

Terms of Reference: Research Consultant

Introduction and Background

Publish What You Fund was established in 2008 with the goal of ensuring that aid and development information is transparent, available and used for effective decision-making, public accountability and lasting change for all citizens. As the largest donor of aid and development finance, we have placed a particular emphasis on transparency of United States (US) foreign assistance.

This project seeks to assess the potential impact of changes to US foreign assistance on countries receiving aid. It will start by reviewing the current levels of assistance, consider scenarios for changes to US foreign assistance -- looking both at the quantity of resources and how they are delivered -- and assess the potential impact of those changes in a selected number of countries.

The findings will be used to influence the debate on US Fiscal Year 2019 spending levels in two ways: first, to make policymakers aware of the potential impact of changes to US foreign assistance; second, to demonstrate how better data on foreign assistance can be used to improve the budget.

Description of Assignment

The project team will consist of a Project Lead, a Research Consultant, a small team (2-4) of In-Country Consultants and a US Advocacy Representative.

The Research Consultant will be responsible for:

- Conducting independent desk-based research.
- Developing a research methodology that encompasses in-country research in up to four countries, which will enable us to assess the impact of the proposed US Budget cuts in those pre-selected focus countries.
- Ensuring a smooth research process and providing light-touch supervision for a team of in-country researchers (one per country).
- Analysing the results of the desk-based review and in-country interviews and focus group discussions for the production of a final draft report of 'composite' findings.

The Research Consultant will work closely with the Project Lead, who will be responsible for overall management of the project, including the initial desk-based research and data analysis, production of final briefing materials and advocacy efforts.

Activities and Deliverables

Desk review:

- Consideration and analysis of previous desk-based research, interviews and other assembled papers relevant to the project.
- Independent desk-based research into US budget proposals and US development strategies in the pre-selected focus countries.
- In conjunction with the Project Lead, develop a methodology, including key informant interview and focus group discussion research questions and key concepts, to assess the

impact of proposed cuts which can be coherently applied to all focus countries.

Light-touch Supervision of in-country consultants:

- Assist in preparations to ensure a smooth launch of the programme of in-country research; planned to begin in January/February 2018.
- Generally supervise and advise all in-country consultants to ensure they are correctly implementing the agreed methodology, remain on course to hit targets and deadlines and produce satisfactory outcomes.
- While the Project Lead will remain involved throughout, the Research Consultant must act as the central point of contact for the in-country consultants.
- Work with the Project Lead to remedy any issues which arise during the duration of the programme of in-country research.
- Organise and chair at least weekly calls / touchpoints with the in-country researchers and Project Lead.
- At the discretion of the Research Consultant, organise individual calls with in-country researchers to provide advice and feedback.
- The Research Consultant will be asked to travel, potentially at short notice.

Production of materials:

- To produce a concise, clear and usable written methodology which can be discussed with, and implemented by, the in-country consultants. The Research Consultant shall propose an outline for the report to be agreed before writing starts, but a style guide shall be supplied.
- To provide a draft final report, of an agreed length, which draws the in-country findings together, provides comprehensive analysis and identifies the general conclusions of the research. The final report will be targeted at the following audiences:
 - Key US Influencers, including members of the US Administration and Congress
 - Members of government and civil society within the selected focus countries
- To review and comment on any subsequent revisions by Publish What You Fund of the final draft report.
- To draft, contribute or otherwise help with the development of any briefing materials being produced during the duration of the contract.
- To comment and input into any communications material produced during the duration of the contract.
- Prepare and facilitate research validation webinars with in-country research participants.

Other:

- The Research Consultant must be in regular contact with the Project Lead, and available for at least a weekly call prior to the programme of in-country research; and at least bi-weekly during the programme of in-country research.
- The Research Consultant may be asked to travel, potentially at short-notice. Details can be agreed prior to the commencement of the assignment.
- Any changes to the Deliverables of this Agreement must be decided by mutual agreement.

Timeframe

The role will require 45 days spread over an extended period; finishing in June 2018. The specifics of time allocation can be discussed prior to the commencement of the assignment.

The project is bound by a strict external deadline (US budget process). Consequently, regardless of the start date of the Research Consultant, the agreed methodology must be complete by January 2018; the in-country research should start no later than February 2018 (or before); and a draft final report shall be delivered no later than mid-to-late May 2018.

Any changes to the timeline must be agreed by the Project Lead.

Payment

Payment will include an upfront fee, a further payment upon reaching a milestone and final payment on satisfactory and timely delivery of all services. The specifics of payments can be negotiated.

Required Skills and Competencies

- Extensive research experience in international development.
- Demonstrable experience of producing high-quality, well-written, impact assessments to a tight deadline.
- Track record and familiarity with developing research methodologies to measure impact, and that can be applied across multiple countries.
- Strong data analysis skills.
- Ability to identify trends and key messages.
- Experience of leading research teams, including remotely.
- A solid understanding of the US' development approach (preferable)
- French language skills (preferable).
- The successful candidate can be based anywhere, with preference given to Washington D.C., or London.

To apply: Please submit a CV and cover letter to james.coe@publishwhatyoufund.org, along with your day rate.