

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Procurement Number:	EUROPE2023TK07o
Open Date:	9/29/2023
Questions Deadline:	10/07/2023
Closing Deadline:	10/12/2023
Decision Date:	N/A
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.

These Focus Group Discussions will provide IRI and project partners with critical data on citizen views on a variety of issues.

Period of Performance

Date of Signature through February 15, 2024 with the option to extend 4 additional years.

Statement of Work

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH IN Turkey

Focus Groups on Policy and Socio-Economic Topics

OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

IRI will ask the bidder to conduct a round of remote focus groups that addresses one or more of research objectives below.

IRI needs to:

- 1. Understand Turkish opinions on policy proposals and legislative drafts**
- 2. Understand Turkish views on pre-election socio-economic issues and post-election expectations.**
- 3. Understand Turkish views on social or political issues that are relevant at the time of fieldwork**
- 4. Understand Turkish views on various political parties and candidates**

METHODOLOGY

The objectives above are best addressed by a round of remote focus groups. IRI would like the option to extend the contract to conduct more rounds of focus groups after the conclusion of the first round. IRI will request no more than 3 rounds per year for up to five years.

For each round, either 20 or 25 or 30 groups, each lasting approximately 60-90 minutes should take place.

For each round, the groups will take place online among participants in different cities across the 12 statistical areas within Turkey. In Istanbul and in Ankara, there will generally be twice the number of groups as in other cities. For example, if there are two groups in a city in Western Marmara, there will be four groups in Istanbul. The groups in each round will cover at least 8 of the 12 areas listed below:

- Istanbul
- Western Marmara
- Aegean
- Eastern Marmara
- Western Anatolia
- Mediterranean
- Central Anatolia
- Western Black Sea
- Eastern Black Sea
- Northeastern Anatolia
- Central-Eastern Anatolia
- Southeastern Anatolia

Each group will be composed as follows:

- Gender will be roughly split 50/50
- Education levels will be mixed

- Ethnic background roughly reflective of the city's population
- Political party affiliation will be roughly proportionate to party affiliation as determined by most recent polling data or election data
- Age groups will generally be separated into 18-40 and 41+

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.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFEROR

IRI prefers participant recruitment by phone/online, and online FGDs, as long as the bidder is able to demonstrate that online fieldwork has been carefully planned for success. IRI is particularly concerned that a potential participant who may meet all recruitment criteria but lack a reliable high-speed data connection (or lack a device or lack skills to access a video conference platform) might be excluded from this study. Please explain how you intend to mitigate this.

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 focus group discussions in Turkey, including data privacy laws. The bidder should engage local support staff as necessary to complete the following:

- **Screeners.** 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 Turkish. IRI reserves the right to review the translation prior to recruitment launch.
- **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 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 5-7 participants for each remote 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 one draft discussion for each round of focus groups. Offeror will be welcome to offer suggestions for improvement and is expected to format and translate the discussion guide into Turkish. IRI reserves the right to review the 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 of discussion. They should familiarize themselves with the topic of discussion prior to fieldwork.
 - **Observation.** The Offeror will provide an opportunity for IRI staff to observe the focus group discussions remotely. IRI may request simultaneous translations in English while observing. In rounds that require simultaneous translation, roughly half of groups will require it.
- **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.** For each round, Offeror will provide a 2-3 page written summary of the focus group discussions (one single summary for all groups) in idiomatic English within one week after the final focus group session. There will be one written summary of the focus group discussions.
- **Transcripts.** For each round, the Offeror will provide IRI with full verbatim transcripts in English 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.
- **Written analytical report.** For each round, offeror will analyze all discussions, and 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 and all discussion sessions per round, 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 slide executive summary, addressing the research needs outlined above. The length is approximately 10-20 slides.

DELIVERABLES per round of focus groups

- 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.
- Full transcripts of all discussions, as described above.
 - Analytic report of 10-20 slides in MS PowerPoint

TIMING

The exact timing of the first round of focus groups needs to be determined in close consultation with IRI. IRI's preferred project timeline is as follows:

Translated questionnaire and recruitment screener	Due 3 days after receipt of English questionnaire and screener
Proposed participant profile	Due 10 days after IRI's acceptance of translated instruments
Fieldwork	Begins within 5 days after IRI's acceptance of proposed participant profile
Written summary	Due 5 days after final discussion
Video/Audio recordings	Due 3 days after final discussion
Full transcripts	Due 7 days after final discussion
Analytic report	Due 14 days after final discussion

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 Offeror (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 Offeror's 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. Offerors 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 Offeror 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 Offeror's Taxpayer Identification Number.
7. Proposals will not exceed 15 pages (not including cover page).

Price Proposals

Price proposal must include the following criteria:

Offerors must propose a firm-fixed Unit Price for each of the deliverables identified below and in the format of the table below. The Offeror'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 an Offeror 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.

Deliverable pricing table per round of remote FGDs:

Total price in USD	20 groups	25 groups	30 groups
Finalized discussion guide			
Proposed Participant Profile			
Written summary			
Video/Audio recordings			
Full transcripts			
Analytic report			
Total:			

Pricing of simultaneous translation during observation:

	Price per focus group session in USD
Simultaneous translation during observation	

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. Bidder will provide a list of at least three (3) recent references that speak to the fulfillment of similar deliverables. Contact information shall be provided upon request. Please limit bids to 5 pages with single spacing. Please include all pricing tables in Microsoft Excel format.

Proposals should address the following points:

- List qualitative projects you conducted with similar specifications in this market
- 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 how bidder will mitigate the risk of excluding participants without a reliable internet connection
- Describe fieldwork quality assurance measures (if any)
- Describe analysis plan
- Provide proposed moderator(s) CV/Resume
- Describe bidder's Turkish language skills
- Please attach valid business registration which confirms bidder is licensed to conduct public opinion research in Turkey
- Please indicate whether or not bidder is affiliated with any political parties operating in Turkey
- Please indicate whether or not bidder has conducted research for any political party in Turkey during the last 12 months
- Please indicate whether or not bidder complies with any laws governing human subjects research that apply to focus group discussions in Turkey, including data privacy laws
- Describe anticipated challenges if any

Evaluation and Award Process

1. IRI may contact any Offeror for clarification or additional information, but Offerors 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 Offerors prior to award of a contract, and may at its sole discretion elect to issue contracts to one or more Offerors.
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 Offeror 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 Offeror based on the following evaluation factors:

- a) Technical evaluation, (including technical capabilities, proposed technical approach, and personnel qualifications) – 40 percent.
 - Recruitment plan-10 percent
 - Capacity of perform scope of work-20 percent.
 - Analysis plan-10 percent
- b) Experience in performing similar projects – 30 percent.
 - Experience conducting remote FGDs in Turkey– 30 percent
- c) Price – 30 percent

IRI intends to evaluate Offerors' proposals in accordance with these factors and make an award to the responsible Offeror 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

Quotes must be submitted via email to Eric Peterman; at epeterman@iri.org with the subject line "RFP EUROPE2023TK07o".

RFP Terms and Conditions

1. Prospective Offerors 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 Offeror's initial proposal should contain the Offeror's 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 Offerors following the receipt of a proposal do not constitute a rejection or counteroffer by IRI.
9. 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.

10. Any samples submitted by Offerors will not be returned to Offerors.
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, 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.
14. 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 Offeror 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. Offerors agree to disclose as part of the proposal submission:
 - o Any close, familial, or financial relationships with IRI staff and agents. For example, the Offeror must disclose if an Offeror's mother conducts volunteer trainings for IRI.
 - o Any family or financial relationship with other Offerors submitting proposals. For example, if the Offeror's father owns a company that is submitting another proposal, the Offeror must state this.
 - o 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 Offerors. 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 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: _____