

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL – RFP Services

Ref: **RFP/CI/FMD/IPDC/2025/01**

(Please quote this UNESCO reference in all correspondence)

External Evaluation of UNESCO's "International Programme for the Development of Communication" (IPDC)

Date: 17 April 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are invited to submit an offer for **an external evaluation** in accordance with the present solicitation document.

The Request for Proposal (RFP) consists of this cover page and the following Annexes:

- Annex I [Instructions to Offerors](#)
- Annex II [General Conditions of Contract](#)
- Annex III [Terms of Reference \(TOR\)](#)
- Annex IV [Proposal Submission Form](#)
- Annex V [Price Schedule Form](#)
- Annex VI [Vendor Information Form](#)

Your offer, comprising of technical proposal and financial proposal, should be delivered through **two separate emails no later than 25 May 2025 at 23:59 CEST (GMT+2)** as follows:

The technical proposal should be sent to the following email, with the mention "Technical Proposal – RFP/CI/FMD/IPDC/2025/01 – name of the bidder" in subject: ci-procurement@unesco.org

The financial proposal should be sent the following email, with the mention "Financial Proposal – RFP/CI/FMD/IPDC/2025/01 – name of the bidder" in subject: ci-procurement@unesco.org

Offers addressed to any other email accounts will be disqualified. It should also be noted that all files together should not exceed 10 Mo per email.

Submissions will be acknowledged by email upon receipt, but **ONLY** selected applicants will receive further notification and correspondence.

This letter is not to be construed in any way as an offer to contract with your firm/institution. Your proposal could, however, form the basis for a contract between your company and UNESCO.

You are requested to acknowledge the receipt of this letter and to indicate whether or not you will be submitting a proposal. For this purpose, and for any requests for clarification, please send an email to ci-procurement@unesco.org

For and on behalf of UNESCO

ANNEX I – Instructions to Offerors

These instructions contain general guidelines and instructions on the preparation, clarification, and submission of Proposals.

A. INTRODUCTION

1. General

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to invite Sealed Proposals for professional services to be provided to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization - UNESCO.

2. Eligible bidders

Bidders should not be associated, or have been associated in the past, directly or indirectly, with a firm or any of its affiliates which have been engaged by UNESCO to provide consulting services for the preparation of the Terms of Reference, and other documents to be used for the procurement of services to be purchased under this Request for Proposal.

This bid is open to all national and international suppliers who are legally constituted, can provide the requested services.

Bidders are ineligible if at the time of submission of the offer:

- (a) The bidder is on the exclusion list published on the global portal for suppliers of the United Nations Organization, (<http://www.ungm.org>) due to fraudulent activities.
- (b) The name of the bidder appears on the Consolidated United Nations Security Council Sanctions List which includes all individuals and entities subject to sanctions measures imposed by the Security Council.
- (c) The bidder is excluded by the World Bank Group.

3. Fraud and corruption

UNESCO requires that bidders, contractors and their subcontractors adhere to the highest standard of moral and ethical conduct during the procurement and execution of UNESCO contracts and do not engage in corrupt, fraudulent, collusive, coercive or obstructive practices.

For the purpose of this provision such practices are collectively referred to as “fraud and corruption”:

- “Corrupt practice” is the offering, giving, receiving or soliciting, directly or indirectly, an undue advantage, in order that the person receiving the advantage, or a third person, act or refrain from acting in the exercise of their official duties, or abuse their real or supposed influence;
- “Fraudulent practice” is a knowing misrepresentation of the truth or concealment of a material fact aiming at misleading another party in view of obtaining a financial or other benefit or avoiding an obligation, or in view of having another party act to their detriment ;
- “Collusive practice” means an arrangement between two or more parties designed to achieve an improper purpose, including influencing improperly the actions of another party ;
- “Coercive practice” means impairing or harming, or threatening to impair or harm, directly or indirectly, any party or the property of the party to influence improperly the actions of a party.
- “Obstructive practice” means acts intended to materially impede the exercise of UNESCO’s contractual rights of audit, investigation and access to information, including destruction,

falsification, alteration or concealment of evidence material to a UNESCO investigation into allegations of fraud and corruption.

- “Unethical practice” means conduct or behaviour that is contrary to Staff or Supplier codes of conduct, such as those relating to conflict of interest, gifts, hospitality, postemployment provisions, abuse of authority and harassment.

UNESCO expects that all suppliers who wish to do business with UNESCO will embrace the [United Nations Supplier Code of Conduct](#)

UN Agencies have adopted a zero tolerance policy on gifts and therefore, it is of overriding importance that UNESCO staff should not be placed in a position where their actions may constitute or could be reasonably perceived as reflecting favourable treatment of an individual or entity by accepting offers of gifts, hospitality or other similar favours. Vendors are therefore requested not to send or offer gifts or hospitality to UNESCO personnel.

UNESCO will:

- Reject a proposal to award a contract if it determines that a vendor recommended for award has engaged in fraud and corruption in competing for the contract in question.
- Cancel or terminate a contract if it determines that a vendor has engaged in fraud and corruption in competing for or in executing a UNESCO contract.
- Declare a vendor ineligible, either indefinitely or for a stated period of time, to become a UN registered vendor if it at any time determines that the vendor has engaged in fraud and corruption in competing for or in executing a UNESCO contract.

Any concern or evidence that corruption or fraud may have occurred or is occurring related to a UNESCO contract shall be forwarded to the Office of Internal Oversight. Please refer to [how-to-report-fraud-corruption-or-abuse](#).

4. Cost of Proposal

The Offeror shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of the Proposal and UNESCO will in no case be responsible or liable for those costs, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the solicitation.

B. SOLICITATION DOCUMENTS

5. Contents of Solicitation Documents

Proposals must offer services for the total requirement. Proposals offering only part of the requirement will be rejected. The Offeror is expected to examine all corresponding instructions, forms, terms and specifications contained in the Solicitation Documents. Failure to comply with these documents will be at the Offeror's risk and may affect the evaluation of the Proposal.

6. Clarification of Solicitation Documents

A prospective Offeror requiring any clarification of the Solicitation Documents may notify UNESCO in writing at the organisation's mailing address or fax or email number indicated in the RFP. UNESCO will respond in writing to any request for clarification of the Solicitation Documents that it receives earlier than two weeks prior to the deadline for the submission of Proposals. Written copies of the organisation's response (including an explanation of the query but without identifying the source of inquiry) may be sent to all prospective Offerors that have received the Solicitation Documents.

7. Amendments of Solicitation Documents

At any time prior to the deadline for submission of Proposals, UNESCO may, for any reason, whether at its own initiative or in response to a clarification requested by a prospective Offeror, modify the Solicitation Documents by amendment.

All prospective Offerors that have received the Solicitation Documents will be notified in writing of all amendments to the Solicitation Documents.

In order to afford prospective Offerors reasonable time in which to take the amendments into account in preparing their offers, UNESCO may, at its discretion, extend the deadline for the submission of Proposals.

C. PREPARATION OF PROPOSALS

The offers received must include information in sufficient scope and detail to allow UNESCO to consider whether the company has the necessary capability, experience, expertise, financial strength and the required capacity to perform the services satisfactorily.

8. Language of the Proposal

The Proposals prepared by the Offeror and all correspondence and documents relating to the Proposal exchanged by the Offeror and UNESCO shall be written in **English**. Any printed literature furnished by the Offeror may be written in another language so long as accompanied by a translation of its pertinent passages in which case, for purposes of interpretation of the Proposal, the language as stated in the Solicitation Documents applies.

9. Documents Comprising the Proposal

The Proposal shall comprise the following components:

- a) Proposal submission form;
- b) Operational and technical part of the Proposal, including documentation to demonstrate that the Offeror meets all requirements;
- c) Price schedule, completed in accordance with clauses 10 & 11;

10. Proposal Form - Presentation of the technical proposal

The Offeror shall structure the technical part of its Proposal as follows:

10.1. Description of the firm/institution and its qualifications

(a) Management Structure

This Section should provide corporate orientation to include company's profile (year and country of incorporation – copy of certificate of incorporation), a brief description of present activities focusing on services related to the Proposal as well as an outline of recent experience on similar projects, including experience in the country.

The firm/institution should describe the organizational unit(s) that will become responsible for the contract, and the general management approach towards a project of this kind. The Offeror should identify the person(s) representing the Offeror in any future dealing with UNESCO.

Offeror to provide supporting information as to firm's technical reliability, financial and managerial capacity to perform the services.

(b) Resource Plan

This Section should fully explain the Offeror's resources in terms of personnel and facilities necessary for the performance of the requirements, and any plans for their expansion. It should describe Offeror's current capabilities/facilities and any plans for their expansion.

10.2. Proposed Approach, Methodology, Timing and Outputs

This section should demonstrate the Offeror's responsiveness to the TOR and include detailed description of the manner in which the firm/institution would respond to the TOR, addressing the requirements, as specified, point by point. You should include the number of person-working days in each specialization that you consider necessary to carry out all work required.

For assessment of your understanding of the requirements please include any assumptions as well as comments on the data, support services and facilities to be provided by the beneficiary as indicated in the Statement of Requirements/TOR, or as you may otherwise believe to be necessary.

10.3. Proposed Personnel

In this section, the offeror should reflect the project staffing including the work tasks to be assigned to each staff member as well as their qualifications with reference to practical experience relating to specialization area of the project for each proposed staff. The complete CV's of proposed staff is to be submitted.

If applicable, this staffing proposal should be supported by an organigram illustrating the reporting lines, together with a description of such organization structure.

The technical part of the Proposal should not contain any pricing information whatsoever on the services offered. Pricing information shall be separated and only contained in the appropriate Price Schedule.

It is mandatory that the Offeror's Proposal numbering system corresponds with the numbering system as provided in the TOR. All references to descriptive material and brochures should be included in the respective paragraph, though material/documents themselves may be provided as annexes to the Proposal/response.

11. Price Proposal

The Offeror shall indicate on an appropriate Price Schedule, an example of which is contained in the Price Schedule sheet, the prices of services it proposes to supply under the contract, if selected.

12. Proposal currencies

Your separate price envelop must contain an overall quotation in a single currency. All prices shall be quoted in **US dollars**.

13. Period of validity of proposals

Proposals shall remain valid for ninety (90) days after the date of Proposal submission prescribed by UNESCO, pursuant to the deadline clause. A Proposal valid for a shorter period may be rejected by UNESCO on the grounds that it is non-responsive.

14. Format and signing of proposals

The Offeror shall prepare two copies of the Proposal, clearly marking each "Original" and "Copy" as appropriate. In the event of any discrepancy between them, the original shall govern. The two copies of the Proposal shall be typed and shall be signed by the Offeror or a person or persons duly authorised. A Proposal shall contain no interlineations, erasures, or overwriting except, as necessary to correct errors made by the Offeror, in which case such corrections shall be initialled by the person or persons signing the Proposal.

15. Payment

In full consideration for the complete and satisfactory performance of the services of the contract, UNESCO shall effect payments to the Contractor within 30 days after receipt and acceptance of the invoices submitted by the contractor for services provided.

D. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

16. Sealing and marking of proposals

The Proposal, should be sent through **two separate emails** (one for the technical proposal and another one for the financial proposal) **no later than 25 May 2025 at 23:59 CEST (GMT+2)**.

The technical proposal should be sent to the following email, with the mention "Technical Proposal – RFP/CI/FMD/IPDC/2025/01 – name of the bidder" in subject: ci-procurement@unesco.org

The financial proposal should be sent the following email, with the mention "Financial Proposal – RFP/CI/FMD/IPDC/2025/01 – name of the bidder" in subject: ci-procurement@unesco.org

Offers addressed to any other email accounts will be disqualified. It should also be noted that all files together should not exceed 10 Mo per email.

17. Deadline for submission of proposals

Proposals must be received on or before the date and time specified on the cover page of these Solicitation Documents.

UNESCO may, at its own discretion extend this deadline for the submission of Proposals by amending the solicitation documents in accordance with clause *Amendments of Solicitation Documents*.

18. Late Proposals

Any Proposal received by UNESCO after the deadline for submission of proposals, pursuant to clause *Deadline for the submission of proposals*, will be rejected.

19. Modification and withdrawal of Proposals

The Offeror may withdraw its Proposal after the Proposal's submission, provided that written notice of the withdrawal is received by UNESCO prior to the deadline specified in the RFP. Proposals may not be modified or withdrawn after that time.

E. OPENING AND EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

20. Opening of proposals

UNESCO representatives will open all Proposals after the deadline for submissions and in accordance with the rules and regulations of the organization.

21. Clarification of proposals

To assist in the examination, evaluation and comparison of Proposals, UNESCO may at its discretion, ask the Offeror for clarification of its Proposal. The request for clarification and the response shall be in writing and no change in price or substance of the Proposal shall be sought, offered or permitted.

22. Preliminary examination

UNESCO will examine the Proposals to determine whether they are complete, whether any computational errors have been made, whether the documents have been properly signed, and whether the Proposals are generally in order.

Prior to the detailed evaluation, UNESCO will determine the substantial responsiveness of each Proposal to the Request for Proposals (RFP). For purposes of these Clauses, a substantially responsive Proposal is one, which conforms to all the terms and conditions of the RFP without material deviations. The determination of a Proposal's responsiveness is based on the contents of the Proposal itself without recourse to extrinsic evidence.

A Proposal determined as not substantially responsive will be rejected by UNESCO.

23. Evaluation and comparison of proposals

A three-stage procedure will be used in evaluating the proposals, with evaluation of the technical component being completed prior to the conduction of the online interview (to complement the technical evaluation process) and prior any price component being opened and compared. The online interview will only be conducted with offerors who have attained minimum 70% score in the technical evaluation (420 technical points to be qualified for the online interview). The Price Component will be opened only for submissions where an online interview has been conducted and which have attained the minimum score of 70% of the total points obtainable for the technical evaluation (490 points to be qualified for further financial evaluation).

The technical proposal is evaluated on the basis of its responsiveness to the Terms of Reference (TOR).

HIGHEST TOTAL SCORE OF WEIGHTED TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL CRITERIA

An online interview will be conducted with offerors who have attained minimum 70% score in the technical evaluation. The price proposal of all offerors, who have attained minimum 70 % score in the technical evaluation, will be compared. ***The contract will be awarded to the offeror that receives the highest score out of a pre-determined set of weighted technical and financial criteria as specified below.***

Technical Proposal Evaluation Form

Sample: Summary of Technical Proposal Evaluation Forms		Points Obtainable	Name of Firm / Institution		
			A	B	C
1.	Expertise of the Entity submitting Proposal	100			
2.	Proposed Work Plan and Approach	300			

3.	Personnel	200			
4.	Online Interview	100			
	Sub-total for Technical Evaluation	700			

The main purpose of the online interview is to assess the administrative, managerial and technical capabilities of the company. Only companies that achieve at least 70% of the technical points (420 out of 600) will be invited for an online interview.

Financial Proposal Evaluation Form

Sample: Summary of Financial Proposal		Points Obtainable	Name of Firm / Institution		
			A	B	C
	Financial Proposal	300			
	Sub-total for Financial Evaluation	300			

Evaluation of the price proposals (of all Offerors who have attained minimum 70 % score in the technical evaluation) will be based on the weight scoring method as follows:

- Financial proposals are opened and list of prices is prepared, where the lowest price is ranked as the first one (receiving highest amount of points) and the most expensive as the last one (receiving the least amount of points).
- Lowest price is given maximum points (e.g. 300), for other prices the points are assigned based on the following formula: $[\text{Amount of points} = \frac{\text{lowest price}}{\text{other price}} \times \text{total points obtainable for financial proposal}]$

An example:

- Offeror A – lowest price ranked as 1st in the amount of USD 10,000 = a
 - Offeror B – second lowest price ranked as 2nd in the amount of USD 15,000 = b
- Points assigned to A = 300 & Points assigned to B = 200 (following formula: $a/b \times 300$ i.e. $10,000/15,000 \times 300 = 200$ points)

Combined Technical and Financial + Interview Evaluation Form

Sample: Summary of Financial Proposal Evaluation Forms + Online Interview		Points Obtainable	Name of Firm / Institution			
			A	B	C	D
	Sub-total Technical Proposal	700				
	Sub-total Financial Proposal	300				
	Total	1000				

F. AWARD OF CONTRACT

24. Award criteria, award of contract

UNESCO reserves the right to accept or reject any Proposal, and to annul the solicitation process and reject all Proposals at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Offeror or any obligation to inform the affected Offeror or Offerors of the grounds for such action.

Prior to expiration of the period of proposal validity, UNESCO will award the contract to the qualified Offeror whose Proposal after being evaluated is considered to be the most responsive to the needs of the organisation and activity concerned.

25. Purchaser's right to vary requirements at time of award and to negotiate

UNESCO reserves the right at the time of award of contract to increase or decrease by up to 20% the quantity of services and goods specified in the RFP without any change in hourly/daily or any other rates or prices proposed by the Bidders or other terms and conditions.

UNESCO reserves the right to undertake further negotiations on the proposed offer.

ANNEX II – General Terms and Conditions for Professional Services

1. LEGAL STATUS

The Contractor shall be considered as having the legal status of an independent contractor vis-à-vis UNESCO. The Contractor's personnel and sub-contractors shall not be considered in any respect as being the employees or agents of UNESCO.

2. SOURCE OF INSTRUCTIONS

The Contractor shall neither seek nor accept instructions from any authority external to UNESCO in connection with the performance of its services under this Contract. The Contractor shall refrain from any action, which may adversely affect UNESCO or the United Nations and shall fulfill its commitments with the fullest regard to the interests of UNESCO.

3. CONTRACTOR'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR EMPLOYEES

The Contractor shall be responsible for the professional and technical competence of its employees and will select, for work under this Contract, reliable individuals who will perform effectively in the implementation of this Contract, respect the local customs, and conform to a high standard of moral and ethical conduct.

4. ASSIGNMENT

The Contractor shall not assign, transfer, pledge or make other disposition of this Contract or any part thereof, or any of the Contractor's rights, claims or obligations under this Contract except with the prior written consent of UNESCO.

5. SUB-CONTRACTING

In the event the Contractor requires the services of sub-contractors, the Contractor shall obtain the prior written approval and clearance of UNESCO for all sub-contractors. The approval of UNESCO of a sub-contractor shall not relieve the Contractor of any of its obligations under this Contract. The terms of any sub-contract shall be subject to and conform with the provisions of this Contract.

6. OFFICIALS NOT TO BENEFIT

The Contractor warrants that no official of UNESCO has received or will be offered by the Contractor any direct or indirect benefit arising from this Contract or the award thereof. The Contractor agrees that breach of this provision is a breach of an essential term of this Contract.

7. INDEMNIFICATION

The Contractor shall indemnify, hold and save harmless, and defend, at its own expense, UNESCO, its officials, agents, and employees from and against all suits, claims, demands, and liability of any nature or kind, including their costs and expenses, arising out of acts or omissions of the Contractor, or the Contractor's employees, officers, agents or sub-contractors, in the performance of this Contract. This provision shall extend, inter-alia, to claims and liability in the nature of workmen's compensation, products liability and liability arising out of the use of patented inventions or devices, copyrighted material or other intellectual property by the Contractor, its employees, officers, agents, servants or sub-contractors. The obligations under this Article do not lapse upon termination of this Contract.

8. INSURANCE AND LIABILITIES TO THIRD PARTIES

The Contractor shall provide and thereafter maintain insurance against all risks in respect of its property and any equipment used for the execution of this Contract. The Contractor shall provide and thereafter maintain all appropriate workmen's compensation insurance, or its equivalent, with respect to its employees to cover claims for personal injury or death in connection with this Contract. The Contractor shall also provide and thereafter maintain liability insurance in an adequate amount to cover third party claims for death or bodily injury, or loss of or damage to property, arising from or in connection with the provision of services under this Contract or the operation of any vehicles. The Contractor shall provide and thereafter maintain all appropriate workmen's compensation insurance, or its equivalent, with respect to its employees to cover claims for personal injury or death in connection with this Contract or the operation of any vehicles, boats, airplanes or other equipment owned or leased by the Contractor or its agents, servants, employees or sub-contractors performing work or services in connection with this Contract. Except for the workmen's compensation insurance, the insurance policies under this Article shall:

8.1 Name UNESCO as additional insured;

8.2 Include a waiver of subrogation of the Contractor's rights to the insurance carrier against UNESCO;

8.3 Provide that UNESCO shall receive thirty (30) days written notice from the insurers prior to any cancellation or change of coverage. 8.4 The Contractor shall, upon request, provide UNESCO with satisfactory evidence of the insurance required under this Article.

9. ENCUMBRANCES/LIENS

The Contractor shall not cause or permit any lien, attachment or other encumbrance by any person to be placed on file or to remain on file in any public office or on file with UNESCO against any monies due or to become due for any work done or materials furnished under this Contract, or by reason of any other claim or demand against the Contractor.

10. TITLE TO EQUIPMENT

Title to any equipment and supplies that may be furnished by UNESCO shall rest with UNESCO and any such equipment shall be returned to UNESCO at the conclusion of this Contract or when no longer needed by the Contractor. Such equipment, when returned to UNESCO, shall be in the same condition as when delivered to the Contractor, subject to normal wear and tear. The Contractor shall be liable to compensate UNESCO for equipment determined to be damaged or degraded beyond normal wear and tear.

11. COPYRIGHT, PATENTS AND OTHER PROPRIETARY RIGHTS

UNESCO shall be entitled to all intellectual property and other proprietary rights including but not limited to patents, copyrights, and trademarks, with regard to products, or documents and other materials which bear a direct relation to or are produced or prepared or collected in consequence of or in the course of the execution of this Contract. At UNESCO's request, the Contractor shall take all necessary steps, execute all necessary documents and generally assist in securing such proprietary rights and transferring them to UNESCO in compliance with the requirements of the applicable law.

12. USE OF NAME, EMBLEM OR OFFICIAL SEAL OF UNESCO OR THE UN

The Contractor shall not advertise or otherwise make public the fact that it is a Contractor with UNESCO, nor shall the Contractor, in any manner whatsoever use the name, emblem or official seal of UNESCO, or any abbreviation of the name of UNESCO in connection with its business or otherwise.

13. CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION

Information and data that is considered proprietary by either Party or that is delivered or disclosed by one Party ("Discloser") to the other Party ("Recipient") during the course of performance of the Contract, and that is designated as confidential ("Information"), shall be held in confidence by that Party.

Drawings, photographs, plans, reports, recommendations, estimates, documents and all other data compiled by or received by the Contractor under this Contract shall be the property of UNESCO, shall be treated as confidential and shall be delivered only to UNESCO authorized officials on completion of work under this Contract. The Contractor may not communicate at any time to any other person, Government or authority external to UNESCO, any information known to it by reason of its association with UNESCO, which has not been made public except with the authorization of UNESCO; nor shall the Contractor at any time use such information to private advantage. These obligations do not lapse upon termination of this Contract.

UNESCO may disclose Information to the extent required pursuant to resolutions or regulations of the General Conference or rules promulgated thereunder and to the UNESCO Access to Information policy. The Contractor acknowledges that UNESCO's Information, including any information relating to an identified or identifiable individual ("Personal Data"), is subject to privileges and immunities accorded to UNESCO and that as a result any such Information is inviolable and cannot be disclosed, provided or otherwise made available to, or searched, confiscated or otherwise be interfered with by any person, unless such immunity is expressly waived in writing by UNESCO. To ensure compliance with the privileges and immunities of UNESCO, the Contractor shall segregate Information provided by UNESCO or generated by the Contractor under this Contract to the fullest extent possible.

14. FORCE MAJEURE; OTHER CHANGES IN CONDITIONS

Force majeure, as used in this Article, means acts of God, war (whether declared or not), invasion, revolution, insurrection, or other acts of a similar

nature or force, which are beyond the control of the Parties. In the event of and as soon as possible after the occurrence of any cause constituting force majeure, the Contractor shall give notice and full particulars in writing to UNESCO, of such occurrence or change if the Contractor is thereby rendered unable, wholly or in part, to perform its obligations and meet its responsibilities under this Contract. The Contractor shall also notify UNESCO of any other changes in conditions or the occurrence of any event, which interferes or threatens to interfere with its performance of this Contract. The notice shall include steps proposed by the Contractor to be taken including any reasonable alternative means for performance that is not prevented by force majeure. On receipt of the notice required under this Article, UNESCO shall take such action as, in its sole discretion, it considers to be appropriate or necessary in the circumstances, including the granting to the Contractor of a reasonable extension of time in which to perform its obligations under this Contract. If the Contractor is rendered permanently unable, wholly, or in part, by reason of force majeure to perform its obligations and meet its responsibilities under this Contract, UNESCO shall have the right to suspend or terminate this Contract on the same terms and conditions as are provided for in Article 15, "Termination", except that the period of notice shall be seven (7) days instead of thirty (30) days.

15. TERMINATION

Either party may terminate this Contract for cause, in whole or in part, upon thirty days notice, in writing, to the other party. The initiation of arbitral proceedings in accordance with Article 16 "Settlement of Disputes" below shall not be deemed a termination of this Contract. UNESCO reserves the right to terminate without cause this Contract at any time upon 15 days prior written notice to the Contractor, in which case UNESCO shall reimburse the Contractor for all reasonable costs incurred by the Contractor prior to receipt of the notice of termination. In the event of any termination by UNESCO under this Article, no payment shall be due from UNESCO to the Contractor except for work and services satisfactorily performed in conformity with the express terms of this Contract. The Contractor shall take immediate steps to terminate the work and services in a prompt and orderly manner and to minimize losses and further expenditures. Should the Contractor be adjudged bankrupt, or be liquidated or become insolvent, or should the Contractor make an assignment for the benefit of its creditors, or should a Receiver be appointed on account of the insolvency of the Contractor, UNESCO may, without prejudice to any other right or remedy it may have, terminate this Contract forthwith. The Contractor shall immediately inform UNESCO of the occurrence of any of the above events.

16. SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

16.1 Amicable Settlement

The Parties shall use their best efforts to settle amicably any dispute, controversy or claim arising out of, or relating to this Contract or the breach, termination or invalidity thereof. Where the parties wish to seek such an amicable settlement through conciliation, the conciliation shall take place in accordance with the UNCITRAL Conciliation Rules then obtaining, or according to such other procedure as may be agreed between the parties.

16.2 Arbitration

Unless, any such dispute, controversy or claim between the Parties arising out of or relating to this Contract or the breach, termination or invalidity thereof is settled amicably under the preceding paragraph of this Article within sixty (60) days after receipt by one Party of the other Party's request for such amicable settlement, such dispute, controversy or claim shall be referred by either Party to arbitration in accordance with the UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules then obtaining, including its provisions on applicable law. The arbitral tribunal shall have no authority to award punitive damages. The Parties shall be bound by any arbitration award rendered as a result of such arbitration as the final adjudication of any such controversy, claim or dispute.

17. PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES

Nothing in or relating to this Contract shall be deemed a waiver, express or implied, of any of the privileges and immunities of UNESCO.

18. TAX EXEMPTION

18.1 Section 7 of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations provides, *inter-alia*, that UNESCO, is exempt from all direct taxes, except charges for public utility services, and is exempt from customs duties and charges of a similar nature in respect of articles

imported or exported for its official use. In the event any governmental authority refuses to recognize the UNESCO exemption from such taxes, duties or charges, the Contractor shall immediately consult with UNESCO to determine a mutually acceptable procedure.

18.2 Accordingly, the Contractor authorizes UNESCO to deduct from the Contractor's invoice any amount representing such taxes, duties or charges, unless the Contractor has consulted with UNESCO before the payment thereof and UNESCO has, in each instance, specifically authorized the Contractor to pay such taxes, duties or charges under protest. In that event, the Contractor shall provide UNESCO with written evidence that payment of such taxes, duties or charges has been made and appropriately authorized.

19. CHILD LABOUR

19.1 The Contractor represents and warrants that neither it, nor any of its suppliers is engaged in any practice inconsistent with the rights set forth in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including Article 32 thereof, which, *inter-alia*, requires that a child shall be protected from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

19.2 Any breach of this representation and warranty shall entitle UNESCO to terminate this Contract immediately upon notice to the Contractor, at no cost to UNESCO.

20. MINES

20.1 The Contractor represents and warrants that neither it nor any of its suppliers is actively and directly engaged in patent activities, development, assembly, production, trade or manufacture of mines or in such activities in respect of components primarily utilized in the manufacture of Mines. The term "Mines" means those devices defined in Article 2, Paragraphs 1, 4 and 5 of Protocol II annexed to the Convention on Prohibitions and Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects of 1980.

20.2 Any breach of this representation and warranty shall entitle UNESCO to terminate this Contract immediately upon notice to the Contractor, without any liability for termination charges or any other liability of any kind of UNESCO.

21. OBSERVANCE OF THE LAW

The Contractor shall comply with all laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations bearing upon the performance of its obligations under the terms of this Contract.

22. AUTHORITY TO MODIFY

No modification or change in this Contract, no waiver of any of its provisions or any additional contractual relationship of any kind with the Contractor shall be valid and enforceable against UNESCO unless provided by an amendment to this Contract signed by the authorized official of UNESCO.

23. SECURITY

The responsibility for the safety and security of the Contractor and its personnel and property, and of UNESCO property in the Contractor's custody, rests with the Contractor.

The Contractor shall:

- (a) put in place an appropriate security plan and maintain the security plan, taking into account the security situation in the country where the services are being provided;
- (b) assume all risks and liabilities related to the Contractor's security, and the full implementation of the security plan.

UNESCO reserves the right to verify whether such a plan is in place, and to suggest modifications to the plan when necessary. Failure to maintain and implement an appropriate security plan as required hereunder shall be deemed a breach of this contract. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Contractor shall remain solely responsible for the security of its personnel and for UNESCO property in its custody.

24. ANTI-TERRORISM

The Contractor agrees to undertake all reasonable efforts to ensure that none of the UNESCO funds received under this Contract are used to provide support to individuals or entities associated with terrorism and that the recipients of any amounts provided by UNESCO hereunder do not appear on the list maintained by the Security Council Committee

established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999). The list can be accessed via: <https://www.un.org/sc/suborg/en/sanctions/un-sc-consolidated-list>.

This provision must be included in all sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered into under the Contract.

25. AUDITS AND INVESTIGATIONS:

Each invoice paid by UNESCO shall be subject to a post-payment audit by auditors, whether internal or external, of UNESCO or by other authorized and qualified agents of UNESCO at any time during the term of the Contract and for a period of three (3) years following the expiration or prior termination of the Contract.

UNESCO may conduct investigations relating to any aspect of the Contract or the award thereof, the obligations performed under the Contract, and the operations of the Contractor generally relating to performance of the Contract at any time during the term of the Contract and for a period of three (3) years following the expiration or prior termination of the Contract.

The Contractor shall provide its full and timely cooperation with any such post payment audits or investigations. Such cooperation shall include, but shall not be limited to, the Contractor's obligation to make available its personnel and any relevant documentation for such purposes at reasonable times and on reasonable conditions and to grant to UNESCO access to the Contractor's premises at reasonable times and on reasonable conditions in connection with such access to the Contractor's personnel and relevant documentation. The Contractor shall require its agents, including, but not limited to, the Contractor's attorneys, accountants or other advisers, to reasonably cooperate with any post-payment audits or investigations carried out by UNESCO hereunder.

UNESCO shall be entitled to a refund from the Contractor for any amounts shown by audits or investigations to have been paid by UNESCO other than in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Contract.

26. PROTECTION FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND SEXUAL ABUSE

Definitions. For purposes of the Contract, "sexual exploitation" means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another; "sexual abuse" means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. Sexual exploitation and abuse are strictly prohibited. The Contractor, its employees, agents or any other persons engaged by the Contractor to perform any services under the Contract, shall not engage in any sexual exploitation and abuse. The Contractor acknowledges and agrees that UNESCO will apply a policy of "zero tolerance" with regard to sexual exploitation and abuse of anyone by the Contractor, its employees, agents or any other persons engaged by the Contractor to perform any services under the Contract.

Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing:

(a) Sexual activity with a child (any person less than eighteen years of age), regardless of any laws relating to the age of majority or to consent, shall constitute the sexual exploitation and abuse of such person. Mistaken belief in the age of a child shall not constitute a defense under the Agreement.

(b) The exchange or promise of exchange of any money, employment, goods, services, or other thing of value, for sex, including sexual favors or sexual activities, shall constitute sexual exploitation and abuse.

(c) The Contractor acknowledges and agrees that sexual relationships between the Contractor's employees, agents or other persons engaged by the Contractor and beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics, undermine the credibility and integrity of the work of UNESCO and are strongly discouraged.

Reporting of allegations to UNESCO. The Contractor shall report allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse, of which the Contractor has been informed or has otherwise become aware, promptly to UNESCO, in line with its established reporting mechanism. To the extent legally possible, the Contractor will require its employees, agents or any other persons engaged by the Contractor to perform any services under the Contract, to report allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse arising in relation to the Contract directly to UNESCO.

This provision must be included in all sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered into under the Contract.

27. UNITED NATIONS SUPPLIER CODE OF CONDUCT

The Contractor acknowledges that the UN Supplier Code of Conduct (available from <https://www.un.org/Depts/ptd/about-us/un-supplier-code-conduct>) provides the minimum standards expected of the UN Suppliers.

28. PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION AND PRIVACY

Both UNESCO and the Contractor shall ensure an appropriate protection of Personal Data in accordance with UNESCO's Principles on Personal Data Protection and Privacy (<https://www.unesco.org/en/privacy-policy>) and their applicable regulations and rules. Personal Data shall be processed solely for the purpose of undertaking this Contract.

The Contractor warrants and represents that it shall establish and maintain appropriate technical and organizational measures against accidental or unlawful destruction or accidental loss, alteration, unauthorized disclosure or access to Personal Data in compliance with best industry standards.

The Contractor shall promptly notify UNESCO of any actual [or suspected or threatened] incident of accidental or unlawful Initials destruction or accidental loss, alteration, unauthorized or accidental disclosure or access to Personal Data, or a breach of this article. The Parties shall consult with a view to addressing, reacting to, and resolving the situation.

The Contractor shall notify UNESCO within five working days of any complaint by an individual in respect of his/her Personal Data. The Parties shall consult with each other before taking any action as a result of or in reaction to such complaint.

The obligations and restrictions in this Article shall be effective during the term of this Contract, including any extension thereof, and shall remain effective following any termination of this Contract, unless otherwise agreed between the Parties in writing.

Unless otherwise agreed between the Parties in writing, after termination of this Contract the Contractor shall return all Personal Data collected for the performance of this Contract to UNESCO in a structured, commonly used and machine-readable format, and shall then delete and procure the deletion of all copies of that Personal Data. The Contractor shall provide written certification to UNESCO that it has fully complied with this paragraph after termination of this Contract.

ANNEX III – Terms of Reference (TOR)

External Evaluation of UNESCO’s “International Programme for the Development of Communication” (IPDC)

1. Background

As the United Nations agency with a specific mandate to promote “the free flow of ideas by word and image”, UNESCO defends and promotes freedom of expression, media independence and pluralism, as well as the building of inclusive knowledge societies underpinned by universal access to information and the innovative use of digital technologies. This, with a view to ensuring that fundamental freedoms are guaranteed online and offline, in line with international standards.

The International Programme for the Development of Communication (hereinafter “the IPDC”) was created by the UNESCO General Conference in 1980 as an intergovernmental body.

As the only multilateral forum in the UN system designed to mobilize the international community around media development, the Programme provides support for media development projects while seeking accord to secure a healthy environment for the growth of free, independent and pluralistic press.

It has an elected Intergovernmental Council of 39 Member State delegates which elects an eight-member Bureau, and a Secretariat located within UNESCO’s CI Sector. The Council convenes every other year and provides a normative framework justifying IPDC’s actions across various political landscapes. By leveraging the intergovernmental nature of the IPDC, the Council’s normative functions allow it to discuss policy issues and endorse normative content, tools and instruments.

It has been the venue for discussions that have strengthened UNESCO’s mandate to promote the free flow of ideas by word and image, including on issues such as the promotion of the safety of journalists and combatting impunity, access to information, media development, journalism education or media viability. For example, it is an IPDC Council decision that led to the elaboration of the [UN Plan of Action on Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity](#) (hereinafter “the UN Plan of Action”, 2012), a systemic, UN-wide plan aimed at creating a free and safe environment for journalists and media workers online and offline and both in conflict and non-conflict situations. Furthermore, on a biennial basis, the Council reviews two key reports related to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators 16.10.1 and 16.10.2: the Director-General’s Report on the Safety of Journalists and the Global Report on Access to Information Laws.

In addition to this normative role, every year, the IPDC provides funding to grassroots media development projects, which also mainstream international standards on freedom of expression, access to information, and ethical journalism. UNESCO and the IPDC Secretariat offer a range of tools and knowledge resources, such as frameworks, policy briefs, the UNESCO Series on Journalism Education handbook, available on [its Resource Hub](#) and pilots global initiatives on standing and emerging media policy issues such as the [Media viability initiative](#), the Safe Spaces Initiative and the Excellence in Journalism education Initiative.

For more information about the IPDC and its initiatives, please visit its [webpage](#). The IPDC’s narrative reports have publicly available reports for the cycle [2018-2019](#) ; [2019 -2020](#) ; [2020 -2021](#); [2021- 2022](#) and [2022 -2023](#). The report for 2023-2024 will be made available in June 2025.

The IPDC complements and synergises with actions implemented under UNESCO’s regular programme and other extra-budgetary funding modalities supporting the Organization’s work on freedom of expression and safety of journalists, such as the [Multi-Donor Programme on Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists \(MDP\)](#), the [Global Media Defense Fund \(GMDF\)](#). Coordination on complementarities and/or synergies is actively sought out among the projects implemented with

UNESCO/IPDC support, including the implementation of measures to avoid any potential overlaps and/or the duplication of activities.

Funding Modality

The IPDC is one multi-donor special account with the possibility of using two funding modalities: **earmarked funds** (financial contributions designated for specific projects, themes, or regions within the programme based on donor priorities) and **non-earmarked funds** (pooled funds not restricted to specific projects, themes, or regions). UNESCO provides consolidated annual narrative and financial reports on the use of the resources to the IPDC Bureau and donors.

Geographic Scope

The IPDC is a global programme which supports national, regional and global actions. Since 2020, more than 80 countries have been/are being targeted by actions supported under the Programme, in addition to global-scope initiatives.

Stakeholders: Beneficiaries and Partners

Under the IPDC, UNESCO seeks partnerships with local, regional, and international independent not-for-profit organizations (e.g. NGOs, media associations, journalists' unions and networks, foundations, academic institutions, etc.) working to expand opportunities for free, independent and pluralistic media.

Direct beneficiaries of the projects supported by the IPDC include journalists, media organizations and institutions, journalism networks, civil society organizations, professional associations (e.g. journalists' unions) and networks, journalists educators and students, judicial operators (prosecutors, judges, and others), and other relevant stakeholders.

Member States and civil society also benefit from the actions supported by the IPDC. More broadly, the Programme benefits the population at large in countries where activities are implemented, as citizens will be better informed and empowered to exercise their fundamental rights where safe and free press environments are reinforced.

Key partners include donors, UN agencies and other international organizations, relevant global and regional special mandates, networks of media development experts, CSOs, specialized NGOs, professional associations, journalism education institutions, and others, as appropriate.

Furthermore, over the past biennium, UNESCO, through the IPDC, engaged in a multi-stakeholder process of developing non-binding principles for effective and relevant support to media and the information environment. After over two years of consultations and advocacy led by experts and civil society actors, the [“Development Cooperation Principles on Relevant and Effective Support to Media and the Information Environment”](#) (“the Media Development Principles”) were approved by the OECD-DAC on 22 March 2024. In November 2024, the Intergovernmental Council of the IPDC took note with appreciation and recognized the merits of those new voluntary principles.

2. Purpose of the Evaluation

As an initiative funded by voluntary contributions with a budget larger than USD 1.5 million, IPDC is subject to a mandatory external independent evaluation as per UNESCO Evaluation Policy 2022-2029.

The main purpose of this evaluation would be to assess the relevance, efficiency and results of the IPDC, and generate recommendations for the future to inform governance and implementation of the IPDC. It would also be the occasion to see the extent to which the IPDC, through its grant making mechanism and activities, is aligned with the Principles for Effective Support to the Media and Information Environment, and whether its contribution to their implementation could be strengthened.

The [last evaluation of the IPDC](#) covered the years 2011 to 2017. The evaluation found that “the unique

potential of IPDC is its ability to combine several distinct features in a manner that generates a higher level of outcomes, and sometimes different types of outcomes, than would otherwise be possible”, which “justify the specific governance costs incurred over those years” and that “evidence available shows convincingly that IPDC interventions have achieved significant outcomes in several key focus areas” including “the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity”; “media sector reform and development” and “work on SDG indicators”. It also noted that “improved project and intervention selection processes (were) relatively robust and efficient.”

However, the evaluation identified the following main challenges:

- a) Lack of clarity on IPDC’s strategic focus and priorities
- b) The IPDC Secretariat is not optimally positioned which has affected internal management communication, cooperation and programme complementarities in the CI sector.
- c) There remains a pressing need to increase the overall volume of donor contributions to IPDC, to improve the regularity and consistency of what can be described as core funding, and to attract a wider set of donors with a sustained interest in the issue and in IPDC as a useful means to address it.
- d) The IPDC experienced a decline in extrabudgetary funding but has shown improvements
- e) The ratio of costs to extrabudgetary contributions is high.

It recommended that:

- 1) IPDC should develop an IPDC Strategic Framework
- 2) IPDC should develop strategically-focused packages of interventions
- 3) The CI Assistant Director General (ADG) should consider strengthening the IPDC’s overall positioning to improve management communication, cooperation and complementarities within the CI/FEM Division
- 4) An online IPDC Communication Platform could be developed
- 5) Fundraising efforts should be reinforced
- 6) The focus on gender transformative action should be reinforced,
- 7) The Project selection process should be reviewed and refined
- 8) An IPDC monitoring and evaluation framework should be designed

Therefore, UNESCO is requesting for proposals for an external evaluation of the IPDC to cover the period from 2018 up to the time of the evaluation in 2025.

This evaluation should be conducted in accordance with the UNESCO evaluation procedures, assessing relevance, coherence and effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the IPDC and its interventions. The evaluation recommendations are expected to inform the future management of its Special Accounts, and the IPDC Secretariat’s efforts to monitor and support the implementation of the funded projects.

It should examine progress made towards achieving the expected results, lessons learned and present recommendations regarding the IPDC’s design and delivery, as well as on potential follow-up actions.

The findings of the evaluation will be used by UNESCO, IPDC Members and donors to assess the achievement of the programme results and to:

- Enhance the relevance, effectiveness, organizational efficiency, sustainability, coherence, and impact of the programme and (where appropriate) similar actions, as well as shape the features of follow-up initiatives and projects;
- Demonstrate the IPDC’s achievements and challenges;
- Identify lessons learned, best practices, and possible areas for adjustment or still to be covered;
- Provide actionable recommendations to improve the design and/or implementation of the Programme;

The evaluation will adopt a retrospective (summative) and forward-looking perspective with action-oriented recommendations to inform future endeavours.

3.Objectives and Scope of the Evaluation

Evaluation Questions

The evaluation questions below are indicative and will need to factor in the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the complex operating environments in which some projects are implemented. The evaluation questions will be refined in the Inception Phase and validated in consultation with UNESCO and the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG).¹ They will also be prioritized to allow for a more focused evaluation analysis.

Relevance:

To what extent does the IPDC respond to the needs of a free, independent and pluralist media sector in developing countries, countries in transition, and countries in conflict and post-conflict situation?

To determine this, special attention should be paid to:

- If IPDC's priorities and objectives are still aligned with the needs of target group(s) enabling the free, independent and pluralist media in developing countries, countries in transition, and countries in conflict and post-conflict situation?
- Can it be demonstrated that public interest information needs have been addressed by IPDC interventions in target countries, including in context of crisis?
- To what extent are projects and initiatives supported by the IPDC relevant tools for that purpose?
- How does UNESCO have a comparative advantage in designing, implementing, and supporting actions and initiatives under the IPDC?
- Which actions implemented under the Programme should be flagged for further analysis or adjustment?
- To which the extent have the 2018 evaluation recommendations been implemented?

Coherence:

How well does the IPDC respond to the needs of a free, independent and pluralist media sector in developing countries, countries in transition, and countries in conflict and post-conflict situation? How well do they align with the above-mentioned Principles for Effective Support to the Media and Information Environment?

To determine this, special attention should be paid to:

- Are the IPDC activities aligned with the Media Development Principles? What are the areas of improvement and what the activities and outputs that could be highlighted or upscaled?
- Are the actions, activities, and projects implemented with IPDC funding sufficiently leveraging other interventions funded by the UNESCO Regular Programme, and/or other extrabudgetary sources of funding?
- How can the visibility of the IPDC and the understanding by relevant stakeholders and the public of its fields of activity be improved?
- Are IPDC projects managed, led, and owned by the local community, organization, or stakeholders rather than external entities?

Effectiveness

What have been the most significant results (outputs and outcomes) of IPDC activities?

To determine this, special attention should be paid to:

¹ A consultative body and sounding board for the evaluation, allowing stakeholders to express their information needs and enhance learning and ownerships of evaluation findings.

- Were/are there examples of innovation and best practice?
- Do/have the projects and initiatives funded by the IPDC take(n) into account and contribute(d) to UNESCO Global Priorities Gender Equality and Africa?
- Are the criteria and methods for selecting grassroots proposals adapted to ensure expected results benefits that can continue after UNESCO's support cease?
- What are the main strengths and weaknesses of the Programme design and implementation?
- How well were the objectives designed initially and what can be improved for future implementation?
- Does the IPDC have effective monitoring mechanisms in place?
- Did any external/internal factors positively or negatively influence the overall implementation of the Programme?
- To what extent have beneficiaries been satisfied with the results?
- Are their positive or negative effects linked to dependency of projects bearers and direct beneficiaries to IPDC funding and/or external support? Can those effects be minimized or maximized?

Efficiency:

How efficient are the governance and management processes of the IPDC activities, including its annual call for proposals?

To determine this, special attention should be paid to:

- What measures have been taken during planning and implementation to ensure that resources are efficiently used?
- Have the Programme outputs been delivered in a timely manner, and is the timeline of the IPDC grassroots call optimal?
- Are the IPDC's organizational structure and management support best set-up to efficiently support the delivery of IPDC activities and outputs?

Impact:

Have those interventions made any difference to the media environment in the medium- or long- term in the relevant countries? What are the unintended effects, if any, of the interventions?

To determine this, special attention should be paid to:

- Have IPDC projects and activities made any difference for free, independent and pluralist media sector in developing countries, countries in transition, and countries in conflict and post-conflict situation? Be it grassroots projects, the journalism education initiative, the safe space initiative or the media viability initiative?
- What were unintended effects, if any, of the interventions?

Sustainability:

Are the IPDC grassroots projects building capacities that can continue after UNESCO's support cease? How can this be improved?

To determine this, special attention should be paid to:

- Have the projects and initiatives funded by the IPDC leave beneficiaries better equipped to advance on advancing media freedom, addressing the needs of journalists and independent media to advance free, independent and pluralist media in developing countries, countries in transition, and countries in conflict and post-conflict situation?
- Are exit strategies generally adapted and realistic? Do partners have the resources to maintain the benefits achieved without external support?
- How can the financial sustainability of the IPDC be improved?
- Is the amount of the budget envelope available for projects and activities appropriate, and how can the sustainability of the IPDC funding be improved?
- What aspects of the Programme are likely to be most sustainable into the future?

- Are there any other local factors and/or global trends that significantly challenge the medium and long-term maintenance of the programme and its results?

4. Evaluation Design and Methodology

The evaluation will apply a mixed-methods and gender-responsive approach. The evaluator(s) are expected to elaborate an appropriate methodology in their technical proposal that can be implemented in seven months (**July 2025 – January 2026**), from the inception phase to the delivery of the final evaluation report.

The level of effort required for the undertaking of this external evaluation is estimated between 60 to 80 working days. Please note that this range is indicative only.

The suggested evaluation methodology includes the following elements:

- Analysis of the relevant trends in the areas of Programme implementation (global, regional and country level);
- Desk study of all pertinent documents, including previous narrative reports, the IPDC website, communication materials produced under the Programme, meeting minutes and other documents that were published during the period covered by the evaluation;
- Meetings and key informant interviews with key stakeholders (such as partners and beneficiaries involved in the project/activities) as well as possible other sources of relevant information;
- Online surveys where relevant; and
- Interviews with UNESCO staff, project stakeholders and beneficiaries for the purposes of enriching the final report's analysis of Programme performance, in particular the achievement of results.

UNESCO will provide the contractor with details about the Programme/activities and a suggested list of partners, beneficiaries, etc. with contact details. As some of the partners/beneficiaries do not speak English, there may be a need to conduct some interviews in French or Spanish. This cost should be foreseen as part of the financial proposal.

The evaluation will follow the principles outlined in the [UNESCO Evaluation Manual](#). More specifically it will follow quality standards explained in Guidance #10 on 'Evaluation Inception Reports', Guidance #12 on 'Evaluation Reports' and Guidance #13 'Evaluation Report Quality Checklist' in the Evaluation Manual. The evaluators will comply with the [UNEG Norms and Standards](#), the [UNEG Guidelines for Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations](#) and [UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation](#).

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The contractor is expected to provide UNESCO with a comprehensive evaluation report of no more than 40 pages (without annexes) covering the Programme's implementation between **January 2018 and June 2025**. The evaluation team will be responsible for logistics: office space, administrative and secretarial support, telecommunications, printing of documentation, and logistics for fieldwork, etc. The evaluation team is also responsible for the dissemination of all methodological tools, such as surveys, and providing the deliverables outlined below (see "6. Deliverables and Schedule").

UNESCO will facilitate the evaluation process to the extent possible by providing access to relevant information, such as monitoring data, programme narrative reports, project progress reports and contract information, bearing in mind some restrictions due to confidentiality and in line with a Do-No-Harm approach.

The Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) provides advice and quality assurance at different stages of the evaluation process. More specifically, the ERG is responsible for the following:

- Provide relevant information to the evaluation team including project documentation and contacts for potential interview partners;

- Provide input to and quality assurance of the draft evaluation products: a) Draft Evaluation ToR; b) Draft Evaluation inception report; c) Draft Evaluation report; d) Preliminary Evaluation recommendations, etc.
- Participate in the evaluation inception and debriefing workshop and contribute to the discussions.

6. Deliverables and Timeline

There are two main deliverables: **an inception report**, and **an evaluation report** (first in draft, then a final version). These deliverables are the responsibility of the external evaluation team, and will be reviewed by the ERG and IOS.

The evaluation team is required to present to UNESCO the following reports/deliverables:

- **Draft and final Inception Report:** including the methodology, evaluation matrix, refined evaluation questions, work plan (including a detailed activity schedule), and timeline **by 31 July 2025**.
- **Draft Reports:**
 - o A draft report on preliminary findings is to be submitted to UNESCO **by 31 October 2025**.
 - o A first draft evaluation report is to be submitted to UNESCO **by 1 December 2025**.
 - o A second draft evaluation report, reflecting the ERG and IOS's comments on the first draft, is to be submitted to UNESCO **by 31 December 2025**.
 - o A final evaluation report, reflecting the ERG and IOS's comments on the second draft, is to be submitted to UNESCO **by 15 January 2026**.
- **Final Evaluation Report:** including annexes, by **30 January 2026**.

Additional Information on the Deliverables:

- The **inception report** should be up to 15 pages long (excluding annexes).
- **Evaluation report annexes** should include the following documents: Evaluation terms of reference, evaluation matrix, list of persons interviewed (disaggregated by gender and/or other relevant characteristics), list of sites visited (if relevant), list of documents consulted, additional details on the methodology (such as data collection instruments, including details of their reliability and validity), evaluators' biodata and/or information on team composition, results framework, and theory of change.
- The evaluation team is required to **present the major results of the evaluation** at a review meeting to be agreed with UNESCO. This includes a PowerPoint presentation and an executive summary of the report. The date for delivery of this requirement will be communicated to the evaluator upon consultation with **IPDC Bureau**.
- The **draft and final reports** should be presented in English (mother-tongue level), and structured as follows:
 - o Executive Summary (a standalone section that includes key information on all sections of the report)
 - o Introduction (describes the Programme in its context and indicates why the evaluation is conducted)
 - o Evaluation Purpose (indicates the objective(s) of the evaluation, intended use and users)
 - o Evaluation Methodology (describes the evaluation approach, methods and quality assurance mechanisms, as well as the limitations)
 - o Findings (provides evidence-based answers to the evaluation questions in relation to the different evaluation criteria. In each section, the findings should be presented in one paragraph upfront, followed by supporting evidence and analysis)
 - o Conclusions (flowing logically from the previous findings, provides a higher-level analysis of cross-cutting, underlying and systemic factors of success and failure of the intervention)
 - o Lessons Learned
 - o Recommendations (based on the conclusions, provides clear and actionable recommendations and suggested action points to improve different aspects –strategic, organizational, operational etc.– of the intervention)
 - o Annexes (see above)

Schedule

The Evaluation period is seven months, from **1st of July 2025 to 31 January 2026**.

Task	Responsible for delivery	Deadline
Selection of external evaluator	UNESCO	13 June 2025
Contracting selected evaluator	UNESCO	26 June 2025
Contract start date	UNESCO	1 July 2025
Inception report	External evaluation team	31 July 2025
Data collection phase	External evaluation team	31 July 2025 – 31 October 2025
Report on preliminary findings	External evaluation team	31 October 2025
Draft report No. 1	External evaluation team	1 December 2025
Draft report No. 2	External evaluation team	31 December 2025
Final draft report	External evaluation team	15 January 2026
Final evaluation report	External evaluation team	30 January 2026

7. Qualifications of External Evaluator(s) Team

The evaluation team should possess the following mandatory qualifications and experience:

Failure to meet a mandatory criterion will disqualify the proposal.

Expertise of Firm/Institution submitting the Proposal:

- A minimum of 10 international experiences in programme/project evaluation;
- A minimum of five evaluations carried out on programmes/projects in support of freedom of expression and/ or media development.
- Demonstrated experience in evaluation methodologies and techniques, both qualitative and quantitative (at least three project references to be provided).

Note: Individual professional consultants may apply for this assignment, provided the proposal is submitted under the umbrella of a legal entity.

Team Leader:

- Advanced university degree and report-writing skills in English;
- At least seven years of professional experience in policy and programme evaluation in the context of international development;
- Extensive knowledge of and more than ten years of experience in applying qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods;
- At least two evaluation experiences with the United Nations or international organizations;
- Proven experience in gender analysis and the undertaking of evaluations on the basis of a human rights-based approach;
- Proven experience in carrying out gender-responsive evaluations;
- Providing at least three references of assignments completed in the field of freedom of expression and/or media development.

Evaluation Team Members:

- Advanced university degrees in specialized fields of media studies, journalism, political science, public policy, international development, international relations, social science, or related fields;
- A minimum three years of experience in programme/project evaluation on at the global/international level of relevance to policy making;
- Excellent analytical skills;
- Oral and writing skills in English to the highest standards;
- At least one member of the team should be fluent in French to conduct interviews with non-English-speakers (the contractor will otherwise be required to submit proof of hiring a translator when

needed)..

Desirable qualifications and experience:

Team Members:

- A gender-balanced evaluation team with diverse geographic representation.
- Command of Spanish or Arabic is desirable to conduct interviews with non-English-speakers (the contractor will otherwise be required to submit proof of hiring a translator when and if needed).

Preference will be given to multicultural evaluation teams with appropriate gender balance and geographic representation.

IMPORTANT:

- No team member should have any previous involvement in the design or implementation of the activities under evaluation;
- It should be possible to determine compliance with the above stated requirements for the Firm/Institutions, team leader, and team members, such as years of experience, etc. based on the documentation submitted to UNESCO.

8. Sustainability Considerations:

Within the framework of the UN Sustainability Management Strategy (2020-2030), UNESCO has committed to promote and apply sustainable considerations in all its operations, including those related to the procurement of goods, works and services.

Therefore, Bidders are strongly encouraged to comply with the following Sustainability Criteria (Environmental/ Social/ Economic) and provide proof of evidence on their commitment and capacity to respond positively to the below set of **Desirable Criteria**:

- Climate change mitigation and adaptation: Bidders are encouraged to demonstrate commitment to use low-carbon/energy-efficient technologies, minimum energy performance, and low power mode equipment.
- Gender issues: Bidders are encouraged to demonstrate commitment to integrate gender mainstreaming in the approach and personnel structure.
- Promoting sustainability throughout the supply chain: Bidders are encouraged to demonstrate that they source responsible suppliers that incorporate environmental and social sustainability objectives in their business practices, production methods and processes, conduct background-check of potential suppliers for their record of social and environmental responsibility.

In addition, bidders are encouraged to adhere to United Nations “Global Compact” programme - <https://www.unglobalcompact.org>

9. Requests for Proposals

Interested candidates should include the following in their Proposal:

- 1) A **technical proposal**, including a proposed work plan and approach to undertake the assignment.

In particular, the technical proposal should elaborate on the following aspects:

- The Firm/Entity's understanding of the task in relation to the objectives and requirements set out in terms of reference, and a description of how a quality result will be ascertained;
- Description of a realistic work plan and approach to the evaluation, with specific reference to key deliverables and priorities, and distribution of tasks among team members, including safeguards for the safety of all those involved in the evaluation process as per do-not-harm good practices;
- Description of the potential risks and challenges identified for the implementation of the evaluation (in particular, any contextual and methodological risks and challenges), and the mitigation strategies they propose to address them (including in the context of the scope/resources/timeline of the evaluation).
- Description of the relevance and quality of previous samples of work in relation to the subject and requirements of the current terms of reference.

- 2) **Two examples of evaluation reports** recently completed, relevant to the subject of the evaluation (if possible).

The sample evaluation reports submitted will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- Relevance to the evaluation to be undertaken;
- Substantive quality of writing sample;
- Coherence of arguments;
- Effectiveness of the presentation of the findings and conclusions.

- 3) **Curriculum Vitae** of all evaluation team members, and **information about the firm/institution**.

- 4) A **financial proposal in USD (US dollars)**, providing a detailed cost breakdown in accordance with the different functional groupings or categories. If travel is required in order to perform the assignment, the financial proposal should include a travel budget. No travel shall be reimbursed.

The Proposal, comprising of technical proposal (including the sample evaluation reports, CVs and information about the firm/institution) and financial proposal, should be delivered through **two separate emails no later than 25 May 2025 at 23:59 CEST (GMT+2)** as follows:

The technical proposal should be sent to the following email, with the mention "Technical Proposal – RFP/CI/FMD/IPDC/2025/01 – name of the bidder" in subject: ci-procurement@unesco.org

The financial proposal should be sent the following email, with the mention "Financial Proposal – RFP/CI/FMD/IPDC/2025/01 – name of the bidder" in subject: ci-procurement@unesco.org

Offers addressed to any other email accounts will be disqualified. It should also be noted that all files together should not exceed 10 Mo per email.

Submissions will be acknowledged by email upon receipt, but **ONLY** selected applicants will receive further notification and correspondence.

10. Online Interviews

As part of the selection process, an online interview will be conducted with offerors who have attained minimum 70% score in the technical evaluation. The interviews will be scheduled between **26 May –6 June 2025** (working days only).

11. Reference Documents (to be provided by UNESCO to the selected evaluation team during the inception phase):

- The Programme Strategic Framework
- The Programme narrative reports.
- The Programme financial reports
- The Programme's Bureau and Council documents
- Project forms and documents
- [Evaluation of the International Programme for the Development of Communication \(IPDC\)](#) – March 2018
- Information gained through interviews with partners/beneficiaries and UNESCO staff.
- Communication materials produced under the Programme.
- Any related publication or resources that can assist the evaluation exercise (including the UNESCO Evaluation Manual)..

ANNEX IV – Proposal Submission Form

TO: UNESCO

To form an integral part of your technical proposal

Dear Sir / Madam,

Having examined the Solicitation Documents, the receipt of which is hereby duly acknowledged, we, the undersigned, offer to provide Professional Services for the sum as may be ascertained in accordance with the Price Schedule attached herewith and made part of this Proposal.

We undertake, if our Proposal is accepted, to commence and complete delivery of all services specified in the contract within the time frame stipulated.

We agree to abide by this Proposal for a period of 90 days from the Proposal Closing Date as stipulated in the Solicitation Documents, and it shall remain binding upon us and may be accepted at any time before the expiration of that period.

We understand that you are not bound to accept any Proposal you may receive.

Name of Bidder:

Address of Bidder:

Authorised Signature:

Name & title of Authorised

Signature:

Date:

ANNEX V – Price Schedule Form

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. The Bidder is asked to prepare the Price Schedule as a separate envelope from the rest of the RFP response as indicated in paragraph 16 (b) of the Instructions to Offerors.
2. All prices/rates quoted must be exclusive of all taxes, since the UNESCO is exempt from taxes as detailed in Annex II, Clause 18.
3. The Price Schedule must provide a detailed cost breakdown. Provide separate figures for each functional grouping or category. If the contractor is required to travel in order to perform the work described in the TOR, a lump sum must be included in the total amount or to be listed separately. No travel shall be reimbursed.
4. It is the policy of UNESCO not to grant advance payments except in unusual situations where the potential contractor whether a private firm, NGO or a government or other entity, specifies in the proposal that there are special circumstances warranting an advance payment. UNESCO, at its discretion, may however determine that such payment is not warranted or determine the conditions under which such payment would be made.

Any request for an advance payment is to be justified and documented and must be submitted with the financial proposal. This justification shall explain the need for the advance payment, itemise the amount requested and provide a time-schedule for utilisation of said amount.

Financial Proposal / Price Schedule				
Request for Proposal Ref:				
Total Financial Proposal [currency/amount]:				
Date of Submission:				
Authorized Signature:				
Description of Activity/Item	No of Consultants	Rate per Day [currency/ amount]	No of man-days	Total [currency/amount]
1. Remuneration				
1.1 Draft & Final Inception Report				
1.2 Draft Report on Preliminary Findings				
1.3 First & Second Draft Evaluation Report				
1.4 Final Draft Evaluation Report				
1.5 Final Evaluation Report, including Annexes				
Description of Activity/Item	No of Consultants	Rate per Day [currency/ amount]	No of man-days	Total [currency/amount]
2. Other Expenses				
2.1 Travel				
2.2 Per Diem Allowances				
2.3 Communications				
2.4 Reproduction and Reports				
2.5 Equipment and Other Items				
2.6 Others (please specify)				

ANNEX VI – Vendor Information Form

General Information

Company Name:	
City, Country	
Web Site URL:	
Contact Person:	
Title:	
Phone:	
Email Address:	

Expertise of the Bidder

Line of Business, area of expertise:	
Type of business (manufacturer, distributor, etc):	
Years of company experience:	
Main export countries/area:	
Past Contracts with other UN organizations:	

References: Please provide at least three references including contact details for contracts for similar services to the one requested under this consultancy:

Organization Name/Country:	Contact person:	Telephone:	Email:
1.			
2.			
3.			