Request for Proposal from Friends of Publish What You Fund

Background:
Friends of Publish What You Fund is a 501(c)(3) organization established in 2015 to advocate for aid transparency, with a special focus on the U.S. Working with Publish What You Fund and other partners, we are committed to improving transparency and accountability in foreign assistance. Aid transparency is needed to promote accountability in both donor and partner countries. That means the data needs to be visible, of high quality and usable.

Short Description of Proposal:
As part of its work this year, Friends of Publish What You Fund will develop and share lessons from the efforts of the U.S. Administration, U.S. Congress and other stakeholders to make U.S. aid transparent since 2008. The Administration set ambitious goals for IATI and for the data revolution, but implementation of those goals has proven to be a more difficult task. As we move into the next Administration, we want to gather, analyze and present the challenges and solutions of the aid transparency and accountability movement so that those who set and decide future policy are informed by the lessons learned.

Friends of Publish What You Fund is seeking a consultant to implement this lessons learned work. Working with a subcommittee of the Friends of Publish What You Fund Board and the U.S. Representative to Publish What You Fund, the consultant will be responsible for:

- Developing the methodology and work plan
- Constructing a survey of core questions
- Undertaking desk research
- Conducting 30-40 interviews with a diverse range of stakeholders, from government, NGOs, academics, and open data experts.
- Drafting a series of lessons learned on aid transparency initiatives, including IATI, the Foreign Assistance Dashboard and the foreign assistance commitments in the OGP. The resulting format would be a combination of short written materials and possibly short video interviews.
- Helping to organize a process to share and validate the lessons learned with key strategic partners prior to dissemination.

The proposed timeline is from mid-May through September, 2016.

The consultant should have experience in evaluations and U.S. foreign assistance policy, with the ability to write clearly and concisely.

Details of the methodology and questions to be considered should likely include:

- Initial commitments: It is useful to understand how and why were these commitments made by the Administration, including motivations, and any

analysis was as to the cost and benefits of aid transparency. These could include consultations, management considerations, and technical skills necessary to meet the commitments. Were the policy goals clearly defined and how widely were they supported?

- o Implementation: Following the aid transparency commitments – particularly to IATI, the Foreign Assistance Dashboard and the transparency commitment in the OGP plan – analyse the implementation of these efforts. What was the progress and how was it measured? Were specific systems and staff in place for ensuring data quality? What efforts were made to coordinate and lead by a single, responsible government entity to ensure cohesion? What was the resourcing that was needed and was it provided? Was there sufficient political support and if not, why not? What justifications for the policy goals resonated in the implementation and why? What stood in the way of implementation?

- o Looking back/looking forward: What were the challenges that the federal government faced in undertaking these commitments? In retrospect, what worked and what didn't and what were the keys to success? As the U.S. makes commitments for the future, what are the factors to consider? Who are the key players that need to be/should have been part of the process? To what extent were U.S. government actors in the field involved and/or consulted?

- o U.S. focus: The focus of this effort will be on U.S. aid transparency successes, failures and challenges. It would seem appropriate, however to look at some best practices internationally. For example, in the roll out of MCC's Principles into Practice on Transparency at the Brookings Institute, we sought to share best practice experiences with speakers from the UK and the Netherlands. It would be useful to identify any U.S. follow up and other efforts to learn from actors outside the U.S.

- o If possible, the review should capture any learnings that may apply beyond aid transparency, such as other policy decisions that have a significant technical element. This mixture of policy and technology has clearly been one of the impediments to consistent progress by the U.S. Understanding this kind of commitment might have application to other policy decisions, especially as open data movements gain more steam.

Deliverables:

The end product will be a series of lessons learned on aid transparency initiatives, likely including IATI, the Foreign Assistance Dashboard and the foreign assistance commitments in the OGP. The format will be a package of useable and compelling set of lessons and recommendations, possibly with a short video, which will be vetted with key policy and other stakeholders. This vetting will ensure that the lessons learned stand up to scrutiny and be useable to inform key groups on recommendations for U.S. foreign aid transparency going forward.

Responses to RFP:

Please provide a response to this RFP that describes:
- Description of the methodology and work plan, including proposed timelines
- Description of the qualifications of the consultant for this work, including a description of the relevant experience for this work
- Proposed fees for the project

The deadline for responding to this RFP is May 11, 2016.

Please submit proposals to:

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