

Regional Call for Investigative Journalism Stories

The Metamorphosis Foundation for Internet and Society announces a Regional Call for Investigative Journalism Stories within the Project “Western Balkans Anti-Disinformation Hub: Exposing Malign Influences through Data-Driven Watchdog Journalism”.



1. Subject

Within the parameters of this Call, applicant/applicants (individuals or legal entities) will be chosen to undertake responsibility for the creation of during the period of March to July 2024:

- 1 (one) or more investigative story/stories

A description of the subject of the call is given below, in the Detailed Overview of the applicant's Obligations and Timeline of the Engagement, which is an integral part of this Call.

1.1. Topic of the investigative story/stories

Identify, follow and investigate the sources and flow of disinformation in the Western Balkan region. Research the relationships with anti-democratic and corruptive structures and their influence.

2. Registration conditions

Legal entities and individuals who offer services in the field of investigative journalism and research have the right to apply for this Call. Individuals can also apply as teams (informal groups).

The legal entities and individuals should reside or have specific knowledge of the current developments in any of the countries in the Western Balkans region (North Macedonia, Albania, Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Monte Negro).

2.1. Individuals must meet the following conditions:

To have relevant professional experience in journalism (minimum 5 years of experience in a newsroom and/or media organization) and to submit a list of previously prepared and published content (including but not limited to investigative stories)

2.2. Legal entities should meet the following criteria:

2.2.1. Personal condition of the applicant

- In the last 5 years, the applicant has not been sentenced for participating in a criminal organization, corruption, fraud or money laundering;
- The applicant has not been imposed a secondary penalty, a temporary or permanent ban on performing a separate activity;
- The applicant is not in bankruptcy or liquidation proceedings;
- The applicant has no unpaid taxes, contributions or other public charges;
- The applicant has not been sentenced with a misdemeanor sanction - a ban on performing a profession, activity or duty, that is, a temporary ban on performing a separate activity.

The applicant confirms the fulfillment of the criteria for determining personal status with a statement submitted in addition to the offer (the statement is attached to this tender documentation - Annex 2).

In addition to the statement, the applicant does not have to submit documents to prove his personal status together with the bid. The Commission may ask the selected applicant to submit the necessary documents to determine the personal situation for verification of these criteria.

2.2.2. Technical ability

The applicant must meet the following minimum conditions:

- To have relevant professional experience in journalism and conducting investigative stories, and to submit a list of previously prepared and published content (including but not limited to investigative stories)

3. Deadline and method of registration

The offers, together with the list of previously prepared and published content (including but not limited to investigative stories), should be submitted via e-mail to the following e-mail address: info@metamorphosis.org.mk no later than March 15th, 2024, with the Subject "Application for Investigative story". All application documents should be submitted in English. Applications that contain incomplete or untidy documentation, are not in English, as well as applications submitted after the deadline established in this Call, will not be considered. Metamorphosis Foundation reserves the right to contact only selected candidates.

4. Elements of the call

4.1. To apply for the Call, individuals should submit:

- Short professional biographies of the person/persons who will implement the activities that are the subject of the contract;
- A list of previously prepared and published content (including but not limited to investigative stories);
- A developed research concept that will explain the topic that will be researched within the framework of the regional call. The research concept should be no longer than 500 words. The concept should include: description of the topic, relevance of the topic, sources from where the data will be collected;
- The applicants are required to outline the research methodology of each investigation as part of their concise work plan (up to 1 page).
- Financial offer according to the form given in Annex 1.

4.2. To apply for the Call, legal entities should submit:

- Short description of the organization;
- Short professional biographies of the person/persons who will be engaged to implement the activities that are the subject of the contract;
- A list of previously prepared and published content (including but not limited to investigative stories);
- A developed research concept that will explain the topic that will be researched within the framework of the regional call. The research concept should be no longer than 500 words. The concept should include: description of the topic, relevance of the topic, sources from where the data will be collected;
- The applicants are required to outline the research methodology of each investigation as part of their concise work plan (up to 1 page).
- Financial offer according to the form given in Annex 1;

- A statement by which the applicant confirms that the criteria for determining personal status is met, according to the form provided as Annex 2;
- Document for registered activity or current status.

5. Criteria and method of selection

All timely, complete and orderly applications will be thoroughly reviewed and evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Quality of offer – Previous experience in journalism production (demonstrated through CV or CVs of applicants and the list of published content) and quality of the research concept – 60 points and
- Financial offer – 40 points.

Pre-selected applicants will be contacted in regard to possible modifications of the work plan prior to concluding the agreement.

An agreement will be concluded with the candidate who will receive the most points according to these criteria, in which mutual rights and obligations will be determined in more detail.

6. Clarification of the call documentation

If you need additional information regarding this Call, you can contact info@metamorphosis.org.mk

7. Amendment and addition to the call documentation

Metamorphosis reserves the right, no later than 2 days before the deadline for submission of applications, at its discretion or on the basis of submitted questions for explanation submitted by the applicants, to amend or supplement the call documentation, for which it will immediately publish the amendment and will notify potential applicants who have submitted a request for clarification.

In case of amendment of the call documentation, Metamorphosis may extend the deadline for submission of the applications upon request if there are justified reasons for this and it will make an appropriate announcement.

8. Payment method and conditions

Payment will be made after the submitting of the final edited version of the investigative story.

9. Notice to Applicants

The selected most favorable applicants will be notified via email address specified in the application. The Metamorphosis Foundation reserves the right to contact only selected applicants.

Detailed Overview of the Applicant's Obligations and Timeline of the Engagement

- **Objective**

The overall objective of this engagement is to collect and publicly share evidence of illegal/corrupt activities or misuse of power, including unethical conduct by a certain authority, leader or in broader terms a center of power in the media sphere in the countries of the Western Balkan region (WB), related to the flow of disinformation undermining democracy in the region or individual countries

- **Provided materials and support**

The journalist(s) will be provided with the relevant related content and research results published during the course of the regional project by Metamorphosis and its partners.

- **Editorial policy and publication**

The investigative stories will undergo editing and approval process by editors assigned by Metamorphosis. The final drafts of the investigative stories should be submitted in the working language of the journalist(s) no later than June 30, 2024.

The final version of the investigative stories will be published no later than July 31, 2024.

The investigative stories will be published on the media platform/s operated by applicant organizations where the journalist(s) currently work, and/or on media outlets operated by Metamorphosis. Translation services for the finished stories into English and between Balkan languages can be included as part of the offer as separate budget line.

- **Timeline**

Month	Activity	Explanation
March 15, 2024	Final deadline for submission of applications	
March 2024 – June 2024	Writing of the investigative story	Research and preparation of the investigative story, including consultations with Metamorphosis editors
June 30, 2024	Submitting the final draft of the story	The journalist(s) will submit the final draft of the story (pre-publication)
July 31, 2024	Deadline for publishing of the stories	Publishing on platforms operated by applicants and/or online media operated by Metamorphosis

For each assignment, a precise timeline will be determined through agreement of the applicants and Metamorphosis Team.