REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Consultancy services for digital and data transformation phase one: discovery and audience needs analysis ICIMOD

TERMS OF REFERENCE
Digital and data transformation – Discovery and audience needs analysis, 2024

Contract modality: Organisation

Contract Period: Aug – October 2024

About

The Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region stretches 3,500km across Asia, spanning eight countries – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan. Encompassing high-altitude mountain ranges, mid-hills, and plains, the zone is vital for the food, water, and energy security of up to two billion people and is a habitat for countless irreplaceable species. It is also acutely fragile, and vulnerable to the impacts of the triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss. The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), based in Kathmandu, Nepal, is an international organisation established in 1983, that is working to make this critical region greener, more inclusive and climate resilient. For more information, read our Strategy 2030(https://lib.icimod.org/record/36171) and explore our website (https://www.icimod.org/).

Background

ICIMOD is setting out to transform how users access our data, knowledge and services by vastly improving the range, uptake and quality of our digital presence, tools, and services.

This work will include but is not limited to:

- the transformation of our top-level ICIMOD.org domain, and the development of sub-domains based on ICIMOD interventions, knowledge, user-need and user-testing, but certainly to include sub-domains available in each of our eight regional member countries' languages;
- the identification, prototyping, and launch of the most promising products, services, and tools to be developed from existing datasets ICIMOD holds, and the recommendations for the sequencing of investment in new fields for data-collection based on already completed analysis;
- a commitment to continuous learning and horizon-scanning – monitoring the ecosystem in which ICIMOD operates to identify complementarity, competitors, areas for potential collaboration and to learn from best practice in development use of digital both within development and the private sectors;
- actively setting out to increase the syndication of our content to third parties to ensure users can access our information wherever they are on the web;

- rebalancing our web offer, from an emphasis on publications, to a portfolio that spans data and data visualisations, services, APIs, and online trainings and webinars and Massively Open Online Courses.

In the first phase of this digital transformation journey, ICIMOD seeks a consultant to conduct a discovery and strategy development process. This process will create research and audience analysis to guide the second design and technical implementation stage which will see the website overhauled and flagship tools or services developed and launched.

The discovery phase will need to supply:
1. An analysis of ICIMOD's data needs and opportunities, meta-data, applications, services, resources and challenges
2. The development of design and visual language, including data visualisation options
3. A report based on detailed research on ICIMOD's current and potential audience needs
4. Competitor analysis
5. Content audit and recommendations, including in the treatment of publications, webinars, and e-learning
6. The selection of data products and tools for rapid prototyping
7. Technical scoping – an audit of current system and recommended revisions to information architecture and data workflows.
8. An online or in-person workshop to ICIMOD's Senior Management Committee for the presentation of consolidated findings, to gather feedback, and forge consensus on the way ahead.

Background to digital and data at ICIMOD
ICIMOD is recognised as a centre of digital excellence, especially in geospatial knowledge and for the development of data applications. The Centre holds 4,485 datasets, 546 of them public, on climate, environment, landslide, floods, drought, rainfall and air pollution, including satellite images, drone footage, snow cover data and NASA and other climate data. Currently, most of this data is inaccessible, or hard to understand, meaning there is a major opportunity for ICIMOD to reinvent its digital and data services by placing more emphasis on ensuring users are inspired and enabled to find, learn from and interact with the data we hold, by making it more accessible, attractive, and compelling.

Vision
To have an inspiring, user engaging, and data-driven web presence

Objective
The primary goal of the discovery phase for the web overhaul is to gather comprehensive insights and data to inform the strategic direction, design decisions, and technical requirements of a new website, to prototype and launch a minimum of two flagship services from the 'regional information service' and to make actionable recommendations on key areas for focus and change. This process aims to understand user needs, organisation's objectives, and technological constraints to create a roadmap that aligns with the organisation's plans.

Stakeholder interviews
- Conduct interviews with key stakeholders from various teams to understand their perspectives, goals, and expectations for the new web.
- Document stakeholder feedback, concerns, and priorities to ensure alignment throughout the project.

User and data research
- Perform user interviews and surveys to gather insights into current user behaviours, needs, pain points, and preferences.
- Evaluate and assess requirements of scientific tools.
- Analyse web analytics data to identify user patterns, traffic sources, popular content, and areas for improvement.
- Create user personas and journey maps to visualise user segments and their interactions with the web.

Competitive analysis
- Analyse competitors to identify industry trends, best practices, and areas of differentiation.
- Evaluate competitor strengths and weaknesses in terms of design, functionality, content, and user experience.

Content audit
- Conduct a comprehensive audit of existing web content to assess relevance, accuracy, and effectiveness.
- Identify content gaps, outdated information, and opportunities for consolidation or restructuring.
- Determine content priorities based on user needs and organisational objectives.

Technical assessment
- Review the current web's technical infrastructure, including hosting, frameworks, integrations and analytical tools.
- Identify technical challenges, performance issues, security concerns, and opportunities for optimisation.
- Analyse and assess the most suitable information architecture and data pipeline for the web, ensuring effective extraction, storage, processing, and visualisation of data.

Design exploration
- Gather feedback from stakeholders and users to refine design direction and ensure alignment with brand identity and user expectations.
- Explore areas to implement accessibility features that align with the W3C Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI).

Timeline and milestones

Week 1-2: Stakeholder interviews and user research

Week 3: Competitive analysis and content audit

Week 4: Technical assessment and initial design exploration

Week 5: Iterative design refinement based on feedback

Week 6: Finalise discovery phase deliverables and present findings to stakeholders

Deliverables

- A comprehensive **digital and data overhaul strategy** document based on understanding of stakeholder requirements, user needs, and technical considerations, which must be actionable by a third party if required.
- Clear insights into competitor strategies and industry best practices.
- Prioritised recommendations for content strategy, information architecture, and technical improvements.
- A design direction supported by user feedback and aligned with organisation's objectives.
- A detailed roadmap for the web overhaul execution, including timelines, resource requirements, and milestones.

Pre-qualification criteria

- The vendor must be comfortable working with the complexities of a large-scale organisation.
- The vendor must have experience in visual and data-driven digital storytelling.
- The vendor must have experience working on web-based data-centric and data-driven visual tools.
- The vendor must have experience working with enterprise-level web-based projects including those on WordPress.
- The vendor must have extensive knowledge on web-based systems, technologies, infrastructure and services such as servers, APIs, web migrations, GIS technologies, multi-language sites, SEO, analytics and so on.
- The vendor must have experience on delivering a good user experience (UX) and making sites accessible, and knowhow on reaching target users and increasing web traffic.

The selected bidder will be eligible to apply, but is not automatically be chosen, for phase two, technical implementation and design phase.

Proposal submission and evaluation

The service provider will be selected on the basis of the highest-ranked technical proposal (60% weightage) and lowest-cost financial proposal (40% weightage).

The service provider will be selected on the basis of the highest cumulative scores obtained in the technical and financial proposals using the following formula:

- Technical score = Score obtained based on technical proposal (total 100)

- Financial score = Score obtained based on financial proposal (total 100)
- Total score = 60% of technical proposal + 40% of financial proposal

The service provider scoring the maximum score based on the criteria will be awarded. However, the service provider should score at least 70 points in the technical proposal.

Contents of the proposal

Applicants must include the following sections in the technical proposal:

1. **Executive summary:** A brief overview of the proposal highlighting the most important aspects, along with objectives, expected outcomes, deliverables intended to achieve, and budget

2. **Technical approach and methodology:** This section should explain the understanding of the objectives of the assignment, the approach to the services, methodology for carrying out the activities and obtaining the expected output, and the degree of detail of such output. The applicant should explain the technical approach they would adopt

3. **Work plan:** The applicant should propose the main activities of the assignment, their content and duration, phasing and interrelations, deliverables, and delivery dates. The proposed work plan should be consistent with the technical approach and methodology along with a detailed timeline

4. **Organisational capacity and experience:** This section highlights the capacity and experience of the organisation submitting the proposal. It should provide information on the organisation's history, its mission and values, and its track record in implementing similar projects. It should also describe the organisation's governance structure, financial management, and monitoring and evaluation processes

5. **Personnel qualifications and experience:** This section describes the qualifications and experience of the key personnel who will be involved in implementing the project. It should outline their relevant education, skills, and experience, and highlight any relevant professional certifications or affiliations

6. **Financial bid:** Applicants should provide the financial quote with the breakdown of all the costs and include the tax in the budget (refer to the table provided below):
    - Breakdown of the experts needed, number of days required, quantity, rate
    - Breakdown of other costs, unit, quantity, rate

Component	Activity	Unit	No. of units	Unit rate	Amount	Notes (if any)
Name of activity (e.g. frontend design)						
Senior staff, designation						
Junior staff, designation						

Total						
Note: Quoted figures should be inclusive of all applicable taxes.						

Bidding process

- The proposal submitted should include all costs, a timeline for the execution of the project, and a breakdown of the durations.
- Proposals must be submitted along with the supporting documents:
  - Company registration certificate and/or business license.
  - Tax registration certificate and tax clearance/returns for the past 3 years.
  - Compliance certificates (if any)
  - Sustainability reports and governance policies (if any)

The bidder must submit the proposal to consultancy.int@icimod.org no later than 17:00 Nepal Standard Time on July 10th 2024.

ICIMOD reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids without giving any reason whatsoever.

Remuneration and payment

- The consultant will receive the payment as per the completion of the deliverables schedule depicted above.
- The consultant must strictly follow the task schedule mentioned above.
- Foresight of any delay of tasks must be communicated prior to ICIMOD.
- Income and other taxes are the responsibility of the consultant according to the rules and regulations of their respective country.

Duration and termination

- The contract duration is from 10 Aug 2024 – 10 Oct, 2024.
- Either party may terminate this contract with 30 days' prior written notice if it considers termination justified on the grounds that no further purpose would be served by continuing the activity. In the event of such termination, the consultant shall be compensated on a pro-rata basis for the actual amount of work performed. Notice of termination shall only be given after through discussion of the reasons with the other party.

Confidentiality

All information regarding the contract and data obtained from ICIMOD, including credentials, must be treated as confidential and may not be disclosed to other parties without the prior written consent of ICIMOD.