

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN THE 21st CENTURY

Latin
America

Request for proposals for Feasibility Study Freedom of Expression in the 21st Century - Latin America

Terms of Reference

Consultancy for Feasibility Study in Latin America

Specific focus on Guatemala, Bolivia, Colombia and Brazil

Date of Issue: December 23rd, 2021

Deadline: January 20th, 2022

We are seeking a Latin America based independent consultant or group of consultants to develop a feasibility study for a possible new program with a focus on Freedom of Expression in Latin America. Hivos explores to set up a program in Latin America and commissions a feasibility study which aims to 1) Analyze the state of freedom of expression in Latin America -specifically in Guatemala, Bolivia, Colombia and Brazil- and the specific role that critical artists, musicians, filmmakers, and writers play to challenge dominant narratives, attitudes and influence the public debate 2) Map the ecosystem of relevant initiatives, agencies, and funders 3) Recommend possible intervention strategies such as grantmaking, capacity building, research and advocacy etc. 4) Identify young women and afro descendant makers and organizations by minorities and indigenous groups who produce critical audio-visual content.

This feasibility study builds directly on the external evaluation of the R.O.O.M program, which recommends to consider 'R.O.O.M-like' programmes' elsewhere. Interested consultants must submit: a letter of interest; a budget, and a resume indicating their relevant experience in the field

of arts and culture and freedom of expression in Latin America. The format of the Letter of Interest and required type of supporting documents are described in detail under the "How to Apply" section of this Request for Proposals. Shortlisted applicants will be invited for an interview before the selection is completed. If applicants request additional information, Hivos will provide it as soon as possible, but any delay in doing so will not be considered a reason for extending the submission date of your application. Please address all inquiries to azuniga@hivos.org and asteiner@hivos.org

BACKGROUND

What is R.O.O.M.?

The [R.O.O.M. project](#) is built on the premise that free expression is vital to humanity and is the foundation of a free society. Globally, the space for free expression is dwindling. Resistance to this development is being led by young frontrunners: artists, musicians, filmmakers, and writers who are primarily using digital channels to spread their work. Through their audio-visual productions, these young makers question and critically examine dominant narratives in their societies, propose alternatives, and thereby create space for more diverse dialogue, debate and dissent. The program supports individual producers of critical and non-conformist content as well as communities and networks of makers, i.e. creative hubs. Within the project, particular attention is given to young female makers, as the voices of women are often underrepresented in the public sphere, as well as to less privileged and marginalized groups of makers in provincial cities, urban peripheries, and low-income areas. As the stories we hear still disproportionately favor and represent a select few, we focus on lifting up underrepresented or unheard voices. The program is currently active on the African continent. More information can be found in the recently conducted [external evaluation](#).

Who is Hivos?

Hivos is an international development organization guided by humanist values. Together with local partners we aim to contribute to a free, fair and sustainable world. A world in which all citizens – women and men – have equal access to opportunities, rights and resources for development and can participate actively and equally in decision-making processes that determine their lives, their society and their future. Throughout the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Hivos trusts in the creativity and capacity of all people to come up with innovative solutions that improve their situation and that of society in general. Quality, cooperation and innovation are our core values and the keystone to our development and business philosophies.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE CONSULTANCY

Overall Objective

The overall objective of the feasibility study is to provide clear considerations and recommendations to Hivos for setting up a new program in Latin America, specifically in Guatemala, Bolivia, Colombia and Brazil. The study should provide an independent assessment of the current landscape for Freedom of Expression and the need for additional interventions, considering the R.O.O.M model and offering a thorough consideration of the relevance of its approach and recommendations for its adaptation to the Latin American context.

The study should focus on young critical artists, musicians, filmmakers, and writers, who challenge dominant narratives, attitudes and influence the public debate. Specific attention should be given to gender and inclusivity of young women, afro descendant makers and creatives from indigenous populations. We also are particularly interested in the state of affairs of digital platforms and how they are used for critical free expression. How do creatives make use of centralized (or decentralized) digital platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, Spotify, Twitch or OpenSea. What are the opportunities and challenges for example for content ownership.

Proposed deliverables:

- High quality feasibility study report, incorporating desk research as well as interviews with key stakeholders (potential beneficiaries, partners and funders)
 - Gain a swift understanding of the existing work of Hivos and the R.O.O.M and specifically its recent external evaluation, to understand how a new initiative in Latin America could add to and complement this area of work.
 - Analyse positioning alongside other similar and relevant agencies and initiatives – what is the unique value Hivos can bring to critical content creators in Latin America with a new program. Which models, previously implemented by Hivos in Latin America and on the African content, would work and how can we guarantee long term sustainability in the program design.
 - Consult and interview Hivos and key stakeholders to test concepts and assess needs. This would include interview Hivos staff, creative hubs, funders and content creators in several countries in Latin America. Hivos will provide contacts and consultants are encouraged to add theirs.

Produce:

- Clear contextual analysis of the state of freedom of expression in Latin America with a special focus on Guatemala, Bolivia, Colombia and Brazil and the specific role that artists, musicians, filmmakers and digital makers play to challenge dominant narratives, shift perspectives and propose alternatives. Specific attention should be given her towards the criticality of the audio-visual productions. How and in which ways do they challenge

dominant narratives in society and what are the key obstacles. How has the context been changing, what are new critical actors in the field of popular culture? Think also about socially engaged game developers, NFT-artists or social media influencers. We expect the consultant to include a minimum of two examples per country, of how critical content creators have safely and successfully increased their critical influence of their work in difficult social and political contexts of Latin America, keeping an eye on cross-country opportunities, if they arise. Specific attention in the context analysis should be given to:

- Less privileged and marginalized groups of makers in provincial cities, urban peripheries, and low-income areas. Specifically minorities and indigenous populations
 - Gender equality, diversity and inclusion in relation to content creation and audiences
 - The opportunities and challenges of digital transformation, the specific role of digital platforms used by creatives and the digital divide
 - Cultural mobility and exchange between Africa and Latin America, including a specific focus on makers and audiences from the afro descendant and indigenous population in the region.
- A stakeholder analysis of the ecosystem including funders that are supporting the cultural and creative sector. This should include the presentation of minimum ten existing comparable initiatives to R.O.O.M and critical analysis of success factors, challenges, pre-existing criteria and external motivations in Latin America. An analysis of a future positioning of a program within this ecosystem is crucial.
 - Propose clear recommendations for intervention strategies, including activities such as grantmaking, capacity building, linking and learning and areas for research and development that can be used for programme design. We would also expect an indication of the resourcing that would be needed.
 - A list of recommendations for resources, materials, key people and organizations that that could be part of this new program.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested individuals are invited to submit their application by email to rh-latam@hivos.org no later than January 20th, 2022.

Eligibility

Individuals or groups should have a proven track record of at least three years of professional experience in conducting similar studies or other undertakings. They should have in-house skills to provide the expertise needed for conducting this study. Applicants must be aware that the products of this request for proposals will be also shared with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

Selection criteria

- Spanish and Portuguese speakers
- Excellent, accessible English writing skills
- Excellent desk research skills
- Track record and proven experience working in thematic areas as artistic freedom and artistic activism in Latin America.
- Network of key actors working on arts and culture and freedom of expression, including artists, creative hubs and funders
- Ability to quickly familiarize yourself with the latest developments in the larger field of funding and programming
- Affinity for and relevant experience in working at the intersection of arts and culture, technology and social justice
- Training and experience in qualitative research methods and storytelling (journalistic experience and/or experience with incorporating images/photography, icons/symbolic graphics, cartoons will be an asset)
- Ability to work in a (digitally) secure manner with sensitive information about stakeholders in fragile contexts
- Given the current COVID-19 travel restrictions, the consultant must be ideally based in one of the potential target countries in Latin America.

Components of the application

The application should consist of the following components:

1. **Letter of Interest:** This is a letter addressed to Hivos explaining the consultant's interest in developing this study. The letter should not exceed two pages and is expected to contain the following: 1) Overview of the proposed approach/ suggested study methodology 2) A short implementation plan laid out in a timetable that is within the duration of the contract. 3) Relevant experience that qualifies the applicant to carry out the study and information about the consultant (this should include legal incorporation information),
2. **Financial proposal:** This should list a breakdown of the total budget associated with the services in USD. The estimated amount of working days for this consultancy is around 25 days.
3. **Documentation of relevant experience:** Resumes of the lead consultant, and if applicable, the key personnel that will help implement the study. Resumes should establish competence and demonstrate qualifications in areas relevant to the ToR.