



Request for Proposals  
Bangladesh: Innovative Research Studies

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# Request for Proposals

## Bangladesh: Innovative Research Studies

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July 2014

International Republican Institute

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## I. Summary of Funding Opportunity

[The International Republican Institute](#) (IRI) is seeking applicants for independent, innovative, research projects to study specific aspects of Bangladesh's current political culture and/or topics related to electoral politics in Bangladesh. Through this request for proposals (RFP), IRI intends to award up to three (3) fixed obligation grants (FOGs) according to the specifications presented in Section II: Research Study Description. The period of performance for the grants will be five (5) months, and the maximum amount available will be 25,000 USD.

General Information	
Funding Mechanism	Fixed Obligation Grant
Estimated Total Number of Awards	Three (3)
Award Ceiling	25,000 USD
Length of Grant Period	Five Months
Date Posted	July 3, 2014
Application Deadline	July 24, 2014
Applications Submission	Electronic, via <a href="mailto:IRIBangladesh@iri.org">IRIBangladesh@iri.org</a>

This RFP is issued as a public notice to ensure that all interested, qualified institutions have a fair opportunity to submit applications for funding. The amount of each grant award is subject to both the availability of funds and the quality and viability of applications received. IRI reserves the right to make multiple awards or no awards under this RFP.

### ***a. Eligibility Criteria***

Proposals will be considered from legally established Bangladeshi nongovernment organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), academic and higher education institutions, research institutes, or comparable organizations.

### ***b. Timing***

Research projects will commence in late August 2014, with preliminary reports due on November 30, 2014, and final reports due on December 31, 2014. Research findings will be released prior to January 31, 2015.

### ***c. Intended Audience***

IRI intends to publish and disseminate research findings as part of the Bangladesh Elections Support Activities (BESA) project, funded by the [United States Agency for International Development](#) (USAID) and the United Kingdom [Department for International Development](#) (DFID). Research project findings will be used to stimulate discussion among civil society, academia and, elections stakeholders by providing concrete data and analysis on Bangladesh's electoral administration and processes.

## II. Research Study Description

IRI encourages the submission of innovative proposals with areas of study that are not commonly addressed in academic or public policy research projects. Areas of research could include:

- Election systems that best mitigate conflict;
- Characteristics of strong, independent electoral bodies;
- Best practices in local governance and devolution;
- The “no vote” option and other forms of ballot protest;
- Electoral systems that promote consensus and greater party participation;
- Unions in Bangladesh and the potential for special interest politics;
- Foreign remittances and their connection to political finance;
- Political party youth wings and their influence on party policy platforms;
- Election time government, including options beyond reviving the caretaker government model; and
- *Hartal* dynamics, the protest mindset, and their effects on the electoral environment and results.

The research topics listed above are suggestive. IRI welcomes innovative research proposals on the range of topics related to Bangladesh’s political culture and/or electoral politics.

## III. Application Instructions

Applications will include two components: a technical application and a cost application. All applications are due by 11:59pm BDT on July 24, 2014. Applications should be submitted electronically to [IRIBangladesh@iri.org](mailto:IRIBangladesh@iri.org). Any application received after the time and date specified for receipt shall be considered incomplete and non-responsive and will not be evaluated for award.

All questions regarding this RFP shall be submitted to Franklin Bonner at [fbonner@iri.org](mailto:fbonner@iri.org).

Contact Information	
Name	Franklin Bonner, Resident Country Director
Address	IRI-Bangladesh Flat J-5, House 1/A Road 35, Gulshan-2 Dhaka, Bangladesh
Email	<a href="mailto:fbonner@iri.org">fbonner@iri.org</a>

**a. Technical Application**

A complete technical application includes a technical proposal and one (1) organizational capacity annex. All application documents must be prepared in English, Times New Roman 12 or relative font, single-spaced, on Letter (8.5” x 11”) or A4 (8.27” x 11.69”) paper, with one-inch (1”) margins.

The technical application includes the following nine sections and is limited to 10 single-spaced pages; anything over the 10 pages will not be accepted. Please note that the 10 page limit does not include the statement of purpose and organizational capacity annex.

*Statement of Purpose:* One page, not counted against page limit, including:

- Name and Address of Organization
- Type of Organization
- Principal Location of Organization
- Project Title
- Primary Technical Point of Contact (Name, Tittle, Email and Phone)
- Total Amount of Funding Requested

*Background:* Applicants must include an abstract that briefly summarizes the area of research, its scope, and relevance to the current political culture or electoral politics in Bangladesh.

*Problem Statement and Objectives:* Applicants must include a problem statement that raises questions to be addressed by the proposed research, any relevance to similar studies and previous hypotheses on the subject.

*Technical Approach:* Applicants must present their research methodology and discuss how the research will be constructed, the theoretical grounding of their proposed analysis and the rationale behind their selection approach. A detailed research methodology should include specific information on potential sources, data collection strategies and techniques, and a description of analysis and reporting procedures.

*Illustrative Research Timeline:* Applicants must include an activities and outputs timeline for the research process. The illustrative research timeline should identify milestones and follow the below format.

<i>Project Milestone</i>	<i>Estimated Time to Complete</i>	<i>Detailed Activity/Output</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

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*Expected Outcomes:* Applicants must detail the anticipated outcome of the proposed research initiative. This should include a comprehensive dissemination plan that targets a wide range of civil society, academia and elections stakeholders.

*Capability Statement:* Applicants must demonstrate the capability of their institution to conduct innovative research on political and electoral issues. Applicants should include an outline of project management that profiles the primary research team, key project partners and project stakeholders.

*Closeout Procedures:* Applicants must outline grant closeout procedures by demonstrating their ability to complete the proposed activities, incur all costs, and submit all programmatic and financial reports within a five-month period. Costs cannot be incurred after the grant expires.

*Organizational Capacity Annex:* All applications must include background on the organization's prior experience as it relates to the requested scope of work as an annex to the proposal narrative. Curriculum vitae of all individuals who will be responsible for the programmatic and financial management of the award must be attached and a valid point of contact for both a past funding entity and a past activity beneficiary must be provided. Provide third-party evaluations of past activities, if available. Applicants must describe current and past projects, funding sources and any potential impact current activities might have on this award. Please also briefly describe accounting practices and organizational infrastructure, including technology and intellectual property owned by the organization that will be used to complete the scope of work. Applicants are encouraged to submit organizational capacity annex documents in a single Microsoft Word file.

### ***b. Cost Application***

All applications must include a detailed budget estimate of project costs using the budget template attached to this RFP. Each application should also have a detailed explanation of expenses and demonstrate the reasonableness of the amount requested.

Cost efficiency will be an important selection criterion and applicants that dedicate the greatest portion of costs to direct research will be rated most favorably. All costs charged to the grant must be reasonable, allocable, allowable and accountable.

- Reasonable - necessary for the grant activities.
- Allocable - specifically for this grant.
- Allowable - conform to limitations of funding.
- Accountable - based on legal transactions and supported with documentation.

The total amount budgeted for this project must not exceed 25,000 USD.

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### ***c. Application Submission Checklist***

- Title Page
- Technical Application
- Organizational Capacity Annex
- Cost Application

## **IV. Proposal Selection Criteria**

The successful applicant will be the one whose combined technical and cost applications receive the highest total score, based on the criteria below.

### ***a. Technical Application Evaluation Criteria***

The technical application will be worth a total of 80 points.

*Technical Merit (40 points):* Applications will be evaluated on the strength of their technical understanding of the proposed research field and their approach to designing and implementing a research study that will meet the specifications described in Section II: Research Study Description.

*Technical Methodology (25 points):* Applications will be evaluated on the rigor and soundness of their methodology for constructing and completing the proposed research project. Proposals containing qualitative, quantitative or a combination of research methods will be considered on equal grounds.

*Research Team (15 points):* Applications will be evaluated based on their capability statement and organizational capacity annex and be scored on the depth and relevance of previous research work.

### ***b. Cost Application Evaluation Criteria***

The cost application will be worth a total of 20 points and will be evaluated for cost realism and cost effectiveness. The cost application will also be evaluated on:

- All work in the technical application being represented in the budget.
- The proposed prices are appropriate and competitive.
- Each budgeted item is necessary to complete the work proposed in the technical application.

Applicants must also demonstrate the reasonableness of the amount they request. There is a maximum of \$25,000 available; however, applicants must clearly demonstrate the need for the grant amount they request.



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## **V. Apparently Successful Applicant**

Applicants recommended to receive a grant under this RFP will be provided detailed guidelines and templates to finalize the grant agreement and will be supported by IRI during the process. Funding will be contingent upon satisfactory completion of the necessary templates. It is anticipated that a completed grant package should be finalized three (3) weeks after the invitation has been delivered to a selected applicant.

## **VI. Terms and Conditions**

IRI may, at their discretion and without explanation to the prospective recipients, at any time choose to discontinue this RFP without obligation to such prospective recipients.

Under no circumstances will IRI reimburse any costs that applicants may incur in the preparation or submission of an application.

The selected applications in response to this RFP will be incorporated into the final agreement between IRI and the selected recipient. IRI may request supporting documents for justification of budget costs.

## **VII. Organizational Background**

IRI is a Washington, DC-based nonprofit, nonpartisan organization committed 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. Currently, IRI is conducting active programs in more than 67 countries around the world, each tailored to meet the needs of the host country. IRI provides technical assistance in the areas of political party strengthening, developing civic institutions and open elections, promoting good governance and advancing the rule of law.

## ANNEX A COST APPLICATION BUDGET TEMPLATE

Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Grant Period: From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

**a. Personnel:** In general, employees receiving benefits from the applicant organization are considered staff. Identify staffing requirements by each position title and provide a brief description of duties. For clarity, please list the annual salary of each position, percentage of time and number of months devoted to the project.

a. Personnel				
Position	Rate/Percent on Project	Unit	Units	Cost
<i>Ex. Administrative Director</i>	<i>\$2,500 x 25 Percent</i>	<i>month</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>\$3,125</i>
<i>Position 2</i>				
<i>Position 3</i>				
<i>Position 4</i>				
<b>Personnel Subtotal:</b>				

**b. Travel:** Estimate costs for domestic travel and travel stipends incurred as part of research fieldwork or in support of project activities.

b. Travel					
Purpose of Travel	Item Description/ Destination Origin	Unit	Unit Cost	No. Units	Cost
<i>Ex: Survey Fieldwork</i>	<i>RT Airfare: Dhaka &gt; Chittagong</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>200</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>\$200</i>
<i>Travel 2</i>					
<i>Travel 3</i>					
<i>Travel 4</i>					


**Travel Subtotal:**

**c. Communications/Postage:** Estimate costs for communications and postage, including phone, fax, internet and shipping costs.

**c. Communications/Postage**

Item Description	Unit	Units	Unit Cost	Total
<i>Ex. Phone Cards</i>	<i>Month</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>\$25</i>	<i>\$125</i>
<i>Ex. Internet</i>	<i>Week</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>\$10</i>	<i>\$40</i>

**Communications/Postage Subtotal:**

**d. Contractual:** Estimate the costs for items such as translation, interpretation, honoraria, local hires, legal fees, accounting/audit services and any other contractual work that will be needed as part of the project.

**d. Contractual**

Item Description	Unit	Units	Unit Cost	Total


**Contractual Subtotal:**

**Other Direct Costs:** These will vary depending on the nature of the project. The inclusion of each should be justified in the budget narrative. Other direct costs might include rent, utilities, office supplies, bank fees or associated tax liabilities on the award.

**e. Other Direct Costs**

Item Description	Unit	Units	Unit Cost	Total
<i>Ex. Rent</i>	<i>Week/Month</i>			
<i>Ex. Utilities</i>				
<i>Ex. Bank Fees</i>				
<i>Ex. Office Materials (Paper, Pen)</i>				

**BUDGET TOTAL:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**ANNEX B**  
**BUDGET NARRATIVE TEMPLATE**

Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Grant Period: From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

The budget narrative must include an explanation and justification for each line item in the detailed budget, as well as the source and a description of all costs. Applicants should order the budget narrative as presented in the detailed budget. Personnel costs should include a clarification of the roles and responsibilities of key staff and percentage of time devoted to the project. The budget narrative should communicate any information that might not be readily apparent in the budget, not simply repeat with words what is stated numerically in the budget.

**a. Salaries**

Example: A total of US \$5,000 has been budgeted for the salaries of full-time and part-time staff required for the execution of the programmed activities. These positions are:

*Executive Director*

Salary: 500 USD per month (or unit). Twenty-five percent of the executive director's time will be dedicated to the project, calculated on a monthly basis. The executive director will be responsible for the following roles and responsibilities:

**b. Travel**

**c. Communications/Postage**

**d. Contractual**

**e. Other Direct Costs**

International Republican Institute  
(202) 408-9450 Phone  
(202) 408-9452 Fax  
info@iri.org  
www.IRI.org | @IRIGlobal

