

# Terms of Reference for Consulting Intern in Middle East region

May 2023

## 1. BACKGROUND

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) is a Quaker organization that promotes lasting peace with justice, as a practical expression of faith in action. Drawing on continuing spiritual insights and working with people of many backgrounds, we nurture the seeds of change and respect for human life that transform social relations and systems.

AFSC is conducting a global research project on 'Digital security across global contexts'. The project is responding to targeted networks of activists and journalists, and grassroots CSOs reporting on human rights abuses and deteriorating political conditions in risky contexts across the globe. Digital security measures vary greatly across contexts, and whilst there are tools and trainings that exist, they are not accessible and adaptable to various needs and contexts.

## 2. PURPOSE

This document provides terms of reference for a consultancy. American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) wish to contract an intern for the Middle East region to support a global research project assessing digital security across contexts and the impact of digital authoritarianism on civil society.

The aim of the research is to map ways organisations are responding to digital communication safety and identify gaps and shortcomings across regional contexts.

Objectives of the research:

1. Map out the organisations that work in digital communication in different regions.
2. Assess the gaps in digital communication across different regions
3. Identify challenges, safety, security and impact of civil society and human rights defenders across different regions surrounding digital communication.
4. Articulate emerging issues and concerns of digital communication.
5. Inform the agenda for in-person convening.

## 3. THE ASSIGNMENT

AFSC intends to engage current students undertaking related studies, for a 3-month long internship to produce a regional analysis of digital security. This will be a desk research project.

The research will include:

1. A concise and detailed literature review on this topic of digital safety and security over last 5 years
2. Key recent examples of how civil society actors have been targeted in relation to digital security and safety
3. Key regional challenges related to this topic area

4. Governments or state authorities respecting or challenging cyber laws or international conventions
5. National and international organisations and networks currently responding to this topic and in what ways
6. Current tools, trainings, resources, or strategies are available across the region to protect the safe transfer of information
7. How these tools are being accessed or not.

#### **4. DELIVERABLES**

- The consulting intern will organize and summarise resources and references in a short overview of initial findings. An assigned regional mentor will support to establish the direction of the regional report
- A 5000-word ~ 10-page regional report, summarizing research findings (this can be produced in any language). The report and findings will remain internal to AFSC.

#### **5. APPROACH**

- The consulting intern will work closely with assigned AFSC member(s) of staff as a key focal point person throughout the research work for co-ordination, and a regional staff member for mentoring and support.
- AFSC will provide an orientation with the interns to guarantee confidentiality, familiarity with Quaker values, and an overview of research approaches and methods, as well as share expectations of the internship.
- The consulting intern must produce original work and any attempts of plagiarism will result in the termination of the internship.

## 6. TIMELINE (FLEXIBLE)

[illegible]

## **6. EXPENSES AND PAYMENT**

AFSC will pay a stipend fee of \$3500 USD to the contracted consulting intern.

AFSC will pay the fee in three parts:

1. 20% on signing the contract and
2. 40% on completion of initial overview
3. 40% on completion of the final draft to a satisfactory standard.

AFSC will not cover additional expenses such as stationery, materials or IT equipment. This work is expected to be carried out virtually. AFSC will cover translation support.

## **7. CONFIDENTIALITY**

The consulting intern consultant shall agree that all research work and materials provided by or created for AFSC shall remain strictly confidential and the intellectual property of AFSC. The consultant will sign a confidentiality agreement as part of the contract, which will remain on file with AFSC.

## **7. CONSULTING INTERN PROFILE**

The ideal candidate will have:

- Currently enrolled in at least a Masters' degree course and/or PhD candidate in related studies
- Demonstrated experience conducting qualitative research
- Excellent writing skills
- Ability to speak and read English
- Ability to read and write in one of the following languages as a native speaker or fluent: Arabic, English, French, Khmer, Bahasa Indonesian, Burmese
- Willingness to listen, learn and share with other interns and AFSC staff
- Harmony with AFSC's principles and philosophy, including non-violence, belief in the intrinsic worth of every individual and commitment to non-discrimination in all its forms
- Discretion and ability to maintain sensitive information confidentiality and risk awareness.
- It is preferred that the candidate also have an academic support focal point person from their institution.

## **9. APPLICATION SUBMISSION**

To apply, please respond with a current CV/resume and a 1-2 page cover letter outlining your interest in the topic, and how this research will be approached to meet the objectives of the internship. Please attach 1-2 examples of previous work with your application with references.

Individuals are requested to submit their application to **TOR@afsc.org**, with the subject '**Middle East regional Digital Security consulting internship**'. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and interviews will be conducted as such. Any informal enquiries or clarifications on any of the provisions of this ToR are welcomed and should be directed to the email provided.