

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

<b>Procurement Number:</b>	CENTER2020GEPT01o
<b>Open Date:</b>	June 3, 2020
<b>Questions Deadline:</b>	June 8, 2020
<b>Closing Deadline:</b>	June 15, 2020
<b>Geographical Area Restrictions:</b>	N/A
<b>Point of Contact:</b>	Adam George ( <a href="mailto:ageorge@iri.org">ageorge@iri.org</a> )

### Background

The International Republican Institute (IRI) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, organization dedicated to advancing freedom and democracy worldwide. Since 1983, IRI has worked to develop democratic institutions and ideals, carrying out a variety of international programs to promote freedom, self-government and the rule of law worldwide. IRI provides technical assistance in the areas of political party strengthening, developing civic institutions and open elections, promoting democratic governance and advancing the rule of law.

Foreign authoritarian regimes like China, Russia, and Iran regularly attempt to influence and undermine democratic political processes and institutions across the developing world. Countering foreign authoritarian influence (FAI) in elections and political processes by these regimes is a U.S. foreign policy priority and Democracy, Rights, and Governance (DRG) assistance necessity. However, there is no systematized approach within the U.S. government (or its bilateral and INGO partners) to define (conceptualize), measure, and detect FAI. To fill this critical gap, IRI will develop, and test the feasibility of measuring, indicators (instrument and influence) of FAI in up to five political domain sub-areas (e.g., interference in elections; influencing political parties).

### Period of Performance

Date of Signature – September 30, 2020

### Statement of Work

**Please note that this contract is contingent upon funding from the donor.**

The Parties enter into this Agreement for purposes of the Contractor providing services described below. Accordingly, the Contractor agrees to diligently perform this Agreement to include furnishing all labor and materials and to perform all tasks necessary to provide the following deliverables and/or services:

First, the contractor will conduct a desk review of existing data sources and studies of foreign authoritarian influence, specifically in the political domain, and with an emphasis on

measurement of that influence. For the purposes of this project, the political domain, which is defined as the rules, laws, regulations, processes, and norms that structure electoral competition, including, but not limited to, political parties, leadership, campaigns and campaign finance, political advertising, patron-client networks, political economy, public opinion, voter engagement, policy development, political corruption, and political violence. The desk review approach, method and scope will be determined in coordination with IRI to ensure it leverages the expertise of USAID, IRI, and other CEPPS partners, including NDI and IFES. Some documents that must be included to shape the approach and scope of the desk review include IRI's "Chinese Malign Influence and the Corrosion of Democracy" and USAID's "Countering Malign Kremlin Influence Framework" and "Countering Resurgent Authoritarianism Framework."

Second, and with an understanding of key mechanisms of foreign authoritarian influence (FAI) derived from desk review, the contractor will develop a comprehensive operational definition of FAI concepts in the political domain, to be refined and finalized in coordination with IRI's experts and collaborators via validation workshops. These FAI concepts and definitions should be organized according to several specific sub-domains to be defined and finalized in coordination with IRI and based on the findings in the desk review. However, Suggestive but not exhaustive examples of typologies may include political party operations, control of electoral processes, civil society constraints and/or co-optation, public opinion, and/or governance practices.

Third, the contractor will design a recommended measurement strategy to clearly identify and monitor instances of FAI in the political domain, including in each of the sub-domains. These indicators will help USAID and its USG counterparts to systematically measure the scope and depth of FAI in the political domain, while taking into account the inherent difficulties in measuring FAI tactics intended to remain covert and/or where it is difficult to determine attribution. Currently, IRI envisions the measurement strategy consisting of specific indicators in each of approximately five sub-domains of the political domain, however, IRI is open to alternative approaches should the contractor make a compelling, evidence-based case for such an alternative. To the extent possible, these indicators should connect directly to common DRG project-level indicators. The measurement and validation strategy should include guidance, developed in collaboration with IRI staff, on connecting the prospective FAI indicators to project goals. The measurement strategy will be validated and refined in coordination with IRI experts and collaborators in validation workshops.

Fourth, the contractor will develop a recommended data collection and validation strategy by which IRI, or its collaborators would systematically but periodically collect, aggregate, and analyze the data to determine if and how FAI is progressing, regressing or otherwise changing across the set of predetermined indicators. It is IRI's preference, to the extent possible, that the data collection strategy rely on already-existing, open source, third-party data sets, including state administrative data, when feasible.

The approximate timeline for this scope of work is included in the deliverables chart below but is subject to change based on mutual agreement between the IRI and the Contractor.

### **Technical Proposals**

All proposals submitted to IRI must include:

1. Information addressing Bidder's experience in providing each of the services identified in the above Statement of Work and Bidder's proposed specific approach for providing those services to IRI under this contract, including sufficient information to determine a clear definition of services as it relates to other providers that may be involved.
2. The name, address, and telephone and facsimile numbers of the Bidder (and electronic address if available). If the Bidder is a firm, name(s) should be provided for individuals authorized to conduct business on behalf of the firm.
3. Bidders may provide a list of up to three references for work performed of a similar nature during the last three years, along with contact details. IRI may contact the references to evaluate past performance.
4. If the Bidder is a U.S. organization/resident, or a foreign organization/resident which has income effectively connected with the conduct of activities in the U.S. or has an office or a place of business or a fiscal paying agent in the U.S., the information submitted must contain Bidder's Taxpayer Identification Number.
5. Proposals will not exceed 3 pages (not including cover page) in Times New Roman, 12-point font with 1.0 line spacing.
6. Proposals submitted by individuals must contain the attached a CV/resume.
7. The Proposal must include background on the organization's prior experience as it relates to the requested scope of work.
8. Proposals must also include the budget in a spreadsheet in Microsoft Excel format.
9. Proposals should include the following eight components:
  - a. Statement of purpose
  - b. Organizational/Individual Experience
  - c. Detailed Product/Service Delivery
  - d. Timeline for Product/Service Delivery
  - e. Points of Contact for Contract
  - f. References
10. Proposals should include a detailed budget with costs for conducting each of the proposed activities including any monitoring and evaluation and reporting deliverables. Proposals should also not exceed 10 pages in length inclusive of all components. Any proposals that exceed the page requirement will not be considered. The detailed draft budget must include the estimated costs of all personnel, travel, equipment/supplies, other activity related expenses, anticipated contractual costs, and any other direct/indirect expense. Costs should be projected across time, providing a unit of measure (day, month, quantity), the unit rate (if applicable), subtotals for cost categories, and a grand total covering the entire project.

### **Price Proposals**

Bidders must propose a firm-fixed Unit Price for each of the deliverables identified below and in the format of the table below. The Bidder's pricing must be valid for at least 60 (sixty) calendar days after the due date for proposal submission. The proposed Unit Price should be fixed and inclusive of all costs to perform, including inspection services, transportation, taxes, import duties (if any), and other levies. To the extent that a Bidder proposed to include any pricing not reflected in the table below, such pricing must be fully described in the proposal. Proposals must be submitted in US Dollars (USD), payments under any resulting contract will be made in this currency.

<b>Service/Deliverables</b>	<b>Unit Type</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Payment Amount</b>
Draft typology of political sub-domains, including detailed definitions of each	Text document	1	
Desk review: measurement approaches to foreign authoritarian influence	Text document	1	
Desk review: catalogue of existing C/FAI data sources	Text document	1	
List of prospective indicators, including operational definitions, and corresponding program-level indicators	Text document or spreadsheet	1	
Data collection and validation strategy	Text document	1	
Participation in validation workshop(s) with IRI staff and collaborators	Meeting	Up to 2	
Final conceptual framework and measurement strategy, including finalized indicators and definitions	Text document	1	
TOTAL			

### **Evaluation and Award Process**

1. IRI may contact any Bidder for clarification or additional information, but Bidders are advised that IRI intends to evaluate the offers based on the written proposals, without discussions, and reserves the right to make decisions based solely on the information provided with the initial proposals. IRI may but is not obligated to conduct additional negotiations with the most highly rated Bidders prior to award of a contract and may at its sole discretion elect to issue contracts to one or more Bidders.
2. Mathematical errors will be corrected in the following manner: If a discrepancy exists between the total price proposed and the total price resulting from multiplying the unit price by the corresponding amounts, then the unit price will prevail and the total price will be corrected. If there is a discrepancy between the numbers written out in words and the amounts in numbers, then the amount expressed in words will prevail. If the Bidder does not accept the correction, the offer will be rejected.
3. IRI may determine that a proposal is unacceptable if the prices proposed are materially unbalanced between line items or sub-line items. Unbalanced pricing exists when, despite an acceptable total evaluated price, the price of one or more contract line items is significantly overstated or understated as indicated by the application of cost or price analysis techniques. A proposal may be rejected if IRI determines that the lack of balance poses an unacceptable risk.

4. IRI will conduct a source selection based as follows:

IRI intends to make an award to the responsible Bidder based on the following evaluation factors:

- a) Technical evaluation: Compliance with the content requested in the entirety of this RFP – 20 percent
- b) Past performance: The applicant's experience vis-à-vis the requested scope of work through record of previous works – 50 percent
- c) Capacity: An assessment of the organizational or individual's capacity to complete the product/service set out in the application. – 20 percent
- d) Cost efficiency: Cost flexibility, value for money and transparency of applicant's financial application– 10 percent

IRI intends to evaluate Bidders' proposals in accordance with these factors and make an award to the responsible Bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the program.

5. If a cost realism analysis is performed, cost realism may be considered in evaluating performance or price.

### **Submission Instructions**

Bids must be submitted via email to Adam George, at [ageorge@iri.org](mailto:ageorge@iri.org) with the subject line "CENTER2020GEPT1" by the deadline listed above.

### **RFP Terms and Conditions**

1. Prospective Bidders are requested to review clauses incorporated by reference in the section "Notice Listing Contract Clauses Incorporated by Reference".
2. IRI may reject any or all proposals if such is within IRI's interest.
3. Proof of costs incurred, such as but not limited to receipts, pictures and financial documents, may be requested during and for up to three years after the end of the contract period.
4. The Bidder's initial proposal should contain the Bidder's best offer.
5. Payment will be made upon receipt of invoices and deliverables/services.
6. Discussions with Bidders following the receipt of a proposal do not constitute a rejection or counteroffer by IRI.
7. IRI will hold all submissions as confidential and submissions shall not be disclosed to third parties. IRI reserves the right to share proposals internally, across divisions, for the purposes of evaluating the proposals.
8. For any currency conversion, the exchange rate to US Dollars listed on oanda.com on the closing date of this solicitation shall be used.
9. Every contract will contain provisions governing termination for cause and termination for convenience.
10. By submitting a proposal, offeror agrees to comply with all terms, conditions, and provisions included in the solicitation and agreement to the services identified above and will specifically identify any disagreement with or exceptions to the terms, conditions, and provisions.
11. Offerors confirm that the prices in the proposal/proposal/application/quote have been arrived at independently, without any consultation, communication, or

agreement with any other Bidder or competitor for the purpose of restricting competition.

12. Bidders agree to disclose as part of the proposal submission:

- Any close, familial, or financial relationships with IRI staff and agents. For example, the Bidder must disclose if a Bidder's mother conducts volunteer trainings for IRI.
- Any family or financial relationship with other Bidders submitting proposals. For example, if the Bidder's father owns a company that is submitting another proposal, the Bidder must state this.
- Any other action that might be interpreted as potential conflict of interest.

### **Notice Listing Contract Clauses Incorporated by Reference**

IRI is required to make the contractor subject to certain flowdown clauses of the prime award. This awarded contract will incorporate one or more clauses by reference, with the same force and effect as if they were given in full text. Where "flow-down" to the contractor is applicable, references to "USAID/Department of State" shall be interpreted to mean "IRI", "Recipient" to mean "Contractor", and "Subrecipient" to mean "lower-tier subcontractor." Included by reference are the applicable provisions contained in Appendix II to 2 CFR Part 200 and USAID Standard Provisions for Non-US Non-governmental Organizations/US Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions.

### **IRI Obligations**

Issuance of this RFP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of IRI, nor does it commit IRI to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal or quotation.

### **Required Certifications**

The following certificates need to be signed by all Bidders. These certifications are an integral part of the quotation/proposal. Please print them off and send back to us with your proposal after signature on each certificate. They are:

- Certification regarding debarment, suspension, ineligibility and voluntary exclusion lower tier covered transactions
- Authorized Individuals

## **CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION, INELIGIBILITY AND VOLUNTARY EXCLUSION LOWER TIER COVERED TRANSACTIONS**

This certification implements Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension and the requirements set forth in 2.C.F.R. 180, Subpart C.”

Copies of the regulations may be obtained by contacting the person to which this proposal is submitted.

1. By signing and submitting this proposal/application/quote, the prospective lower tier participant is providing the certification set out below.
2. The certification in this clause is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was entered into. If it is later determined that the prospective lower tier participant knowingly rendered an erroneous certification, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the department or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.
3. The prospective lower tier participant shall provide immediate written notice to the person to which this proposal/application/quote is submitted if at any time the prospective lower tier participant learns that its certification was erroneous when submitted or has become erroneous by reason of changed circumstances.
4. The terms "covered transaction," "debarred," "suspended," "ineligible," "lower tier covered transaction," "participant," "person," "primary covered transaction," "principal," "proposal," and "voluntarily excluded," as used in this clause, have the meanings set out in the Definitions and Coverage sections of the rules implementing Executive Order 12549.
5. The prospective lower tier participant agrees by submitting this proposal/application/quote that, should the proposed covered transaction be entered into, it shall not knowingly enter into any lower tier covered transaction with a person who is debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this covered transaction, unless authorized by the IRI.
6. The prospective lower tier participant further agrees by submitting this proposal/application/quote that it will include the clause titled "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion--Lower Tier Covered Transactions," without modification, in all lower tier covered transactions and in all solicitations for lower tier covered transactions.
7. A participant in a covered transaction may rely upon a certification of a prospective participant in a lower tier covered transaction that it is not debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction, unless it knows that the certification is erroneous. A participant may decide the method and frequency by which it determines the eligibility of its principals.
8. Nothing contained in the foregoing shall be construed to require establishment of a system of records in order to render in good faith the certification required by this clause. The knowledge and information of a participant is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.
9. Except for transactions authorized under paragraph 5 above, if a participant in a covered transaction knowingly enters into a lower tier covered transaction with a

person who is suspended, debarred, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the department or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.

1. The prospective lower tier participant certifies, by submission of this proposal, that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for disbarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency.
2. Where the prospective lower tier participant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title/Position: \_\_\_\_\_  
Entity Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## Authorized Individuals

The offeror/bidder/applicant represents that the following persons are authorized to negotiate on its behalf with IRI and to bind the recipient in connection with this procurement:

Name	Title	Telephone	Email

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title/Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Entity Name: \_\_\_\_\_