

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

<b>Procurement Number:</b>	EUROPE2023V04o
<b>Open Date:</b>	March 16, 2023
<b>Questions Deadline:</b>	March 23, 2023
<b>Closing Deadline:</b>	March 26, 2023
<b>Geographical Area Restrictions:</b>	N/A
<b>Point of Contact:</b>	Eric Peterman; <a href="mailto:epeterman@iri.org">epeterman@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.

IRI is conducting research in Hungary to better understand how Hungarian citizens form their perspectives and opinions on matters of foreign and domestic policies. In recognizing that various media sources and platforms may influence and shape how Hungarian citizens perceive foreign and domestic policies, IRI is interested in gaining insight into the nature of citizen's media consumption. To assist in deepening the scope of its research, IRI seeks a contractor to conduct a digital media ethnography with a small subset of the Hungarian population, reflective of geography and divergent political leanings. The contractor will be responsible for conducting the study, collecting media diaries, conducting in-depth interviews with participants, and providing IRI with analysis.

### Period of Performance

Date of Signature through February 29 , 2024

### Statement of Work

Mixed Methods Research to Wholistically Study Media Consumption in Hungary

### Research Objectives:

IRI needs to:

1. **Understand what media content Hungarian citizens hear and view online and offline.** What websites, social media channels, TV/radio channels and programs, or print media do they use? How frequently do they access various sources, and for how long per session? Are there specific news and current events topics they seek out, and if so, which,

and on which sources? Are they exposed to media platforms (like commercials or billboards) that they do not intentionally seek out?

2. **Understand why Hungarian citizens make specific media consumption choices and if/how their media diet impacts their opinions on issues, in particular regarding foreign and domestic policy issues.** What guides their media consumption choices? How do they assess the credibility of various media sources? Does this vary by topic? What role does media consumption play in their opinion formation about various topics?

### **Methodology:**

The objectives listed above are best achieved through an interlocking three-pronged research approach. A simultaneous fieldwork period of digital ethnography (tracking) and offline media diaries (phase 1) will bring to light what media consumers actually see and hear, while subsequent in-depth interviews (phase 2) will debrief them to better understand their consumption choices.

#### **Phase 1: Digital Ethnography (Online Tracking) and Media Diaries**

In phase 1, participants will install tracking software on their personal smartphone(s) and tablet(s) to capture their media consumption. Full written consent must be obtained prior to installation. The tracking/monitoring software will capture all online activities on browsers and apps, but only media related activities will be considered for subsequent analysis.

In order to also capture offline media consumption or online media consumption on devices not included in tracking (e.g. school computers or work-issued mobile devices etc.), participants will be asked to complete a media diary at least once per day, listing additional media exposure, such as watching television with relevant details, such as channel, program, and duration. The estimated level of effort to complete the daily media diary is 20 minutes/day. IRI will provide blank diaries that will need to be translated into Hungarian by the offeror.

Fieldwork for phase 1 will last 10 days. Prior to commencement of phase 1 of fieldwork, panelists will be trained by the offeror using an IRI developed training manual (duration 1 hour); the manual will need to be translated into Hungarian. Throughout phase 1, the offeror will need to regularly (daily) monitor the tracking software and the completion of the media diaries. IRI recommends that media diaries be submitted online, but allows for alternatives in case some participants do not have the skills/access required for online submissions.

#### **Phase 2: Debrief In-Depth Interviews**

Following the analysis of the data captured during phase 1, the offeror will conduct 60-90 minute in-depth debrief interviews with all study participants. During this in-depth interview, participants will be given an overview of their media diet during the fieldwork period and asked to comment on various aspects, such as why they opted to visit a specific website or watch a specific channel etc. The offeror will develop a customized discussion guide for each interview that reflects the participant's media usage during phase 1. The discussion guides can be developed in Hungarian, but will need to be translated for IRI review. Alternatively, they can be developed in English and later translated into Hungarian. Interviews will be recorded for transcript creation purposes. The Offeror will provide one or more trained and experienced qualitative interviewers who should familiarize themselves with the topics of discussion prior to the interview. It is IRI's preference that the in-depth interviews be conducted face-to-face at a

place/time convenient for the participant, but IRI will also accept video-call interviews. The offeror will provide an opportunity for IRI staff to observe the in-depth interviews.

#### **Participant Recruitment:**

There will be 15 participants. The offeror will also need to recruit some back-up participants should any of the original participants drop out over the course of the study or if their participation is flawed (malfunctioning software, deliberate modification of device usage, low quality media diaries etc.)

IRI will supply contact information and demographic details for potential participants who have consented to follow-up contact in earlier research.

As is customary with qualitative research, the offeror may provide participants with a small honorarium for their participation. Written informed consent from all participants is required, IRI will provide draft informed consent language which may be adjusted by the offeror in order to conform to any specific legal requirements in Hungary. The offeror will deliver a proposed participant profile to IRI no later than 2 business days prior to beginning of fieldwork for phase 1.

#### **Deliverables:**

**Phase 1, pre-fieldwork: Translated blank media diaries:** IRI will provide blank media diaries. The Offeror will review and offer edits within three working days of receipt. Following IRI approval, the Offeror will translate the diaries into Hungarian. IRI reserves the right to review the translation prior to fieldwork launch. If the diaries are administered online, the Offeror will program them into software platform of their choice.

**Phase 1, pre-fieldwork: Translated participant training manual:** IRI will provide a draft training manual explaining what is expected of participants during phase 1 of fieldwork. The Offeror will review and offer edits within three working days of receipt. The offeror will also add any instructions that are relevant to the specific software used for tracking as well as instructions for the submissions of the daily media diaries. Following IRI approval, the Offeror will translate the screener into Hungarian. IRI reserves the right to review the translation prior to participant training.

**Phase 1, pre-fieldwork: Proposed participant profile:** At least two business days prior to the start of fieldwork for phase 1, the Offeror will provide a brief description of the composition of the participant group in terms of age, gender, occupation, and other recruitment criteria.

**Phase 1, post-fieldwork: Completed media diaries in Hungarian.** The offeror will submit the completed media diaries to IRI. Translation is not required. The delivery format is the bidder's choice, as long as the full content is reflected. IRI can provide a template upon request.

**Phase 1, post-fieldwork: Analysis, incl methodology:** The offeror will analyze the data collected during phase 1 and code it on various layers, such as by platform, specific media outlet, and content type. A detailed profile of each participant's media diet will thus be constructed, which will be used to devise customized interview guides for each individual's debrief interview

in phase 2. An overview of this analysis, including a methodology description of phase 1 of fieldwork, will be submitted to IRI.

**Phase 2, pre-fieldwork: discussion guides in English:** The offeror will provide the customized draft discussion guides in English to IRI at least 2 business prior to each in-depth interview.

**Phase 2, post-fieldwork: recordings:** Audio and/or video recordings of in-depth interviews for full and accurate data collection, transcript generation and inclusion of illustrative samples in the final analytical report are required. If participants do not consent to videotaping, audio recordings are acceptable.

**Final Report:** Offeror will analyze all data obtained in both phases of fieldwork; contextual findings from phase 2 will be integrated into the media consumption data obtained in phase 1 to form a wholistic basis of reporting on the study's findings. The Offeror shall write and edit a 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, while noting any major differences. The report must present actual analysis (i.e. not mere description) and include data excerpts and illustrative quotes from participants. The report must be in idiomatic English, and include a one or two page/slide executive summary, addressing the research needs outlined above. The length is approximately 50 slides in MS PowerPoint format.

### **Timing:**

Phase 1 fieldwork should be held in May 2023. Fieldwork for Phase 2 should be held no later than 2 weeks after the conclusion of phase 1. Final deliverables are due no later than 2 weeks after the conclusion of phase 2.

### **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 5 pages (not including cover page).
6. List projects you conducted with similar specifications, globally or in Hungary
7. List any previous fieldwork experience in Hungary
8. Name and explain the role of subcontractors (if any)

9. State if you are to comply with all requirements listed on this SOW without alterations. If any proposed alterations, explain.
10. Describe intended software for phase 1 tracking, including capabilities
11. Describe fieldwork quality assurance measures (if any)
12. Describe analysis plan
13. Describe anticipated challenges if any
14. Include anticipated timeline
15. Describe bidder's Hungarian language skills or access to translation services
16. Attach valid business license which confirms bidder is licensed to conduct public opinion research in Hungary
17. Indicate whether or not bidder is affiliated with any political parties operating in Hungary

### 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.

<b>Insert cost per deliverable in USD</b>	
Phase 1 pre-fieldwork deliverables (Payment 1)*	
Phase 1 post fieldwork deliverables and Phase 2 pre-fieldwork deliverables (Payment 2)**	
Phase 2 post-fieldwork deliverables and Final Report (Payment 3)	
<b>Total:</b>	

\*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 percent.
  - *Capacity to perform scope of work* -20 percent
  - *Analysis plan*-20 percent
- b) Experience in performing similar projects – 30 percent
  - *Experience conducting similar studies in Hungary or globally* - 30 percent
- c) Price – 30 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 Eric Peterman, at [epeterman@iri.org](mailto:epeterman@iri.org) with the subject Line "EUROPE2023V04o" 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 Lobbying

### CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

1. No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal Cooperative Agreement, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
2. If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned must complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.
3. The undersigned must require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients must certify and disclose accordingly.

This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, United States Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification will be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

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

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

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

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

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_