

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST:

CREATION OF A SECURE DIGITAL TOOL FOR HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING AND DOCUMENTATION

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF EOI

22 June 2020

AIM

This project seeks to enable human rights defenders and others working in restrictive environments, often with little or no ability to document, collaborate or share information in person, to:

- contribute digitally to the collection and collation of information and knowledge about the overall human rights situation in their country
- identify how the violations they identify may help measure progress toward implementing UN recommendations and government commitments made through the State's most recent Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

It also aims to provide a tool to groups supporting these grassroots defenders to:

- better synthesize existing information about human rights violations
- identify and seek to fill gaps in information about human rights violations
- make inferences about the scope, extent, and severity about violations, and identify trends
- incorporate these findings into international advocacy campaigns and reports

TO APPLY

Expressions of interest should include:

- Work experience/CV (1 page)
- Proposed solution (1-2 pages)
- Budget and timeline (1 page)

Please send EOI packet to TASapplications@protonmail.ch by **22 June 2020**. Please note that the content of your email and attached documents are encrypted **only if you send it from a Protonmail account**.

Shortlisted applicants will be contacted in person for further discussion, and a final selection would ideally be made by **mid-July 2020**.

BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

Secure documentation of human rights violations, regardless of context, is a significant challenge. Barriers to successful gathering and classification of material for the purposes of assessing implementation levels of government human rights policies, or for identifying victims and perpetrators, may include:

- Limited awareness of what constitutes a human rights violation
- Lack of technological capacity
- Difficulty confirming authenticity of material
- Censorship and self-censorship, in certain contexts
- Threats against persons involved in data collection

In practice, activists and defenders on the ground regularly share information in a variety of forms (text, image, voice, and video) and on a multitude of pre-existing platforms. In the context of focus for this project, such mediums currently include:

- Social media (Twitter, Weibo, WeChat)
- Blogs and other website posts
- Email, open and encrypted
- Text messaging applications, open and encrypted

While this means that a significant amount of information exists, it poses challenges to the identification, collation and eventual analysis of violations across jurisdictions and over time.

This, in turn, means that advocacy organisations at local, national and international levels are not able to fully take advantage of the information to support their (often qualitative) work with figures, or to show trends over time.

This project proposes to address these documentation and advocacy challenges, and prepare organisations and human rights defenders to use their documentation to follow up on the United Nations' [Universal Periodic Review](#), with an initial focus on the 2018 review of the People's Republic of China.

ELEMENTS AND FUNCTIONALITY

ISHR recognises that this tool could, potentially, take many different forms or be a combination of various existing tools. Any EOI should address at minimum how the solution would provide the following requirements or functionality:

- be able to receive information (data) in such a way as to protect the source of the information (e.g., encryption, anonymity, deletion at source)
- be able to receive information from any source (i.e., registration should not be a prerequisite)
- be able to store a variety of different file formats, in multiple languages
- have a user interface in an initial two languages, English and Simplified Chinese

- have a system for categorizing or ‘tagging’ information, based on its origins and based on the typology of rights violation (using the broad categories identified through the UPR)
- be able to connect or link new information, based on its categorization, to an existing set of unique UPR recommendations
- have a means of conducting basic analysis functions, such as an internal search function or cross-referencing system

The below would be ideal, depending on the solution offered:

- be replicable in its structure, for use with different sets of source data (e.g., by being updated with a future set of UPR recommendations for the same country, or by being adapted to respond to the UPR recommendations of a different country)
- be able to provide some degree of verification as to the origin, time, date, location, and credibility of the source
- have a way for trusted staff/‘moderators’ to review and revise data if needed

USERS AND DISTRIBUTION

Approximate profiles of users include:

- *Sources*: They would be providing inputs in the form of data (images, video, text, etc.). Their main concern is whether they can be personally linked to the project, as a source, by external actors.
- *Analysts*: They may also be sources, but in addition, they would be using the tool to analyse or make inferences about the information (e.g., trends, frequency, scope, etc). Their main concern is security of their personal identity (PII).
- *Ghostbusters*: the individual(s) at the heart of the project, who would need to be able to ‘tag’ or categorize different kinds of data, as well as access information about the tool’s use. There may be varying levels of access among ghostbusters, or not. Their main concern is to ensure data quality/accessibility and the security of the tool overall.

This tool will be shared primarily via ISHR and partner networks with defenders working in, and in respect of, the country of concern. This may include in-person workshops; webinar-style introductions; and sharing on various forms of social media (public and private).

BUDGET AND TIMEFRAME

Up to **22’000 USD** can be allocated to this project. The anticipated timeframe for delivery is **six months from signing of contract**.

SUSTAINABILITY

This is the initial amount of confirmed funding. As the project progresses, there may be opportunities to expand the scope and increase outputs of the project. Additional funding has been set aside for testing/piloting; training on the use of the tool; and a limited length of time for maintenance/troubleshooting.