



Call for Proposals

The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Freedom of Expression

The Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFoM) is developing the “Spotlight on Artificial Intelligence and Freedom of Expression” #SAIFE project, funded by extra budgetary contributions, to promote a clearer understanding of government, regulators, and internet intermediaries’ policies and practices in their use of artificial intelligence (AI) and other forms of automation, and the impact these have on how citizens access and share information.

The aim of the #SAIFE project is to develop policy recommendations on the most effective ways to safeguard freedom of expression and media pluralism, when deploying AI. In the #SAIFE project, special focus is given to the following areas of concern where technology and freedom of expression intersect: content moderation (especially with regard to security threats or so-called ‘hate speech’), and content curation (specifically the consequences of surveillance and overall impact on media pluralism).

To underpin other activities, deepen outreach and promote all stakeholders’ efforts, the RFoM will fund a limited number of initiatives to put a spotlight on AI and freedom of expression. In this way, RFoM will support powerful initiatives and promote existing knowledge in the field, which directly contribute to the RFoM’s #SAIFE project.

THE CALL FOR PROPOSAL

Funded initiatives must support RFoM's #SAIFE project on the [impact of AI on freedom of expression](#), as well as the overall [mandate](#) to safeguard media freedom and freedom of expression across the 57 OSCE participating States.

RFoM encourages applications on activities that have a gender-responsive approach that is informed by perspectives of intersectionality.

Who can apply?

Independent experts, journalists, academia, and representatives of civil society.

RFoM can only contract and pay independent expert(s) / supplier(s) directly, not an organization. Proposed experts/consultants should be nationals of one of the 57 OSCE participating States; and all activities must take place in one or more of the 57 OSCE participating States.

Applications can be submitted alone or in partnership.

Budget

Proposals should be in the range of 2,000 - 5,000 EUR.

The OSCE undertakes no liability for taxes, duty or other contribution that may be payable on payments made under this Agreement, and recommends to prepare a budget accordingly.

What can be funded?

Activities could include, but are not limited to: development of tools to counter freedom of expression challenges posed by AI; educational and awareness-raising activities; podcasts; documentaries; mini-series; exhibitions; and storytelling.

How shall this contribute to the #SAIFE project?

The initiatives should have a clear result plan that presents how it relates to the overall aim to shed light on policies by states, tech companies and other actors and practices in the development and use of AI and the profound impact they have on freedom of expression and freedom of the media online.

Selection process

Initiatives will be selected through a competitive review process. Selection decisions will be final.

Applicants must demonstrate how their activities address the aims of the #SAIFE project and overall mandate of the RFoM; how they will have impact; and how they integrate gender in their design and implementation.

Applicants should attach to their application terms of reference for the work to be done, a brief profile for the required person(s), and a financial overview. If these activities also benefit from staff and resources from other funders, these budgets shall be separated and the names of the funded shall be stated.

Financial and narrative documentation must be complete and clearly demonstrate that the proposed activities have potential for success and replication across the OSCE region, and can be managed within the time frame and budget proposed. Priority will be given to shorter initiatives that demonstrate sustainability, innovation and value for money. The application should contain one annex only.

Duration and timeframe

Deadline for proposals: 31 October 2020. Applicants will be informed about whether their proposal was accepted within two weeks.

Accepted proposals must be completed by 31 January 2021.

Reporting

Within two weeks following the completion of the activities, the selected expert needs to provide a one-page narrative report on the activities completed and the impact achieved. The report should refer to the main objective of the initiative and summarize its performance, focusing on the main achievement and main conclusion. The report should emphasise the initiative's added value to the RFoM's work and include horizontal issues such as gender equality. The report can also include recommendations and lessons learned, and should include a financial report reflecting the originally provided budget.

One representative of each initiative that receives funding may be invited to present their results at an RFoM event in 2021. (Should these events not take place online, any potential travel costs will be covered by RFoM and should not be included in the budget).

Funding modalities

RFoM will only fund initiatives, which, in their final form, directly and clearly support the objectives and parameters of the #SAIFE project. RFoM reserves the right to amend a proposal in agreement with the applicant before making a commitment to fund it. Final funding modalities will be decided by RFoM after consideration of the activities and budget that have been submitted, and discussion with the successful applicant.

RFoM may use consultancy contracts or direct payments to a service provider.

How to apply

Applications should be sent in English with the subject line “SAIFE – Proposals 2020” to the following e-mail address: AIFreeSpeech@osce.org until 31 October 2020. A timeframe and budget breakdown for the activities must be included in the application form. Each applicant may submit a maximum of two applications.

Please note: applying and submitting supporting documentation in English (including translations) will speed up the selection procedure at all stages.

For further information on the RFoM project, please refer to the [#SAIFE website](#).