INVITATION FOR BIDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Procurement Number:</strong></th>
<th>ASIA2021NP050</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Open Date:</strong></td>
<td>January 27, 2022</td>
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<td><strong>Questions Deadline:</strong></td>
<td>February 3, 2022</td>
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<td><strong>Closing Deadline:</strong></td>
<td>February 10, 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Geographical Area Restrictions:</strong></td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td><strong>Point of Contact:</strong></td>
<td>Rabbiya Kamal Nagra, <a href="mailto:rknagra@iri.org">rknagra@iri.org</a></td>
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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.

IRI has supported the development of democratic institutions across the South Asia region through programs that amplify diverse voices, expand political space, and foster accountable relationships. Through the Niti Sambad program, IRI Nepal improves the policy development and legislative research capacity within Nepal’s recently federalized system. The International Republican Institute (IRI) intends to commission a comprehensive qualitative study at the provincial level to examine the laws enacted by the Provincial Assemblies, their effectiveness, and the implementation level. These objectives are best examined by a combination of desk review, Key Information Interviews (KII) conducted among the provincial stakeholders, mostly the lawmakers and Provincial Assembly Secretariat officials and elected officials of municipalities, and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) among citizens.

Scope of Work:

**A comprehensive study of lawmaking by Elected Provincial Officials (Desk Review, Key Informant Interviews, and Focus Group Discussions)**
The International Republican Institute (IRI) intends to commission a comprehensive qualitative study at the provincial level to examine the laws enacted by the Provincial Assemblies, their effectiveness, and the implementation level. These objectives are best examined by a combination of desk review, Key Information Interviews (KII) conducted among the provincial stakeholders, mostly the lawmakers and Provincial Assembly Secretariat officials and elected officials of municipalities, and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) among citizens.
Research Objectives:
IRI needs to gain a comprehensive understanding of the laws implemented by the Provincial Assemblies, in particular:

- status of lawmaking and enforcement at the provincial level (mainly from desk research)
- perceptions and observations of key stakeholders on the lawmaking process. This includes how needs are identified, what sources are used for making laws, what procedures are followed, and what are the capacities available at the provincial level for lawmaking, among others. (mainly from KII)
- constituents’ assessment of the lawmaking process and the efficacy of the laws (mainly from FGDs)

Methodology:

IRI is recognizant of challenges associated with the Coronavirus and is open to the Bidder's recommendations in the proposal to mitigate the risks. So, IRI accepts participant recruitment by phone/online, and online FGDs/KII if the COVID-19 situation restricts in-person interviews and FGDs. In such a condition, the bidder must be able to demonstrate that online fieldwork has been carefully planned for success. This includes ensuring that potential participants with limited internet access/skills are not excluded.

Research Components:

1. Desk review of the laws promulgated by all seven Provincial Assemblies in all the provinces: how many laws were implemented, what were they, and how fully they were implemented.
2. KII with Speakers of the seven Provincial Assemblies and PA members (two to three per province), PA Secretariat Staff (two to three per province), local elected officials (two to three per province), and federalism experts (four in total). These KII are meant to obtain high-level, technical insights into the deliberations—or lack thereof—on the formulation of laws at the provincial level. KII will last 60-90 minutes each.
3. Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) in each province (seven in total) to solicit the perspective of the citizens and to triangulate the KII findings to better understand if provincial lawmaking is perceived as citizen-centered or not. Participants for the FGDs will be diverse in terms of their political party affiliation, age (18 and older), gender, and ethnicity. Each FGD will last 90-120 minutes (60-90 if online). Participants in the same focus group session may not know one another, and may not have participated in focus group research in the past 12 months.

Bidder will be responsible for managing all logistical aspects of the project above and should engage local support staff as necessary to complete the following:

- **Desk Review**
- **FGD Screener.** IRI will provide a draft screening questionnaire within two weeks of contract award based on the specifications above. The Bidder will review offer edits within three working days of receipt. Following IRI approval, the Bidder will
translate the screener into Nepali. IRI reserves the right to review the translation prior to recruitment launch.

- **Recruiting participants for KIIs and FGDs.** Bidder will recruit all participants according to the specifications listed above. For KII participants, the bidder will directly reach out to qualifying interviews (PA speaker and members, PA secretariat staff, local election officials, and federalism experts. For the FGDs, the bidder will do open recruitment using the FGD screener. At least one week prior to the start of the first KII and the first FGD, the Bidder will provide a brief description of the composition of the participants to IRI. The Bidder should recruit 8-10 participants (5-7 in case of online groups for each FGD as well as 2-3 alternates in case any of the original participants are unable to participate. All participants will be required to give written informed consent to participate in this study. IRI can provide draft informed consent language which may be adjusted by the bidder in order to conform to any specific legal requirements in the research country.

- **Discussion guides for KIIs and FGDs.** IRI will provide the draft discussion guides for both the KIIs and the FGDs. Bidder will be welcome to offer suggestions for improvement and is expected to format and translate the KII discussion guide into Nepali and the FGD discussion guide into Nepali. IRI reserves the right to review the translation(s.)

- **Focus group moderator/KII interviewer.** Bidder will provide a trained and experienced moderator/interviewer, who will familiarize him/herself with the topic of discussion.

- **Observation.** The Bidder will provide an opportunity for IRI staff to (remotely) observe the KIIs and FGDs.

- **Recording of KIIs and FGDs.** Audio and/or video record all KIIs/FGDs for full and accurate data collection and inclusion of illustrative samples in the final analytical report. If participants do not consent to videotaping, audio recordings are acceptable.

- **Written summaries of desk review, KIIs, and FGDs.** Bidder will provide a 2-3 page written summary of the desk review, a 2-3 page written summary of the KIIs, and a 2-3 page written summary of the FGDs in idiomatic English after the conclusion of the research component. The summaries will be used by IRI to inform instrument design of subsequent activities. For example, the desk review summary will be used to draft the discussion guide for the KIIs, and the KII summary will be used to draft the discussion guide for the FGDs.

- **Transcripts.** The Bidder will provide IRI with full verbatim transcripts in English of each KII and FGD that will identify each participant speaker by number or nick name or first name to link each comment to the participant’s gender, exact age, education level, city and occupation.

- **Written analytical report.** The bidder will write one consolidated analytic report in MS Word in idiomatic English, which includes a one or two page/slide executive summary, addressing the research needs outlined above. In this report, the bidder will integrate the findings from the desk review, KIIs, and FGDs and answer the research objectives detailed above. The report is expected to synthesize findings across all participants and all discussion sessions, while noting to any major differences of opinions between participants and sessions. The report must present actual analysis (i.e. not
mere description) and illustrative quotes from participants. The report will be approximately 20 pages in length.

- **PowerPoint Slides.** The Bidder will create approximately 20 PowerPoint slides to be used by IRI and the bidder for oral presentations (briefings) of the research findings. The slides will be modeled on the analytical report.

- **Briefings.** The Bidder will conduct seven briefings of the research findings. The bidder can elect to participate remotely, and the timing of such briefings would be arranged jointly with the Bidder.

### DELIVERABLES

- Translated screener and discussion guides
- Proposed Participant Profile
- Written summaries of desk review, KII, and FGDs
- Audio/video recordings of all KII and FGDs
- Full transcripts of all KII and FGDs
- Analytical report
- PowerPoint Slides
- Seven briefings on the findings

### TIMING

The desk review should commence after contract signature. KII should be held upon desk review conclusion. All research activities should take place between January 2021 and June 2022; the exact timing needs to be determined in close consultation with IRI.

**Proposals should address the following points:**

- List of qualitative projects you conducted with similar specifications
- Name and explain the role of subcontractors (if any)
- State if you are to comply with all requirements listed on this SOW without alterations. If there are any proposed alterations, explain.
- Describe recruitment plan
- Describe fieldwork quality assurance measures (if any)
- Describe analysis plan
- Provide CV or resume of the proposed moderator
- Describe anticipated challenges if any

Explain the potential impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on your firm’s operations, employees, and research participants, and detail how to plan to mitigate risks.

**Period of Performance:**

Date of signature to June 30, 2022
Technical Bid:
Interested bidders must present the technical bids outlining the following information:

Please submit all bids in English on official letterhead in Times New Roman 11-point font.

- Please provide contact information for at least three (3) recent references that speak to the fulfillment of similar deliverables.
- Please limit bids to 5 pages with single spacing. Please submit all pricing tables separately as Microsoft Excel files.
- Proposals must contain:
  - List qualitative projects you conducted with similar specifications
  - Name and explain the role of subcontractors (if any)
  - State if you are to comply with all requirements listed on this SOW without alterations. If any proposed alterations, explain.
  - Describe recruitment plan
  - Describe fieldwork quality assurance measures (if any)
  - Describe analysis plan
  - Provide CV or resume of the proposed moderator
  - Describe anticipated challenges if any

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 technical bids must contain Bidder's Taxpayer Identification Number.

Price information should be presented as a firm-fixed Unit Price for each of the deliverables identified below and in the format of the table below. 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. If there are any additional fees not reflected in the table below, such pricing must be fully described in the bid. Bids must be submitted in USD; payments under any resulting contract will be made in this currency.

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<th>Unit</th>
<th>Unit Cost</th>
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IFB Terms and Conditions:
1. Prospective Bidders are requested to review clauses incorporated by reference in the section "Notice Listing Contract Clauses Incorporated by Reference". By submitting a bid, bidder 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.
2. IRI may reject any or all bids if such is within IRI’s interest.
3. The Bidder’s initial bid should contain the Bidder’s best offer.
4. IRI reserves the right to make multiple awards or partial awards if, after considering administrative burden, it is in IRI’s best interest to do so.
5. Discussions with Bidders following the receipt of a bid do not constitute a rejection or counteroffer by IRI.
6. IRI will hold all submissions as confidential and shall not be disclosed to third parties. IRI reserves the right to share bids internally, across divisions, for the purposes of evaluating the bids.
7. If IRI continues to require the goods and services and the price remains reasonable and within market norms, resulting contract may be renewed each year for up to 5 years with 30 days’ notice to the Contractor. Bidder must establish any price increase for each renewal year in the initial bid.
8. Bidders confirm that the prices in the bid/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.
9. By applying to this IFB, applicant is certifying that if it is awarded a contract, none of funds payable under the resulting contract will be used to (1) procure or obtain, extend or renew a contract to procure or obtain; (2) enter into a contract (or extend or renew a contract) to procure; or (3) obtain the equipment, services, or systems that uses covered telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as critical technology as part of any system in compliance with the National Defense Authorization Act. Covered telecommunications equipment and services mean any of the following:
   i. Telecommunications equipment produced by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities).
   ii. For the purpose of public safety, security of government facilities, physical security surveillance of critical infrastructure, and other national security purposes, video surveillance and telecommunications equipment produced by Hytera Communications Corporation, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company, or Dahua Technology Company (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities).
   iii. Telecommunications or video surveillance services provided by such entities or using such equipment.
   iv. Telecommunications or video surveillance equipment or services produced or provided by an entity that the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Director of the National Intelligence or the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, reasonably believes to be an entity owned or controlled by, or otherwise connected to, the government of a covered foreign country. (2 CFR 200.216).
10. Bidders agree to disclose as part of the bid submission:
   a. 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.
b. Any family or financial relationship with other bidders submitting bids. For example, if the bidder’s father owns a company that is submitting another bid, the bidder must state this.

c. Any other action that might be interpreted as potential conflict of interest.

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 bids and reserves the right to make decisions based solely on the information provided with the initial bids. 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 were 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 bid 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 bid may be rejected if IRI determines that the lack of balance poses an unacceptable risk.

4. At least three years of experience within Nepal.

5. Provided list of qualitative studies conducted in Nepal.

6. Able to conduct FGDs in each of the seven provinces.

7. Professional fluency in English.

8. IRI will conduct a source selection based as follows: “best value”

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

a) Technical evaluation, (including technical capabilities, proposed technical approach, and personnel qualifications) – 40 percent
   - Capacity to perform SOW – 20 percent
   - Fieldwork Quality Control – 10 percent
   - Sampling Methodology – 10 percent
b) Past performance and experience in performing similar projects – 30 percent
c) Price – 30 percent

IRI intends to evaluate bids in accordance with these factors and make an award to the responsible bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the program.

9. 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 Rabbiya Kamal Nagra at rknagra@iri.org with the subject line “ASIA2021NP05o- Legal Study” by the deadline listed above.

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

Notice Listing Contract Clauses Incorporated by Reference
IRI is required to make the contractor subject to the clauses of the prime award. This contract incorporates 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 appropriate and applicable, references to “USAID” or “Department of State” shall be interpreted to mean “IRI”, “Recipient” to mean “Contractor”, and “Subrecipient” to mean “lower-tier subrecipients”. Included by reference are 2 C.F.R. 200 and USAID Standard Provisions for Non-US Non-governmental Organizations/US Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions.