

Terms of Reference

For

Communications Consultancy (Press Releases)

Contracting authority	Stichting SPARK
Subject	Media Consultancy (Press Release Distribution)
Locations:	Europe, Middle East, Gulf and Africa
Duration:	12 Months (with a possibility to extend another 12 months)
Application Closing Date:	04 December 2022 / 16:30 CET
Expected Start Date:	15 December 2022
Reference Number:	RFQ-PRESS-2022-SPARK
Last date for questions	All interested bidders must address their questions within a maximum of 5 days prior to the submission date (29 November 2022)

1. Background

SPARK is seeking to hire the services of a professional media agency for the distribution of press releases in Europe, Middle East, Gulf and Africa. The overall aim of this procurement is to find a media agency able to provide an extensive media visibility of SPARK's project and donors' support, through dignified and positive representation of vulnerable communities SPARK works with.

SPARK develops higher education and entrepreneurship to empower young, ambitious people to lead their fragile and conflict-affected societies into prosperity. SPARK is a dynamic and growing, international not-for-profit development organisation with 100+ staff members, in more than 14 offices around the world. SPARK supports women, refugees and host communities in the Middle-East and Africa by providing them with scholarships in universities and higher education institutions in the region. SPARK also supports young entrepreneurs in fragile states, to start or grow their own businesses.

2. Criteria for Submitting a Bid

2.1 Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be financially sound and financial continuity throughout the project;
- Have proven experience in media relations and press release distribution in Europe, Middle East, Gulf, and African regions;
- English is essential; Arabic is a bonus.
- Provide consulting services in drafting press releases to be covered in top-tier media outlets in Europe, Middle East, Gulf and Africa;
- Extensively monitor the coverage;
- Draft media reports upon completion of each distribution;
- Have experience in communications for European Union funded projects is a plus;
- Deliver tangible and efficient results to tight deadlines;
- Efficiently budget and contribute to the success of the activities.

2.2 Applicants must submit a bid on their own being the mere implementing body.

3. Description

All press releases will be drafted by SPARK's Communication Team and will be shared with the service provider in a timely manner. SPARK will also provide media kits including photos, videos or infographics to be shared with the targeted media outlets.

During the duration of 12 months, the service provider is expected to be the main focal point for SPARK's media relations and press releases, and be available when needed. The service provider will be asked to distribute press releases for SPARK in Europe, Middle East, Gulf and Africa and will be compensated after each activity based on the qualification of said activities. Compensation will be based on the essential expenses provided by the service provider in the application.

The service provider should expect inquiries of the consulting, distribution, follow-up, and monitoring services for press releases in English. Distribution in additional language(s) will be required depending on the target audiences in Europe, Middle East, Gulf and Africa.

4. List of Deliverables

- Consulting on the writing press releases to get the best media coverage possible;
- Consulting on the best timing of press releases;
- Translating the press releases from English to additional language(s) that may be required depending on the target audiences;
- Distributing press releases to top-tier media outlets in Europe, Middle East, Gulf and Africa;
- Sharing press kits and providing information and visual materials (photos, videos, infographics) to the media outlets upon their request (with support from SPARK Communication Team);
- Following up with key people at media outlets ie. (media owners, journalists and editors) to secure media coverage;
- Carrying out an extensive media monitoring upon distribution of each press release;
- Providing a comprehensive media report upon completion of each distribution;
- Ensure that SPARK and its donors are acknowledged and mentioned in the news articles.

5. Evaluation Details

We are looking for service providers who:

- Are competitive budget-wise and can contribute to the success of the activities;
- Ensure visibility and branding for the activities, participants, SPARK, and the back donor;
- Have reasonable experience in the fields of refugees and development sector in general and entrepreneurship/start-ups and MSMEs specifically;
- Are well-connected with the major news media in Europe, Middle East, Gulf and Africa;

- Have added-value and advantage over competitors.

6. Selection Criteria

1. The evaluation committee will evaluate and award the contract on the basis of the following **selection criteria**:

- √ **Price**
- √ **Quality**

2. **Selection method** (selection criteria evaluation):

Evaluation method (selection criteria evaluation):

- Price
 - Criteria weight is **40 %**
 - Formula: (Best Bidder Price/Evaluated Bidder Price) *Criterion Weight.
 - Price shall be quoted in EURO

- Quality
 - Criteria weight is **60%**

Point evaluation (weighted points):

Criterion will obtain between 0 and 5-point, 5 point being the maximum, 0 points the minimum and the points obtained will be multiplied by criterion weight.

PIN expert evaluation committee will assign up to 5 points for the best quality of the sample, based on the following evaluation grid:

Score	Benchmark for Services/Works
5	Excellent response with no weaknesses shown and exceeds the requirement - also provides comprehensive, detailed, and convincing assurances that the services will be delivered to an excellent standard
4	A very response that demonstrates real understanding and fully meets the requirements - offers assurances that the service delivered will be of a high standard

3	A satisfactory response which demonstrates a reasonable understanding of the requirements and gives reasonable assurance of delivery of services to an adequate standard, but does not provide sufficiently convincing assurance to be able to award them a higher mark
2	A response where reservations exist - lacks full credibility/convincing detail, and there is a significant risk that the response will not deliver/be successful
1	A response where serious reservations exist - the may be because, for example, insufficient detail is provided and the response has fundamental flaws, or seriously lacks credibility with a high risk of non-delivery
0	Response completely fails to address the criterion under consideration

Those bidders who get less than 3 for the capacity of the bidder shall not be accepted or considered and their offer will be rejected.

For each bid, points from all evaluation criteria will be added up and the winning bid will be the bid with the highest number of points. In case of equal number of points, the winning bid will be the one with the lowest price.

7. Required documents:

- Narrative description of the offer, written in English
- Financial proposal in EUR and including VAT (the template will be provided by SPARK)
- Examples of previous media coverage gained through press release distribution in languages mentioned above
- List of media outlets which you worked with/are working with
- Examples of previous media reports
- Reference list
- Certificate of registration
- Certificate of activity
- Tax registration

8. Remuneration

Payment will be released upon SPARK's acceptance of the final deliverables following review by SPARK.

If you have any questions please contact SPARK, via email: ihale@spark-online.org

Interested applicants may contact SPARK through ihale@spark-online.org to receive the financial proposal template.
