



Call for Tenders

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Feasibility study for a journalistic media project to promote climate communication and climate action in Central Asia

Berlin, 6 November 2023

For our upcoming 3,5-year project ***Communicating Climate: A network of journalists and experts to promote climate action in Central Asia***, the international media NGO **n-ost** is inviting tenders for an independent feasibility study preceding its implementation. Based on an assessment of the initial objectives and planned methodology, we are looking for recommendations on how to maximize the project's impact while minimizing risks.

The study must be carried out by independent experts with technical, methodological, and practical expertise as well as regional knowledge who provide a detailed report of max. 30 pages (final report to be submitted in English by **February 12th 2024**). It is intended as a basis for the cooperation with partners in the region, and for the common planning and implementation of the project activities. This project is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and implemented in close cooperation with the **MediaNet International Center for Journalism** in Kazakhstan.

About n-ost

n-ost is a media NGO, agency and network of European journalists with headquarters in Berlin and more than 250 members across Europe. Since our establishment in 2006, we have been engaged in cross-border and investigative journalism with strong expertise particularly in Eastern Europe. n-ost's mission is to contribute to a European integrated media sphere which is transnational and collaborative. We strive to connect journalists to counter the shrinking space of free media and the polarized public discourse especially in Eastern Europe. We are currently

implementing several joint projects funded by a variety of donors with media outlets and media NGOs across Europe, including the countries of the Eastern Partnership and Central Asia.

About the project

Over the course of 3,5 years, a collective of roughly 50 climate journalists and climate experts from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan will be working together **to strengthen climate communication and media reporting on the impact of climate change and climate policies in the four project countries.**

Central Asia is strongly affected by the consequences of climate change: Rising temperatures and droughts have already led to crop failures. Water scarcity entails problems in power generation and has repeatedly evoked (even violent) cross-border conflicts. According to recent studies, by 2050 the region will have to cope with up to 5 million of climate migrants - the support and integration of whom poses an enormous challenge, especially in societies plagued by ongoing political authoritarianism, huge social disparities and unclarified questions of national identity(s) due to a history of colonialism and national oppression.

Despite this concrete threat, **climate change and climate protection play a surprisingly minor role in the public debate** in Central Asia. This is due - firstly - to the fact that the political framework conditions set limits to an open discourse in all four project countries (to varying degrees). A second reason for the comparatively weak climate discourse is that many journalists in Central Asia find it difficult to break down global contexts, studies and facts to the respective local context and to tell climate change in stories that are attractive and comprehensible for the audience. Against this background, an important role could be played by local experts and/or activists who could explain to the public (via the media) what consequences climate change will have on the lives of people in the region - and what measures would therefore have to be taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or to adapt to climate change. But due to the Soviet legacy, journalists tend to not consider scientists or NGO-representatives to be a trustworthy source of information. Additionally, many experts are not sufficiently trained to bring their knowledge to the point in a generally understandable and precise way so that the media can use and disseminate these messages in a targeted manner - which is the third reason, why the topic of climate change has not yet caught on in the public discourse.

The **Communicating Climate project therefore aims to** network both journalists and potential climate communicators from the four project countries and to strengthen their respective professional skills in order to bring climate change and climate protection into the focus of the public debate. Several offline workshops lasting several days will deepen existing knowledge about the specific effects of global climate change on site. In a writing school lasting several days, the journalists will train to actually tell climate change in *stories*. The climate communicators (scientists, NGO experts) will learn how they can use appropriate language and demeanor to help the media convey their expertise and recommendations to a broad political audience. The financially supported publications produced during the project are intended to show the public in the project countries in a coordinated, condensed “campaign” in 2026 how urgently climate change needs to be addressed politically. In 2027, a media conference will bring together climate journalists from the region and Europe.

The aim of this feasibility study is to **assess** the project design to provide a solid basis for finalising the project concept by clarifying conditions, opportunities and risks. **Concretely, the study should**

- a) briefly analyze the current situation with regard to media reporting and climate communication on the consequences of climate change for the four Central Asian project countries and on national or international political measures to mitigate them (baseline)
- b) identify relevant target groups and stakeholders of the project
- c) assess the project design based on the OECD’s DAC criteria, i.e. relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact

The detailed project design will be provided in due time. The general framework of the project is

Planned time frame: June 2024 - Dec 2027 (43 months)

Total budget: approx. 1,000,000 €

Project countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan

Requirements for the feasibility study

- The study should present the **context** on several levels (micro, meso, macro).
- An overview of existing structures (institutions, networks, umbrella associations, etc.) relevant to the project and its activities should be given.
- An **analysis and assessment of the project's approach** to solving the problem situation of the target groups and other actors should be carried out on this basis to examine and **evaluate the planned project critically** with regard to the [OECD DAC criteria](#).
- On this basis, **tangible recommendations for adjustments** to the specific project concept, including the target system and measures are to be formulated, taking into account the actors and stakeholders to be involved, suggestions for areas of observation of the results and impact measurement as well as the opportunities and risks.

Guiding questions for the study report

- What challenges, problems and public debates can be identified in the four project countries with regard to the consequences of climate change?
- What political stances shape public discourse(s) on / and media coverage of climate change and climate action ?
- What are the strengths, deficits and needs in media reporting and experts' communication on climate change? Which publishing projects or networks already exist on this topic?
- What political or technical obstacles could participants be confronted with when investigating/ communicating climate change and climate action in the four respective countries ?
- How do you assess the risks with regard to the security of investigative journalists in the four project countries and how can these be addressed?
- Is the local organization envisaged an adequate partner for this project (in terms of administrative capacities, experience in international cooperation, outreach)? Are there alternatives?
- Who are the target groups and relevant actors the project should address on various levels (micro, meso, macro)?
- Independent media and experts play a crucial role in reporting on climate change and its impact on people's everyday lives, but are working under difficult circumstances. What are the most significant structural needs and obstacles to overcome in order to fulfill their potential ?

- How would you assess the potential for intensified cross-border co-operation of media in the project countries? What are the major obstacles and shortcomings in this regard?
- What is the (national) audience's interest in the societies of their neighboring countries (based on interviews, not quantitative analyses)?
- What are the major potentials and needs regarding professional (journalistic) development in the four project countries that should be addressed by the project?

Scope & Remuneration

The study should comprise **between 20 and 30 pages and will be remunerated with 18.000 euros including all fees and taxes**. Applications from expert **teams** to share the individual analysis on the four project countries (but still work with an integrated analytical framework) are welcome.

Applications

In order to apply for this tender, please send your application and offer to Anneke Hudalla (hudalla@n-ost.org) as soon as possible, but no later than **26 November 2023**, 23:59 CET.

For the full application the **following documents have to be submitted**:

- A detailed outline of the objectives and methods to be deployed in the feasibility study;
- A list of products, deliverables, and activities that will be provided, including timeline and specification of costs;
- A structural framework for the final report based on the feasibility study;
- Proof of independence of the evaluators, as well as their technical, organizational, methodological and other capacities, composition, roles and tasks of all those involved;
- A list of sources, such as national strategy / policy papers and briefings, references to other studies and further readings, documents from prior projects, guidelines on the methodology to be deployed etc.;
- A presentation of the team members and their relevant experience for this study.

The successful applicants will be selected **by 1 December 2023**. We expect to receive the final study until **12 February 2024**. Any questions can be directed to Anneke Hudalla (hudalla@n-ost.org).