urve has a strong network of relationships with government organizations, NGOs and media organisations across the Baltic States.
Jānis Siksnis (Baltics Centre for Media Excellence)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Baltic Media Centre for Excellence, implementing media development projects in public service broadcasters and regional media of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. • As Director General of Latvian Radio, Jānis expanded its programme in Russian, and created a new web portal and youth media platform. • As a press adviser to the President of Latvia, Jānis organised public events on counter-disinformation and strategic communication.
Colm McGivern (British Council)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Responsible Officer for the FCO-funded People to People Cultural Engagement (P2P) Baltics programme, accountable for successful delivery, overall strategy and implementation. • Over 20 years' experience of international relations, policy engagement and leadership. • Leadership of multi-country, complex matrix organisations in post-conflict contexts.
Gordon Macmillan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 20 years' experience working in editorial and management positions internationally.

(Thomson Reuters Foundation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media consultant specialising in change management, leadership development, digital and broadcast integration, multi-platform working and organisational effectiveness. Delivered TRF support for Belsat, an independent broadcaster based in Poland and broadcasting to Belarus.
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Responsibilities	Value add + Examples of regional and/or thematic work
Igor Zinatulin – Project Director	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Client management and primary point of contact for the FCO, Baltics Board and regional Baltics embassies Overall technical direction (including methodology, processes, and MEL) and quality assurance Provide support and quality assurance to the PM on reporting Task the project team on a weekly basis, in line with the workplan Lead on drafting reports, including quarterly and annual reports to FCO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International experience of growing strategic accounts in liaison with governmental, NGO and academic partners such as the FCO, Department of State, PwC and EBRD. Managed rapidly growing team of strategists, producers and designers to deliver media and communications campaigns across social, press and offline. Developed and trained journalist networks in the Baltic states, Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Eastern Europe with cumulative reach of 10M+ monthly viewers. Launched the first acceleration programme for media entrepreneurs in the Baltic region which helped finance and equip publishers with the skills to develop sustainable projects. Managed social media campaigns and delivered training at the BBC World Service operating across five languages.
Maria Shukurova – Account Manager	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure high-quality technical programming and partner support Contribute to project planning, including the development of annual work plans and budget Ensure compliance with HQ and FCO requirements and policies Serve as a liaison to relevant donors, government, and other stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 years' experience organising and managing Russian-language projects in the cultural and media sector. Worked across numerous projects with influencers from the Baltics, Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and the USA, including support on content creation to deliver key messages. Running workshops and mentoring sessions for independent media outlets in Ukraine. Social media management of ZAG – a Russian-language channel with 95,000 page likes and 20 viral videos.
Maris Hellrand – Public Sector Broadcaster (PSB) Lead	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying PSBs in each country, and leading on capability and risk report Oversee the leadership capacity-building activity Support PSBs on content acquisition and creation Facilitate linkages between influencers and PSBs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 29 years' experience working as a journalist, broadcaster and communications advisor in Estonia. Strong ties to all the main broadcasters in the Baltics region, supporting them on production and fixing for international media (ZDF, BBC, ARD (including NDR, WDR, RBB, BR, SWR), Arte, Deutsche Welle, TV4 (Sweden), Euronews, France 24, Nelonen). Formerly in charge of the press centre of the EU ministerial meetings for the Government of Estonia. Former Head of Communications at the Tallinn Creative Hub.
Eva Ladva – Media Growth Lead	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leading on hyper-local outlet development, Champion Brand Development and the Baltics Media Accelerator Will support the development of journalists and drive the growth of independent media outlets, as well as supporting them to achieve financial sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than 10 years' experience in building capacities of media and communications projects in the Baltic States, including working with regional media outlets to strengthen their capacity to better address local audiences and monetise content. Set up and developed an innovative media project, Nordic Passionista, to tackle gender inequalities in the post-Soviet Union space to encourage women to set up their own business. Designed and delivered communications and outreach strategies for large private sector clients, such as AirBaltic and Tallinna Kaubamaja retail store chain, as well as the Government of Estonia and independent media outlets.
Hannah Wright – MEL Lead	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work in collaboration with the Authority to come up with a robust MEL results framework and Theory of Change in line with their requirements Oversee all MEL, adapting and adjusting activities based on regular data analysis Provide significant input into the drafting of the quarterly report Write the annual lessons learnt report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 years' relevant experience in designing research and developing strategies for fieldwork, insight, implementation and evaluation. Worked with a range of sectors including charity/not for profit, government, tech/start-ups and research agencies. Strengths include: designing and delivering quantitative and qualitative research (using a range of methodologies such as generative research, comparative linguistics, thematic analysis and observational techniques), consumer behaviour and psychology, insight and trends, brand strategy and brand experience design,

	user experience and digital strategy, creative strategy, customer journey mapping and monitoring and evaluation.
Anna O'Flynn – Gender Sensitivity Advisor	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring activities are gender sensitive and inclusive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical leadership and input on gender sensitive and transformative programming in post-conflict, challenging regions. Gender and inclusion specialist providing technical assistance across the women and girls portfolio at the British Council.

SECTION 3 – Our supply chain partners to deliver the requirements of this project

Consortium-based delivery can sometimes suffer from siloed delivery, with partners running standalone activities to meet specific requirements that deviate too far from a unified project objective. We will not allow that to happen and have a proven track record of delivering CSSF projects in this integrated way.

We are bringing the expertise of our supply chain partners into a single, integrated delivery team with a shared understanding of and commitment to bringing greater balance and plurality to the Russian language media space. We are co-designing our proposals to meet the requirements of this project to enable us to deliver a joined-up package of activities that add value to their individual impact and maximise our ability to comprehensively and sustainably meet the project requirements. Within this integrated, single-team approach, Zinc and our supply chain partners will have roles and responsibilities that harness the expertise they are bringing to this project.

Zinc activities as prime supplier

Zinc has delivered projects for clients including the FCO and the State Department, including the FCO's flagship *EXPOSE* project to tackle divisive narratives. Zinc has also managed complex networks of stakeholders, including supporting over 50 counter extremist organisations in the UK for RICU, and delivering network-driven counter-messaging campaigns across some of the world's most challenging territories, including Iraq, Somalia and occupied parts of Ukraine. This track record has not only built a formidable global capacity in developing and connecting local organisations in difficult areas of operation, but also enhanced and solidified the sustainability of project outcomes.

- Zinc will be the contract holder and ultimate accountable supplier to the FCO, responsible for the overall technical and financial management of the project, including: ♦ governance ♦ risk ♦ partner management ♦ ensuring ethical behaviour ♦ safeguarding and duty of care responsibilities ♦ quality assurance ♦ and financial reporting.
- Zinc will lead on part of **Activity 1 – Monolingual Hyperlocal outlet development**, providing: ♦ technical skills development ♦ content creation ♦ digital and content capacity building ♦ search optimisation ♦ and mentoring.
- Zinc will support on **Activity 2 – Multilingual Champion Development** through brand development.
- Zinc will be involved on part of **Activity 3 – PSBs**, supporting on: ♦ leadership capacity building ♦ content acquisition and creation (helping PSBs to work in partnership with influencers and independent media outlets) ♦ targeted commissioning rounds with PSBs to facilitate influencer pitches) ♦ and support for on-demand services.
- Zinc will support on **Activity 6 – Critical Thinking Campaign**, on: ♦ branding ♦ strategy ♦ and offline collateral.
- Zinc will lead on the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning, producing the quarterly and annual reports.

Consortium supply chain partner activities and relevant expertise

Thomson Reuters Foundation (TRF)

Expertise	TRF is the philanthropic arm of Thomson Reuters. TRF leverages the expertise, reach and reputation of its parent company to run projects to promote high standards in journalism across the globe. TRF has 35 years' experience of international media development, toolkit production and journalism and media training and mentoring. In addition to accessing TRF's pool of over 150 multilingual technical staff, we hold an agreement with TR where we can directly engage TR's technical and operational staff, including over 25 in the Baltics.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TRF will lead on part of Activity 1 – Monolingual Hyperlocal outlet development, providing: ♦ training sprints for business model development ♦ and ongoing mentoring. TRF will support on Activity 2 – Multilingual Champion Development. TRF will lead on part of Activity 3 – PSBs, supporting on: ♦ creating a media sector editor toolkit ♦ content acquisition and creation ♦ routes to market (3-day pitch development workshop) ♦ and delivering a tailored package of local and technical media support. TRF will support on Activity 4 – Media Market Accelerator to develop joint editorial policies.

The British Council:

Expertise	British Council is an international organisation providing educational opportunities and supporting positive cultural relations in communities across the world. They have had an established presence in all three Baltic States since 1993, with regional expertise in facilitating UK and National cooperation within education, innovation, literature and social inclusion and cohesion. British Council currently run a £10m CSSF contract, ' <i>People to People Cultural Engagement</i> ', to strengthen community cohesion in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. They bring decades of experience of delivery in the region and up-to-date expertise of running similar counter-disinformation activities to this project.
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Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> British Council will be responsible for ensuring all activities are both conflict and gender sensitive. British Council will be responsible for grants management and grants disbursement. British Council will provide a staff exchange programme for Activity 3 – PSBs. British Council will support on Activity 6 – Critical Thinking Campaign, on: ♦ offline events ♦ and facilitating in-country networks.
The Baltic Centre for Media Excellence (BCME)	
Expertise	BCME is an independent, non-profit organisation that has grown from a grassroots initiative to become a powerful hub for smart journalism in the Baltics by promoting professional growth, media intelligence and critical thinking. BCME’s approach is underpinned by bringing together journalists working in national and Russian languages (including by hosting public events) into a shared information space of uniform journalistic standards, a key objective for this FCO project. BCME are bringing wide-ranging regional expertise to the project, including their understanding of the media landscape in all three countries developed through their ‘ <i>Media Training Needs Mapping</i> ’ study.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BCME will support on Activity 3 – PSBs to: ♦ facilitate relationships with PSBs ♦ and support PSBs at distribution fairs and conferences. BCME will lead on Activity 5 – Building resilience.

SECTION 4 – Our capacity to quickly uplift, downsize or mobilise the project team throughout delivery

Our consortium has a proven track record in mobilising staff at short notice in response to client calls to provide services, including in the Baltics. Flexibility is embedded across our approach to resourcing to enable us to quickly uplift, downsize or mobilise our project team to meet all requirements of the project, and ensure that our approach continues to deliver value for money throughout contract delivery by ensuring appropriate project team resourcing.

1. Agile redeployment of resources to uplift or downsize the project team

Our consortium has a network of 42 relevant staff across the Baltics, and 75 media development staff located in the UK on contracts that require fluctuating levels of resource. This includes experts in strategy and creative development, media training and mentoring, digital marketing and social media and direct marketing. This gives us the expertise and flexibility to redeploy staff in response to Authority calls for services.

Example – Redeploying staff to respond to the 2019 North Macedonia Elections

EXPOSE programme: The FCO identified North Macedonia as a priority country early on in the project. Zinc identified a large media outlet within the country, the *MOST Network*, and deployed a team which included a Network Manager and Security Consultant within three days of the client request. Over 2 weeks, our team and consortium partners, including DFR Lab and Bellingcat, provided cyber security training, mentoring on digital forensics, open source investigation and media ethics.

2. Mobilising our networks of staff at short-notice

Our consortium has a proven track record of rapidly mobilising our respective networks of freelancers and consultants to respond to specific client requests and/or scale-up our project team to meet new project requirements. Zinc has a global network of 300+ freelancers and consultants, including 32 located in the Baltics, covering roles including: ♦ account directors ♦ safeguarding advisors ♦ cyber and physical security consultants ♦ researchers ♦ producers ♦ copywriters ♦ creative directors ♦ social media managers ♦ and content strategists. We will leverage Thomson Reuters Foundation’s access to the *Thomson Reuters Hub* to quickly identify and mobilise technical and operational personnel from a database of 45,000 employees and 16,000 alumni journalists based around the world.

Example – Quickly mobilising a project team to deliver an FCO project

Thomson Reuters Foundation (TRF) was contracted to provide media development consultancy services to a Belarussian TV station, *BelSat*. Within 10 days, TRF mobilised a team of 15 staff to deliver the project, drawing on in-house personnel, Thomson Reuters alumni and pre-vetted consultants. TRF’s team of interpreters, project managers and finance staff provided 150 days of support, 97 days of which were delivered face-to-face in-country.

3. Recruiting new staff

Our HR Team operate a Rapid Recruitment Process to recruit new staff quickly, while maintaining robust selection and vetting processes. In addition to our usual recruitment methods (advertising on LinkedIn and accessing CV databases) we would use the Consortium’s network, including 16 media companies that BCME has trained within the Baltics, to rapidly onboard individuals from trusted local networks.

Example – Recruiting new staff to respond to an FCO research programme on disinformation

The FCO contracted Zinc to research Russian disinformation tactics and impact in response to a high-profile event. The project required a rapid mobilisation, producing over 20 reports for 5 European countries in 4 weeks. We used our secure network of contacts and organisations to identify 7 multilingual individuals, all of which were recruited with fast-tracked due diligence and risk assessed, briefed on security, provided with laptops and user permissions, security fobs, and inducted within one week of the FCO request.

SECTION 5 – Organogram structure and reporting lines

