

pen

INTERNATIONAL



AN INVITATION TO TENDER FOR AN INDEPENDENT EVALUATION

PEN INTERNATIONAL

1. Background to PEN International

PEN International, established in 1921, is the world's oldest literary and human rights based organisation. A global grassroots community of writers who adhere to the PEN Charter and are united in celebrating literature as well as upholding and pressing for lasting improvements in respect of freedom of expression and other rights. The PEN network spans more than 100 countries, represented through over 147 local autonomous centres, with a Secretariat based in London. PEN Centres are engaged in work at the national, regional and international level to advance PEN's core values of freedom of expression, mutual respect and tolerance across cultures, as well as opportunities for all to participate in, and contribute creatively to, both local and global literary culture.

PEN has a long-established record of defending writers and campaigning for freedom of expression including linguistic rights. It challenges threats to the right to write, and to freedom of expression in general, through an arc of interventions, from providing direct emergency assistance to writers at risk, to researching and publicizing information about threats to individual writers, as well as mobilising dynamic coalitions of writers, activists, media, and civil society partners to campaign against broader threats to freedom of expression. PEN advocates for redress for rights violations and to strengthen legal and policy frameworks for the protections of these rights going forward. PEN has a similarly long history of promoting cross-cultural understanding through the shared values of literature, and building truly international networks of writers that demonstrate and reinforce the universality of the right to freedom of expression.

PEN International's governing document is the PEN Charter and its Constitution, PEN International's members are the PEN Centres which meet once a year at the Assembly of Delegates. The organisation is managed by its board, which consists of the International President, International Secretary, the Treasurer and seven members elected from among PEN's worldwide membership. International PEN through its Secretariat coordinates the activities of PEN Centres across the world in defence of freedom of expression and provides international support, research, policy development and programming to further its aims.

2. INTRODUCTION

In 2015 the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) awarded PEN international a 4 year (2015 – 2018) grant (31,000,000 SEK), to support its core programme of work - to defend fellow writers facing persecution and to challenge the limitations and threats to freedom of expression across the world. Threats whether they be from States with ever more sophisticated systems for monitoring their citizens and censoring expression, from non-state actors who seek to impose cultural orthodoxies, from globalized economies and policies that threaten to overwhelm local languages and cultural traditions and from the persistent and growing divide between those who have the means to tell their own stories and those who do not— these are just a few of the forces that PEN has sought to address - to defend the right of all to express themselves freely and in the language of their own choosing.

The overarching goals which PEN International set for itself during this time period were to:

Increase the impact and reach of PEN's advocacy and other programming to promote freedom of expression, literatures, linguistic diversity, mutual respect and tolerance across borders; Cultivate strong, diverse, and sustainable PEN centres that are influential civil society actors advancing PEN's mission at the local, national, regional, and international levels and to strengthen the capacity of PEN International to facilitate, support, and promote PEN's work globally through to PEN's centennial year.

Aligned to our goals, 3 outcomes defined our strategic objectives:

- ❖ To protect and promote freedom of expression – using PEN's influence to advocate for the improvement of policy and practice and campaigning for the repeal of structural barriers to free expression
- ❖ To improve the situation of writers at risk, who are detained or otherwise persecuted for their opinions expressed in writing, through direct support, solidarity, advocacy and campaigning;
- ❖ To ensure that freedom of expression is understood and asserted - Civil society expresses itself creatively and critically enhancing freedom of expression policy and practice.

Challenging structural barriers to freedom of expression

PEN advocates before national governments and international human rights fora to press for changes in the structural obstacles to, and redress for, violations of freedom of expression. Over the past four years PEN has documented an increasingly challenging climate for freedom of expression across the globe.

The threats to free speech have come from new and long-standing repressive governments in the form of new anti-terror laws and extremely invasive surveillance laws, attacks on the media and the proliferation of fake news. Dissident writers and those critical of government policies are intimidated, forced to flee their homes, prevented from working, pressured into self-censorship and, at worst, imprisoned or tortured and even killed. Impunity continued for murders and attacks on writers both by non-state actors such as organised crime or by religious extremists. Across the world authoritarian governments sought to silence open debate or criticism both off and on-line. Lethal government crackdowns have silenced independent media and writers have been prosecuted for criminal defamation, blasphemy or apostasy and on spurious charges of 'supporting terrorism'. Ongoing and protracted conflicts have contributed to the ongoing outflow of writers fleeing their homelands and seeking refuge.

In order to address the perilous threats and deterioration of the right to free expression across the world, the focus of our advocacy and campaigning has been on impunity and safety of journalists, hate speech, and the ever increasing threats to digital freedom. PEN has called for the repeal of legislation which restricts the right to legitimate freedom of expression, especially vague and overbroad national security, sedition, obscenity, blasphemy and criminal

defamation laws, as well as other legislation used to imprison, harass and silence critical voices, including on social media and online.

PEN International issues reports and briefing papers to inform our campaigning and advocacy amongst writers, the public and decision makers. Reports have been both country focused for example on Turkey, India and Ukraine and thematically focused for example on Criminal Defamation in Africa. In collaboration with our local PEN Centers and sister freedom of expression organisations PEN advocates for systemic change to improve the framework for freedom of expression with governments and international human rights mechanisms. PEN regularly provides submissions to human rights protection mechanisms such as the UN Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review, and works with these bodies to influence change.

Supporting Writers at Risk

PEN International's work to support individual writers at risk focuses on monitoring, researching, campaigning and providing direct assistance to writers in prison or persecuted for their writing.

PEN's annual Case List, which has been published since the 1960's provides an analysis of cases of writers in prison, killed, threatened or facing harassment for their work. Global and regional analysis seeks to document emerging and changing threats to writers whether by state or non-state actors and monitors the application of legislation which seeks to silence and curb free expression. The Case List underpins PEN's calls to action through its Rapid Action Network, as well as statements and press briefings on behalf of writers at risk across the world calling for an end to their persecution, their release from prison, the cessation of harassment and in some cases, an end to torture or ill-treatment.

We work with the International Cities of Refuge Network (ICORN) to assess applications from writers seeking short (up to 2 years) placements with ICORN member cities who offer temporary shelter to those at risk as a direct consequence of their creative activities. Through the PEN Emergency Fund, we support writers who are in acute financial need because of the persecution they face. The modest funds have assisted writers to flee their country, purchase urgent medication following imprisonment and sometimes to support writers' families who are in distress. PEN also provides support to writers through letters in support of asylum and refugee status, and coordinates with its local PEN Centres to facilitate access to legal advice and accompaniment to court hearings for exiled writers seeking asylum.

Supporting spaces for freedom of expression in civil society

PEN International supports its global network of Centres to create spaces for civil society to assert creatively and critically the right to freedom of expression. Online platforms such as Swedish PEN's *The Dissident Blog* an on-line magazine provides a platform for publishing banned texts—ones that can neither be written nor published in the writers' own countries. The Blog includes articles, interviews and literary pieces which reflected on freedom expression and the impact they have on individuals and on society in general.

PEN's civil society programme has directly supported over 25 PEN Centres mostly in the global south, with small grants to deliver a range of projects. Addressing their local needs,

projects include Free the Word! public events, which use literature as an avenue for stimulating dialogue and exchanges of ideas, often providing a unique stage for minority and often excluded voices. Education projects are run in schools, universities, rural communities and prisons to encourage reading, creative writing and critical thinking in young people. PEN Centres are using literature, in particular minority language literature as a tool to increase understanding of human rights (and responsibilities) and to explore the world around them. Giving a voice to young people is an integral part of PEN's work - recognising that engaged citizenship, reading, writing and speaking out from an early age provide the basis for healthy civil societies where literature and freedom of expression can blossom.

PEN has supported its Centres in the civil society programme to become more active and effective in their contexts. Through small grants, Centre to Centre learning, training and the provision of resources, capacity is being strengthened institutionally in good governance, resourcing and project management, whilst communications and advocacy training has sought to enhance outreach through varying medium and increase our influence amongst the public and duty bearers.

3. Evaluation Purpose

As PEN International draws to the end of this cycle of work, we are looking to learn and build on our successes and strengthen our approach in areas where the work has been slower or more challenging than expected.

The evaluation is intended as a learning exercise to determine the extent to which PEN International is delivering on its intended objectives. PEN would like an independent view on what has been achieved and what has been learned, with a special focus on impact and effectiveness, sustainability and replicability. The evaluation should also reflect on the extent to which PEN implemented recommendations from previous evaluations and to what effect. The results and recommendations will be used for planning PEN's strategic plan 2019 – 2022, through and beyond its Centenary in 2021.

PEN welcomes recommendations as to which areas of its work are for set for expansion and at what rate, as well as identifying areas which would benefit from continued investment and support to improve effectiveness.

The evaluation should adopt a gender lens and reflect on PEN's effectiveness in gender mainstreaming across all areas of its work. The evaluation will provide an assessment of the impact of PEN's work in the following areas

Relevance

- Has PEN has carried out the most appropriate activities to achieve its objectives?
- Examine PEN's relevance in the field of Freedom of Expression in the global context particularly its added value in comparison to other freedom of expression organisations in the given context

Efficiency

- To what extent has PEN International been able to meet its targets in terms of activities and outputs?
- To what extent have inputs and outputs served to achieve PEN's outcomes?
- Is PEN value for money? Have funds been used effectively and efficiently to deliver results?

Effectiveness

- The extent to which PEN International has developed capacity and created new spaces and channels for dialogue and communication amongst its membership and through its civil society programme;
- The extent to which Centres running projects through the civil society programme have been effective in their chosen activity;
- The extent to which advocacy activities have been based on effective strategies.
- The extent to which the Dissident Blog is relevant and effective in showcasing dissident writers to a variety of audiences, particularly its reach and impact; and the extent to which the Dissident Blog has contributed to PEN International's strategic objectives.

Impact

- To review the extent to which PEN International's influence is effecting positive and sustainable change on the issues and countries on which we work;
- To review the extent to which PEN International's direct support and solidarity, advocacy and campaigning has affected positive change for writers on whose behalf we advocate;
- Where is there most scope for replicability of PEN's work in the future?
- The extent to which support from Sida has enhanced the PEN International Secretariat to deliver PEN's goals and support its membership.

The evaluation audience

- PEN International's Centres and members
- Staff and Board of trustees
- Beneficiaries of PEN's work - writers, learners, duty bearers
- PEN's supporters, donors and coalition partners
- The general public

The evaluation should be based on OECD/DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance and will provide a rigorous analysis of the organisation's achievements and learning by an

external and independent consultant. The evaluation will enable PEN International to strengthen its approach, and will feed into PEN forthcoming strategic planning process. The evaluation will also help local Centers to gain a clear sense of what they have achieved, to draw out what each of them has learned and to help them further strengthen their projects to increase the impact and sustainability of their work.

The evaluators will triangulate information from stakeholders, including those benefitting from the project (learners and duty bearers), so Centres can confidently demonstrate what has been achieved and learned and communicate this both to those involved in the project and an external audience. The local Centres involved in the evaluation will be agreed with the evaluation team.

CALL TO TENDER

CONSULTANT/TEAM – profile and skill set

- Extensive experience of carrying out evaluations and impact assessments for a wide range of organisations, including multi-country evaluations
- Demonstrable experience of working in the global south, implementing programmes and/or undertaking evaluations in the development or human rights sector using participatory approaches
- Proven ability to deliver rigorous analysis as independent and external evaluators in line with the principles of participatory and qualitative research
- Experience of working with voluntary based and/or membership organisations
- A commitment to grassroots and local PEN Centre engagement and learning in the evaluation process so that they both validate and own the findings, contribute their expertise to the process
- Ability to analyse budgets and financial reports to assess economy, efficiency and value for money in programmes and approaches
- Ability to write clearly and engagingly in English, so that work is useful to donors, international organisations and local partners
- Fluency in Spanish and/or French, an advantage
- Knowledge and experience of working with PEN International, highly desirable

TIMING

The evaluation needs to be completed, with evaluation report and recommendations submitted to PEN International by 15 October 2018.

BUDGET

A maximum of £50,000 (including expenses and VAT) is available for this evaluation

The tender from interested parties should include an approach paper (no more than 5 pages) which sets out the relevant experience and qualities of the evaluation consultant/team; a description of different types of methodologies and tools which could be applied for consulting different stakeholders and assessing impact.

A budget for the work to include any overheads/management costs and including figures for travel and other expenses and VAT where appropriate

An evaluation timeline;

Key personnel involved in undertaking the work – their experience and past work including CVs.

A list of (similar) projects evaluated by the evaluation team/organisation

The name and contact details of two independent referees.

Deadline: Tenders should be submitted to Romana.Cacchioli@pen-international.org by 9:00 GMT, on 12 March 2018.

Notes

EVALUATION APPROACH

It is proposed that the evaluation will take a participatory approach, which enables PEN staff and trustees, PEN Centres, beneficiaries and duty-bearers to reflect on and analyse what is working well, what has been learned and what could be strengthened. The evaluator will aim to ensure that the views of centres, writers and beneficiaries emerge clearly in the evaluation by drawing out their contribution from project documents, interviews with centres and field visits.

In order to facilitate meaningful participation, the evaluator will not only involve stakeholders in discussions and interviews, but also use participatory tools, where appropriate, to engage young people and others more deeply. Tools will be agreed with PEN Centres to ensure they are both relevant and culturally appropriate. Information should be triangulated, where feasible, through a range of sources.

PEN International will work closely with the consultant/evaluation team to develop detailed terms of reference and approach, which it will share with participating PEN Centers. PEN International will also approach SIDA as the funding partner for their input and provide feedback to the consultant who will make any agreed amendments to the approach before finalising a contract with PEN International.

Detailed design of evaluation framework

The evaluation should seek to be as participatory as possible, include staff, trustees, PEN members, external stakeholders including funders. We foresee that this may include on line questionnaires; focus group discussions, interviews, and country visits. The consultant will also liaise with PEN Centres to be visited to adapt and agree the specific visit activities in line with their local context and ways of working.

The evaluator will develop and use a short on line survey to gather quantitative data (using mainly tick boxes and numerical responses) from all participating centers and committees in

a consistent way. The survey will also include three to five qualitative questions that will give Centres an opportunity to provide feedback on more sensitive issues. The evaluator will protect confidentiality of this feedback, and information gathered more generally in the evaluation, as appropriate.

Local center interviews

The review of documentation and responses from the on-line survey qualitative responses will which Centres should be selected for in-depth interviews. For examples Centres in countries that will not be visited, the evaluator will undertake a phone/Skype interview. The interviews could include two to three people from each local Centre, including both the leadership of the Centre and someone directly involved in the project work. The interviews will draw out qualitative information, including specific case studies and examples.

Country and field visits to be agreed

The evaluator will travel to up to four PEN Centres involved in the civil society programme undertake in-depth visits, working with a facilitator from the local center. The activities could include:

- An initial meeting with local Centre leadership to introduce the research and evaluator; talk through plans, tools, timetable and any concerns; and make small last minute changes to plans, as needed;
- Some initial interviews of with centre members including any staff to orient the consultant.
- A meeting with all Centre members to explore achievements, learning, concerns and programme relationships;
- Non-community based interviews: Interviews, as feasible and warranted, with government officials, NGO partners and other stakeholders. Further interviews with project staff and review of systems;
- Field work with beneficiaries: groups will be invited to participate in the evaluation that represent different geographic locations/ target groups/ gender/ needs/ and progress. Field work could include the following: participatory activities (to be agreed with Centres partners after the initial document review and interviews); case studies (successful, average and difficult); focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews as well as group participatory activities (Venn diagrams, ranking, scoring, timelines).

The Evaluation report and recommendations

A report of maximum 30 pages including:

- Title page, contents page, acronyms page
- Executive summary (maximum 3 pages)
- Background to the evaluation:
- A short introduction to the programme and context
- Centres, project and target group
- Findings in relation to standard review criteria; and other unexpected findings.

- Conclusions: innovation and lessons learned
- Recommendations with respect to growth and investment towards achieving global step change; are there areas (thematic or country/regional) where PEN should be doing more, or conversely are there areas where PEN should be doing less, in either case an analysis of why would be welcome
- Specific recommendations for local centres, PEN International and SIDA
- Annexes: the evaluation methodologies, terms of reference, evaluation schedule and participants, achievement rating scale, documents consulted statistical data and a two-page summary of centre visits.

The draft report shall be sent to PEN international – a meeting shall be held with the evaluator to cross-check factual information, obtain Centre feedback on the analysis and discuss the recommendations for the way forward.