

International Research and Exchanges Board – IREX
SERBIA MEDIA ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR A
MEDIA PLAN TO PROMOTE DIGITAL CONVERSION FOR SERBIAN TV.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

USAID's **SERBIA MEDIA ASSISTANCE PROGRAM** is a four year initiative that will be implemented by International Research and Exchanges Board - IREX. The project main goal is to support media in Serbia. The project began on October 1, 2008.

Serbia, along with other countries in Europe, is required to convert terrestrial TV broadcasting from analogue to digital by June, 2015. Serbia wishes to complete this conversion sooner, by April 2012 in order to meet the deadline for digitization recommended by the European Commission to convert to digital transmission at the same time as neighboring countries, Croatia, Hungary, and Romania. The Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Society is the government agency responsible for conversion from analogue to digital broadcasting.

On July 2, 2009, the Government of Serbia adopted the Strategy for Digital Conversion, developed by the Ministry of Telecommunications (attached to this request for proposals). This Strategy provides a roadmap for conversion.

Further, the Ministry of Telecommunications and IREX have commissioned a study on the economic impact of the conversion. While that study is not yet complete, a draft synopsis of findings relevant to this RFP is attached to this request for proposal.

The process of analogue to digital switchover in television broadcasting has been planned as a market oriented process, based on the principles of transparency, non-discrimination, market subsidiary and technical neutrality, with clearly defined objectives and procedures for the existing operators of broadcasting services and programme content providers.

Objectives

To create a media plan in order to identify the best way of informing citizens, broadcasters, equipment manufacturers and other interested parties about the digitalization process in the Republic of Serbia, as well as to create an estimated budget to plan for the potential cost that will be incurred in the media campaign.

Expected Outputs

- Identify means of informing the citizens about the concept, benefits and features of digital television, about the reasons for switchover from analogue to digital broadcasting of television programmes, and the ways it will affect their lives.
- Create a media plan that will utilize all identified means into a focused promotional/informational campaign with segments tailor-made for the various groups that will be the different foci of the campaign.

- Identify other stakeholders, that can support the information campaign, these include equipment manufacturers, advertising agencies, broadcast stations and telecommunications companies..
- Create an estimated budget that will correspond to the activities planned in the Media Plan.
- Identify other public relations efforts that local and national commercial stations may have to take, beyond the general campaign, that stations may find necessary to protect their market share.
- To identify essential details that should be specified in independent campaigns promoting digitization. (For instance promoting the correct digital standard, DVB-2T2.)

Deliverables

Deliverables will consist of the following:

- Creation of a complete situation analysis bearing in mind the goal to be achieved, while identifying audience(s) and specific message(s) to be disseminated.
- Definition of the objective of the promotional campaign through quantifiable and measureable goals, with an outlined promotional strategy and marketing tactics.
- Creation of a complete media list with suggested marketing activities that could be utilized through each.
- Creation of a media plan with estimated budget.
- Definition of a promotion calendar / timeline for the suggested campaign, paying particular attention to determining the various intensities the campaign will need to have at the different cycles.

Notes:

The promotion is to be separated into four cycles: period after the adoption of the Strategy, period during the regional trial simulcast, period just before the National Analogue Switch-off, and period to cover the post-analogue switch off phase.

Deliverables will be in both English and Serbian.

Support

IREX will support the project via financial means research that it has available and consulting expertise (technical assistance) as per the requirements of the evolution of the project.

The Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Society will provide

- A main contact person.
- Appointment of project management team within the Ministry
- Provision of facilities for the consultative roundtables.
- Office space for the hired experts as well as all necessary data relevant for the creation of Media plan.

The project will be supervised by the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Society.

Funds will be spent as per signed contract terms.

Monitoring & Evaluation

The activities will be monitored on a monthly basis, and the report of the monitored activities will be presented to the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Society.

The Project team will be convened every week to monitor the project activities.

Budget

The bidder will propose a budget for this activity based on this RFP.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR BIDDERS

Bidders will submit a proposal to provide International Research & Exchanges Board – IREX/Serbia Media Assistance Program. All bids must be submitted electronically as well as in hardcopy in accordance with the following instructions.

PROPOSAL

The following information should be provided as part of the Contractor's proposal:

- a) A cover letter (which shall be considered an integral part of the Proposal) shall be signed by an individual who is authorized to bind the bidding firm contractually. The signature must indicate the title or position that the individual holds in the firm. An unsigned Proposal shall be rejected. The letter must designate a person with contact details for any communications needed during the bidding review process.
- b) a brief description of your company/organization,
- c) Recommendations if any (not mandatory)
- d) any comments on and/or problems with fulfilling the services as defined in this RFP,
- e) deliverable date,
- f) terms of payment in U.S. Dollars,

Terms of payment and price information should be submitted on a separate sheet of paper and, electronically, in a separate file.

The proposal must be received by the deadline for bid submission. Proposals received after this date will not be evaluated or taken into consideration.

IREX recommends hardcopies to be either hand-carried to the International Research & Exchanges Board – IREX/ Serbia Media Assistance Program Office or to be sent by Post Express to ensure

their arrival before the deadline for the bid submission. Proposals must also be delivered in electronic form, sent via email in MS word with signature pages sent in PDF format.

Attention: Igor Mandic bid@irex.rs
IREX/ Serbia Media Assistance Program
Kralja Petra 54/III
11000 Beograd

KEY ACTION DATES

RFP Distribution: April 15, 2010
Deadline for bid submission, Close of Business May 14, 2010
Award notification to vendor: June 14, 2010

QUESTIONS ON THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

If bidders have questions on this proposal please submit them to Mr. Mandic by April 22, 2010. IREX will collect all questions about the bid and send all answers to everyone who has expressed interest in bidding. Any organizations wishing to bid but not having questions may send their contact details to Mr. Mandic in order to get answers to questions that others have asked.

EVALUATION

The Request for Proposals will be reviewed by a committee consisting of at least one representative from International Research & Exchanges Board – IREX/Serbia Media Assistance Program and at least one from the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Society. The committee reserves the right to seek outside expert opinion on the proposals. The committee may reject any or all bids and may waive any immaterial deviation or defect in a bid. Such a waiver of any immaterial deviation or defect shall in no way modify the RFP documents or excuse the Bidder from full compliance with the RFP specifications, if the contract awarded. The proposals from suppliers for delivery and vendor support of equipment will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Bids will be judged in a two step process: First on the content:

- Compliance with the requirement specifications;
- Qualifications and expertise of organization;
- Delivery timeline.
- Previous experience in working in similar fields.

After ranking on content the committee will consider

- Total Price of the proposal, which must be stated in U.S. Dollars;
- Terms of payment

PRICE

The proposal's price must include all costs associated with support services to be provided.

NOTE: *No costs incurred by the Bidder in preparing and submitting the proposals are reimbursable. All such costs will be at Bidder's expense.*

NOTE: *All prices are to be quoted in U.S. Dollars.*

ERRORS IN THIS RFP

If a Bidder discovers any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, omission, or any other error in this RFP, the Bidder shall immediately notify International Research & Exchanges Board – IREX/ Serbia Media Assistance Program of such error in writing and request clarification or modification of the document.

Modifications will be made by issuance of an addendum to all parties who are participating in the bidding process. Modifications will be given by written notice, without divulging the source of the request.

If the RFP contains an error known to the Bidder, or an error that reasonably should have been known, the Bidder shall bid at its own risk. If the Bidder fails to notify International Research & Exchanges Board – IREX/ Serbia Media Assistance Program of the error prior to the date fixed for submission of bids, and is awarded the contract, the Bidder shall not be entitled to additional compensation or time by reason of the error or its later correction.

LANGUAGE OF PROPOSALS

The proposals, all correspondence and documents related to the proposal must be written in English. Supporting attachments, if any (e.g., organization registration and other statutory certificates) may be in Serbian.

NOTIFICATION UPON SELECTION

Notification of the successful bidder will take place according to the timetable stated under the section *Key Action Dates* in writing delivered to the contact address provided by the Bidder. The successful Bidder will be invited to sign a contract which embodies the terms of the accepted bid with or without technical modifications. The signed contract shall be the controlling document for the procurement.

CONTRACT

The contract for the study will be with International Research & Exchanges Board – IREX/ Serbia Media Assistance Program.

The *Request For Proposal* and the *Vendor Proposal* shall be attachments to the vendor contract to serve as a method of measuring vendor performance.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any confidential information provided to the Contractor by International Research & Exchanges Board – IREX/ Serbia Media Assistance Program or by any other source referred to by or related to International Research & Exchanges Board – IREX/ Serbia Media Assistance Program is to be treated in accordance with confidentiality requirements specified by International Research and Exchanges Board – IREX/ Serbia Media Assistance Program. All proposals received by International Research & Exchanges Board – IREX/ Serbia Media Assistance Program will become the property of International Research & Exchanges Board – IREX/ Serbia Media Assistance Program and will not be returned.