

BACKGROUND

The National Endowment for Democracy (NED) is a private, nonprofit foundation established in 1983 to strengthen democratic institutions worldwide through support for nongovernmental initiatives. Governed by an independent, nonpartisan board of directors, NED annually awards thousands of grants to civil society organizations advancing democratic values across Africa, Asia, Europe, Eurasia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East.

As NED continues to evolve as an institution, the Endowment seeks to enhance the way it engages and supports its grantees — not only through grant funding, but also through broader institutional support, peer learning, and capacity-building opportunities.

To that end, NED seeks the services of a qualified consultant to conduct research and provide actionable recommendations on how the Endowment can expand and institutionalize value-added grantee engagement strategies. NED holds a plethora of resources beyond its grantmaking funds, which the Endowment believes could significantly benefit grantees if utilized effectively. NED seeks a consultant to assess both grantee needs and interests and NED's non-grantmaking resources, and then make actionable recommendations that capitalize on areas of alignment. The objectives and methodology below outline NED's minimum expectations for this project.

OBJECTIVES

The consultant will conduct research and provide actionable recommendations for how NED can strengthen grantee engagement and deliver value-added support beyond direct grant funding. Both the research and recommendations should be submitted in the form of a final report. The consultant should address, at a minimum, the following questions:

1. What additional support, resources, or relationships do NED grantees need to advance their missions effectively?
2. What are some options for effectively delivering and scaling this support?
3. What opportunities exist for fostering connections and collaboration among NED grantees, and how might NED best facilitate such engagement?

The consultant may propose additional research questions when developing their methodology or during or after data collection as new information comes to light. The consultant is encouraged to propose creative project modifications that they believe will help them determine a set of recommendations for NED's best path forward for

augmenting grantee engagement.

METHODOLOGY

The consultant will propose and implement a research methodology designed to generate actionable, evidence-based recommendations.

At a minimum, the methodology must include both quantitative and qualitative data collected from NED staff, current and former grantees, and representatives of NED's four Core Institutes. Data collection should include semi-structured interviews and may also include focus groups, surveys, document review, or other methods proposed by the consultant.

The consultant is expected to travel to NED's Washington, D.C. headquarters approximately twice: once during the data collection phase and once to present final findings and recommendations. All travel expenses are included in the total consultancy cost outlined in this agreement.

DELIVERABLES

The consultant will produce the following deliverables:

- Inception Report / Methodology Plan – Outlining the proposed research design, data collection methods, and timeline (to be approved by NED before data collection begins).
- Progress Update – A brief written and oral presentation summarizing preliminary findings and a proposed outline for the final report.
- Final Report – A comprehensive report including:
 - Research methodology and rationale;
 - Summary and analysis of all data collected, disaggregated by stakeholder type;
 - Key findings and insights;
 - Actionable recommendations for how NED can provide value-added engagement and support to grantees;
 - Appendices summarizing interview instruments or data tables as relevant.

MILESTONES

The project is expected to take approximately three months, and the consultant may propose reasonable adjustments to this timeline, subject to NED approval, based on data

availability and emerging findings.

Weeks 1-2: Consultant develops and submits proposed research methodology (inception Report) for approval.

Weeks 3-9: Data collection, including at least one in-person visit to NED headquarters. Mid-project written and oral progress update, including proposed final report outline.

Weeks 10-12: Drafting and submission of final report; final in-person presentation of findings and recommendations.

APPROVAL AND ACCEPTANCE

All deliverables, including milestones and the final report, are subject to review and approval by the NED project manager. The project manager may seek input from additional NED staff as appropriate. The consultant is expected to incorporate feedback provided during the review process before deliverables are finalized.