

# Bids invited for projects promoting human rights and democratic values in Sri Lanka

## **Objectives**

The High Commission particularly welcomes expressions of interest (EOIs) which:

- bring together one or more of the thematic areas (for example: working with media to promote and foster social cohesion or protecting human rights defenders and journalists)
- include project activities across several strands, including working in partnership with other implementing partners with diverse expertise
- are mindful of cross-cutting themes such as conflict-sensitivity, gender and environment

## **Priority themes**

The activities will focus on the following priority themes. Suppliers are encouraged to identify target areas within and across these themes, and justify their focus.

### **Reinforcing media freedom and protecting freedom of expression**

We welcome suggestions for activities, which support press freedom in Sri Lanka. This could include:

- supporting journalistic practice in identified 'needs' areas in Sri Lanka (such as digital and physical safety, high-quality and inclusive content, or data-driven and investigative journalism) – e.g. through direct capacity building to journalists, or initiatives to support the spread of journalistic best practice and learning
- initiatives to boost civic literacy and tackle disinformation, especially where potential scalability, cross-cutting themes, or sustainability can be demonstrated

### **Promoting freedom of religion or belief and tackling inter-communal tensions**

We welcome proposals that address ethno-religious and religious tensions in Sri Lanka. These could include:

- raising understanding and awareness including on triggers of religious and ethno-religious tensions and conflict (inter and intra-communities), through effective research and documentation
- promoting conflict management through education of and engagement with

local and national authorities

## **Supporting human rights defenders and strengthening civil society**

We welcome proposals to safeguard the essential role Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) and civil society play in promoting and protecting democracy. This could include:

- supporting civil society engagement through identified 'needs' areas in Sri Lanka (such as digital and physical safety, data-gathering and documentation, access to legal or operational support, linkages between CSOs and other key stakeholders i.e. government and media)
- initiatives to boost collaborative and coordinated advocacy, including between and within grassroots, regional and Colombo-based organisations, especially where potential scalability, cross-cutting themes, or sustainability can be demonstrated

## **Delivery mechanisms**

Suppliers should consider the best delivery mechanism to meet needs. Suppliers may want to consider capacity building (direct, or through 'train the trainer' models) alongside more creative mechanisms such as support to peer to peer networks or sector initiatives, and creating relevant products/resources (eg: technical 'tool kits'). Activities will need to take into account Covid-19 risk mitigation and planning.

## **Timeline**

The successful implementer should be able to commence work from October 2021 and complete all project activity by mid-March 2022 (subject to final funding decisions).

Project involving communications will be subject to an additional approximately 2-month approval process in addition to usual set up processes. Suppliers should consider delay in start-up in designing their work.

## **Budget**

We anticipate budget provision for a number of outputs with individual costs up to £60,000. Proposals with multiple implementing partners should be submitted under one lead contractor. We are unable to support contingency, miscellaneous, small grants, or per diem costs. Admin costs must not exceed 10%.

## **Requirements/Criteria**

- EOIs are open to registered community and civil society organisations
- EOIs should be submitted in the form of a concept note on maximum two-

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- E0Is should cover the type of project intervention and delivery proposed, as well as how it will address value for money. Bidders must provide a broad indication of proposed activities to be delivered, anticipated outcomes, and sustainability approaches post-completion of the project. They should factor in risks and mitigation plans, i.e. with COVID-19. They must also demonstrate an ability to deliver all project activity before mid-March 2020, with a substantial portion within the first half of the project. An outline activity based budget must be submitted as an annex to the E0I.

## **Deadline for submitting expressions of interest**

E0Is must be submitted to the British High Commission at [colombo.general@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:colombo.general@fcdo.gov.uk) no later than 1700hrs local time on Thursday, 12 August 2021. Please indicate the E0I heading in the subject line.

E0Is will be considered separately by a panel of assessors. Submitters of the strongest proposals will be invited to develop and submit a detailed proposal and activity-based budget for consideration by mid-September 2021. The High Commission aims to inform bidders of the outcome of their E0I by end of August 2021.