

Request for Proposal: Communications, Marketing & Fundraising

About us

The International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) is a global research institute with offices in North America (Washington, DC), Asia (New Delhi) and Africa (Nairobi and Kampala).

Our research evidence identifies the social contributions of women, girls and marginalized people, and the obstacles preventing them from realizing their full potential. ICRW translates these insights into paths of action that honor human rights and counter systemic injustice, ensuring gender equity and fostering the conditions in which all people can thrive.



ICRW's specialists are social scientists and analysts, all of whom are experts in gender. Driven by our vision of equity for all, we dig into the ways gender shapes societies and the ways people's lives are diminished by power imbalances.

We work with non-profit, government and private sector partners to conduct research, develop and guide strategy and build capacity to promote evidence-based policies, programs and practices.

To learn more about our offices and practices, visit our web pages:

- ICRW U.S. - <https://www.icrw.org/>
- ICRW Asia - <https://www.icrw.org/icrw-asia/>
- ICRW Africa - <https://www.icrw.org/icrw-africa/>
- ICRW Advisors - <https://www.icrw.org/icrw-advisors/>

Mission

Anchored in the principle of human dignity, ICRW advances gender equity, social inclusion and shared prosperity.

Scope of Work

ICRW is seeking a firm(s) to provide strategic guidance, creative content and tactical implementation in (1) marketing & communications and (2) fundraising. Preference is for a firm that can provide both lines of work or can team with another company to fulfill our



needs; however, we will consider all submissions, even if submitting for only one component.

The selected firm(s) will work with ICRW's communications and fundraising staff as we enter our 45th anniversary year. Below are initial elements we envision for each component of work, noting some elements could change once a partner is in place.

Component 1: Communications & Marketing – Anticipated budget: \$120,000
(including expenses). *Proposals accepted for one or both components.*

- **ASSESS, STRATEGIZE, PREPARE:**
 - **Assess current strengths and weaknesses:** Take a close look at how we are communicating through our website, social media, email, events, etc. Identify challenges to overcome and areas for growth.
 - **Develop current and potential audience profiles / personas:** We would like to get a better understanding of our current audiences as well as those we may be missing.
 - **Develop a strategy for increased audience & media engagement:** This should take into account ICRW team insights, trends, gaps, and tactics during the contract period (and beyond). This can be a simplified process (e.g., workshop) with developed plans for implementation.
 - **Provide strategic guidance on relevant website strategy and user experience:** ICRW has a website partner to support on maintenance, hosting, and some design. However, in the strategy development, we would include website in those sessions.
- **IMPLEMENT:**
 - **Develop messaging, collateral, visual assets:** This could include responsive email templates, brochures, case studies, social media assets, video, infographics, etc.
 - **Boost media engagement:** This could be supported through media contacts, pitching, press releases, training of staff, best practices, etc.
 - **Leverage ICRW's 45th anniversary:** With 2021 being ICRW's 45th anniversary, we have an opportunity to build out key moments to increase visibility, communicate ICRW's impact and aspirations and support our overall communications strategy. The anniversary campaign will require a unique suite of marketing materials and products, which could include an anniversary logo, website landing page design support, storytelling, multimedia, etc.



- **Surge support for key strategic opportunities:** Based on the above, and emerging fast-breaking opportunities, provide communications support during key moments, product launches, and/or events.
- **Other support, guidance, and implementation as time and budget allow.**

Component 2: Fundraising – Anticipated budget: \$34,000 (including expenses).
Proposals accepted for one or both components.

ICRW seeks a firm to:

- **ASSESS, STRATEGIZE, PREPARE:**
 - **Assess current strengths and weaknesses:** Take a close look at ICRW's unrestricted fundraising strategy and tactics, in light of current market trends and the state of the sector. Identify and support opportunities for growth.
 - **Develop donor profiles / personas:** We would like to gain a deeper understanding of our current donor base as well as undertake an analysis of potential donors.
 - **Develop strategy for engaging donors:** ICRW has a small, committed base of individual donors. We would like to find ways to better engage them and deepen these relationships to unlock additional dollars as well as reach new audiences who will serve as funding champions for our work.
- **IMPLEMENT:**
 - **Develop messaging and collateral and support outreach to donors:** Help us better communicate with current donors to inspire larger gifts and reach new donors to grow our donor base. Demonstrating impact (return on investment) and telling the story of ICRW are key.
 - **Leverage ICRW's 45th anniversary:** With 2021 being ICRW's 45th anniversary, we have an opportunity to build key moments to support our fundraising strategy. Given the ongoing pandemic, we need creative ways to reach audiences through virtual events, utilizing ICRW's key platforms such as the Champions for Change Awards, as well as content that reaches new audiences, inspiring them to give to ICRW.
 - **Other support, guidance, and implementation as time and budget allow.**

The selected firm(s) will work primarily with staff located in ICRW's Washington, DC office but may also work with staff based at ICRW Asia (Delhi, India) and ICRW Africa (Nairobi, Kenya and Kampala, Uganda) as relevant. The firm(s) should have access to knowledge and



networks relevant to ICRW's work in all priority geographies and possibly would support collateral, asset development, training, etc. for our other offices.

Submissions

ICRW invites firms that wish to bid on the RFP to consider submitting a proposal for one or both components above (Communication & Marketing and/or Fundraising). We encourage firms to team, as needed.

ICRW will review bids with a view to identifying innovative, cost-efficient, impactful approaches that best meet our needs.

What we're looking for in a partner:

- **Partnership, value add & honesty:** We are looking for a partner, not just a vendor – a firm that has deep knowledge and appreciation for the nonprofit sector – particularly in the international development space - and understands the importance of branding in this particular market. We are also looking for a partner who will give us honest feedback when a request will likely not achieve the desired effect or reach the intended audience, provide data or support for a counter argument and give us a path forward to success.
- **Responsiveness & flexibility:** We would like a partner with the ability and commitment to handle both slow-burn project deliverables, as well as those requiring very tight turnaround. Tell us how you will manage this workflow and at what point you would charge fees.
- **Budgetary considerations:** ICRW is exceptionally cost-conscious. In your proposal, please adopt a framework that provides a menu of services and price-points.

Proposal Components

- **About your firm:** Who are you? What are you most passionate about? What makes you stand out among other communications & marketing firms and fundraising shops? What makes you who you are and why do you think you are best suited to work with ICRW?
- **Staff bios:** Tell us about the team that would be working with ICRW, including primary contact.
- **Experience / Portfolio:** What relevant experience do you have working to fulfill the areas noted above? Please provide examples of products / case studies that would be most relevant to your proposed work with ICRW.



- **Diversity, equity and inclusion:** While every organization is working to address diversity and inclusion in the workplace, this is of particular importance to ICRW where we focus on gender equity and social inclusion. Please tell us about your corporate practice and how you integrate an intersectional approach into client services, as well as any internal work you are doing.
- **Project Management:** Tell us your process for managing multiple projects for your clients, including any preferred project management tools. If you elect to bid on both components, tell us how you would manage the multiple dimensions of the work for ICRW.
- **Expectations:** What do you expect from us in terms of timelines, resources and support that will help you do what we need you to do? What fees do you apply, if you do, and at what point do you apply them?
- **Financial proposal:** Submit a separate budget for each area. Please include a breakdown of staff team rates and representative deliverable costs or ranges. ICRW's office are currently closed with all staff working virtually so there is no need to include travel costs.

Timeline

- **Deadline for questions:** Friday, January 8, 2021 at 12pm ET.
- **Responses to questions shared:** Tuesday, January 12, 2021.
- **Proposal deadline:** Wednesday, January 20, 2021 at 10am ET.
- **Virtual interviews/presentations:** Short-listed firms will receive a task to complete prior to a meet-and-greet call/meeting with our team, where you will talk through your idea. Weeks January 25, 2021 and February 1, 2021.
- **Anticipated Start Date:** Mid-February 2021.

Questions & Submission Contact

Questions and proposals should be sent to Joe Shaffner (jshaffner@icrw.org) and Kristin Fack (kfack@icrw.org).