

Call for Applications to Conduct Forum Theatre Performances

Incubator Spaces for Promoting Information Rights and Freedom of Expression (InSPIRE) Project

Background

The Incubator Spaces for Promoting Information Rights and Freedom of Expression (InSPIRE) is an action jointly implemented by the Sri Lanka Development Journalist Forum and Helvetas Intercooperation gGmbH and funded by the European Union.

The **Overall Objective** of the action is to *contribute to the enhancement of democracy and human rights in Sri Lanka*. The creation of youth communities and accessible spaces for free and diverse speech represents a novel and innovative opportunity for students of media and mass communication and, through them, larger youth groups to be informed, to project community voices, to engage and to participate in civic engagement. The action has integrated on multidisciplinary learning methods and therein a comprehensive internalization of concepts around freedom of expression.

The **Specific Objective:** *To promote an increased understanding and respect of freedom of expression and information, by empowering a community of youth to creatively express and advocate for the **focus areas** of (i) gender-sensitive freedom of expression and (ii) ethical and socially responsible media expressions*. Through empowering a network of 350 young future media professionals, the development of Incubator Spaces at 3 selected Universities and of modules for capacity building future professionals will be trained and media products will be generated, in a gender-sensitive, ethical and socially responsible manner.

For the creation of new media products, students were given the opportunity to first pitch their ideas in an idea market organized in the incubator spaces and, from thereon, guided by mentors to develop quality media products that promote and strengthen freedom of expression in these areas. Further, the new media products highlight issues faced by women and communities that are otherwise ignored or receive inadequate attention.

The action also contributed to gender-balanced freedom of expression by empowering women in media and amplifying the experiences and voices of otherwise silenced women. Three planned advocacy initiatives, district-level dialogues with decision-makers and online campaigns will be implemented on the selected focus areas. The project action's objective will be achieved through the delivery of 3 main Outputs: **O1: 1 innovative, socially responsible network of 350 future journalists and media professionals** is created and activated (communities of which 3 of approximately 100 Mass Media and Communication students in the Universities of Colombo, Jaffna and Peradeniya / Kandy and 50 students of the South-Eastern University / Batticaloa). **O2: 3 "Incubator Spaces"** (1 in each University of Colombo, Jaffna and Peradeniya / Kandy) are established as a replicable model; **150 media products** (from diverse media categories including short-films, photography and digital stories) and 2 research outputs are generated, focusing on (i) gender-sensitive freedom of expression and (ii) ethical and socially

responsible media expressions. **O3: 3 advocacy initiatives** (including 10 districts-level dialogues with decision-makers) are conducted based on district-wise research.

Under the output 3, Helvetas and SDJF is responsible for the implementation of Activity 3.3 as detailed below.

Activity.3.3: Outreach initiatives (4 per District) to present media products: The new media products will be shared among a wider audience of women and youth groups, university students, high school students from intervention districts, active users of digital space, community networks and members of CBOs, projecting issues to be voiced through new media products designed. HELVETAS and SDJF will ensure that 16 outreach initiatives (each targeting 250 persons, total of 4,000) such as exhibitions, street dramas, people's forums, panel discussions will be organized to enable wider dissemination of the media products and discussion of issues around freedom of expression among the wider audience. Officials of local government institutions and other stakeholders with access to the new media products will benefit from exposure to the issues faced by these groups.

Considering the time restriction and importance of the activity, the project is seeking to conduct these outreach activities by using Forum Theatre or Street drama to reach intended audience and numbers with the guidance of SDJF.

SDJF is looking for an experienced performing arts company or institution to take up this task and complete it in a time period of two months.

The roles and responsibilities of a performing arts company/institution

1. Proposal submission: Interested companies should submit a proposal to SDJF outlining the methodology and strategy to reach a wider audience and initiate dialogues under this program and outlining the tentative timeline and cost structure to complete the 16-performances including all costs related to the performance.
2. Selection of artists/Crew: It is solely the responsibility of the company to select appropriate artists/crew members to deliver the target. The company should pay attention to gender and language diversity when selecting artists.
3. Training on concept and script writing: Upon selection of all artists, SDJF will facilitate a two days conceptual training for the selected artists with the facilitation of the company and finally develop a script for the performances.
4. Prepare the performance calendar and submit it to SDJF for approval.
5. Conduct 4 performances per district for a total 16 performances.
6. The company is responsible for the reporting of each performance with the number of interventions, type of interventions, and output of the performance to SDJF.
7. The company should submit the final report to SDJF highlighting the key features of the performances.

Target Group

1. The company is expected to reach the following target group when conducting a forum theatre.
 - Women organization representatives

- Youth groups and their representatives
 - University students
 - High school students (A/L or O/L)
 - Members of CBO
 - Active users of digital media (Journalists) and
 - Community members.
2. The company is expected to have at least 250 persons/individuals per performance and reach at least 4000 persons through 16 performances. The company should demonstrate the evidence for the participants (Attendance sheets).
 3. The performance should target Jaffna, Kandy, Ampara and Colombo districts.

Qualification and Experience

- Demonstrate the relevant qualification related to performing arts and special focus on Forum Theatre.
- Demonstrate at least 3 years' experience in delivering forum theatre performances.
- Demonstrate the capacity of the company in term of artists, crew members, etc
- Demonstrate the financial management capacity of the company to engage with this assignment.
- Should be registered in Sri Lanka.
- Able to travel across the country and do the performances.

How to apply:

Interested companies/organizations are requested to submit:

- A short proposal including the budget.
- A cover letter that describes why the company/organization is the most suitable to undertake this assignment. (Should include a list of projects/similar assignments carried out within the last 03 years.)
- Copy of the registration of the company/organization if applicable.
- The focal point for coordination from the company/organization if applicable.

Please send in your applications to procurement@ldjf.org on or before 26th January 2023