

## ICRW's Communications, Marketing & Fundraising RfP Q&A

### General:

1. Would you consider a deadline of 1/22 for the final proposal, considering the upcoming federal holidays?
  - Given multiple federal holidays, including MLK and Inauguration Day, we will move the deadline to close of business on January 21, 2021.
2. What is the timeline for the scope—the full year?
  - We imagine 1 - 1 ½ years, depending on how quickly we move.
3. Do you have a current strategic plan? Where are you in the process of executing that? Can you send us an institutional strategy showing where you hope to be in, e.g. 5 years' time?
  - We recently underwent a strategic refresh for FY21 - FY23, and will share those materials with the successful firm as part of the discovery process.
4. We don't have offices or any staff globally, though we do work with clients that have a global presence. Would you consider an agency like ours?
  - You will not be disqualified if you do not have a global presence, though it certainly helps to have an understanding of what works globally and how to engage global audiences.
5. Has planning already started on the 45th anniversary? Champions for Change platform, Leadership Council, what has C4C looked like in past, galas.
  - We have done some initial brainstorming but put the work on pause to make this part of the kick-off with the awardee of this contract. We would appreciate the awardee's insights in developing a strong strategy and support with our implementation. Champions for Change have most recently been galas. We would like to engage the Leadership Council more effectively going forward with specific requests to help raise ICRW's visibility.
6. What is the biggest challenge to doing this work?
  - (1) making our work in research engaging to a broader audience (2) we have a number of audiences that splits focus (small donors, large donors, corporate, government, research partners, implementation partners) - though for this contract, we'd like to focus in on more effective targeting, (3) we have small, very busy teams in communications and fundraising, (4) lack of overarching brand story and messaging on ICRW's impact and influence.
7. Also what might be the length of the engagement? When do you project the engagement to conclude?
  - We are flexible on the length of engagement and expect the budget will dictate much of the timeframe. We anticipate the marketing and communications component to last 1 to 1 ½ years (possibly up to two, but within budget). If the fundraising component is awarded separately, we anticipate the smaller budget would likely allow for less than a year of engagement.
8. Is the scope of this work U.S.-focused or is ICRW also interested in communicating with audiences in India, Kenya, Uganda, UK/Europe? Other markets? Can you please clarify the following statement from the RFP: "The firm(s) should have access to knowledge and networks relevant to ICRW's work in all priority geographies..."? Are you specifically looking for teams with existing networks in India, Kenya, and Uganda?

- We engage global audiences, including in those locations. We would like to build those out. It is not essential, though helpful, that the selected partner have an understanding of other regions or know people who could provide extra insights.
9. Regarding the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, is this being celebrated throughout 2021? Or is there a culminating event or time period? We are conscious of starting plans in February.
- We are aware that we would need to start planning with the selected partner soon. We're looking at May-December, or thereabouts. We have some thoughts on what we can do for the 45<sup>th</sup>, but intend to build out a full strategy with the selected firm.
10. The RFP mentions the Champions of Change event as an opportunity to weave in the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. However, it doesn't look like ICRW has honored people with those awards since 2017. When will the Awards event be held and will the Champions of Change awards be the same or similar to what they were 2006-2017?
- We last conferred the Champions for Change Award in 2019. That information can be found here: <https://www.icrw.org/action-for-gender-equity/>. We generally confer these awards every ~2 years. Timing for 2021 will be determined with the selected firm. Given the changing environment due to the pandemic as well as gala fatigue, we very much welcome fresh ideas..
11. How do the Champions of Change awards intersect with the Paula Kantor and Mariam K. Chamberlain awards? Could these also be connected to the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary?
- We have, in the past, included multiple award presentations in the same event. We are open to amping up events this year with highlights of all awardees. We look forward to new thinking.
12. Who would be the direct client contact? Who will be the ICRW decision makers throughout the project life cycle? How will ICRW manage the two project components internally? Is there one point of contact, or will separate people/teams manage each component? How do you envision the selected agency working with ICRW's communications, marketing and development teams? How are Communications, Marketing, PR and Development activities currently conducted and by whom? What is the current scope of each of these programs and are there adequate staff resources available to assist the consulting team and to act upon our recommendations?
- The main contacts will be Joe Shaffner (communications) and Kristin Fack (fundraising), and there is very regular coordination with both under the broader External Relations Group at ICRW (consisting of communications, business development, and fundraising teams). We have small teams at ICRW, and our intent with this contract is to support focusing and aligning efforts that bring more return on investment. The agency(ies) would work directly with both to align messaging and work going forward. There would be some work that might diverge (particularly for communications, the larger component), but a good portion under the 45<sup>th</sup> and collateral would be in coordination with both departments.
  - The communications team has two people in Washington, DC and will have one or two in India during this contract. The fundraising team is one person. Both are supported by a handful of members in the External Relations Group. Collectively, we handle website (with a maintenance and hosting contractor), social media, project deliverables (research teams), traditional media engagement, events, fundraising campaigns, big donor engagement. We do it all and can use support! But we will also be very engaged with the selected partner's efforts.
13. Are you comfortable working with a smaller team or do you prefer a larger agency?
- We could work well with either.

14. Are you able to provide an estimate of anticipated expenses for both components included in this RFP?
  - The breakdown of the budget is on the RFP (\$120,000 for communications and marketing; \$34,000 for fundraising). We would like our collective strategy to determine what the expenses are under the contract (could entail collateral, ad buys, social media toolkit and asset development, videos, event support, etc.), but we are open to further discussing budget and expenses with the finalists in order to better refine the scope.
15. Why is ICRW looking to appoint an agency to assist with communications and fundraising around the 45th anniversary?
  - We see the 45th anniversary year as an opportunity to increase visibility and unrestricted revenue, and realize that we could benefit from fresh ideas and greater bandwidth; however, the work will go beyond the 45th anniversary. There will be other work as noted in the RFP.
16. What are the main objectives for the 45th anniversary campaign - what will success look like?
  - Key indicators would include increased visibility, meeting ambitious unrestricted funding targets, and greater involvement of our community and champions in ICRW's work. Specific metrics will be developed with the selected firm based on the scope of work.
17. Why have you chosen 45 years as an anniversary to celebrate and promote?
  - We see this as an opportunity to raise visibility and unrestricted revenues.
18. Have you done similar anniversary launches/promotions in the past?
  - Yes, we celebrated our [35th](#) and [40th](#) anniversaries with various events and special communications.
19. Are you looking to the 45th anniversary campaign to change the way stakeholders see ICRW in any way?
  - We want to present a fresh strategic framework and more coherent narrative on ICRW's impact and influence in the sector. We would like to see our stakeholders more engaged in our work and energized to put more money and time into supporting us.
20. Will ICRW be doing anything new for its 45th anniversary - e.g. launching a new initiative? Commissioning some new research? What are the "key moments" you mention during the 45th anniversary year?
  - We have some ideas; however, we are looking for the selected firm to help us with the overall strategy and implementation.
21. Why should people be interested in ICRW's 45th anniversary?
  - For staunch supporters, it's a time to celebrate. For those unfamiliar, ICRW has been bringing evidence and uncovering systemic inequities for 45 years - both of which are more important than ever in a time when facts are more important than ever and digging deeper to get to solutions that work in advancing equity. It is an opportunity to raise visibility and engage.
22. What is the timeline for delivery of both projects?
  - We're hoping to begin the contract in February. External facing events for the 45th anniversary would likely run from May-December. See #9 for additional explanation.
23. What are the three achievements ICRW is most proud of from its 45-year history?
  - There are so many achievements that we are proud of. We welcome the opportunity to think this through further with the selected firm. For some of our organizational highlights, please see [Our History](#).
24. Are you able to provide any metrics or weightings as to how proposals will be reviewed?

- See included rubric / criteria for selection.
25. Do you have any preference for the format of the proposal – i.e. written document or PowerPoint presentation?
- We leave this to you in how you would like to present yourselves.
26. Is any event planning and/or execution support anticipated in this scope of work?
- This will be dependent on the proposed contract activities in relation to ICRW's staff skills and bandwidth. We're happy to discuss further with finalists in the second round.
27. Are the two budgets coming from separate funding sources (\$120K Communications and Marketing and \$34K Fundraising)? Is there flexibility in how the funds for this project are allocated, if that's what we propose?
- They are separate budgets and we need to keep some separation given fundraising budget guidelines; however, we recognize the synergies of the fundraising and communications work and that there will be overlap.
28. What is meant by "intersectional approach into client services"?
- This has to do with diversity, equity & inclusion (DEI). How do you walk the talk in your own commitment to DEI? Both internal and external commitments to DEI are important to ICRW, and we prefer partners who are as committed as we are. We invite you to share more about your own DEI practices and commitments.
29. For the assessment/discovery phase, how many stakeholders (internal management, Board members, partners, donors, etc.) would we have access to for interviews?
- We would be happy to provide access to interviews, particularly to staff and Board members who lead our Communications and Development Committees; however, over the last year and a half, we have undertaken stakeholder and donor interviews, so we would like to be very strategic in how we ask for individuals' time and would be happy to share what we have learned in our own interviews.
30. How many firms is ICRW hoping to solicit proposals from for its review?
- We have received a great deal of interest, so we anticipate a competitive process. The decision will be made by several team members based on the criteria noted in the RFP. Number submitting remains to be seen. Those short-listed for phase 2 will be notified of how many are short-listed.
31. Does ICRW currently have a working relationship with an outside firm(s), and will they be submitting a proposal?
- This is an open call for proposals. We do not currently have a contract with a marketing/communications and/or fundraising firm.
32. Which organization(s) do you regard as your competitive set? Which organization(s) do you regard as your aspirational peers?
- See response to Question 25 in the Fundraising section. This response should give some indication of who our peers are without assigning much weight to them.

## **Fundraising:**

1. What is your annual unrestricted revenue?
  - Approximately \$250K-400K depending on the year.
2. What is the breakdown of your revenue (individuals, corporate support, special events)?
  - Board Emeriti/ Leadership Council     \$14,825
  - Board of Directors                             \$63,128

- Event for #AnacostiaConnected \$34,868
  - Individuals, Corporations, & Fdns \$130,296
  - Workplace Giving \$10,149
  - TOTAL \$253,265
3. Your annual report shows income of \$10-12 million, with US government and foundations as the main sources.
    - Government grants and other foundations who provide restricted project funding make up the majority of that figure and are not included in our unrestricted fundraising figures.
  4. Do you have a fundraising target \$ – and what is the timeframe you would like to achieve this by?
    - We hope to set specific measurable targets in partnership as the scope of work is further defined based on our fundraising history while also setting stretch targets given the additional investment made in this scope of work.
  5. What does success look like for fundraising?
    - Success means utilizing a focused strategy to reach new audiences with inspiring content and generating new gifts to ICRW as well as engaging existing donors in new and meaningful ways to increase their gift size and deepen their involvement and interest in ICRW. As above, we'd like to develop hard metrics with the selected firm.
  6. Based on the most recent annual report, it appears that approximately \$200k is raised annually from individuals. Is that correct, and, if so, what are the median and mean gifts?
    - For our most recent fiscal year (ending 9/30/20, more recent than the annual report), it was approximately \$253K. The mean gift size was approximately \$880 and the median approximately \$100.
  7. How are gifts from individuals currently solicited (e.g. direct mail or e-appeals, individualized asks, etc.)?
    - We primarily focus on individual asks made by our President and e-appeals. In some years, we also hold events specifically for fundraising.
  8. Does ICRW currently use any fundraising software or platforms, like Raiser's Edge? How do you track past donors and donor contact information? If so, could you let us know what it is, and if you would expect agency support to include utilizing ICRW's subscription, for example to log-in and pull data reports, etc.? How well is it utilized, and how active many records are there?
    - We currently use Salesforce to track donations. Additionally, we use a platform called EveryAction to send out e-blasts and collect online donations. We would be open to providing access to these.
  9. How well is your CRM utilized, and how many active records are there?
    - Salesforce is used to track income, categorize funding, and track acknowledgments and correspondence throughout the year. We do see the benefit of increasing our usage. We do not currently have a dedicated Salesforce administrator. See #11 for a breakdown of active donors.
  10. What email system do you use?
    - EveryAction
  11. How many existing donors are in your database? How big is your existing donor file? Roughly how many donors are in the small, committed base mentioned in the RFP?
    - We receive about 225 donations a year, excluding event income but including multiple gifts from the same individual, including recurring monthly donations. Of those, about 130 are unique individuals (that figure excludes workplace giving from World Bank and Global Impact as well as platforms such as Amazon,

- Pocket Change, etc. as we don't generally have exact data on individuals from those intermediary platforms).
12. What is the breakdown between monthly vs one-time donors?
    - We currently have 4 monthly donors and about 130 unique donors overall from our last fiscal year.
  13. How much is US rooted vs. international? Does each office have it's own donor relations team?
    - ICRW's individual donors are primarily based in the US with a few in the UK. Our unrestricted staff is currently based in the DC office; however, we recently hired a staff member to the Business Development team in our India office who brings great experience in corporate and foundation fundraising.
  14. Do you currently do any peer-to-peer or one-on-one outreach – either to your supporters or donors?
    - One-on-one outreach is primarily done by our President as well as our Manager, Philanthropy. This is generally to extend event invitations, share special updates such as the release of our annual report or a year-end thank you, or to make an ask.
  15. Donor profiles? What are you looking for? You've asked for the development of donor profiles/personas in Component 2 and the development of current/potential audiences profiles/personas in Component 1. Do you currently identify these as two different audiences? If so, what CRM tool are you currently using to differentiate these audiences?
    - There is some overlap between the two; however, there are some audiences we communicate with who might fall more under the category of peer who draws on our research but doesn't necessarily give to ICRW.
  16. For fundraising opportunities, you've mentioned support, what kind of support are you anticipating to receive from a partner?
    - We welcome insights into how a firm could support us to achieve our goals given the budget.
  17. Will the digital strategies and tactics we provide in the "strategy for engaging donors" deliverable be implemented by the ICRW communications team?
    - Yes, ICRW's communications team along with support they receive through the communications portion of this RFP will provide delivery of digital strategies.
  18. How does the ICRW currently engage with donors online? Do you use email communications or social media to fundraise?
    - We rely on e-blasts as well as our social media to fundraise online with a focus on a calendar year-end campaign that usually includes about 5 emails between Giving Tuesday and December 31. We're eager to strategize new virtual engagement opportunities given the current environment.
  19. Does the Component 2 budget (\$34k) include budget for digital ad buy, if any, to engage donors?
    - Any anticipated expenses should be included in the \$34K budget.
  20. Does ICRW already have a messaging framework in place that you'd like us to work from to develop donor messaging?
    - We recently undertook a small messaging refresh; however, we're hoping to further update messaging for individual donors and foundations who are not as immersed in technical research. We hope this might be done in tandem with the communications component of the RFP.

21. Do you already have stories collected that we can work from to support donor engagement?
  - We have very limited stories, which we recognize are a critical part of fundraising and communications. We have been working to improve the way we discuss our impact, which can be difficult to communicate as we are not an implementing/direct service organization.
22. Which type of donors are you looking to attract?
  - We're looking to grow our unrestricted funding base generally and hope the selected firm can provide guidance on what they see as the most strategic focus for our lean fundraising team.
23. What scale do you envisage for the fundraising initiative, and over what timeframe?
  - We appreciate that the \$34K budget will likely dictate the final scale and we are flexible on timeframe; however, we anticipate that the fundraising component would be complete over the next several months (before the end of the year).
24. Do you have any expectations about how the fundraising programme will change the mix of income?
  - We want to grow our overall base of funding, and we see opportunities to grow our individual and foundation funding in particular.
25. What other organisations are doing similar things to you and how is ICRW different?
  - Close peer organizations in the US include Population Council, PSI, Women for Women International, Center for Global Development and WomenStrong, Institute for Women's Policy Research and the Global Center for Gender Equality at Stanford. Dalberg does some similar work to our ICRW Advisors strategic advisory arm. ICRW is smaller than most of these organizations, and unique in that we engage in research, program implementation (to a lesser degree, and currently only out of ICRW Asia), policy advocacy and strategic advisory services (though research is the foundation for everything we do). Most of our peers are either research OR policy OR implementing organizations OR advisory. We also have a good degree of cache in the sector, known for rigor and quality and deep subject matter expertise.
26. Are ICRW seeking to increase core "unrestricted" funding or project funding or both?
  - We are primarily focused on increasing our unrestricted funding.
27. Do the offices in Africa and India fund raise separately or receive all their funding from the DC office? If not, why not?
  - The Africa and India offices do not have specific members of staff to raise unrestricted funds; however, the India office does have a Business Development Specialist who works closely with our DC Business Development team on restricted fundraising. We are open to ideas about how to build an unrestricted funding stream in these offices.
28. Has ICRW undertaken an equivalence determination on its Africa and India entities?
  - We are registered in India, Kenya, Uganda, the Netherlands, and the UK in accordance with the in-country requirements for public charities.
29. Has ICRW ever been, or applied to be, an implementing agent for UKAID?
  - Unless UKAID provides unrestricted grants/general operating support, we are not looking for support in this particular area.
30. Does ICRW typically co apply for funds from Governmental calls or apply solely?
  - We are not looking for support in this particular area.
31. In the RFP, you mention the consultants will *"help us better communicate with current donors to inspire larger gifts and reach new donors to grow our donor base."* You also mention a small base of individual donors. Are you specifically referring to high-net-

- worth, major gift individual donors in this RFP, or would you like us to include other audiences in the scope, too (e.g. trusts & foundations, corporates, etc.)?
- We would like to include both individual donors as well as trusts, foundations, corporations, etc.
32. Are you able to share fundraising collateral you have and more details on the outreach you currently do? What has been successful, and what would you look to change?
- Our current individual donor outreach is done primarily through our President for major donors and through e-blasts and social media for general donors. We see the greatest success among donors who are connected to the organization in some way (friend on the board, etc.). We would like to discuss possible improvements with the selected partner.
  - Fundraising Collateral Samples provided at the end of the Q&A.
33. When was the last analysis of your existing and potential donors carried out? Please share any insights and analysis, if possible.
- We have not done a full analysis of our donors in recent years; however, we have recently undertaken a set of interviews with individual donors and would be happy to share highlights from those.
34. Will we have access to past event financials, etc.?
- Yes, we would be happy to share details about this if useful with the selected partner.
35. Do you have a plan (or framework) for your 45th anniversary in 2021, including a proposed schedule of events, technology platform(s), and staffing plan? Are you open to hosting several virtual, smaller events and a larger Virtual Gala?
- Prior to developing the RFP we had just begun work on this; however, we've largely pressed pause in order to incorporate strategy and messaging that might be developed through this partnership. We are open to learning more about online event ideas; however, we typically have not had great success with galas and are somewhat wary of a large virtual gala.
36. The RFP outlines assessment of ICRW's unrestricted operating support, as well as individual giving/major gifts cultivation and engagement, and prospect identification. Do you want your consulting team to conduct a formal Development Assessment (including metrics, analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, with findings and recommendations)? Or, are you seeking more of a "thought partner" for strategy and tactical implementation regarding the full scope of your current activity?
- Ideally we would be interested in both, but with limited budget, we would first want to undertake an assessment.
37. What is your current level of investment in prospect research? Do you have an in-house researcher, or a working relationship with a prospect research consulting firm?
- No, we do not have an in-house researcher or utilize a firm.
38. Have you completed a wealth screening of your individual donors within the past three years?
- No, we do not have access to platforms such as Wealth Engine.
39. Do activity and/or financial goals exist for frontline fundraisers?
- We have annual financial targets, which typically total from \$250K-\$400K.
40. Does the President of ICRW have a portfolio of prospects she cultivates and solicits?
- The President typically has individuals in mind who she cultivates and solicits; however, we have not previously had a robust Moves Management type system. We are aiming to implement something more formal in that regard over this year. Our current CEO will also be retiring within the year, and we welcome guidance on ensuring a smooth transition of donor relationships to the extent possible.



41. How many leaders/staff members at ICRW are dedicated to fundraising/philanthropy? Can you briefly describe your current fundraising capacity (resources, tools, staffing, etc.)? What level of resources and staff are currently devoted to fundraising?
- Our current fundraising team includes the President of ICRW, the Senior Director of External Relations, and the Manager, Philanthropy & Strategic Relations; however, none of these staff members are focused exclusively on unrestricted fundraising. These staff work very closely with the DC-based communications team made up of a Senior Manager and a Specialist. Separately, we have a Business Development team overseen by the Senior Director of External Relations. This team focuses almost exclusively on restricted project funding.
42. What is the case for increasing philanthropy at ICRW? Does ICRW have a defined and compelling case for support?
- We do not have one clear case for support; however, over the last several months we have been working to produce new collateral as well as undertaking a strategic refresh, which we hope will contribute to this along with the messaging work taking place through the communications portion of this RFP.
43. Has ICRW ever undertaken a capital campaign? (If yes, how many years ago and what was the goal?) Is one being contemplated for the future?
- Our most recent capital campaign was for our Catalyst Fund in 2016. We would be open to a campaign if this is identified as the best strategy for where ICRW currently stands in fundraising as well as the current fundraising climate.
44. What impact, if any, has COVID-19 had on your fundraising?
- We were able to achieve nearly 80% of our target for the fiscal year ending at the end of September. Like many nonprofit organizations, it's added some challenges. Going forward, we hope to increase revenue in 2021.
45. Do you have a board giving policy?
- Our current board giving policy is as follows:
    - i. An annual income-appropriate financial contribution by each Member of the Board of Directors is required to support the mission and work of the institution as well as to serve as an example to other donors and supporters. In FY17, Board giving ranged from \$100 to \$100,000. Starting in FY18, the minimum individual contribution shall be \$500. For Members with philanthropic backgrounds, or those otherwise in a position to do so, the minimum individual contribution shall be \$10,000. For Members with access to matching funds, a minimum individual contribution of \$10,000 is strongly encouraged, with members encouraged to leverage 'give, get and/or arrange' to meet the floor amount.
    - ii. At the time of accepting an invitation to join the Board, a candidate will indicate the range and manner through which they will make their gift to ICRW. Additionally, at the beginning of each fiscal year, Board members will indicate their expected participation in that year.
    - iii. Identify and cultivate new donor prospects for ICRW, as per the fundraising strategy.
    - iv. Encourage others to become donors and supporters of ICRW.
46. Does the board have a role in helping to identify and/or refer giving prospects?
- In addition to their own giving, the Board is asked to identify and introduce potential donors to ICRW per the policy noted above. Additionally, we have a Development Committee, who meet at least twice a year.

47. Is the priority to develop a more robust annual fund donor base via online giving and/or a membership model that can feed future major gifts? Or is the current priority to identify and develop a major gift strategy, prospect pool and potential donor profiles?
- We're in the process of implementing a better major donor engagement program that we're hoping will develop somewhat organically through an online event series we're piloting with a closely curated invitation list. We'd love input on that, but the larger priority would be to help us build out a strategy, prospects, and profiles. Ideally, we'd like to understand what the selected firm sees as priority and potentially successful strategies.

## Communications:

1. What email platform do you use for marketing communications? Are there other tools you currently use?
  - We use EveryAction for email, fundraising, and potentially for in-person events once COVID (fingers crossed!) has left us. We use Zoom for events. For internal design, we use Adobe products.
2. What Customer Relationship Management, Email Marketing System, and Content Management Systems are you currently using?
  - We use Salesforce, EveryAction, and Meltwater for most of this currently. Hootsuite in the past, as well.
3. How big is your existing email list?
  - Nearly 19,000.
4. Can we assume that your current website vendor will be responsible for any implementation around landing page creation or other website related elements?
  - Our website vendor and our own team, depending on needs. If you have capabilities and it's tied to the scope, we may request your support. But we do not expect that support on this contract.
5. Is the budget provided expected to cover printing costs for any non-digital materials developed?
  - We do not anticipate using this contract for printing but reserving for strategy and overall implementation. We have some separate institutional budget for printing.
6. Is the budget provided expected to cover paid media costs for campaigns?
  - Should paid media be determined an important part of the strategy we determine jointly (and we anticipate some ad buys, etc.), we would like those covered under this contract.
7. Does ICRW have an estimate of the number of pieces of collateral and visual assets (brochures, case studies, social media assets) they'll require, or how many were produced in 2020?
  - This is to be determined over the course of the project. Most of our visual assets at ICRW are covered under project funds (covered by foundations for specific work). We would like to have some institutional collateral that comes under this contract. We only produced a handful of assets in 2019-2020 that were not project funded. We would like to have more tied to our focus areas and to ramp up visibility. This is an important part of strategy build-out.
8. Of the marketing budget how has that been that split out to each channel/activation historically? What is projected to accompany this project?
  - This is far more than the budget we've had to work with in the recent past. Most of that budget has been tied to the website, a media engagement platform,

minimal collateral and ad buys, events, etc. The big ticket items are still included under that separate budget. So, we have some room to really decide how we want to break this contract out and get the most return on investment.

9. What audiences are you most seeking to engage the most? What do you desire to receive from engaging those audiences?
  - For the portions of the work tied to fundraising, certainly big donors and general donors. We would like to further engage current donors but develop new relationships with ICRW. For other work in communications, it would be great to grow out our visibility with potential partners, those in the research and advocacy spaces, and grow our base of supporters for gender equality. That's broad, and what we would welcome is deciding how best to target and get the most return on our investment. We could explore personas and the pros and cons of targeting different audiences.
10. Have you done paid advertising in the past? Are you currently leveraging paid ads?
  - Very little. The most we have done is pay for Facebook or Twitter buys in the recent past and not many each year. We imagine doing more over the course of this contract.
11. Have you done any audience research or user interviews to lay a foundation for the current work you all are doing in the marketing/communications space?
  - We have some information we have pulled together to help inform some of our work for this year. We can support gathering a bit more and open to discussing other options.
12. Website & UX strategy - would you require a strategy, or the actual website and UX designs and flows?
  - We are going to be signing a contract soon for website support services, and we plan to reassess the website structure and user experience. Where it makes sense for this contract, we would welcome discussion / strategy with the selected partner on UX and content – in coordination with our web partner.
13. Can you provide any details on what ICRW is looking for in website strategy? Is there an organization providing a user experience that inspires you or you would like to replicate? Would you expect the selected communication partner to interact with and/or manage the existing website partner?
  - See above. We hope to be more interactive over the coming year. No specific organization; we've seen many. We do not expect the selected partner to manage the existing website partner. Depending on tactic, we may put the awardee in contact with them to ensure effective implementation.
14. Messaging, visual content & collateral development and ICRW's 45th anniversary communications - what kinds of content and collaterals are you looking at, and any indicative number of collaterals
  - We would expect a bulk of the content developed this year to be collateral/assets tied to the 45th anniversary and general institutional collateral. This has not been fully defined and would like support on defining and implementing.
15. Media planning and engagement - for media engagement, could you elaborate, does this entail media strategy or media plan execution as well? What's the goal of media engagement for component 1? Thought leadership, fundraising, informing the public?
  - We have some media relationships right now and use Meltwater to engage the media further. However, our small team has limited connections and experience with media engagement and would welcome capacity building more than anything. The idea primarily is to build relations that will help us raise overall visibility.

16. Is there a communications plan already in place to align with?
  - We do have a decent strategy and tactics laid out, which was created prior to being made aware of the option for this contract. We would like to align that plan with this work, though the current plan can be adapted to make for more effective strategic implementation.
17. Are there existing multimedia assets and or to what extent would we need to partner with photographers/videographers to create them?
  - We have some photo and visual assets. We also utilized free sites for photos. We do not expect the awardee to partner with photographers for this contract though welcome options. For video, we would like to consider some content that would help us boost the 45th anniversary, in particular. This would be for discussion once we have kickoff. We do lack video content, though.
18. Our firm's expertise lies in digital communications, including social media, email, and digital advertising. What percentage of the work included under the "Communications & Marketing" component do you anticipate will be comprised of traditional media communications work, including press pitching, drafting press releases, and staff training?
  - It is hard to say. Much of the work this year will be 45th anniversary and collateral / assets, but media relations capacity is one we would like to see improved. Likely 5-10%.
19. What is your website CMS and is it already connected to Google Analytics? What is your email marketing tool/CRM?
  - Website is WordPress, and it's connected to Google Analytics. Email is EveryAction.
20. Will the digital strategies and tactics we provide in the "strategy for increased audience and media engagement" deliverable be implemented by the ICRW communications team? (We see that implementation bullets include messaging/creative development, media engagement, leveraging ICRW's 45th anniversary, surge support, and other support as time/budget allow, but we do not specifically see implementation of digital strategies mentioned. Will the ICRW team be implementing any digital strategies we provide?)
  - Our communications team of 3 people currently implements everything we do digitally (with backend web support from our vendor). However, we would like to have a boost in our presence online and would like both strategy and implementation support this year. Our team will continue to do everything, but keep in mind the small team. We would likely need support to boost signal as much as we hope.
21. Does the Component 1 budget (\$120k) include budget for digital ad buy, if any?
  - If we determine ad buys are the right tactic (which we imagine should be), it would be part of the budget.
22. Understanding that 2021 is ICRW's 45th anniversary, is there a particular month you're planning to launch the anniversary campaign or virtual events?
  - We're currently looking at May.
23. Does ICRW already have a messaging framework in place that you'd like us to work from to support the implementation bullet 1 of component 1 (develop messaging, collateral, visual assets)?
  - We have some messaging we can build from, but we know this could be improved.

24. Does ICRW have existing video footage files and BROLL files that can be used to create new video assets that demonstrate value and impact?
- We do not have a lot of video content. Our Asia office has some. Most everything else we have is on YouTube. We would like to develop more but are limited with what is on hand now.
25. What is the size and structure of your internal communications team?
- The communications team is growing from 3 to 4. Two in Washington, DC. There will be two new people in Delhi (India). Communications is part of the External Relations Group (Communications, Business Development, Fundraising) - a larger team which can provide some support and strategic vision. However, for implementation, that's our team.
26. As a team, what do you feel are your three biggest challenges when communicating externally?
- (1) Small capacity and time, (2) Effectively communicating what we do (which is a LOT) in a targeted way, (3) Taking what could be considered dry content (e.g., research) and make it really engaging and understood.
27. What do you feel are your biggest strengths?
- We back up what we say with evidence, which has become increasingly important. While we have a small team, and generalists, we have some good overall skillsets that could be further supported by the selected partner.
28. How do you rank the geographies in terms of generating media engagement – is there a priority focus?
- We'd like to grow capacity across all offices. The U.S. has had the most engagement. Asia is second. Africa is in a nascent phase with no designated communications person.
29. In terms of current audiences, can you expand and explain who the priority organisations are and their roles and remits?
- We have a range of audiences: researchers, foundations, implementing partners, social media base, email base, Congressional staffers, foreign policy experts and government officials, multi-laterals, corporations, etc. It's part of the challenge - to target, depending on who we're talking to. Some audience priorities are dictated by project funding. Others, we try to define and hone ourselves, but this would be helpful for us to visit with the selected partner.
30. Are you able to provide details on how you have measured success and impact in the past? Do you have specific KPIs in mind or is this something we would build with you?
- Building with us would be good. We do have some growth statistics to give us a sense of trajectory on social media and the website, but we could refine and even branch out.
31. What would success mean for the 45th anniversary? What plans have you already got in place that could help inform how we would strategise?
- It's a celebratory moment (over a few months) that we'd like to see a boost in funds, new audiences, engaged base of support, and improvement in how we message about what we do. We have a loose strategy we started building out before this contract idea was introduced to our team. So, we would like to think all this through more with the awardee.
32. Within 'implement' and 'Develop messaging, collateral, visual assets' there is and can be a lot, including video, social media assets and infographics – is the brief for the agency to design and produce these, or is there an in-house designer? If possible, please can you specify the scope of these assets any further? E.g. number and duration of videos, social media assets.

- We work with a design partner (external), though that work is primarily with project funding and minimal institutional budget. We have our small communications team that has minimal skills in design, but we do hope that some of the work that comes up under this contract will be provided by or at least supported by the selected partner. We do not have a set number of videos and duration in mind, or social media assets. We'd need more help with video if those are part of the overarching strategy we jointly develop for this year. But we welcome further discussion once contracted.
33. Are you able to provide any context for media engagement – what would success look like in terms of the type of coverage and the types of media outlets?
- We would like to see our contact list grow but also develop our capacity and success a bit. Likely, more of capacity building throughout the process, while contacts are welcome over the life cycle of this contract.
34. Is there a bigger reason driving the communications, marketing and fundraising push that would help inform our response?
- This drawdown on institutional funding was intended to support our work, to give us a boost, particularly in our 45th year. So, we want to take advantage of this time to really grow our visibility.
35. Would you be interested/open to one of our team being seconded to support your communication needs? (perhaps in the lead up to and during the 45th anniversary)
- We would be happy to consider this, as long as it is included in the contract cost.
36. What external audiences have you prioritized in the last 3 - 5 years from a communications perspective?
- Donors, policy advocates, social media (general growth).
37. What media outlets/reporters have you focused on cultivating in the last 3 - 5 years?
- Maintaining Devex, Ms. Magazine, The Hill, The Guardian, NPR, a couple of outlets in India. More recent developments: Foreign Policy, The New York Times, PassBlue, The Daily Nation (Kenya), North Carolina outlets (based on research there). We would like to grow them out more.
38. Do you anticipate potential expenses related to video production being included within the outlined communications budget? Do you have any in-house videography resources?
- Our resources and capacity internally are very limited. We would like to see any videos under this work as part of the expenses in the contract budget here.
39. Are you anticipating that design and production costs for collateral development included in the proposal or will you leverage in-house resources for specific collateral development with the agency playing an advisory role? I see a number of creative assets that would be developed as part of the project, including videos, graphics, brochures, etc. Is it expected that these should be included as part of the \$120,000 budget? If so, do you have a sense of roughly how many of each you will want to have created?
- We would like to include as much as possible under this contract with strategy and content creation.
40. How would you rank the importance of media in each of the markets in the proposal?
- We have found a lot of success from the minimal media coverage and see value in building that out across our regional office work. For this contract, we would like to see media engagement over the course of the 45th anniversary campaign. And we would appreciate some capacity building, but the level of importance may change based on joint strategy development.

41. Do you have research products that will be released in the coming months that we should be planning for? Any specifics related to topics would help as we incorporate ideas into the proposal.
  - We always have research products coming out across offices. We can give the selected partner a better sense of what these are once contracted, as we will have a better sense of timeline during the 45th.
42. For the assessment/discovery phase, will we be given access to the website back-end, analytic reports, as well as current marketing and development assets for evaluation?
  - The website back-end access is negotiable. All other reports, assets, etc. would be provided.
43. What do you regard as the most important outcome of this agency engagement?
  - We want to grow our influence and reputation as a thought leader. Engagement with donors and project implementers (who could use our research capacity) is also important. We would also like to increase understanding about what we do with follow-up conversations for more work.
44. How recently have you surveyed internal/external audiences, and on what topics? We are particularly interested in brand perception, recognition and reputation, and message testing.
  - We have surveyed stakeholders and key audiences a bit in the last couple of years. And there are some details we can pull from that information. Some was not targeted to gather that information, but we can do an assessment of what else we need with the awardee.
45. What impact, if any, has COVID-19 had on your communications?
  - Fortunately, it has not impacted our communications a great deal. We cannot host events in the office, but we are hosting online still, and most of the rest of our communications can be done remotely.
46. Do you currently have any specific, definable goals and outcomes for an updated communications/marketing/media strategy, or will you be looking to the selected firm to help identify these?
  - We have some loosely defined goals and others we can further define based on past years' results, but we would certainly welcome more discussion of this with the awardee during the kick-off phase.
47. Do you anticipate a separate 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary communications strategy and plan? Or do you anticipate leveraging ICRW's 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary in strategically appropriate places throughout an overall communications strategy and plan?
  - This would be integrated in an overarching communications plan (with fundraising tied to communications during the 45th). We have a light touch plan that we would like to further develop with the selected partner, one that is focused on the 45th.
48. Which communications channels do you currently rely on the most? Which do you find the most successful?
  - Social media (continued growth), email, and website. All could be improved, and we can utilize other channels over the course of this contract.
49. What data or demographics do you currently have on your audience?
  - This is minimal, but we can dig in with the awardee. About ¾ of our individual audience members are female. We have a good number of partner organizations and donors on our audience list. Age range is pretty broad, as well as demographics.
50. What are your high level communications and organizational goals?
  - We can dig into this more too once contracted. But for communications, we would like to raise overall visibility and engagement, grow our social channels,

increase media contacts and engagement, better utilize our core supporters, etc. Organizationally, beyond that, we hope to increase funding this year, clarify what we do to our audiences, etc.

51. What are you currently doing or what have you done that has been successful in reaching your goals?
  - We have divided up tasks among our small staff. We have increased and diversified our content. We have increased our events and access to them. We have engaged designers and a web team to help us grow our brand since 2016 (new website).
52. Is there a need for ongoing content for social media?
  - We do this already but would definitely like to expand on this and welcome the awardee's support, especially over the course of the 45th anniversary campaign - which we hope will provide reusable content.
53. Would the social scope include community management (posting, engaging, monitoring, etc.)?
  - This is less important than helping us produce content. Possibly, we could use help during our surge moments during the 45th anniversary. However, open for discussion.
54. Is there an interest for paid social strategy as well? If so, would that budget part of the \$120,000 total budget, or separate?
  - We expect this would be a key part of the strategy, to be discussed further with the awardee.
  - If separate, can you provide an estimate on that, as well as the potential desired length of the campaign? - All budget should fall under this contract.
55. Would the ads stay 100% on social (Facebook/IG/Twitter) or would you also want to explore other avenues like ad networks, etc.?
  - Open to exploring others. We have used social in the past and are fine sticking with that, but if it's strategic and there's a lot of return on investment, we would be happy to consider other avenues.

**Fundraising Collateral Samples provided below.**





# REWRITING THE STORY

— WITH THE WORLD'S —

# WOMEN & GIRLS



This year proved that women’s economic empowerment (WEE) remains a critical issue deeply impacted by the current global context, with long-term consequences for women, their families and their communities.

**With your support**, ICRW can dig deeper to more completely understand the barriers that prevent women from reaching their full economic potential and the tools needed for success.

- **Investing in women-owned enterprises:** While women make up a large proportion of entrepreneurs, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, their businesses often remain limited to the informal sector. It is critical that long-term investments are made in education, skill- and capacity-building, and networking to support the growth and sustainability of women’s businesses. [Read more of our recommendations here.](#)
- **Pioneering research on gender and inclusion in manufacturing:** While manufacturing is key to Kenya’s economic growth, women make up just 17 percent of employees and 93 percent of women-owned manufacturing companies operate in the informal sector. [Read ICRW’s new study](#) and [watch the launch event](#) to learn more about what helps and hinders women in their journeys to find meaningful, well-remunerated work.

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Thank you for supporting gender equity.





## ICRW Celebrates the Year's Top Moments

As we say goodbye to 2020, we are grateful for the opportunities to advance our work this year and the support we received in pursuit of a shared vision of gender equity. Every December we invite staff to vote on their top moments from the year, and below are our top 10.

Moments like these are only possible with your support. [We hope you will join us in celebrating these and future milestones with a year-end donation.](#)



**1.) ICRW is selected as Banana Republic's charity partner for the "Notorious Necklace" honoring Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.** ICRW was thrilled to be [selected as the recipient of the proceeds](#) from the reissue of Banana Republic's Notorious Necklace, originally sold in 2012 and worn by Justice Ginsburg as her "dissent collar."

**2.) More than 70 organizations representing thousands of Americans launch a bold vision for feminist foreign policy in the United States.** On May 21, more than 1,000 people tuned



in to the launch, spearheaded by ICRW, of a [collective vision for a feminist foreign policy in the United States](#).



**3.) ICRW director named to national COVID-19 task force in India.** Dr. Ravi Verma, Director for ICRW Asia, was [appointed to a national task force](#) convened by the Indian Council of Medical Research. As a member of the task force, Dr. Verma helped identify research priorities and partners and develop protocols for studies to understand the socioeconheomic impact of COVID-19 on families and communities.

[Read the full list of our top moments here.](#)

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