



Creative & Public Relations (PR) Agency

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

CGIAR System Organization

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1. Introduction and Background:

The CGIAR System Organization seeks proposals from qualified global creative and PR agencies to support communication initiatives that drive fundraising, public awareness, and stakeholder engagement. The selected agency will work on campaigns across multiple regions, including Europe, North America, Australasia, and over 100 countries in the Global South. The duration of this agreement will be for two years with a possible extension of one year.

CGIAR is a global research partnership whose mission is to deliver science and innovation to advance the transformation of food, land, and water systems in a climate crisis. CGIAR envisions a world with sustainable and resilient food, land and water systems that deliver diverse, healthy, safe, sufficient and affordable diets and ensures improved livelihoods and greater social equality within planetary and regional environmental boundaries. Its research is carried out by independent CGIAR Centers in close collaboration with hundreds of partners, including national and regional research institutes, civil society organizations, academia, development organizations and the private sector.

2. Scope of Work

The creative and PR agency will support communications activities of different sizes with different objectives. From resource mobilization campaigns in funding countries (Europe, North America, Australasia) to behavior change campaigns in beneficiary countries in over 100 countries in the Global South targeting smallholder farmers, food producers, national and regional policymakers and private sector companies.

CGIAR is looking for an agency to deliver the following services:

Creative Development, Branding, Copywriting and Storytelling

- Develop brand and messaging guidelines.
- Develop tone of voice and style guides
- Design compelling visual and multimedia content, including graphics, videos, animations, and reports in line with branding guidelines.
- Develop communication toolkits and guidelines for internal and external use.
- Training sessions and communication toolkits for CGIAR staff and partners.
- Copy writing
- Production of reports and knowledge products – for print and digital
- Multimedia content production both print and online (incl graphic design, infographics, animation)
- Design and production of brochures and flyers (end to end)
- Develop key messaging frameworks and storytelling approaches.

- Craft engaging narratives that highlight CGIAR's impact and innovations.
- Collaborate with CGIAR's centers and partners to ensure cohesive messaging.

Campaign Development

- Audience Insight
- Campaign Strategy and implementation plan
- Evaluation plan
- Media performance reports and optimization strategies.
- Digital engagement reports with insights and recommendations.
- Develop and execute integrated and target communication campaigns for CGIAR's campaigns and programs: social media and email marketing campaigns
- Enhance CGIAR's digital presence through content creation, community engagement, and influencer partnerships.
- Develop data-driven external engagement strategies to increase audience interaction.

Web Development

- Development of web content
- Development of web modules for cgiar.org (Aquia Website Factory /Drupal)
- Development of web integrations with CGIAR databases

Events, PR and public affairs

- Secure interviews with international, regional and national media (online and traditional including radio, podcast, TV, etc)
- Write PR briefs, TPs, media briefings, speechwriting
- Organize press conference, roundtables
- Meetings, Visits and Events support (logistics, concept note development, invitations, briefings documents, presentations, talking points and promotion pre/post event)
- Provide creative direction and content development for major CGIAR events and initiatives.
- Develop key institutional documents and targeted documents (specifically for funders: investment case, bespoke market briefs, impact communications)

3. Deliverables

Specific deliverables will be determined for each project/campaign on a project brief. Deliverables will be aligned to the scope of this framework agreement including the below as applicable.

- Campaigns
- Bi monthly/monthly PR and media outreach reports

- Quarterly performance review reports
- Regular creative content updates (e.g. videos, infographics, digital assets etc)

4. Qualifications and Experience

CGIAR is looking for a firm with the following experience and capabilities:

- a global network partners, country offices, desks or consultants that can be activated globally. CGIAR is looking for a firm with capabilities in:
 - our key donor markets (existing and potential): US, Europe (UK, Belgium, France, Germany, Scandinavia), Asia (Japan, China, Korea), the Gulf.
 - our key country of operations – including countries where CGIAR Research Centers have headquarters
- a diverse and global workforce
- experience working with communications platforms used at CGIAR (Sprout Social, Canva, PhotoShelter, Meltwater, Splash, Salesforce, Aquia, PowerBi, etc)
- proven experience with international non-profit organizations
- experience in international development
- experience with large fundraising campaigns including key documents like investment case
- experience with large and small behavior change campaigns in the global south

5. Project timeline

Timelines or key milestones and deadlines will be defined as part of each project briefing.

6. Performance Measurement and Review:

In this section of the Request for Proposal (RFP), we delineate the framework for performance measurement and review for the prospective firm. It is imperative that prospective Firms meticulously review the outlined performance structure and KPIs, as adherence to these will be mandatory in the execution of the project.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

1. Performance Measurement

1.1. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- Quality of Work: The agency's work will be assessed based on the submitted deliverables' accuracy, completeness, and quality.
- Timeliness: The agency will be evaluated on their ability to meet deadlines and milestones as outlined in the timeline.
- Client Satisfaction: Feedback from project stakeholders and team members regarding the agency's professionalism and effectiveness.
- Adherence to Budget: The agency's ability to stay within the allocated budget for the project.
- Activities Performance: When the agency delivers campaigns, the outcomes of the communications activities will be evaluated.

Performance Evaluation and Review

Performance evaluation is a fundamental aspect of ensuring this project's success and timely completion. The outlined Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will serve as the backbone for this continuous evaluation process, ensuring the Firm's alignment with the project's goals and expectations. The comprehensive and structured performance evaluation process, built on stakeholder feedback, project progress reports, and reviews, will ensure the constant alignment of the Firm's performance with the project's objectives.

Evaluation Methodology:

Stakeholder Feedback: The agency's performance will be subject to evaluation by pertinent project stakeholders. Their insights and perspectives will offer a comprehensive view of the agency's adherence to the defined KPIs, contributing to a well-rounded assessment.

Project Progress Reports: Regular project progress reports will be an essential tool for assessing the KPIs. These reports should detail the agency's accomplishments, challenges, and adherence to the project schedule and budget.

Review Process:

The performance of the agency will be evaluated at two levels:

- At the framework agreement level: with quarterly reports prepared by the agency with aggregated metrics from all projects delivered with the previous quarter and from the beginning of the contract. An evaluation of the account management should also be included.
- At project level: following the completion of each project, a short performance report, when appropriate, should be submitted to the project lead.

The Communications & Outreach team will be responsible for the Framework agreement level review while the project level will be performance reviews will be conducted by the project owner.

All feedback and assessments provided during the review meetings will be formally documented. This documentation will serve as a record for performance assessment and will be referenced in future evaluations and reviews.

The Agency will have the opportunity to respond to the feedback, offering insights into their performance, challenges faced, and the strategies employed for issue resolution and project advancement. A collaborative approach will be adopted to identify areas of improvement and the necessary steps to enhance performance in subsequent processes/phases.

7. Legal Considerations

a) Confidentiality

To ensure information security throughout this RFP process, all information disclosed by CGIAR ("Discloser") and all information submitted by the Agency in response (including technical details, pricing information, and business plans) will be considered confidential. This information can only be used for proposal preparation and cannot be disclosed to any external party without our prior written consent. Exceptions include the Agency's employees or advisors needing the information for proposal development, provided they are bound by confidentiality obligations at least as strict as those outlined here. The Agency must ensure any subcontractors, or third parties involved in the engagement are bound by similar confidentiality obligations. The Agency is responsible for protecting this information with the same care given to their own confidential data and remains liable for any breaches by subcontractors or third parties. CGIAR acknowledges the information's value and the potential harm from a breach, so the Agency's confidentiality obligations extend beyond the proposal deadline and remain in effect for ten years from the RFP date.

By submitting a proposal, the Firm/individual commits to the following:

- a) All information obtained during the engagement with CGIAR will be stored only on CGIAR servers/systems.
- b) None of the information obtained during the engagement with CGIAR shall be shared with any other party for any reason.
- c) The provided access by CGIAR shall only be used for this project and to communicate with CGIAR
- d) Access to Confidential Information will be limited to those of its employees or contractors who have a legitimate need to know such information for the project and who have agreed in writing to be bound by the terms of this NDA.
- e) All reasonable precautions will be taken to prevent the unauthorized disclosure or use of Confidential Information, including but not limited to implementing and maintaining adequate security measures.
- f) Access to CGIAR systems shall only be made from trusted machines with current protection standards.
- g) Access to CGIAR systems shall not be made from any sanctioned country

b) Ownership and Intellectual Property

To ensure clarity and protect CGIAR interests, the selected Agency must acknowledge that all deliverables (reports, analysis, recommendations) become our intellectual property upon full payment. We reserve ownership of any new intellectual property developed during the study, with exceptions for pre-existing, Agency-owned IP requiring a separate licensing agreement. The Agency is responsible for complying with all applicable laws and regulations in the countries where project work occurs, including data privacy, export controls, and labor laws. Additionally, the agency must implement appropriate data security measures and comply with standard clauses regarding termination, dispute resolution, and data security.

c) Other considerations

The Agency is responsible for complying with all applicable laws and regulations in the countries where project work occurs, including data privacy, export controls, and labor laws. Additionally, the agency must implement appropriate data security measures and comply with standard clauses regarding termination, dispute resolution, and data security.

d) Contracting

The Agency should accept the CGIAR System Organization standard terms and conditions of contract in Appendix 1.

If the Agency requires amendment of specific clauses, the agency must submit those contract clauses or the agency's template for our review and consideration. **Please submit it in Word format as a separate document, [along with the agency's confirmation of intent to submit a proposal.**

CGIAR reserves the right to request additional information or clarification regarding the contract clauses or templates during the evaluation process. Submitting suggested clauses or templates does not guarantee that the firm will be awarded the contract. Final contract negotiations will be conducted with the selected agency based on the evaluation results.

e) Conflicts of Interest

To ensure a fair and objective selection process, the Agency guarantees they have no conflicts of interest (financial or otherwise) that could influence their work on this project. They must disclose any potential conflicts immediately, with details and proposed mitigation strategies (like staff recusal or information firewalls). CGIAR has the right to reject proposals with unmanageable conflicts and terminate the agreement for breaches. The Agency is also responsible for ongoing monitoring and disclosure of new conflicts. Any confidential information they share about potential conflicts will be kept confidential by us, except for evaluation or breach-related actions.

f) Payment Terms

The standard payment terms will be net 30 days from the date of invoice receipt. The invoicing schedule may vary based on the approach outlined in the prospective firm's commercial proposal. Agencies have the option to invoice either on the basis of measurable progress throughout the project or upon the submission and subsequent acceptance of final deliverables by CGIAR. This flexibility allows for alignment with the agency's preferred billing structure while ensuring that payments are made in a timely manner following the standard Net 30-day policy.

8. Required Proposal Content:

This RFP document is not intended to limit the Agency's submission content but rather to provide a framework for CGIAR to evaluate each proposal and determine which submission most closely addresses the needs. Agencies are encouraged to provide any additional information or innovative approaches not specifically outlined in this RFP. Agencies will provide reasonable additional information upon request by CGIAR.

a) Technical Proposal Structure

- Company profile and how your agency differentiates itself
- Company leadership and day-to-day account staff
- Your approach to service delivery (projects, campaigns, etc)
- Portfolio with case studies (Fundraising & behavior change Campaigns)
- Client References (at least two references)
- Account management procedures and how your agency balances strategic and tactical duties, including who will provide strategic leadership and who the main point of contact will be
- Your agency's billing and reconciliation processes
- Conflict of Interest Declaration –identifying any client or issue that might pose a conflict of interest with CGIAR
- Annexes (for any additional information)

b) Commercial Proposal

- Proposed costs should be presented in US\$ in a separate document from the technical proposal. The agency should provide a rate structure, pricing model (retainer, project based or hybrid) including (but not limited to) the cost breakdown for professional services, hourly rates, etc.
- Document any assumptions, dependencies or exclusions.

Identification of any project element to be subcontracted (if any), showing number of subcontractor hours and their hourly rates.

9. Proposal Evaluation Criteria and Process

The purpose of this section is to outline the evaluation criteria and process that will be used to assess and select the most qualified agency.

CGIAR will evaluate the responses based on multiple criteria and will select the best overall solution to fit its needs. CGIAR is not obligated to select the lowest price bidder. All responses will be evaluated in the following areas:

Criteria	Weight (100)
Company profile including global outreach	5
Relevant Experience & case studies	20
Creativity and Strategic approach including project management & reporting	25
Demonstration of resources and skillsets required globally	10
References and other Certification Credentials.	10
Cost competitiveness (as a separate file)	30

a) Other considerations:

In the selection of the ideal agency, a comprehensive evaluation will be conducted. As a global organization, CGIAR is agnostic to the location of the Consultants that participate in delivering the scope of work outlined in this RFP; however, flexibility in consideration of CGIAR's global stakeholders and constituents is necessary, and any challenges should be addressed in the proposal.

Proposal Alignment:

Expectation: The Agency's proposal should be clear, concise, and directly aligned with our specific requirements.

Experience:

Industry Experience: Relevance of case studies to the requirements of CGIAR. Please include at least two: one for a fundraising activity and one for a behavior change campaigns in the non-for-profit sector.

Communications Products: please provide examples of key communications products you have delivered.

Reputation and References:

Client References: Please provide feedback from other clients or contact details for CGIAR to gather feedback on the agency's experience.

Project Management and Communication:

Project Management Approach: Please include an example of how account management will work.

Performance and progress report: Please include templates of what a regular campaign performance and evaluation report will contain.

Contractual and Legal Compliance:

Expectation: Assurance that the Firm comprehensively complies with all legal requirements and offers a transparent, fair contract that safeguards our interests.

Data Security and Privacy:

Expectation: Confirmation that the Firm adheres to industry best practices for data security and privacy, ensuring the utmost protection of sensitive information.

Cost and Budget:

Cost Structure: Please include the pricing model, including upfront costs, retainer fees, and any hidden charges. All costs should be in USD.

Competitive Pricing: Please develop a dynamic rate card per market as opposed to a global rate card as to remain competitive with local firms. The rate card can be either resource-based, deliverable-based or a mix of both.

Timeline and Deliverables:

Project Timeline:

Expectation: Presentation of a realistic yet flexible project timeline, ensuring the timely completion of deliverables without compromising quality.

Deliverables:

Expectation: Explicit definition of the scope of work and anticipated deliverables, ensuring they robustly align with CGIAR's requirements.

CGIAR reserves the right to progress with all, one, or multiple activities of a bidder's response based on its performance against the evaluation criteria.

b) Evaluation Process

The evaluation will be conducted based on the criteria outlined in this RFP. The RFP timeline may be modified if needed to benefit the RFP results while keeping interested parties well informed.

Evaluation Panel: An evaluation panel will be established to review and evaluate all proposals received. The panel will consist of representatives from CGIAR's relevant departments. The panel members will be selected based on their expertise and experience relevant to the RFP.

Evaluation Criteria: The panel will evaluate each Firm's technical capabilities, including team composition, proposed approach and methodology, references, and cost.

Evaluation Process: The evaluation process will consist of the following steps:

Proposal review: The panel will review all qualified proposals, assessing them against the evaluation criteria outlined in this RFP.

Evaluation and Scoring: The evaluation panel will evaluate each shortlisted Firm's proposal and presentation based on evaluation criteria. The scoring system listed below will be used to ensure consistency and objectivity in the evaluation process.

Firm Selection: After completing the evaluation scoring, the panel will recommend the selection of the Firm that best meets the RFP requirements and evaluation criteria.

Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest: All evaluation panel members will be required to sign a Conflict-of-Interest statement and treat all information submitted by participating firms as confidential and used solely for the purpose of Firm selection.

10. Bid Schedule and Dates:

The following schedule includes key milestones and their associated completion dates and is provided primarily for planning purposes. CGIAR System Organization may modify the project timeline at its discretion.

Dates	Milestones
24 March 2025	Issuance of Request for Proposals
1 April 2025	Confirmation of intent to submit a proposal (Template Provided)
2 April 2025	Submit RFP questions or requests for clarification by this date
4 April 2025	Responses to questions provided by CGIAR
14 April 2025	Proposal submission deadline
21 April 2025	Evaluation & finalists' selection
24-25 April 2025	Presentation from Finalist(s) (TBC)
30 April 2025	Final selection & agency notified

11. Communication during RFP period

CGIAR intends to run a fair bidding process where all respondents are given equal opportunity to put forward their best proposal. As such, any material questions asked by bidders will be collated, answered, and shared with all bidders before the RFP closes.

Submit your questions through the email smo-bidding@cgiar.org

12. How to submit a proposal:

Please submit a narrative proposal and a fee proposal as two separate documents to smo-bidding@cgiar.org. Both documents can be attached to the same email.

All proposals must be received no later than 14 April 2025 Paris time. Only electronically submitted proposals will be considered.

Annexes

Annex 1: CGIAR standard terms and conditions of contract

Annex 2: Letter of Intent template

The agency interested in bidding for this framework agreement should register their interest with CGIAR and will receive the following:

- 2025-2030 CGIAR research portfolio
- CGIAR external engagement strategy
- CGIAR brand guidelines