**CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: MEDIA LANDSCAPE STUDY/NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

Media Initiatives Center invites a researcher/analyst to design and conduct a baseline study for its newly launched Initiative for Media Quality and Resilience project.

**Background**

Media Initiatives Center and its partners – Yerevan Press Club, Media Diversity Institute and International Media Support – recently started the implementation of the European Union funded **Initiative for Media Quality and Resilience** (IMQR) project. Its impact statement is: Armenian civil society organizations have the capacity and resilience to act as trusted, independent and effective actors. Progress towards this goal will be realized through a combination of consultancy, training, grant-funded content production, advocacy and public engagement. These interconnected efforts will make independent media less vulnerable to politically motivated takeovers and more responsive to audience needs and priorities which, in turn, will consolidate their market position and build public trust in their programming. The duration of this project is 38 months.

The objectives of the project are to:

* to empower media organizations to manage and perform professionally, independently and sustainably;
* to support media organizations and actors to develop more reader-relevant, analytical, reliable and responsible content;
* to ensure participation of civil society, media and public authorities in the progress and reformation of the media ecosystem.

Final beneficiaries and target groups of the project are media entities in the capital and regions; journalists and media workers, including management; media self-regulation initiatives; media development NGOs; media regulatory and legislative bodies.

**Goal and Objectives of the Study**

The goal of the study is to map the situation in the media landscape with respect to the IMQR project objectives, targets and activities. The study will not report on the general situation in the sector, but will rather help the project team tailor the activities towards achieving the project objectives and to have a baseline information which will later allow to assess the impact of the project.

The specific objectives of the study are to:

* identify the main gaps in media coverage, shortcomings in the media workers’ profession, challenges of media entities, perceived problems of media regulatory bodies;
* determine a set of baselines (quantitative and qualitative) for measuring the project progress towards its targets;
* propose recommendations for adjusting the action to better match the needs defined.

**The Scope of the Study**

Through this study, Media Initiatives Center seeks proposals for adjusting the action to better match the needs of the sector and thus to have a greater impact. The findings will be used to recalibrate planned activities in line with feedback received.

The Contractor will design and implement the study in coordination with the IMQR project team.

The *geographical coverage* will include the country at large. However, no travel will be required at this stage.

The study will focus on the *stakeholders and beneficiaries* of various project interventions including media entities, media workers, media self-regulation initiatives, media development NGOs, media regulatory and legislative bodies, as well as key *implementing partner organizations* (MIC, YPC, MDI).

Project proposal and logical framework will be the primary documents guiding the study as they state what the project is intended to achieve on all levels (outputs, outcomes and goal/impact), how these achievements will be gauged, provide details on the key M&E tasks. The contractor will be provided with reports of media sector-related research projects implemented during the past year.

Primary users of the study findings and recommendations will be the implementers of the IMQR project.

The study will apply qualitative methods, including interviews and focus groups with target groups of the project, as well as desk research of project documents, research reports, and other related materials. Qualitative methods will help to answer evaluation questions, as well as to track project outcome and output indicators not covered by quantitative survey.

In addition to this inception study, similar research will be conducted on an annual and/or semi-annual basis for the IMQR in order to keep the document and the overall process living.

In order to deploy the full potential of the study, it should be viewed as a living document and will be updated every year.

MIC anticipates around *two months* for conducting the study.

The *deliverables* include draft and final reports to be presented in English, not to exceed 25 pages (excluding annexes) and containing Executive Summary, Methodology, Findings, and Recommendations.

**Required qualifications**

The contractor should have the following qualifications:

* at least five years of experience in designing and conducting studies, evaluations, and other research;
* experience in conducting qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis, and in producing reports;
* good analytical and communication skills, fluency in English;
* advanced university degree in Sociology or a related field;
* the knowledge in the media sector of Armenia and in the evaluation of EU-funded projects is preferred.

**Application procedure**

Interested experts are invited to send their applications to Arshaluys Muradyan, at [amuradyan@mediainitiatives.am](mailto:amuradyan@mediainitiatives.am) by April 10 mentioning “Media Landscape Study/Needs Assessment” in the subject line.

The application package should include:

* CV of the researcher;
* Recorded evidence of similar studies and research, such as links to reports;
* Financial proposal (an initial indicative budget for completing the study).

*The "Initiative for Media Quality and Resilience" project is funded by the European Union and implemented by the Media Initiatives Center in collaboration with Yerevan Press Club, Media Diversity Institute - Armenia, and International Media Support.*