

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Procurement Number:	ASIA2023PI01o - FGDs
Open Date:	December 1, 2022
Questions Deadline:	December 8, 2022 IRI will host a question & answer session about this solicitation on that date at 4PM EST for any and all bidders. Please email Ann Yang at ayang@iri.org if you are interested in joining this call. For any written questions, please email Eric Peterman at epeterman@iri.org
Closing Deadline:	December 15, 2022
Geographical Area Restrictions:	N/A
Point of Contact:	Eric Peterman; epeterman@iri.org

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.

The International Republican Institute (IRI) will partner with an external researcher or research firm in Fiji or the Pacific Islands region to conduct a series of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with a project budget ceiling of USD \$27,000. The purpose of the FGDs is to explore two key themes: specifically, how the voter registration changes impacted targeted communities; and generally, how government and civil society can ensure that women and LGBTQI+ people are adequately consulted on future legal and regulatory changes that affect their ability to participate in political processes. The FGDs will be implemented in coordination with IRI.

Period of Performance

12/01/2022 - 3/31/2023

Statement of Work

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH IN Fiji

Focus Groups on Voter Registration and Political Participation

OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

IRI needs to:

- 1. Understand what are the general barriers that women and LGBTQI+ people might experience and what motivates them to vote.**
- 2. Understand how the recent voter registration changes impacted target communities.** The focus groups will explore how the targeted communities received and understood the processes the Fijian Elections Office (FEO) laid out for voter registration; their ability to respond and upgrade their voter registration; and whether voter registration changes impacted turnout of targeted communities. This is with Electoral (Registration of Voters) Amendment No. 2 Act 2021 which was passed on September 22, 2021, that voter names to be what appears on their birth certificate.
- 3. Understand how government and civil society can ensure that women and LGBTQI+ people are adequately consulted on future legal and regulatory changes that affect their ability to participate in political processes.** The focus group discussions will explore perceptions of the major barriers to women and LGBTQI+ people's political participation; communication platforms where these communities are most likely to engage with these issues; how CSOs can most effectively engage these communities on structural barriers to participation; and sentiment about the adequacy of government consultation on major policy changes affecting women and LGBTQI+ people.

METHODOLOGY

The questions above are best addressed by a focus group study. Six groups, each lasting approximately 90-120 minutes should take place.

Group	Location	Gender	Age	LGBTQI+ ?	Urban/Rural	Affected by voter registration changes?
1	Suva	Women	18+	Not specified	Mixed	A balance of people 1) affected by changes and did re-register, 2) people affected by changes and did not re-register, and 3) people not affected by changes
2	Suva	Half men, half women		Yes		
3	Sigatoka	Women		Not specified		
4	Sigatoka	Half men, half women		Yes		
5	Nadi or Lautoka	Women		Not specified		
6	Nadi or Lautoka	Half men,		Yes		

		half women				
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Recruitment Criteria for Impact from Voter Registration Change:

1. Affected by changes and did re-register: This includes people who were affected by the voter registration change amendment and went through the process to register to vote again.
2. People affected by changes and did not re-register: This includes people who were affected by the voter registration change amendment, but did not go through the process to re-register to vote. *This category should include BOTH people who tried to re-register but were not able to complete the process, and people who did not try to re-register.*
3. People not affected by changes: This includes people who are a member of a potentially impacted group (women and LGBTQI+ people) but were not personally impacted.

Additional requirements:

- Participants in the same focus group session may not know one another.
- No participants may have participated in a focus group study in the past 12 months.
- For the groups that convene in Nadi or Lautoka, the vendor will suggest the location. IRI requires that participants are drawn from both communities.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFEROR

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

- **Screener.** IRI will provide a draft screening questionnaire based on the specifications above. The Offeror will review and offer edits within three working days of receipt. If the bidder finds it necessary, they will translate the screener into one or more non-English languages. These translations will be listed in the proposal. IRI reserves the right to review any translations prior to recruitment launch.
- **Recruiting participants.** Offeror will recruit all participants according to the screening criteria listed above. At least one week prior to the start of the first focus group session, the Offeror will provide a brief description of the composition of the groups in terms of age, gender, occupation, etc. Offeror should recruit 6-8 participants for each in person group 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 will 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 guide.** IRI will provide the draft discussion guide. Offeror will be welcome to offer suggestions for improvement and is expected to format the discussion guide. If the bidder finds it necessary, they will translate the discussion guide into one or more non-English languages. These translations should be included in the proposal. IRI reserves the right to review any translation(s.) Once IRI has reviewed the template, some modification of the discussion guide may be required.
- **Focus group moderator(s).** Offeror will provide one or more trained and experienced moderator(s) who is/are fully fluent in the language or discussion. They should familiarize themselves with the topic of discussion prior to fieldwork. If bidder determines that discussion guide translation into a language other than English is necessary, bidder will also provide moderator(s) who can conduct focus groups in this language. In this instance,

Bidder will determine with IRI the language that will be used for each of the six focus group discussions

- **Observation.** The Offeror will provide an opportunity for IRI staff to observe the focus group discussions.
- **Recording of focus group discussions.** Audio and/or video record all aspects of research necessary for full and accurate data collection, transcript generation and inclusion of illustrative samples in the final analytical report. Offeror will film focus groups and film should be high quality with clear sound. If participants do not consent to videotaping, audio recordings are acceptable.
- **Written summary of focus group discussions.** Offeror will provide a 2-3 page written summary of the focus group discussions (one single summary for all) in idiomatic English within one week after the final focus group session.
- **Written analytical report.** Offeror will analyze all discussions, and write and edit final analytic report for review, editing and acceptance by IRI. IRI will provide a report template. The report is expected to synthesize findings across all participants and all discussion sessions, while noting 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 must be in idiomatic English, and include a one or two page executive summary, addressing the research needs outlined above. The length is approximately 15-20 pages.

DELIVERABLES (needs to be in English)

- Finalized discussion guide (incl translation where applicable)
- Proposed Participant Profile
- Written summary as specified above.
- Video/Audio recordings of the discussions, with clear audio. Recording should be delivered to IRI electronically (for example via a file transfer service) or delivered to the local IRI office.
- Analytic report in MS Word, 15-20 pages

TIMING

The focus group discussions should be held after the elections are conducted on December 14, 2022 either in December 2022, January 2023, or February 2023; the exact timing needs to be determined in close consultation with IRI. Please include a project timeline in your proposal and specify how soon after contract award you would be able to commence recruitment.

Technical Proposals

Please submit all bids on official letterhead in Times New Roman 11-point font containing a brief organizational description, budget for services and any descriptions of specialized products or services relevant to the bid 5 pages with single spacing. Please include all pricing tables in Microsoft Excel format. Proposals should address the following points:

- Applicant shall provide registration documentation
- List qualitative projects you conducted with similar specifications in this market, especially in Fiji or other Pacific Islands.
- Name and explain the role of subcontractors (if any)

- State if you are able to comply with all requirements listed on this SOW without alterations. If any proposed alterations, explain.
- List any languages bidder suggests for screener and discussion guide translations.
- Describe recruitment plan
- Describe fieldwork quality assurance measures (if any)
- Describe analysis plan
- Provide proposed moderator(s) CV/Resume
- Describe anticipated challenges if any
- Proposals will address:
 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 submitted by individuals must contain the attached Expert Service Rate Form and a CV/resume.
 6. English and other local language skills
 7. Licensed to conduct public opinion research in Fiji
 8. Bidder is not affiliated with any political parties operating in Fiji
 9. Bidder has not conducted research for any political party in Fiji during the last 12 months

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 USD, payments under any resulting contract will be made in this currency.

Please submit all pricing tables in an Microsoft Excel format.

Insert cost per deliverable in USD	6 FGD sessions
Finalized discussion guide and Proposed Participant Profile (Payment 1)*	
Written summary and Video/Audio recordings (Payment 2)**	
Analytic report (Payment 3)	
Total:	

*This amount may not exceed 30% of the total amount quoted. **The amount of payments 1 and 2 combined may not exceed 70% of the total amount quoted.

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, (including technical capabilities, proposed technical approach, and personnel qualifications) 40
Recruitment plan 10
Capacity of perform scope of work 20
Analysis plan 10
 - b- Experience in performing similar projects 30
Experience conducting face to face FGDs in Fiji or the Pacific Islands 30
 - c- Price 30

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 Eric Peterman; epeterman@iri.org with the subject line ASIA2023PI01o: Fiji Focus Groups 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. By applying to this RFP, 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](#)).

13. 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: _____