REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Subject: RFP for Advertising and Audience Measurement Services
RFP No.: FY24-SCC-RLTCF-AAM (01)
Date of Issuance: February 2, 2024
Deadline for Submission of Proposal: February 22, 2024, 15:00 (Chisinau local time)
Project: Strengthening Content Connections Project and Russian-Language Television Content Fund
IREX: International Research and Exchanges Board

The projects Russian-Language Television Content Fund (RLTCF) and Strengthening Content Connections (SCC), funded by the US State Department to bolster Moldova’s information space by supporting the production and broadcast of high-quality TV productions in Romanian and Russian languages, invite bidders to submit a proposal on advertising and audiences measurement services.

- IREX intends to issue a service contract for this procurement.
- Costs incurred by respondents for the preparation of a proposal and the negotiation of contract are not reimbursable.
- IREX is not bound to accept any of the proposals submitted.
- IREX reserves the right to accept a Bidder’s proposal without further discussion.
- IREX will only evaluate proposals from qualified individual persons or companies to execute and implement the work under this project.
- The Bidder must be able to complete all the items stated in the Purpose of this RFP.

If the Bidders have questions or clarifications, please send them to tender.md@irex.org. The subject line should have: “Questions for RFP No. FY24-SCC-RLTCF-AAM (01)” in the subject title.

Questions/clarifications must be submitted in writing. Phone calls will not be accepted. IREX will respond in writing to any request for clarifications.

Instructions:

1. Attached are the documents required for proposal submission:
   - Technical Specifications (TS) (Annex I)
   - Proposal Submission Form (Annex II)
   - Financial Proposal Form (Annex III)
   - Experience and Past Performance Form (Annex IV)

2. Proposals must be comprised of a proposal submission form, a technical proposal, a financial proposal form, experience and past performance form and all other required documents as stated in the clause 4 PROPOSAL CONTENT from the Instructions for Bidders, Annex I Technical Specifications (TS).

3. Submittal requirements:
   - Please scan, sign, and submit your proposal via e-mail to: tender.md@irex.org.
   - The Subject line of the email should read: “No. FY24-SCC-RLTCF-AAM (01),
Individual Name_Surname/Company Name.”

4. Only officially registered companies in the Republic of Moldova are eligible to submit the proposals or individuals that have Moldovan unrestricted work authorization.

5. Proposals must be written in English or Romanian.

6. All proposal prices indicated in the financial proposal form should be appropriate, reasonable, quoted in Moldovan lei (MDL), and should indicate VAT excluded.

7. Partial and or incomplete proposals shall be rejected as non-responsive.

The RFP is issued in the English language.

IREX Moldova does not discriminate against any Bidder or potential Bidder, such as, but not limited to, by withholding, adversely impacting, or denying equitable access to benefits or services on the basis of any non-merit factor. A non-merit factor includes race, colour, religion, gender, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, genetic information, marital status, parental status, political affiliation, or veteran’s status.
Instructions for Bidders

ANNEX I
Technical Specifications (TS)

Date: February 2, 2024

1. Background

The assignment shall be performed under the overall guidance of the Project Director and the direct supervision of the SCC and RLTCF Project Officer.

About IREX
IREX is a global development and education organization. We strive for a more just, prosperous, and inclusive world—where individuals reach their full potential, governments serve their people, and communities thrive. With a projected annual portfolio of more than $100 million and more than 600 staff worldwide, we work with partners in more than 100 countries in four areas essential to progress: cultivating leaders, empowering youth, strengthening institutions, and increasing access to quality education and information. More details are available at www.irex.org.

Summary of the SCC and RLTCF
IREX implements in Moldova two projects, Russian-Language Television Content Fund and Strengthening Content Connections, funded by the US State Department, to bolster Moldova’s information space by supporting the production and broadcast of high-quality TV productions in Romanian and Russian languages.

The projects support the diversification of the television entertainment programming by sustaining the locally produced television series and Moldovan talents meeting audiences needs and preferences.

PURPOSE

Purpose: IREX seeks Advertising and Audience Measurement services, provided by an individual or company, to work with selected projects’ partners with specific emphasis on improving television and online viewership and monetization of the content.

EXPERIENCE AND PAST PERFORMANCE OF THE CANDIDATE

- Advanced knowledge of TV and online audience measurement and extensive understanding of TV and online ratings.
- Research techniques and inferential statistics to recognize, design and implement strategies that support interpretation and usage of viewership ratings to facilitate negotiations and generation of revenues.
- Proven working experience with advertising companies and sales stakeholders on the market.
- Capacity to meet the requirements of the current RFP.
- Previous positive experience in working with international organizations is an advantage.
2. SPECIFICATIONS

The Bidder will elaborate the offer based on the specifications from the table below and will add lines and/ or comments if necessary. Interested candidates can apply for both components, TV and online viewership and monetization of the content, or only for one component stipulated below. This should be clearly stipulated in the financial offer. Prices indicated in the financial offer should use as a reference required deliverables per one project partner, however IREX anticipates collaboration with more partners.

1. TV viewership and monetization of the content

1.1 Setting-up commercial partnerships:
- Research the advertisement market and identify appropriate interested commercial entities ready to invest in entertainment TV programs. Provide contact details of the potential commercial entities to the selected partners working with IREX projects.
- Provide the selected project partners with tailored strategies and guideline to set up viable commercial partnerships (e.g., support selected partners in development of attractive commercial offers and guide them to develop the pitch with interested commercial entities)
- Facilitate meetings between the selected partners and commercial entities.
- Interpret and analyze TV ratings data to understand audience behavior and viewership trends.
- Develop and submit regular (monthly and final) TV audience reports to selected project partners, with a dedicated chapter on effectiveness of television promotion campaign.

1.2 TV promotion campaign:
- Develop guideline for the project partners to implement engaging and impactful promotional campaigns optimized for television, considering various formats and time slots.
- Provide training for monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of promotional campaigns using TV audience data and performance metrics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverables</th>
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<td>Develop one guideline for attracting commercial partners, including pitching strategies and the development of compelling offer presentations.</td>
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<td>Training for monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of promotional campaigns</td>
<td>One training for all the projects partners.</td>
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2. Online viewership and monetization
2.1. Setting-up commercial partnerships

- Evaluate the content and impact of projects partners channels available on different social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, YouTube).
- Provide the selected project partners with tailored strategies and guidelines to set up and maintain viable social media channels attractive for online audiences and commercial entities (e.g., increase online audience and overall reach, assessment and interpretation of ratings, understanding online audiences’ behavior and patterns, templates for content plans, leveraging online platforms as distribution channel, considering online-market dynamics and consumer preferences).
- Provide the selected project partners with tailored guidelines on setting-up partnerships with commercial entities willing to invest in online entertainment content\(^1\) (e.g., identification of partners, development of attractive commercial offer, pitching the content).

2.2. Online promotion campaign:

- Develop guidelines for the project partners to implement engaging and impactful promotional campaigns optimized for different online platforms, considering various formats of entertainment content.
- Provide training for monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of promotional campaigns using online data and performance metrics.

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NB: SCC and RLTCF projects implemented by AO IREX Moldova are exempt from VAT with the right of deduction, according to Government Decision no. 246 of 08.04.2010, thus the rates will be indicated without VAT.

Projectele RLTCF și SCC implementate de către AO IREX Moldova sunt scutite de TVA cu drept de deducere, conform Hotărârii de Guvern nr. 246 din 08.04.2010, astfel tarifele vor fi indicate fără TVA.

\(^1\) Entertainment content means an audio-visual product produced by a specialized company, with a minimum duration of 25 minutes. The entertainment content is usually broadcast on TV and subsequently distributed online.
Please, indicate other existing cost and/or services that are not stated in the table above, if available/ Vă rugăm să indicați prețurile pentru alte servicii existente, care nu se regăsesc în tabelul de mai sus, dacă există.

3. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

➢ The Bidder shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of its proposal and contract negotiation, and SCC and RLTCF will in no case be responsible or liable for those costs, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the RFP.

➢ Bidder participation in this RFP will not generate any IREX obligations toward any Bidder. SCC and RLTCF reserve the right to accept or reject any proposal that does not conform with the requirements of this document or to annul the entire RFP process and reject all proposals at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to any Bidder.

➢ By applying to this RFP, the Bidder agrees and accepts all conditions and rules listed in this RFP.

➢ No appeal against contract decision award is allowed.

➢ Any communications between the Bidder and IREX related to matters of alleged fraud or corruption must be made in writing. If the Bidder has any evidence of fraud, corruption, and conflict of interest this information shall be submitted in writing to IREX Grants, Contracts and Compliance (GCO) office in Washington, DC. Please request the contact information from tender_md@irex.org.

Trafficicking in Persons (April 2016)

a. The recipient, subawardee, or contractor, at any tier, or their employees, labor recruiters, brokers or other agents, must not engage in:

   (1) Trafficking in persons (as defined in the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime) during the period of this award;

   (2) Procurement of a commercial sex act during the period of this award;

   (3) Use of forced labor in the performance of this award;

   (4) Acts that directly support or advance trafficking in persons, including the following acts:

      i. Destroying, concealing, confiscating, or otherwise denying an employee access to that employee’s identity or immigration documents;

      ii. Failing to provide return transportation or pay for return transportation costs to an employee from a country outside the United States to the country from which the employee was recruited upon the end of employment if requested by the employee, unless:

         a) Exempted from the requirement to provide or pay for such return transportation by Department of State under this award; or

         b) The employee is a victim of human trafficking seeking victim services or legal redress in the country of employment or a witness in a human trafficking enforcement action;

      iii. Soliciting a person for the purpose of employment, or offering employment, by means of materially false or fraudulent pretenses, representations, or promises regarding that employment;

      iv. Charging employees recruitment fees; or

      v. Providing or arranging housing that fails to meet the host country housing and safety standards.

b. In the event of a violation of section (a) of this provision, IREX is authorized to terminate this award, without penalty, and is also authorized to pursue any other remedial actions authorized.
4. PROPOSAL CONTENT

The proposal package will comprise the following documents in Romanian or English:

I. Technical Proposal.
- Name of Applicant
- Details about the applicant’s capability to fulfill the scope of this assignment
- CVs of staff that will be assigned to this assignment, emphasizing relevant experience and detailed description of roles and responsibilities.
- A detailed description of the method used to perform the tasks outlined and proposed timeline.
- Copy of the Registration Certificate or Decision of the Registration of the company (Certificat de Înregistrare eliberat de Agenția Servicii Publice sau Decizia de Înregistrare)/ Proven evidence of Moldovan unrestricted work authorization for individual persons.

II. Proposal Submission Form (Annex II).


IV. Experience and Past Performance Form (Annex IV).

5. PROPOSAL EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND CRITERIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Percentage weighting</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Must have 5 years of experience in television and online programming research with previous experience in media, TV and online advertising, and attraction of commercial partners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Reasonableness and appropriateness of cost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1 Preliminary Examination:

a) Verification

The Bidders shall verify that the proposals have all required documents.

b) Eligibility

Proposals shall be examined to verify whether the Bidder, and all parties constituting the Bidder (partners in a Joint Venture), is eligible for Contract award.

If the Bidder has:
(a) Nationality from a country with a sanction imposed by the United Nations Security Council; or
(b) Been debarred or suspended from participation in procurements funded by the United States Federal Government or otherwise prohibited by applicable United States law or Executive Order or United States policies, including under any than existing anti-terrorist policies; or
(c) Been barred from participation in procurements financed by the World Bank;
(d) Active exclusions in the System for Award Management (SAM) (www.sam.gov);
(e) Been listed on the Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) and Blocked Persons List


maintained by the U.S. Treasury for the Office of Foreign Assets Control, sometimes referred to as the “OFAC List”;
(f) Been listed in the United Nations Security designation list;
(g) been listed on debarment and suspension list, through checks in LexisNexis Bridger Insight and Prohibition List of the Moldovan Government Public Procurement Agency.
(h) for any reason previously violated or failed to perform any contracts concluded with IREX or including public procurement contracts, even if the contract was terminated.

Proposals submitted by ineligible Bidders or proposing ineligible Contractors will be rejected. All received Proposals will be evaluated according to their combined technical and financial scores.

5.2 Technical Evaluation
A proposal will be rejected at this stage if it fails to achieve the minimum technical threshold of 30 points prior to any price proposal being opened and compared.
   a) Experience – 50 points.
   b) Cost – 50 points.

5.3 Financial Evaluation
All proposals will be evaluated considering the reasonableness and appropriateness of costs, which shall be realistic and not overrated per each activity/item.

5.4 Combined Evaluation and Ranking of Bidders

Combined Score
- As a result of the evaluation, each proposal shall be given a combined technical and financial score using the following formula:
  \[ S = S_T + S_F \]
- Where: \( S_T \) the Bidder’s technical score.
- \( S_F \) the Bidder’s financial score.

Ranking of Bidders
Proposals shall be ranked according to their combined technical and financial scores.

The proposal with the highest combined score will be considered for Contract award.

IREX Moldova/SCC and RLTCF reserve the right to reject any and all proposals if such action is considered to be in the best interest of organization.

5.5 Contract award and renewal

The awarded Bidder will sign a service contract. IREX reserves the right, based on availability of funding and vendor performance, to enter into subsequent contractual agreements with the winning vendor until the end of the SCC and RLTCF without issuing a new RFP.

CHECK LIST

Attached are copies of original documents of: [check the box(es) of the attached documents]
□ TECHNICAL PROPOSAL
□ Copy of the Registration Certificate or Decision of the Registration of the company (Certificat de Înregistrare eliberat de Agenția Servicii Publice sau Decizia de Înregistrare)/ Proven evidence of Moldovan unrestricted work authorization for individual persons.
□ Annex II: PROPOSAL SUBMISSION FORM
□ Annex III: FINANCIAL PROPOSAL FORM
□ Annex IV: EXPERIENCE AND PAST PERFORMANCE FORM
ANNEX II

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION FORM

Dear Sir / Madam,

Having examined the Solicitation Documents, the receipt of which is hereby duly acknowledged, we, the undersigned, offer to provide Advertising and Audience Measurement Services at the order of the SCC and RLTCF for the sum as may be ascertained in accordance with the Financial Proposal Form attached herewith and made part of this Proposal.

We undertake, if our Proposal is accepted, to commence and complete assignment of all deliverables and items specified in the contract.

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

Dated

Signature

(In the capacity of)

Duly authorized to sign Proposal for and on behalf of
ANNEX III
FINANCIAL Proposal Form

The bidder is asked to prepare the Financial Proposal Form and submit it along with the Technical Proposal.

The Financial Proposal must be submitted on a separate sheet.

All prices/rates quoted must be in MDL and exclude VAT. The Financial Proposal must provide a detailed cost breakdown and provide separate figures for each category. The format shown below should be used in preparing the Financial Proposal. Interested candidates can apply for both components, TV and online viewership and monetization of the content, or only for one component stipulated below. This should be clearly stipulated in the financial offer. Prices indicated in the financial offer should use as a reference required deliverables per one project partner, however IREX anticipates collaboration with more partners.

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2. Online Viewership and Monetization of Content

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Proiectele RLTCF și SCC implementate de către AO IREX Moldova sunt scutit de TVA cu drept de deductie, conform Hotărârii de Guvern nr. 246 din 08.04.2010, astfel tarifele vor fi indicate **fără TVA**.

Please, indicate other existing cost and/or services that are not stated in the table above, if available/

Vă rugăm să indicați prețurile pentru alte servicii existente, care nu se regăsesc în tabelul de mai sus, dacă există.
ANNEX IV

EXPERIENCE AND PAST PERFORMANCE FORM

The Applicant shall fill in this Form in accordance with the instructions indicated. No alterations to its format shall be permitted and no substitutions shall be accepted.

The Applicant shall provide information on each contract for which its firm/entity, either individually as a corporate entity or as one of the major companies within an association, or as an individual, was legally contracted during the last three (3) years. A minimum of two (2) references are requested.

Name of Applicant: [insert: complete name of Applicant]

Reference 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contract Name:</th>
<th>[insert: id number and name of contract]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of Beneficiary:</td>
<td>[insert: complete name of beneficiary]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Beneficiary’s Reference Information</td>
<td>[insert: name, position, telephone number and email address]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country:</td>
<td>[insert: name of beneficiary’s country]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>[insert: full address of beneficiary]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Associated Companies, if Any:</td>
<td>[insert: complete name of company(ies)]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start Date of the Contract (Month/Year):</td>
<td>[insert: date]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End Date of the contract (Month/Year):</td>
<td>[insert: date]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract Value (in Current USD):</td>
<td>[insert: amount]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of assignment relevant to the current services requested by the RFP</td>
<td>[insert: description of assignment]</td>
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