

Terms of Reference

Developing research-based digital tool for media-management decision-making in East Africa

Service:	Conceptualization, development and implementation of a digital tool to facilitate the decision-making for viable media management in East Africa – based on the research data from the Innovation for Media Viability Research Project
Project title:	Media Futures East Africa Project
Location:	Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda
Implementation:	30.07.2022 – latest 31.12.2022
Languages required:	English /Kiswahili
Application deadline:	13.07.2022 (23:59 EAT)

I. Background

DW Akademie is Deutsche Welle's centre for international media development. As a strategic partner of the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, DW Akademie carries out media development projects that strengthen the human right to freedom of opinion and promote free access to information. For more information visit www.dw-akademie.com.

The **Graduate School of Media and Communications of the Aga Khan University (AKU-GSMC)**, hosting the **Media Innovation Centre** in Nairobi, aims to foster a diverse, independent, innovative, ethical, and economically thriving media and communications sector in East Africa that contributes to the creation of successful and sustainable societies in an era of technological and social change. Through ongoing partnerships with the media industry and prestigious overseas institutions, the AKU enlists international and local expertise to help establish its programs and services. Accordingly, AKU-GSMC and the Media Innovation Centre are dedicated to advancing excellence in media performance, strengthening ethical practice, enhancing leadership, and promoting innovation and entrepreneurship across the media and communications sectors. More information is available on the AKU-GSMC [website](#).

The Media Futures East Africa Project (MFEAP)

DW Akademie and AKU-GSMC, Media Innovation Centre are collaborating within the Media Futures East Africa Project to support informed communities through viable media in East Africa. To this end and through partnerships we conduct research and training, and carry out acceleration and outreach, for media and other stakeholders. The Media Futures East Africa Project supports media that is free, independent, innovative, evidence-based and committed to society. Overall, the project aims to:

- 1) Bolster the viability of media outlets and

2) Galvanize media innovation in East Africa, with a focus not just on creative content but on new and sustainable business models for the future.

For more information on the project, please visit our [website](#).

The Innovation for Media Viability Research

Under the auspices of the MFEA project, between 2020-2021 the Innovation for Media Viability research collected survey responses from over 1000 media practitioners from 437 media houses across Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda – focusing on the status quo of their innovativeness and media viability, including aspects such as: Newsroom structure, Innovation culture, Journalism culture, Organisational capacity, the Impact of COVID-19, Business resilience, Content quality and the Ownership and Business models.

The resulting data and insights have already been presented at various international conferences and are partially currently in review for publication in peer-reviewed journals. There will also be an extensive final report covering insights from all three countries, as well as a podcast and roundtables to familiarise media practitioners with the research outcomes and implications for their work.

To ensure the longevity and applicability of the research, the MFEA project is now seeking to develop a digital tool that will allow for an easily digestible review of the data for media practitioners, as well as provide a practical aid in decision making, based on the data.

II. Scope of engagement

To this end we are looking for a partner to support in **conceptualization, development and implementation of a digital tool to facilitate decision-making for viable media management in East Africa – based on the data from the Innovation for Media Viability research**. The tool and development process is envisioned to have the following features and final aim (to be verified by additional needs assessments):

- Use the existing project data
- Target media managers across the region– with secondary use options by journalists or media support organisations, where relevant
- To visualise country and sector-specific existing data so users may compare their organisation’s data with data from the study
- Develop a series of key decision-support questions to enhance their organisation’s specific media viability strategy with SMART goals covering aspects such as: Finance, Human Resources, Innovation, Technology, Journalism Quality
- Be developed in close collaboration with the research team

It should also:

- Be designed to integrate into the [project website](#)
- Provide the option for personal log-in and team collaboration on the backend
- Facilitate the integration of [datawrapper](#) visualizations and visualizations via other software
- Identify issues & decision areas from media managers across the region
- Allow for data import from other platforms

- Be available in Kiswahili and English
- Be fast and easy to use
- Able to work in limited bandwidth environments
- Accessible from mobile and desktop devices
- Allow for comparative features
- Provide an FAQ section
- Be able to understand question input in human language
- Be visually appealing
- Allow for the custom download of reports
- Enable saving personalized questions and responses on user's device only
- Have high data security precautions, aligned with GDPR and regional data protection standards, to protect any data input

The following may be provided by the research team to facilitate development:

- Full dataset covering over 1000 individual responses from over 430 media houses
- Initial drafts of research data visualized in [datawrapper](#) (note that developer team may eventually develop visualizations in other software that best lends itself to the tool objectives)
- Access to key stakeholders, including management of review cycles
- Questions to be asked

The development and implementation shall take place **between July 2022 and latest December 2022 in either Kenya, Tanzania or Uganda**. The estimated budget for development and implementation should not exceed 15.000EUR incl. VAT.

III. Competencies

- Proven experience in developing effective, low-cost digital solutions for an East African market
- Knowledge of co-creation and human-centered design processes
- Excellent data analysis and visualisation competencies. Working knowledge of datawrapper preferred
- Thorough understanding of WordPress integration options
- Proven knowledge of English and Kiswahili, additional regional languages preferred
- Experience working with international development actors preferred
- Sound knowledge of the media landscape in East Africa, and engagement with relevant stakeholders is preferred

IV. Deliverables

Based on Section II the following deliverables shall be provided (indicative but not limited to the following):

- Inception report: outlining the learnings from additional user research & paper prototype, and anticipated product development timelines
- Prototype: including improvement of existing [datawrapper](#) visualisations where necessary
- Review cycles: minimum 5 – including a variety of stakeholders

- Final tool: integrated on project website and providing full development details and IP
- User guidebook: preferably in multimedia format, to be uploaded to project [website](#)
- Digital launch training with key stakeholders
- Final report: outlining long-term handling, use strategy & communication plan for wide dissemination
- Publicity: Be willing to feature on project website for publicity purposes as the developer of the tool (video, social media, etc.)

V. How to apply

Applications shall be made in writing **by July 15th, 2022** and provide the following:

- **Eligibility:** Cover letter (max 1 page): Kindly briefly outline your eligibility as per above criteria. Any CVs of participating developers & previous projects may be annexed
- **Vision:** brief description outlining your understanding of the final tool in your own words, and including additional features where you deem necessary for the target group and feasible within the estimated budget
- **Activity plan:** outlining the steps taken for deliverables outlined in Section IV, including a broad estimated timeline for the proposed activities
- **Budget:** Financial proposal in local currency and in Euro (incl. VAT), split into personnel and material costs. Please note that costs incurred or committed prior to a signed agreement are not eligible for refund

The MFEA project will assess all applications and shortlist applicants for an interview. Proposals (incl. budget) should be submitted in electronic form only to dw-akademie.media-futures@dw.com with Rose Kimani (rose.kimani[at]dw.com) and Hesbon Owilla (hesbon.owilla[at]jaku.edu) in CC. All questions should be addressed to the above email addresses. The deadline for all proposals is **July 13th, 2022**. Please merge all required documents into one PDF.