

Request for Proposals:

Designing a program to strengthen the role of local groups in corporate accountability strategies in south-east Asia

MAY 2022

Summary

The Freedom Fund is seeking a partner organisation to define and develop a new project to support frontline NGOs and activists to identify and implement corporate accountability strategies to address forced labour in global supply chains, with an initial focus on south-east Asia. The goal of the project is to increase the number, diversity and connectivity of frontline groups pursuing accountability-focused interventions, with the long-term objective of strengthening the global case pipeline to secure justice for forced labour.

The organisation will work closely with the Freedom Fund's corporate accountability team to co-create this program. The Freedom Fund anticipates that this will be a five-month project, with work commencing in June 2022.

Eligibility

Non-profit organisations and for-profit consultancies are invited to submit proposals. Organisations must have a presence in south-east Asia region or have significant experience implementing programs in the region. Applicants must have demonstrable subject matter expertise and a track record in successful implementation of capacity building programs in the Global South.

Budget

Approximately USD 75,000 has been made available for this project, including any travel and workshop costs. Budgets will be reviewed with respect to the strength of the proposal in meeting the project objectives in a cost-effective manner.

Proposal deadline

Proposals should be submitted via email to Marta Bylica (mbylica@freedomfund.org) on or before 2 June 2022. Proposals should be no longer than 5 pages plus annexes.

Background to the Freedom Fund

The Freedom Fund is a global fund with the goal of ending modern slavery. We identify and invest in the most effective frontline efforts to eradicate forced labour and human trafficking in the countries and sectors where they are most prevalent. Partnering with visionary investors, governments, anti-slavery organisations

and those at risk of exploitation, we tackle the systems and power structures that allow modern slavery practices to thrive.

The Freedom Fund's Corporate Accountability initiative invests in cutting-edge accountability programs designed to shift corporate behaviour as a driver of forced labour and human trafficking across all sectors of the global economy. Our goal is to incentivise systems change by increasing the pressure on businesses to address, remedy and prevent modern slavery in their supply chains.

Project Overview and Key Objectives

Securing accountability for corporations involved in, or benefitting from, forced labour in their supply chains is a critical component of a systems change approach to ending modern slavery. The introduction of new enforceable standards of responsible business conduct, and the increasing number of legal cases being filed against multinational corporations implicated in forced labour practices, provides new opportunities to advance accountability and secure justice for workers in global supply chains.

In 2021, the Freedom Fund [commissioned a scoping study](#) to understand the role of Global South NGOs and lawyers in corporate accountability legal actions for forced labour. The study provided a landscape assessment of the accountability 'ecosystem' within three countries in south-east Asia: Thailand, Malaysia and The Philippines. It concluded that there are currently no clear pathways or pipelines for local groups in these countries to pursue transnational corporate accountability legal approaches. Both local and global organisations lack the connections and resources required to identify, develop and sustain such actions, and as a result there is little consideration given to the possibility of pursuing these avenues to justice.

The Freedom Fund intends to establish a new program to help strengthen the accountability ecosystem for forced labour – the networks, expertise and established pathways that are available to local groups to initiate and implement interventions challenging exploitative industries. The project will have three key objectives:

- **Strengthen knowledge and expertise:** Partner with local groups to build knowledge and skills to initiate accountability-focused interventions targeting multinational corporations involved in forced labour abuses, based on information and skills exchange approaches that support local ownership.
- **Facilitate connections:** Connect local groups with international and regional experts, to foster collaboration on transnational corporate accountability strategies that are driven by the needs and perspectives of impacted groups.
- **Invest in the case pipeline:** Provide financial support to support accountability initiatives, with a focus on laying the groundwork for strategic legal action through investigations and case development.

We plan to pilot the program in south-east Asia, supporting a small cohort of frontline NGOs with experience working on labour rights issues linked to global supply chains. Our target countries are Thailand, Malaysia, Taiwan, Indonesia, Cambodia, and The Philippines.

Scope of consultancy

We are seeking a partner organisation to help co-create this program with the Freedom Fund. In the first phase the organisation will:

- Research and capture learnings from similar ‘capacity building’ programs
- Design the overall model for the program, specifically focusing on knowledge and skills development and network building components (objectives 1 and 2)
- Define and identify potential participants in the program, and delivery partners

We expect that the consultant will organise at least one regional workshop during the project period to gather input and perspectives from potential project participants.

Following the project development phase our intention is to work with the consultancy to deliver the project, subject to funding. Given that the scope of the project will depend on the outcome of this first phase, applicants do not need to cover this in their proposals.

Key design questions

1. **Program structure:** How should the program be structured to deliver the key objectives in a practical and effective way?
2. **Content:** What subject areas should the knowledge and skills development component of the program cover? How should the technical content of corporate accountability legal strategies be tailored to the specific needs and requirements of the program beneficiaries?
3. **Approach:** What tools and methods should be used to deliver each of the program components? How can the project be implemented in a way that respects local ownership and a collaborative approach to knowledge and skills development?
4. **Participants:** What type of organisations should the program be targeting? Should there be a narrow or broad geographical focus within the region? How can the program be delivered in a way that is attractive and useful to participants?
5. **Networks:** How can this program develop, support and sustain the development of a global network of experts, connecting local and international groups to create pathways for referrals to effectively pursue corporate accountability legal approaches?
6. **Impact:** How can we measure the success of the program?
7. **Resourcing:** What financial resources are required for program delivery? How can the Freedom Fund use investment to support the long-term objectives of laying the groundwork for strategic legal action?

Project deliverables and high-level timeline

The tentative schedule of main deliverables is as follows. As part of the contracting process, the timeline below will be further reviewed and refined.

Main deliverables	Proposed timeline
Detailed workplan submitted to FF	July 2022
Desk-based research and interviews with key stakeholder groups	August – October 2022
Project development workshop(s)	October 2022
Draft ecosystem project strategy	November 2022
Final ecosystem project strategy	December 2022

Budget

The Freedom Fund has budgeted \$75,000 USD for this project. Budgets will be reviewed with respect to the strength of the proposal in meeting the project objectives in a cost-effective manner. We do not simply prioritise the lowest budget.

As part of the proposal, please prepare a brief budget with the following breakdown

- Personnel cost
- Other direct costs (event and meeting costs, travel and accommodation, covid-19 precautions etc.)
- Overheads
- VAT if applicable

Evaluation criteria

In evaluating proposals, the Freedom Fund will use the following criteria

Technical criteria	Weighting
a. Organisational capacity and track record: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Experience developing and/or implementing capacity building programs for Global South groups- Programmatic expertise and organisational presence in south-east Asia- Knowledge and expertise in corporate accountability, human rights and/or labour rights	30%
b. Approach and methodology: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Understanding of, and responsiveness to, project objectives and design questions- Relevance of suggested approach to achieving project objectives- Stakeholder (local/regional/international) engagement strategy	30%
c. Team structure and staffing levels are adequate to deliver quality outputs within the desired timeframe	20%
Financial criteria	
d. Costs are proportional to the scale of the project and reasonable for the level of activities proposed	20%

Proposal format and timeline

Interested parties should prepare a proposal of no more than 5 pages (excluding annexes). Proposals should contain the following sections:

- 1 Profile of organisation, including how the organisation meets the eligibility requirements
- 2 Approach to delivering on the scope of the RFP and project design questions, including any trade-offs and limitations.
- 3 Team structure, defining the role and time commitment of key project team members.
- 4 High-level workplan and deliverables.
- 5 Proposed budget in USD.
- 6 CVs of consultant(s) (to be included in the annex)

The proposal must be written in English and submitted electronically in Microsoft Office or PDF format.

5 May 2022

Release of RFP

By 2 June 2022 Midnight UK time Final proposals due

Please submit all documents to Marta Bylica (email addresses above) with 'Ecosystem building project consultancy' as the email subject line

By 10 June 2022

Shortlisted organisations notified

June 2022

Contract signed with selected organisation