

Request for Proposal: Partnership Grants

Transformative Media Partnership

Closing date for proposal submission: Thursday, 3 February 2023 12pm UK time (GMT)

Background

The UK Prime Minister launched the **Centre for Disaster Protection** ('the Centre') in July 2017. The Centre works to change how the world prepares and pays for disasters. Paying for disasters after they happen is not just slow and political but undignified for those who are the poorest and most vulnerable. We want to move to a system where the finance is there when a crisis hits. This means we need to increase the quality of financing mechanisms and the quantity of crisis finance¹ available to countries to help manage and ultimately reduce risk.

We believe that effective communication is necessary for a more explicit and durable social and political contract on managing disaster risk. Public discourse is key to driving the agenda – and the media plays a critical part in shaping public debate. We want to support informed journalism that cultivates an enabling environment for evidence-based decision making and facilitates a dialogue between citizens, government and the private sector on quality disaster risk finance and where it is needed most.

The Transformative Media Partnership Project

The Centre is inviting organisations interested in communicating and amplifying the issues in the nexus of development, humanitarian, and climate finance to respond to this request for proposals (RfP) to help deliver the Transformative Media Partnership project.

The Transformative Media Partnership project aims to promote better-informed demand on the part of crisis-affected and at risk low- and middle-income countries. The Centre is launching a ten-month journalistic fellowship project to support a cohort of 20-30 storytellers (with a potential to scale to include more journalists through access to materials and training).

The support from the Transformative Media Partnership will consist of a combination of a) individual grants for journalism, b) an accredited training course, c) peer support, and d) mentorship, potentially boosted by e) expanded access to materials, such as webinars. We are also planning to run a parallel research project (See Scope of Work).

¹ Crisis financing refers to funding and financing that promotes and specifically targets prevention, preparedness, and response to crises. It could take the form of: (i) cash flow to recipients (e.g. grants) that could be arranged in advance or agreed in real time; (ii) cash flow to and from recipients via a financial intermediary (e.g. loan or insurance)

The partnership aspires to be transformative and shift power by starting to disrupt the status quo in at least two ways:

- **Transform the story** that treats disasters as surprises and where narratives represent narrow views, Western bias, or are framed in the interests of those holding power (e.g. Granger, 2021; Pointer & Matsiko, 2022)
- **Speak truth to power** by holding national, regional, and international actors and the global crisis finance system to account for decision making, promoting the voices and interests of those most at risk or vulnerable to the impact of disasters.

Ultimately, the project aims to invest in context-specific journalism that drives public demand and improved accountability for inclusive, high-quality disaster risk finance and to nurture a diverse, local talent pipeline. The project's success will be measured through relevant agreed indicators, such as the number of journalists producing published content and completing the training; and the influence of the content supported by the grants.

Scope of Work

The Centre is looking for a partner organisation or a small consortium of organisations ('Partner' from now on) to help design the project, disburse the grants and deliver the accredited training for the fellowship recipients. The Partner's scope may also incorporate researching issues around climate and disaster risk reporting.

Designing and delivering the journalist grant project

The programme will award grants to practicing or emerging journalists from any low- or middle-income country or a small island state, although the Partner is welcome to propose a regional focus. The grants are not restricted to a type of journalism, and the journalists should have complete editorial independence in producing stories, including written, video, audio, data journalism, and photographic entries.

The bidder for this partnership should propose an approach to impact to ensure the grants lead to the publication of work. It could mean that the journalist grant applicants provide a letter of endorsement from a publisher or a media organisation indicating an intention to publish the complete work. It could also entail applicants submitting samples of previous relevant work, and the Centre and the Partner will broker media relationships and support with the publication.

We welcome a broad range of topics focusing on past disasters or preparedness and planning for future disasters, or engagement on the issues related to humanitarian, development, and climate finance, or relevant institutional reform. We expect the journalists to have some experience in covering development, humanitarian, or climate issues and a strong interest in bringing out the finance and economic aspects in their content. We welcome different cross-cutting and intersectional perspectives on topics (e.g., through a gender or conflict lens).

The Partner would be expected to disburse the grants to the selected journalists.

Provision of journalist training, peer support and mentoring

The Partner will provide accredited training to help journalist fellows build expertise and skills in financial reporting or data journalism, especially in finding and analysing data around disaster risk or financing. The training should be aimed at non-financial journalists and thus include numeracy and financial literacy with an overview of critical terms, metrics, and a general understanding of the key institutions and the roles of the public and private sectors in disaster risk finance. Key materials should become a public good to expand the reach of the benefits of the training.

The Partner, together with the Centre, may also incorporate an element of peer support and mentoring access for shortlisted journalists.

Research into media coverage and narratives (optional)

As an optional piece included within the overall budget ceiling, we invite proposals on a research project discussing the reporting of disasters affecting low- and middle-income countries in the global and regional media, particularly from the angle of financial preparedness and planning. The research report could outline the main, alternative, and missing narratives. The research would feed into developing the problem statements for an accompanying research and learning project that will be run in parallel by the Centre.

Grant Duration

This scope of work is expected to commence in March 2023 and run for an initial period of ten months, subject to performance indicators being met.

The work can be delivered from anywhere in the world, but the Partner would be expected to attend regular and ad hoc virtual meetings and at least one in-person meeting (held in the country of the Partner's location).

Budget

The total project budget (including grants) for the period (March – December 2023) is **up to GBP 120,000**.

At least 50% of the available budget must be spent on the journalists grants, with the remaining budget made available for the Partner to support with design and delivery of the programme, grants disbursement, training, and research (optional).

Applicants may request grant-funding for all eligible costs associated with the proposed project, or for a portion of the proposed costs, proposing co-funding of certain elements itself or (subject to ensuring alignment with the Centre's aim) by third party funders. Co-funded elements can include cash or in-kind organisation contributions.

Types of activities and costs that the Centre can support **exclude**:

- Costs incurred outside of the grant award period
- Financial profit
- Interest payments
- Costs already funded by other sources

- Projects consisting primarily of management of sub-grants to others
- Politically motivated activities
- Activities that advocate terrorism or violence of any kind.
- Travel costs in any class other than standard or economy

Funding of procurement of assets will be considered on a case-by case basis. Specialist, project specific assets integrally required for delivery the proposed activity are most likely to be considered eligible. General assets such as standard IT equipment will not usually be considered.

Only costs actually incurred will be eligible for funding. All cost items must be supported by evidence (receipts or other documentary proofs) in Partner's financial reports.

Requirements

We are looking for a partnership with demonstrable links to journalists in the Global South with the technical expertise, networks, and ability to provide accredited journalist training. The Partner can be a small consortium to help meet these requirements.

We are looking for partners with demonstrable ability to:

- Design and deliver journalist fellowship programmes
- Leverage its regional footprint serving low or middle-income countries or small island states
- Bring strong networks in media development in the countries of focus
- Deliver accredited training in financial journalism
- Disburse and manage small grants to individual journalists
- Conduct media research (optional)

All applicants must meet the following minimum eligibility criteria to apply. If you apply in a consortium, this includes applicants who will be receiving funds through a lead partner:

- Be legally registered in country of establishment
- Be non-governmental **and** not-for-profit
- Have strong financial accounting systems, including the ability to manage external funds
- Have at least one annual audit report
- Have experience in the key thematic and/or geographical areas addressed by this call or be able to demonstrate outreach capacity to operate in the area independently or with partners.

Please note, any grant award will be subject to successfully passing required vetting and due diligence checks, compliance with the terms of a grant agreement with the Centre's managing agent DAI Global UK Ltd., and adherence to DAI and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) codes of conduct. Further details on these processes will be provided to shortlisted organisations, and where appropriate, advice and assistance may be provided by DAI in demonstrating eligibility under these terms and codes.

We are happy to discuss the above with interested applicants and make exceptions to the above requirements and help develop the capacity of applicants who show particular strengths, innovation, and commitment to the Centre's values of impartiality, quality, creativity, and challenge. The partnership should foster two-way knowledge transfer and learning with



opportunities built into the contract for the Centre to have its capacity built around funding journalism in disaster affected countries.

Value for Money

The Centre is required to ensure that value for money is considered carefully in all funding decisions. All grant applications – including overall and individual cost elements and additional resource mobilised or leveraged – will be assessed on a value for money lens that considers equity, economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and impact.

Intellectual Property (IP)

Ownership of background IP brought by Partner to an assignment will ordinarily remain with that Partner. Ownership of any foreground and new Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) arising out of the performance of project will be discussed in detail in the context of grant award.

However, the Centre and DAI shall at minimum be awarded licence to use all foreground IP arising from activities and projects funded with contributions from the Centre (and any background IP only to the extent this is needed to make use of the foreground IP) in the form of a perpetual, irrevocable licence to use, sub-licence or commercially exploit such IPRs in the delivery of its mission and likewise provide licence to the Centre's funder, the UK FCDO, for the same rights.

Where the Centre contributes IP, the Partner will be provided with right to use such IPRs and other Centre IPRs to the extent needed to perform their obligations under this project.

How to Apply

The grant will be contracted by DAI Global UK, who are the Centre's managing agent.

Interested organisations should apply by 12pm UK time, Thursday, 3 February 2023 by sending the following to jobs_centre@disasterprotection.org:

- Proposal (guidance available Annex B)
- Partner Information Form (Annex A)

Bid submissions should be clearly marked with the following e-mail subject line:

Grant RfP: Transformative Media Partnership

Any questions for clarifications can be submitted in writing (by email) to the above address before 3rd February 2023. Anonymised questions and answers will be posted on *Contracts Finder* – link: <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/>

Assessment, Selection and Award

- The Centre will review proposals following the close of the window for applications on **3rd February 2023**.
- The Centre will aim to confirm to applicants whether the applications has been shortlisted for further discussion, or cannot be supported, no later than 3 weeks after the close of the window for applications

- The Centre (with its managing agent) will enter into further discussion with shortlisted applicants to discuss any questions around technical scope, delivery concerns, costs and payments, share and discuss grant award contractual terms and conditions, and commence due diligence and vetting checks in lines with UK Aid and DAI policies.

For the avoidance of doubt, shortlisting and subsequent discussion will in no way indicate final approval of award of funding and will remain exploratory in nature until a final grant agreement is concluded by both parties.

The Centre and DAI reserve the right to make amendments to this RfP process, to withdraw the opportunity, and/or to choose to make no award as a result of this process.

Annexes

- Annex A – Partner Information Form
- Annex B – Proposal Outline and Guidance

Relevant Sources

- Granger, J. (2021) 'Decolonising journalism: what does it mean, why does it matter and where do you start?' 08/09/2021 *journalism.co.uk* available at <https://www.journalism.co.uk/news/decolonising-journalism-what-does-it-mean-and-where-do-you-start-/s2/a856450/>, accessed on 23/12/2022
- Ingram, M. (2019) 'How foundation funding changes the way journalism gets done' 1/2/2019 *Columbia Journalism Review*, available at <https://www.cjr.org/analysis/foundation-funding-journalism.php>, accessed on 23/12/2022
- Leake, M. (2020) "'Journalism is not for journalists. It's for citizens, and we should have citizens in our minds at every point of what we do'" 30/10/2020 *Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism*, available at <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/news/journalism-not-journalists-its-citizens-and-we-should-have-citizens-our-minds-every-point-what>, accessed on 23/12/2022
- Pointer R., Matsiko S. (2022) 'Climate Change in Africa Are Africans sleepwalking to disaster? Analysis of the conversations, stories and resulting narratives on climate in Africa', *Africa No Filter* available at <https://africanofilter.org/our-research/climate-change-in-africa-is-africa-sleepwalking-to-disaster>, accessed on 23/12/2022