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Advancing legal and policy reforms to enhance
media integrity and protect freedom of speech

TERMS OF REFERENCE

CALL FOR PROPOSAL: EXPERT

BACKGROUND

The Action addresses specific objectives of the **Call for proposal: a)** to continue support to issue based networks in the area of rule of law and freedom of expression and media and advance **b)** institutionalisation of civil society participation in policy and decision making process. It aligns with the Thematic Priorities **5** (Fundamental rights) and **7** (Civil Society) of the IPA III Programming Framework. The motivation behind this Action lies in response to the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina's striking underperformance in meeting the 14 priorities set for the country in the EC Opinion 2019. Key areas of concern include the lack of appropriate judicial and institutional follow-up to cases of threats and violence against journalists. Furthermore, the government has not adopted crucial laws, such as the Law on Electronic Communications and Electronic Media (which was supposed to be adopted in 2016) and the Law on media ownership transparency. Issues related to arbitrary and non-transparent allocation of public funds and hate speech online still persist. The situation has worsened in 2023, with the adoption of amendments to the criminal Code that re-criminalize defamation in Republika Srpska.

Journalists face constant threats and attacks, and political pressure on media further undermines media freedoms and freedom of expression. The newly proposed Draft Law on Freedom of Information Act could also potentially restrict citizens' right to obtain information due to a wide list of possible exceptions to the government's obligation to provide information to the public and media.

Two Specific objectives of the Action are defined, as follows:

- **SO1:** To monitor the media policy and legal environment to test the extent of freedom of expression and through this to challenge the authorities to abide by the rule of law, to prevent manipulation and intimidation of media and to respect the need for transparent media reforms in line with the EU accession process.
- **SO2:** To establish an education network that mobilises media, CSOs, media education organisations, self-regulatory bodies and fact checkers to monitor media integrity and the protection of fundamental rights and freedom of expression.

The following outcomes will lead to achievement on these objectives:

- **Outcome 1 (Oc.1)** Governments and institutions alerted and respect the need for transparent media reforms in line with the EU accession process.
- **Outcome 2 (Oc.2)** enhanced media content, improved quality and more credible journalism, Representatives of civil society, media capacitated and demand a legal framework that reflects professional standards free from unethical bias, favouritism and corrupt practices.
- **Outcome 3 (Oc.3)** CSOs more able to recognise credible journalism and support media freedoms.
- **Outcome 4 (Oc.4)** more discerning public and a more open media environment that reflects enhanced self-regulation and the identification of gaps in the existing legislation and the media landscape



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Call

The Call for proposals is opened within the project “Advancing legal and policy reforms to enhance media integrity and protect freedom of speech” jointly implemented by Foundation Mediacentar Sarajevo, NGO “JaBiHEU” and Press and Online Media Council in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Press and Online Media Council in Bosnia and Herzegovina is currently seeking to engage a web developer to design and develop mobile phone application (Android and IOS), containing the Self-regulation Toolkit. Aim of the Self-regulation Toolkit is to help all media professionals (journalists, editors, journalism students, bloggers etc.) avoid any ethical mistakes and adhere to professional media reporting standards outlined in the Press and Online Media Code of Bosnia and Herzegovina, within the Action objectives. Self-regulation toolkit consists of Ethical Guidelines and Ethical Checklist. By using this quick and simple tool, regardless of their reporting location and reducing the need for consultations with editors-in-chief, journalists will be able to eliminate potential ethical doubts, protect themselves from potential inconvenience, and avoid potential defamation lawsuits.

SCOPE OF WORK

The developer will be asked to carry out following tasks:

- Designing and developing Android and iOS Mobile phone applications.
- Developing software requirements specification and documenting the development procedures, data flow diagram and others.
- Providing the application to run in any screen resolution.
- Developing test case design for conduct testing.
- Ensuring good loading speed, for users not waiting too long.
- Update the mobile app to be compatible with new version of the OS of Android and iOS.
- Regular Maintenance and support by the end of Action.
- Upload it on Google Play store and Apple store and bear all fees and cost of uploading.
- Regular Data backup for the mobile application.

The engagement will last 60 days, starting from the notice received that the Self-regulation Toolkit has been developed. Period of 45 days will be dedicated for the development, while test phase will last 15 days. Web developer will work in close collaboration with the project partners and Experts engaged for the development of the Self-regulation Toolkit.



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Qualifications and skills:

General professional experience:

- ✓ At least 5 years of experience in the field of web and mobile phone application development.

Specific requirements:

- ✓ Proficiency in web and mobile phone application development, with minimum of 5 projects completed in this field.
- ✓ Familiarity and relevant experience in using different Content Management Systems (CMS), particularly WordPress, with minimum of 5 projects completed or 5 years of experience.
- ✓ Demonstrate the ability to create innovative and visually appealing design, with minimum of 5 projects expressing the application of latest technologies.

Open positions

1 (one)

Workplace

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Note:

All the documents produced must satisfy European Union visibility requirements including European Union logo, information on funding as well as disclaimers.

Selection criteria:

The applicant companies or individuals are required to provide their CV and portfolio. The evaluation will be made based on the prior experience and quality of portfolio.

The applications need to be submitted by email: info@vzs.ba, or directly to Press and Online Media Council in BiH, Trampina 8, Sarajevo, no later than 1 August, 2024.