

CALL FOR PARTNERSHIPS (CFP)

from

Not-for-Profit Institutions

Ref: CI/FEJ/GMDF/2021/01

(Please quote this UNESCO reference in all correspondence)

Date 19/04/2021

Closing date: 15/06/2021 (23:59 [CET])

Submission via email to: gmdf@unesco.org

Inquiries via email to: gmdf@unesco.org (technical aspects)

gmdf@unesco.org (administrative & financial aspects)

I. BACKGROUND:

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) seeks to build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and Culture. UNESCO's programmes contribute to the achievement of the [Sustainable Development Goals in Agenda 2030](#) adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015. This Call for Partnerships (CFP) for Implementation Partners relates to the UNESCO project:

[Programme/ Project] Global Media Defence Fund (GMDF)

[Brief description of the programme/ project] The Global Media Defence Fund is a UNESCO Multi-Partner Trust Fund developed with the goal of enhancing media protection and improving the access of journalists to specialized and gender-sensitive legal assistance. Administered by UNESCO, the Fund was established thanks to the initial donations of the governments of the United Kingdom and Canada. This Fund is one of the outcomes of the *Global Campaign for Media Freedom*, and contributes to advancing the [UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity](#).

The GMDF contributes to a free and safer environment for journalists to undertake their work through four key approaches or Outputs:

1. Fostering international legal cooperation, as well as the sharing and implementation of good practices to promote the defense of journalists under attack;
2. Reinforcing the operationalization of national protection mechanisms and peer support networks, to ensure journalists' rapid access to specialized legal assistance, bolster their defense and enhance their safety, taking into account the gendered nature of threats against them;
3. Supporting investigative journalism that contributes to reduced impunity for crimes against journalists, and enhancing the safety of those conducting this line of work;
4. Enhancing structures for fostering strategic litigation in order to protect environments where the legal frameworks are conducive to an independent, free and pluralistic media ecosystem.

The Global Media Defence Fund is implemented in complementarity and/or synergy with other ongoing UNESCO initiatives, as well as with those led by other relevant stakeholders.

II. OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTPUTS/ DELIVERABLES:

The **objective** of this Call for Partnerships is to support local, regional and international not-for-profit organizations working on the ground in the implementation or upscaling of projects that bolster journalists' legal defense, enhance their security, reduce impunity, and contribute to protecting free, independent, and plural media environments.

OUTCOME: Media protection and journalists' access to legal advice enhanced at grassroots level.

IMPACT: A safer global environment for journalists to undertake their work, thanks to strengthened legal protection mechanisms, expanded access to legal defense and reduced impunity for crimes committed against them.

Detailed objectives and related outputs and deliverables are provided in the **Terms of Reference – Annex 1**

Final Beneficiaries

Eligible proposals will be those focused on bolstering journalists' legal defense, enhancing their security, reducing impunity, and contributing to protecting free, independent, and plural media environments, in accordance with Outputs 2, 3 and/or 4 of the Global Media Defence Fund, and targeting journalists, media lawyers and specialized not-for-profit entities as the direct and final beneficiaries.

II. ELIGIBILITY:

A UNESCO Implementation Partner is an entity with a not-for-profit status to which UNESCO has entrusted partially or fully the implementation of programmes or projects specified in a signed document, along with the assumption of full responsibility and accountability for the effective use of resources and the delivery of outputs as set forth in such a document.

Main features of a UNESCO Implementation Partners' Agreement
The partner brings added value, including monetary or in-kind contribution, to the project/activity
The partner shares in the risks and rewards of the project/activity implementation and is responsible and accountable for delivering expected results
The partner is involved at each step of the process, from detailed work plan elaboration to project/activity evaluation.
The partnership will include aspects beyond the delivery of a service to include capacity-building elements with respect to the partner and/or beneficiary

The parameters that will determine whether an entity is eligible to be considered by UNESCO will be based on the **UNESCO Partner Identification form – Annex 2**

III. PROPOSAL:

Proposed Methodology, Approach, Quality Assurance Plan and Implementation Plan

The proposal should demonstrate the entity's response to the **Terms of Reference – Annex 1** by identifying the specific components proposed, how the outputs/ delivery shall be addressed, as specified; providing a detailed description of the essential performance characteristics proposed; identifying the works/portions of the work that will be subcontracted.

Moreover the proposal should demonstrate how the proposed methodology meets or exceeds the TOR, while ensuring appropriateness of the approach to the local conditions and the rest of the project operating environment. This methodology must be laid out in an implementation timetable and a quality assurance.

For more detailed information on the Eligibility requirements for the proposals submitted under this Call, please refer to the **Terms of Reference – Annex 1**

Management Structure and Resource (Key Personnel)

Your application should include the comprehensive description of the management structure and information regarding required resources including curriculum vitae (CVs) of key personnel that will be assigned to support the implementation of the proposed methodology, clearly defining the qualifications in areas relevant to the TOR.

This information should be included in the **Application Form – Annex 3**

For more detailed information on the organization and management requirements, please refer to the **Terms of Reference – Annex 1**

IV. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND METHODOLOGY:

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following overall criteria:

- 1) Sound technical proposal that includes innovative and replicable inclusion mechanisms to maximize the value transfer to the beneficiaries.
- 2) High impact interventions directly targeting and responding to the needs established in the TOR.
- 3) Size of budget requested commensurate with the organization's proven administrative and financial management capacity.
- 4) Participatory monitoring and evaluation that will contribute to building a sense of ownership among the beneficiaries to promote the sustainability of the interventions.

For more detailed information on the Admissibility and Eligibility Criteria, the Evaluation Criteria (and corresponding Evaluation Grid) and the Selection Process for this Call, please refer to the **Terms of Reference – Annex 1**

V. BUDGET SIZE AND DURATION:

Proposals amounts should range from a minimum of USD 15,000 to a maximum of USD 35,000 for direct interventions in one or more activities/geographical areas as stated in the **Terms of Reference – Annex 1**.

The amount requested in the proposal should be commensurate with the organization's administrative and financial management capabilities. In principle, project duration will not exceed 18 months.

Regarding the budget of the technical proposal of the partner, UNESCO retains the right to elaborate the work plan and negotiate the budget with the partner, prior to signing agreement, to ensure value of money. Likewise, UNESCO will ensure that in accordance with its policies the selected Partner will be able to provide added value in terms of financial or in-kind contribution. The partner's financial or in-kind contribution will be indicated in the budget proposal. No overheads in terms of administrative or service fees are accepted (direct budgeting based on activities).

For more detailed information on the requirements of the budget and the duration of the proposed activities, please refer to **Terms of Reference – Annex 1** and **Budget Template – Annex 4**

VI. SELECTION PROCESS:

UNESCO will review proposals through a five-step process: (i) determination of eligibility; (ii) technical review of eligible proposals; (iii) scoring and ranking of the eligible proposals based on the assessment criteria outlined in the **Terms of Reference – Annex 1**, to identify the highest-ranking proposals; (iv)

round of clarification (if necessary) and work plan elaboration with the highest-scoring proposals; and, (v) Implementation Partners' Agreement (IPA) signature.

The selection process is described in the **Terms of Reference – Annex 1**

VII. **SUBMISSION PROCESS:**

Applicants shall bear all costs related to proposal preparation and submission.

The comprehensive list of documents that must be submitted in order for the submission to be considered are available in the checklist included under section VIII of the **Terms of Reference – Annex 1**

For additional questions about the Call for Partnerships Guidelines or application forms, please e-mail gmdf@unesco.org.

Note: UNESCO reserves the right not to fund any proposals arising from this Call for Partnerships. Depending on the value and context of the implementation partners agreement, the final financial report must be audited by the External Auditor of the Partner. The audit requirement will be confirmed during work plan elaboration and contract finalization.

Below is an estimated timeline for this Call for Partnerships:

STAGES		INDICATIVE PERIOD
1	Launch and publication of the Call	19 April 2021
2	Deadline for submitting partnership proposals	15 June 2021
3	Evaluation and selection period	June – July 2021
4	Notification to candidate partners	July-August 2021
5	Launch of the contracting process	August 2021

IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

UNESCO requires that partners, bidders and their subcontractors adhere to the highest standards of moral and ethical conduct during the implementation of the partnership agreement and do not engage in corrupt and fraudulent practices.

United Nations Agencies have adopted a zero tolerance policy on gifts and, therefore, it is of overriding importance that UNESCO staff should not be placed in a position where their actions may constitute or could be reasonably perceived as reflecting favorable treatment of an individual or entity by accepting offers of gifts, hospitality or other similar favours. Partners are therefore requested not to send or offer gifts or hospitality to UNESCO personnel.

UNESCO will:

- (a) Reject a proposal to award an agreement if it determines that a partner recommended for award has engaged in fraud and/or corruption in competing for the agreement in question.
- (b) Cancel or terminate an agreement if it determines that a partner has engaged in fraud and/or corruption in competing for or in executing a UNESCO contract;
- (c) Declare a partner ineligible to become a "United Nations registered vendor", either indefinitely or for a stated period of time, if it determines at any time that the partner has engaged in fraud and/or corruption in competing for or in executing a UNESCO agreement.

This Call for Partnerships is not to be construed in any way as an offer to contract with your organization. Your proposal could, however, form the basis for a contract between your organization and UNESCO.



For and on behalf of UNESCO

Andrea Cairola, Programme Specialist
CI/FEJ

VIII. ANNEXES:

Annex 1 – Terms of Reference

Annex 2 – UNESCO Partner Identification Form

Annex 3 – Application Form

Annex 4 – Budget Template

Annex 5 – Implementation Partners' Agreement (example)