



Call for Proposals

Review of the Human Rights Project Series

Overview

The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), together with its Partners – the Raoul Wallenberg Institute (RWI), the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs, the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China – are organising regular human rights dialogues between civil society and government representatives. These dialogues, which follow the format of a 3-day seminar, are intended to foster discussion and exchange of ideas on the promotion and respect of human rights in all 53 Partners of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM).

Call for Proposals

ASEF is recruiting an independent consultant or organisation to undertake a review of its human rights project series with a view to:

- Assess the results and strengths of the human rights project series so far
- Identify ways to strengthen the future strategy and operation of the project series
- Provide recommendation to improve the impact of the project series and its long-term stability

The review is planned to start in **June 2019** and be finalised by **January 2020**. The final report will be presented at the Informal ASEM Human Rights Seminar Series' Steering Committee meeting in **February 2020** in Singapore.

For details for the scope of the review, please refer to the annex below.

Candidate Requirements

1. Experience in designing and conducting evaluations of international cooperation programmes
2. Graduate qualifications in a relevant field
3. Experience of working for inter-governmental organisations and/or NGOs on international relations or human rights
4. Excellent writing ability with the experience of responding to different audience requirements; experience of report-writing
5. Strong communication and inter-personal skills including tact and cultural sensitivity
6. Fluency in written and spoken English
7. Proactive and flexible; able to work without detailed supervision
8. National from an ASEM country
9. Familiarity with the ASEM Process, human rights in the ASEM context, and Asia-Europe relations would be preferred
10. Ability to partner with a colleague from Asia/Europe would be preferred
11. Knowledge of OECD/DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance would be preferred

Deadline and contact details

Queries, CVs, cover letters and work plan (including quotations) should be emailed to Ms Armi Hannele AARNI (armihannele.aarni@asef.org), Ms Iulia LUMINA (iulia.lumina@asef.org) and CC humanrights.seminar@asef.org. Expressions of interest must be received by 12:00 noon (Singapore time) on **Wednesday, 1 May 2019**.



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Annex I: Review of the Human Rights Project Series

Role: Independent Reviewer/Evaluator(s)

Start date: June 2019

Location: Home based in Europe or Asia, with 1 trip to Singapore as required

Time frame: 6 months

Reporting to: Director/ Project Manager, Governance & Economy Department, Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)

Coordination: Project Manager & Project Officer, Governance & Economy Department, Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)

1. Background

ASEF, together with its Partners, has been organising regular human rights meetings for the ASEM Partners. The aim of this initiative is to promote mutual understanding and co-operation between Europe and Asia in the area of political dialogue, particularly on human rights issues.

After each conference, the main recommendations are sent immediately to the ASEM governments. The outcomes of the discussions are gathered in a publication that may be used by governments and civil society as a reference on the state of play of the debate on human rights in ASEM countries. Since 2014, additional outreach activities have also been conducted to disseminate the outcomes further. Since 2017, an annual training component was implemented with the aim of utilising the human rights meetings' outcomes to train professionals on human rights topics.

2. Review Objectives

The co-organisers would like to review the working methods of the seminar series to learn how its impact can be improved and its outcomes made more effective. An independent review will be carried out in 2019 to assess the seminar series since 2012.

The overall purpose of the exercise will be to:

- Assess the evolution, relevance, impact and effectiveness of the human rights project series (also the effectiveness of ASEF as the secretariat)
- Identify lessons learned and provide recommendations to strengthen the project series' future strategy, operation and long-term sustainability. This includes insights for project series' design and format, including any necessary adjustment of objectives; structures and priorities
- Provide recommendations on strengthening its stakeholder involvement, outreach and impact.

In particular, ASEF and its Partners would like to use the review to assess how the strengths of the seminar series can be harnessed to improve its impact (from preparing high-quality recommendations to putting them into practice). The results will also help the organisers to consider how to best allocate their resources for the project series.

2.1 Review questions

The overall review questions to be answered by the report are the following:



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2.1.1 To assess the evolution, results and effectiveness of the human rights project series thus far

- a) To what extent has the overall strategy of the programme been effective in promoting human rights dialogue between ASEM Partners?
- b) To what extent has the overall strategy of the project series been effective in strengthening cooperation and raising awareness about human rights between ASEM Partners?
- c) Are the existing organisational structures sufficient?
- d) To what extent have the current working methods been effective? How effective has ASEF been as the secretariat?

2.1.2 To identify lessons learned and provide recommendations to strengthen the project series future strategy, operation and long-term sustainability. This includes insights for project design, including any necessary adjustment of objectives; structures and priorities

- a) Given the context in which the project series operates, what are challenges and future concerns that the project series needs to address?
- b) In terms of the tangible outputs (e.g. – background paper, concept paper, key messages, final report, training component), what are their relevance in the project series?
- c) What are the prospects of sustaining the current levels of funding?

2.1.3 Provide recommendations on strengthening its stakeholder involvement, outreach and impact.

- a) To what extent has the human rights project series succeeded in reaching out its targeted audience and stakeholder groups? How to ignite the interest of ASEM Partners to engage actively?
- b) Are the targeted stakeholder groups still relevant? How to address the requirements of new and existing stakeholders and incorporate different interests?
- c) Given the qualitative nature of the programme, what is its impact at the ASEM policy level?

The approach is intended to ensure that the exercise acts as a strategic review enabling ASEF to build on/adjust the human rights project series to ensure its continued and optimal effectiveness.

In assessing progress towards objectives, the evaluator will focus on the outcome areas in which ASEF and its Partners *can reasonably be expected to have positive effects*, i.e. on boosting levels of knowledge, capacity and dialogue within and across, keeping the practical concerns of the operating environment in mind, and also the political constraints and various expectations of ASEM Partners.

In making recommendations for future programming, the evaluator will strive to ensure that the exercise is as beneficial as possible in practical terms by highlighting approaches that have worked well so far and can be built in the future, with the existing resources and capacity.

2.2 Scope

The review will cover the human rights Seminar Series from 2012 – 2017.



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3. Existing information sources

- Programme documentation (internal project reports, participant feedback forms, etc.)
- ASEF Website and ASEMInfoboard
- Media monitoring and ASEM documents
- Minutes of preparatory meetings/Steering Committee meetings

4. Methodology

In keeping with the focus on lesson-learning and practical recommendations for improvements, this review will require an emphasis of qualitative methodology. While quantitative information will be relevant in assessing some measures of result and impacts, the sensitive and complex nature of the human rights project series will benefit from qualitative evaluation of its current position and future strategy.

The ideal methodology will be one that is logically structured while also providing some flexibility for the context of the project series' structure and evolution.

A detailed methodology for the review will be proposed by the evaluator and finalised in consultation and agreement with ASEF. The methods likely to be used by the evaluator include:

- Document review: human rights project documents, feedback forms, publications and internal/external reports
- Interviews of selected ASEF staff, partner organisation and Steering Committee members
- Interviews of relevant consultants (e.g. - researchers, moderators, host Partners) contributing to the project
- Interviews with key stakeholders – participants and target groups (e.g., ASEM Contact Points)

(Interviews can be via skype/email/phone/in-person; a survey could be done before-hand before short- listing interview candidates.)

5. Timeline

- Wednesday, **1 May 2019**, 12:00 noon, Singapore time: application deadline
- Early **June 2019**: Consultant hired. Elaboration of detailed methodology and work plan for the review, in close consultation with ASEF
- **June - September 2019**: document review, interviews and gathering of quantitative and qualitative information
- **October 2019**: Submission of the first draft of the report. Feedback on the draft.
- **October - December 2019**: Evaluator to revise upon the draft based on feedback from ASEF and its Partners
- **January 2020**: Report finalisation
- **February 2020**: Presentation of the Final Report at the Steering Committee meeting in Singapore.



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6. Logistics & Procedures

ASEF will provide existing documentation to the evaluator as well as facilitate contacts with stakeholders. Detailed work-plan including Singapore travel and review meetings will be set up with the evaluator.

7. Outputs

Review report –first draft to be delivered **early October 2019**.

Response by ASEF and its Partners to the review before **end November 2019**.

Review report – final version to be presented by **January 2020**.

8. Reporting and contracting arrangements

ASEF is commissioning the review and will contract the evaluator and coordinate with all relevant stakeholders.

9. Confidentiality

The review is confidential and sharing with a third party is forbidden. ASEF will retain full copyright to the review, its findings, data and the report.

10. Time required

It is expected that the review will require up to 50 days work over the months of June - December, including one trip to Singapore (included in fee).