

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Procurement Number:	EURASIA2023K04o
Open Date:	September 5, 2023
Questions Deadline:	September 25, 2023
Closing Deadline:	September 29, 2023
Geographical Area Restrictions:	N/A
Point of Contact:	Julia Repishti, jrepishti@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.

IRI will conduct 5 Group Discussions, particularly in Bishkek, Osh City, Chui oblast, and Batken oblast. IRI will introduce pro-democracy forces to the group discussions process of identifying a target group, designing questions, and testing specific political messages that are of interest to political parties and individual leaders. They will be invited to work together with IRI on selecting target groups, developing language for the group discussion guide, and generating political messages for testing on constituent engagement. Political parties and pro-democracy groups will use the group discussion results to inform their communications and constituent engagement strategies (i.e., incorporating language used by participants), as well as offer them an opportunity to learn how they can conduct similar research on their own in the future to increase the effectiveness of their advocacy campaigns.

Period of Performance

Date of Signature –October 30, 2024.

Statement of Work

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH IN KYRGYZSTAN

5 Group Discussions throughout the country

OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

IRI will introduce pro-democracy forces to the group discussions process of identifying a target group, designing questions, and testing specific political messages that are of interest to political parties and individual leaders. They will be invited to work together with IRI on selecting target groups, developing language for the group discussion guide, and generating political messages for testing on constituent engagement. Political parties and pro-democracy groups will use the group discussion results to inform their communications and constituent engagement strategies (i.e., incorporating language used by participants), as well as offer them an opportunity to learn how they can conduct similar research on their own in the future to increase the effectiveness of their advocacy campaigns.

METHODOLOGY

The questions above are best addressed by a group discussion study. Five groups in total, each lasting approximately 90-120 minutes should take place across the country with one group per oblast or city (two in Bishkek with different target groups and Discussion Guides). For the oblasts, the group will take place in a city or village to be determined by IRI after contracting. Five groups will be divided into three rounds among three beneficiaries with three different Discussion Guides and Participant Profiles.

The two oblasts and two cities are:

- Round 1
 - Bishkek city
- Round 2
 - Bishkek city
 - Osh city
- Round 3
 - Batken oblast
 - Chui oblast

The language of discussion for each group will either be Russian or Kyrgyz, with only one language per group. The language of each group will be determined during the screening process.

Recruitment criteria for each round may be different and will be finalized in consultation with IRI staff after contracting. Participants will be voters or non-voters of a particular political party. A different political party will be target for each round. The age and gender composition of the groups may also vary between rounds.

All participants should be:

- Of voting age
- Representative of a broad range of income and education levels and recruited from different neighborhoods in same city
- Registration papers should not be used from recruitment

- Voters of a particular political party.
- Include at least two members belonging to minority groups in each session who are fluent in the language of discussion (Kyrgyz or Russian)
- Participants in the same group may not know one another
- No participants may have participated in a group or in-depth study in the past 12 months.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFEROR

Offeror will be responsible for managing all logistical aspects of the project above. From project design to execution, the bidder must comply with any laws governing human subjects research that apply to group discussions in Kyrgyzstan, including data privacy laws. and should engage local support staff as necessary to complete the following:

- **Screener.** For each round, IRI will provide a draft screening questionnaire based on the specifications above. The Offeror will review offer edits within three working days of receipt. Following IRI approval, the Offeror will translate the screener into Kyrgyz and Russian. IRI reserves the right to review the translation prior to recruitment launch. There will be three different recruitment screeners (one for each round) during the initial period of performance.
- **Recruiting participants.** For each round, Offeror will recruit all participants according to the screening criteria listed above. At least one week prior to the start of the first group session, the Offeror will provide a brief description of the composition of the groups in terms of age, gender, occupation, etc. There will be three different sets of recruitment specifications (one for each round) during the initial period of performance. Offeror should recruit 10 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.** For each round, IRI will provide the draft discussion guide. Offeror will be welcome to offer suggestions for improvement and is expected to format and translate the discussion guide into Kyrgyz and Russian. IRI reserves the right to review the translation(s.) Once IRI has reviewed the template, some modification of the discussion guide may be required. There will be three different discussion guides (one for each round) during the initial period of performance
- **Group moderator(s).** For each round, 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, and may be asked to participate in a training of up to 2 hours with IRI staff.
- **Observation.** The Offeror will provide an opportunity for IRI staff or beneficiaries to observe the group discussions.

- **Recording of** 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 groups and film should be high quality with clear sound. If participants do not consent to videotaping, audio recordings are acceptable.
- **Transcripts.** For each round, the Offeror will provide IRI with full verbatim transcripts in English and interview languages of each group that will identify each participant speaker by number or first name to link each comment to the participant's gender, exact age, education level, city, and occupation.

DELIVERABLES

- 3 Finalized discussion guides (incl translation where applicable)
- 3 Finalized recruitment screeners (incl translation where applicable)
- 3 Proposed Participant Profiles
- 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.
- Full transcripts of all discussions, as described above.

TIMING

The group discussions should be held between September 2023 and October 2024; the exact timing needs to be determined in close consultation with IRI.

Technical Proposals

All proposals submitted to IRI must include:

1. Information addressing your firm's experience in providing each of the services identified in the above Statement of Work and your 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);
3. Names, titles, and telephone and facsimile numbers, and electronic addresses of persons authorized to negotiate and act on the Bidders behalf with IRI in connection with this RFP and the resulting contract award.
4. Name, title, and signature of person authorized to sign the proposal. Proposals signed by an agent shall be accompanied by evidence of that agent's authority, unless that evidence has been previously furnished to the issuing office.
5. Bidders shall provide a list of at least five previously executed contracts of a similar nature for the last three years along with the contact details. IRI may contact the firm as reference check.
6. 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 proposals must contain Bidders Taxpayer Identification Number.

7. 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. Contact information is provided 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 include all pricing tables in Microsoft Excel format.
8. Proposals should address the following points:
 - 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)
 - Provide proposed moderator(s) CV/Resume
 - Describe anticipated challenges if any
 - Informed consent policy
 - Proposal must confirm you are able to transcribe full sessions and provide translated copies of transcriptions in all interview languages with participant tags included
 - Please indicate whether or not bidder complies with any laws governing human subjects research that apply to group discussions in Kyrgyzstan, including data privacy laws
 - Please attach valid business registration which confirms bidder is licensed to conduct public opinion research in Kyrgyzstan
 - Please indicate whether or not bidder is affiliated with any political parties operating in Kyrgyzstan

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

Insert cost per deliverable in USD	5 group discussion sessions - In person
3 Finalized discussion guides, 3 finalized recruitment screeners and 3 Proposed Participant Profiles (Payment 1)*	
Video/Audio recordings (Payment 2)**	
Full transcripts in interview language and English languages (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.

Insert cost per deliverable in USD	Unit Price	Number of Units	Total Price
Finalized discussion guides		3	
Finalized recruitment screeners		3	
Proposed participant profiles		3	

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: Best Value.

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

<i>Technical evaluation, (including technical capabilities, proposed technical approach, and personnel qualifications)</i>	<i>40</i>
<i>Recruitment plan</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Capacity of perform scope of work</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Experience in performing similar projects</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Experience conducting face to face qualitative research Kyrgyzstan</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Price</i>	<i>30</i>
Total	100

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 Julia Repishti, at jrepishti@iri.org with the subject line **EURASIA2023K04o- Kyrgyzstan Qualitative Research** 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. Proposals must be submitted in English.
4. Payment will be made upon receipt of invoices and deliverables/services.
5. 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.
6. The Bidders initial proposal should contain the Bidders best offer.
7. 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.
8. Discussions with Bidders following the receipt of a proposal do not constitute a rejection or counteroffer by IRI.
9. By submitting a proposal, 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.
10. Any samples submitted by Bidders will not be returned to Bidders.

11. 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.
12. For any currency conversion, the exchange rate to US Dollars listed on oanda.com on the closing date of this solicitation shall be used.
13. By submitting a proposal, 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.
14. Bidders 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.
15. 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](#)).
16. 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 an Bidders mother conducts volunteer trainings for IRI.
 - Any family or financial relationship with other Bidders submitting proposals. For example, if the Bidders 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 subcontractor subject to the clauses of the prime award. This subcontract 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 subcontractor is appropriate and applicable, references to “USAID/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 CFR 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 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:

- Narcotics offenses and drug trafficking- key individual certification
- Certification regarding debarment, suspension, ineligibility and voluntary exclusion lower tier covered transactions
- Lobbying disclosure
- Authorized Individuals

NARCOTICS OFFENSES AND DRUG TRAFFICKING- KEY INDIVIDUAL CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that within the last ten years:

1. I have not been convicted of a violation of, or a conspiracy to violate, any law or regulation of the United States or any other country concerning narcotic or psychotropic drugs or other controlled substances.
2. I am not and have not been an illicit trafficker in any such drug or controlled substance.
3. I am not and have not been a knowing assistor, abettor, conspirator, or colluder with others in the illicit trafficking in any such drug or substance.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Title/Position: _____

Entity Name: _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____

NOTICE:

1. You are required to sign this Certification under the provisions of 22 CFR Part 140, Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers. These regulations were issued by the Department of State and require that certain key individuals of organizations must sign this Certification.
2. If you make a false Certification you are subject to U.S. criminal prosecution under 18 U.S.C. 1001.

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: _____

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: _____

Authorized Individuals

The Bidder/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: _____