



Short-Term Consultancy Position: Terms of Reference for

research on international human rights funding

1) Rationale and context of the assignment

Human Rights Defenders carry out their work in a difficult and challenging context. Their physical integrity, as well as their legal ability to work is being increasingly threatened. At the same time, available funds to support them at the international level have remained limited in the past few years. Lack of support has been resulting in a growing number of casualties among Human Rights Defenders and the forced closure of local Human Rights organisations. Overall, such a situation puts the peaceful defence of Human Rights in danger.

ProtectDefenders.eu, the EU Human Rights Defenders mechanism operated by a Consortium of 12 international NGOs, carries out its work of supporting defenders and organisations, including through financial assistance, training and advocacy activities. However, members of the Consortium can only report about the increasingly scarce financial resources available at the global level from traditional donors for this specific group of beneficiaries. If part of the needs can be answered thanks to the resources of the EU mechanism and of other organisations active in the field of Human Rights, a large part of the requests remains unanswered for which Human Rights Defenders do not manage to find appropriate support.

At the end of 2017, ProtectDefenders.eu commissioned a research study on the funding available for HRDs, in order to identify and qualify funding trends, as well as to analyse the funding characteristics, map main public and private donors, map main NGOs recipients, and try to anticipate future trends. The study covered both public (bilateral and multilateral donors) and private funding (foundations) and the period analysed was 2013 - 2017. The data analysed came from donors' databases and the funding flows analysed were grants and specific funds to HRD NGOs and individuals. One of the main findings this study was that institutional donors had been reducing or were to reduce their budget while private funding - even having reported an increase, would not be sufficient to compensate for the fall of institutional funding.

This report was made available to the partners to inform the advocacy work and engagement with donors, individually and as a Consortium. The report was presented at the European Parliament, among other spaces. However, while this piece of research is considered a valuable asset, it evidenced the subsequent need for it to be expanded and complemented with more in-depth analysis.

ProtectDefenders.eu intends to continue mobilising international attention on this phenomenon and urge relevant stakeholders to develop concrete actions to ensure sufficient and effective financial support to individuals and organisations defending human rights. To initiate such an action, ProtectDefenders.eu needs a solid, in-depth update of the research study of



these trends based on a thorough analysis of all available information, that would be used as a basis for further advocacy, adjusted to the priorities and the current interests of the Consortium.

2) Scope of the work

Under the supervision of a steering committee of ProtectDefenders.eu's partners and under the overall coordination of the Secretariat of ProtectDefenders.eu, the consultant will produce a thorough research on funding available for HRDs, not focused solely on protection but also on project/core resources made available to local human rights defenders' organisations. The research should illustrate and explain the recent trends (2018 - to date) in the funds available for Human Rights Defenders and NGOs that need support for their activities or to answer security threats. To the possible extent, it should also provide a forecast of funding availability for the upcoming 3 to 5 years. This research should balance its findings with the trends in the level of demands/needs/ of Human Rights Defenders and local NGOs.

In particular, this research will look into:

- The situation and trends of institutional/bilateral funding – including from the EU and in the NDICI framework, for HRD work. It will focus on the institutional/government funding – including on the ways these donors are managing and delivering the funding (e.g. pooled funds, small grants, management of embassies' support schemes, etc.).
- A special interest in some regions, HRDs work topics, or countries of interest (to be determined), examples of innovative practices and/or flexible tools and approaches from donors towards their relation with grantees and beneficiaries throughout the funding cycle, as well as gaps in available funding (under-funded regions, countries, or groups identified in previous research), which can eventually be connected to the work of the EU HRD mechanism.
- Case studies will be looking at funding more in depth and with a qualitative approach, in specific country(ies) or for specific group(s), including interviews with human rights defenders and organisations.
- A particular focus on funding available to WHRD, LGBTI, and gender-non-conforming groups, including for protection.
- The level of funding channelled by intermediary donors and their (changing) role in supporting HRDs in increasingly restricted contexts (e.g. increased funding restrictions, HRDs moving away from formal registered organisations etc.) and in light of the impact of COVID19.

The approach used in the research should provide a basis for future advocacy work.



3) Responsibilities

The consultant shall:

- Conduct a comprehensive research from a multidimensional perspective on the subject with strong legal, financial and academic supporting resources;
- Comprehensively map the current funding landscape available for Human Rights Defenders and Organisations, considering all kinds of public/ institutional donors, focus regions, thematic areas, beneficiaries, etc.;
- Identify useful indicators for monitoring the funding environment, providing key data and information on, inter alia, evolutions, trends (including in funding needs for case studies), accessibility to funds and recent changes;
- Analyse the context (in donors' countries?), and identify political, economic and social trends directly affecting the subject of the research;
- Once the research has been finalised, draw lessons and conclusions and consider ways in which this study can be used in a practical way to expand the funding available to human rights defenders and organisations;
- Inform the ProtectDefenders.eu Consortium about the results of the research, including developments, conclusions and contacts generated in relation to the study.

4) Stages, outputs and deliverables

Stage	Deliverables	Deadline	Duration
0. Initial scoping	Inception note	October 2021	<5 days
1. Quantitative assessment: Research	Study Info-graphs	End of December 2021	<25 days
2. Qualitative assessment: Case studies	Catalogue of case studies	End of February 2022	<10 days
3. Wrap-up and Dissemination	Executive summary Presentation(s) to the Consortium	Mid-March 2022	<5 days

5) Duty station

The consultant will work home-based. Visits related to the research can be considered, as well as visits to the Secretariat of ProtectDefenders.eu in Brussels.

6) Time-frame for reviewing milestones and performance

A performance review and a discussion of the preliminary findings will be conducted by the Steering Committee before completion of each stage of the project, followed by a final performance review upon completion of the assignment. The review will be based on the performance indicators below.

7) Performance indicators for evaluation of results

- Overall quality of the deliverables;
- Accuracy, depth and relevance of research and materials produced;
- Relevance of the research approach for further use in a practical environment;
- Quality of the contacts established and inputs collected;
- Timeliness of response and ability to meet deadlines.

8) Qualifications, specialised knowledge and experience required

- Advanced University degree in Human Rights, International Relations, Law, Political Science or related field.
- Demonstrated ability to research and analyse information to a high quality standard.
- Five to seven years of work or academic experience in a professional capacity in Human Rights, International Relations, Law, Political Science or related field.
- Deep understanding of non-governmental organisations, human rights organisations, funding mechanisms and procedures, legal and practical aspects of funding frameworks and project management.
- Experience liaising with different stakeholders, notably governmental and international entities and civil society.
- Strong ability to write and edit. Ability to express clearly and concisely ideas in written materials and presentations.
- Advanced critical thinking, analysis, and synthesis skills required to draw conclusions from several sources of information and data.
- Proven skills in interpersonal communication and networking.
- Good understanding of the EU system, including European Commission, the EU financial framework, as well as world affairs, events and human rights issues.

9) Duration

Estimated: Six (6) months starting September/ October 2021 for a maximum of 40 working days.



10) How to apply

Applicants are requested to send their submissions to the Secretariat of ProtectDefenders.eu at recruit@protectdefenders.eu, with the subject line "Research consultant" by 15 September 2021.

- Applications must include:
- Cover letter
- CV
- 1-2 examples of research work relevant to this TOR
- A maximum 3-page document proposing a research approach and a plan of action, including a suggested time-frame and a methodology, as well as a budget detailing the daily rate and other eligible expenses for the research.

Applications submitted without a budget will not be considered.

Please note that acknowledgement of applications will be extended only to short-listed candidates.