

**CRDF GLOBAL
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
PFP-04-UA-2025**

Seeking a *Media and Public Relations Promotion* Vendor to support the promotion of the cyberveterans reintegration program

«CyberDefender 2025»

Deadline: February 07, 2025; 18:00 Kyiv time

Summary:

CRDF Global is seeking a long-term, agile, and highly efficient partnership with qualified experts, the local vendors specializing in media and public relations (PR) promotion. The selected partner will be expected to deliver innovative, strategic communication solutions that enhance visibility, engagement, and outreach for the cyberveterans reintegration program 2025, while demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness to evolving project needs.

CRDF Global, with support from the Department of State's Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia, will deliver the cyberveterans reintegration program 2025 designed to provide cybersecurity skills to Ukrainian veterans. This program will equip qualified veterans with the tools they need to reenter the workforce and contribute to countering cyberspace threats. CRDF Global will develop an intensive reintegration training course tailored to the needs of the cybersecurity sector, preparing Ukrainian veterans to become cybersecurity professionals and assisting them with employment in both the Ukrainian government and private sector. The reintegration process will be supported through the development of cybersecurity-focused theoretical and practical classes, the provision of psychosocial support, mentoring and career counseling services, as well as peer-to-peer support to improve their social well-being and professional skills. The intensive training program will also incorporate English language courses to enhance participants' communication skills and ensure they are better equipped to engage in international cybersecurity collaborations and initiatives. All program components will be designed to facilitate participants' smooth entry or advancement into the cybersecurity and cyber defense sectors, accelerating their reintegration into civilian life.

Specific **objectives** set for the Contractor include:

Enhancing Awareness

- Raise awareness among the target audience about the Cyberveterans reintegration program and its unique features to encourage veteran participation and interest in applying.
- Maximize the program's visibility and reach among veterans, government institutions, and the broader cybersecurity community, ensuring key stakeholders are informed and engaged.
- Elevate the program's profile through strategic PR activities, media coverage, and content that highlights its objectives, impact, and significance.

Driving Engagement

- Foster active participation by creating targeted messaging and storytelling that resonates with the intended audience, encouraging them to engage with the program.

- Use compelling narratives, success stories, and interactive content to increase interest, drive awareness, and encourage enrollment.

Promoting Success Stories

- Showcase program achievements, participants' journeys, and key milestones to highlight the impact of the Cyberdefenders reintegration program.
- Utilize success stories to inspire and motivate both current and prospective participants, creating a stronger connection with the program.

Strengthening Social Media Presence

- Establish a dynamic and impactful social media presence across key platforms (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn) to ensure consistent messaging and engagement.
- Develop and manage high-quality content, posts, and campaigns that promote the program's goals and foster an ongoing connection with the target audience.

Given the scope and complexity of the tasks outlined, CRDF Global seeks a sustainable, agile, and highly productive partnership with qualified experts in the field.

Scope:

With financial and strategic support from the U.S. Department of State, CRDF Global is set to launch the four-month cyberveterans reintegration program "CyberDefender 2025". This initiative comprises cybersecurity-focused theoretical and practical courses, both online and offline, alongside psychosocial support, mentoring, career counseling services, and English language training. The program is specifically designed for Ukrainian veterans who are currently unemployed and are seeking career opportunities in the cybersecurity sector, whether within public or private institutions.

The successful implementation of the program will require comprehensive public outreach through various media channels, social networks, and online platforms, in line with the established communication plan. Communication efforts will be essential throughout the program's lifecycle, including the announcement phase, participant selection process, and the dissemination of information regarding key events and milestones, with particular emphasis on the opening event, the Job Fair and the Final CTF. The Contractor will provide comprehensive communication services to support the program's outreach, engagement, and visibility objectives.

The Contractor will be tasked with developing and executing a comprehensive communication strategy aimed at maximizing the program's visibility and engagement. Responsibilities will include managing social media platforms (including Facebook, Instagram) by creating visual materials, posts, and event announcements in consultation with, and subject to approval by, the CRDF Global project team.

Additionally, the Contractor will handle the promotion and targeting of posts related to participant enrollment, program announcement, program opening, Job Fair, employer engagement, and the unveiling of the Final CTF. High-quality multimedia content will be produced to ensure consistent branding, and key events such as Opening of the Program, the Job Fair and Final CTF which will be promoted with an emphasis on showcasing outcomes. The promotional visual materials intended for target audiences should be discussed and approved with the project team.

Moreover, the Contractor’s efforts will include collaborating with relevant media outlets, distributing press releases and securing coverage of program milestones. The Contractor will be responsible for crafting compelling success stories and creating relevant posts to increase program awareness, as well as overseeing and managing the publication of content on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and others (on request). Proficiency in managing these platforms is essential to ensure alignment with the program's communication plan and objectives.

Progress will be monitored through final report submission based on regular updates, and all efforts will be aligned with the established communication plan and program objectives to ensure a cohesive and impactful outreach strategy. The final report will provide an analytical review of the campaign's reach, summarizing the activities conducted, highlighting key successes, and identifying areas for improvement.

Tasks and Deliverables:

Task 1. Pre-Stage preparation: PR and Communications strategy

#	Description
1.1	Develop a PR and Communication Campaign Strategy aligned with the outlined program description, collaborating closely with the CRDF project team. The strategy should aim to build public awareness of the Cyber Veterans reintegration program among key target audiences, including the general Ukrainian public, veterans, stakeholders, private companies, potential employers, key influencers, and mass media outlets.
1.2	Develop a Social Media Plan for managing and promoting the program's social media pages (<i>Facebook, Instagram</i>), including posting schedules, content types, and engagement tactics to follow the schedule of publishing 2 posts per week throughout the full cycle of the program.
1.3	Develop a plan to engage journalists, issue press releases, and facilitate media interviews to secure broad coverage and amplify the program's visibility.
1.4	Collaborate with leading Ukrainian TV channels and media outlets to broadcast promotional announcements about the Cyber Veterans Reintegration Program at least twice before its official launch. These announcements should highlight the program’s objectives, significance, and enrollment details to effectively reach the target audience and maximize awareness of the program launch.
1.5	Develop a concept portfolio of visual materials such as images, graphics, videos, and posts ready for use on social media platforms and in promotional campaigns to be approved with CRDF Global project team: program announce, slogans, events announcements etc.
1.6.	Raise awareness among the target audience about the cyberveterans reintegration program and its unique features to encourage veteran participation and interest in applying.

Task 1 Deliverables:

1. Developed PR and communication campaign strategy in collaboration with the CRDF Global project team.
2. Developed a Social Media Plan for managing and promoting the program's social media pages (*Facebook, Instagram*), including posting schedules, content types, and engagement tactics Results of the targeted campaign of posts designed to encourage veterans to apply for the program.
3. Engage the target audience to apply for the program.

4. Regular execution of communication strategy.

Task 2. On-stage preparation: PR and Communications strategy

#	Description
2.1	Develop, publish and manage content on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, (two posts per week during the entire program) about the full cycle of the program. The content will feature compelling program launch, success stories, events, relevant articles, and updates to enhance program awareness. Visual content, posts, event announcements, and account promotion will be created and managed in close collaboration with the CRDF Global project team throughout the program’s duration.
2.2	Engage media publications (local and international journalists) to feature articles about the program at least twice per month within the full cycle of the program, ensuring consistent coverage that highlights its objectives, progress, success stories, and impact to maintain interest and raise awareness about the CyberDefenders program.

Task 2 Deliverables:

1. Compile and provide links to media publications featuring articles about the Cyberdefenders program.
2. Share the reach and impact of published articles, including views, engagement metrics, and publication reach.
3. Ensure the coverage highlights program objectives, milestones, success stories, and impact to maintain ongoing awareness of the cyber veterans reintegration program.

Task 3. Final and post-stage work: PR and Communications strategy

#	Description
3.1	Launch a promotional campaign highlighting employer enrollment for the Job Fair to effectively reach a broader audience and encourage greater participation of different companies, both private and public, in the program’s initiative.
3.2	Engage relevant media stakeholders by conducting a series of interviews with participants and program collaborators to capture success stories and gather valuable insights. This will include publications online to amplify the program's impact.
3.3	Raise awareness of the program’s culminating event—the Final CTF event —among key stakeholders and top employers in the governmental and public sectors, particularly within the cybersecurity and IT fields. Engage the employers to connect them with the program participants, supporting their employment and advancing the program’s primary goal of facilitating career opportunities in IT and cybersecurity.
3.4	Engage journalists to promote the program through various media platforms, ensuring broad coverage and raising awareness of the program’s objectives, achievements, and impact.
3.5	Prepare the final report, offering an in-depth analysis of the campaign's reach, emphasizing key successes, and pinpointing areas for improvement.

Task 3 Deliverables:

1. Engagement analytics showing the reach and impact of the campaign on employer enrollment.
2. A series of media engagements

3. Final report, which will include links to online publications and social media mentions.

Contractor Requirements:

CRDF Global will evaluate proposals based on the Contractor's ability to meet these requirements and provide the best value in terms of expertise, experience, and proposed approach. The selected Contractor must meet the following requirements:

Key Requirements

The most significant criterion for evaluation is the completeness and accountability of the program, with deliberate steps designed to achieve qualitative results measurable through reach recording, which will be reflected in a final report. This includes the efficient use of funds, a clear breakdown of goals, and a budget aligned with program milestones.

1. The Contractor must have a minimum of two years of experience managing awareness campaigns.
2. The Contractor must demonstrate expertise in designing and executing comprehensive PR and communication campaigns for social initiatives or programs of a similar scale and scope.
3. The Contractor must demonstrate strong relationships with key media stakeholders, including TV channels, online publications, etc.
4. They must have a proven ability to secure media placements, conduct impactful interviews, and engage relevant media publications to enhance program visibility and reach.
5. The Contractor must have a proven track record of successful collaboration with media stakeholders, including securing online publications, conducting impactful interviews, and engaging influencers or bloggers.
6. Preferably, the Contractor should have experience working on donor-funded projects, especially those funded by the U.S. government or multilateral institutions.
7. The Contractor must have the capability to begin supporting the project promptly upon selection.
8. The Contractor must be a legal entity, registered in Ukraine.

Experience and Expertise:

- Strong capability in managing and promoting social media accounts on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.
- Proficiency in creating engaging visual content, posts, and event announcements, tailored to target audiences.
- Experience in monitoring campaign performance and delivering comprehensive final reports.
- Familiarity with Ukraine's cultural, social, and media landscape, particularly the challenges and opportunities related to veterans' reintegration
- Access to technical tools and a team capable of producing high-quality visualizations, multimedia content, and engaging promotional materials.

References:

- Provide references (at least 2) and case studies (at least 1) demonstrating successful completion of similar projects.

Proposal Requirements:

Each proposal must include:

- Statement of Interest and Technical Capabilities
 1. A detailed description of the services offered aligns with the RFP Subject Matter Expertise outlined in the Scope and Tasks section.
 2. Provide a well-structured PR & Communication campaign strategy that aligns seamlessly with the specified tasks and objectives. The strategy should detail the approach for building public awareness of the Cyber Veterans reintegration program, effectively engaging the target audiences, including the public, veterans, stakeholders, private companies, potential employers, key influencers, and media outlets.
 3. List of recently developed similar projects.
- Cost proposal - a description of the pricing and cost factors, including but not limited to hourly rates, fixed-cost pricing on standard services, etc., that the Vendor is open to negotiating under the General Service Contract (GSC).
- CV(s) of the project team members responsible for the project implementation.
- List of recent experience in the RFP Subject Matter area and applicable references/past performance
- Any Small or Disadvantaged Business Designations (Veteran Owned, HUB Zone, Women Owned, Disadvantaged Businesses)

Timetable:

January 24, 2025:RFP Questions due

January 31, 2025:RFP Questions & Answers released

February 07, 2025:RFP submissions due

February 24, 2025 (TBD):Contract start date

Contractor Selection Criteria:

CRDF Global will select the contractor that provides the best value in terms of overall price and experience. The Contractor is expected to have demonstrated experience in managing complex promotion and outreach campaigns targeting specific audiences.

Key Requirements:

The selection of the Contractor will be based on their demonstrated expertise and proven track record in managing awareness campaigns and executing PR and communication strategies for initiatives of similar scale and scope. A minimum of two years of relevant experience, particularly in engaging media stakeholders and utilizing social media platforms, is required. Preference will be given to Contractors with prior experience working on donor-funded projects, especially those funded by the U.S. government or multilateral organizations, and familiarity with Ukraine's socio-cultural and media landscape.

CRDF Global prioritizes a safe and collaborative work environment in which diversity, equity, and inclusion is championed and discussed. CRDF Global provides equal employment opportunities to all qualified individuals without regard to age, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity, national origin, protected veteran, or disabled status. We are dedicated to creating and maintaining a respectful work environment that is safe, engaging, and comfortable for all.

CRDF Global pledges to prioritize sponsorship of diverse events and panels of experts whenever possible.

Evaluation Factors and Subfactors:

1. Technical Approach:

The technical approach will be evaluated based on the extent to which the Contractor's proposal demonstrates a thorough understanding of the requirements and a feasible method to meet or exceed those requirements.

Subfactors:

- Understanding of the project scope, requirements & alignment with project objectives
- Feasibility of the approach to PR & Communication Strategies
- Innovative and creative approach to the proposed PR & communication campaign, which will preferably contain a brief portfolio overview of visual materials for the program launch

2. Past Performance:

Past performance will be evaluated based on the relevance and quality of work on similar projects. The Offeror must provide references or examples of past contracts of similar scope and complexity.

Subfactors:

- Relevance of past projects aimed at managing awareness campaigns
- References from previous clients

3. Key Personnel and Qualifications:

Key personnel proposed for the project will be evaluated based on their experience, qualifications, and ability to fulfill the project's requirements.

Subfactors:

- Requisite knowledge, skills and abilities of key staff assigned to the project
- Demonstrate staff experience in leading the PR and Communication campaign strategy
- Certifications, education, and qualifications acquired by the Vendor's team members
- Relationships with key media stakeholders, including TV channels, online publications, etc.

4. Management Approach:

The Contractor's management approach will be evaluated based on the quality of the proposed PR& Communication strategy.

Subfactors:

- Proposed promotion and outreach strategy overview
- Resource allocation and personnel management

5. Price/Cost:

Price will be evaluated for reasonableness, fairness, and alignment with the proposed scope of work.

Subfactors:

- Overall cost compared to market rates
- Cost realism (to ensure the proposal is realistic given the scope)

6. Compliance:

The Vendor's compliance with state regulatory requirements will be evaluated.

Subfactors:

- Adherence to data privacy and protection standards in all communication activities.
- Demonstrated understanding of ethical considerations in public outreach, including responsible messaging and cultural sensitivity.

Evaluation Methods:

1. **Lowest Price, Technically Acceptable:**

Preference will be given to the Vendor who submits the lowest price proposal, provided that the proposal is technically acceptable. Technical acceptability will be determined based on whether the Offeror meets all the minimum technical requirements as outlined in the PFP. Price will not be considered until technical acceptability is established.

2. **Evaluation Scoring Methodology:**

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following scoring system:

- **Excellent (5):** Exceeds all requirements and offers superior benefits.
- **Good (4):** Meets all requirements with some additional value.
- **Acceptable (3):** Meets all minimum requirements.
- **Marginal (2):** Meets some requirements but has deficiencies.
- **Unacceptable (1):** Fails to meet requirements.

The final selection will be made in favor of the Offeror whose proposal represents the best value, with consideration given to both technical and pricing factors.

Submission:

Proposals should be submitted to procurement@crdfglobal.org & ofomin@crdfglobal.org , no later than **February 7, 2025, 18:00 Kyiv Time**. Proposals should be submitted as electronic documents in PDF, Word or Excel format.

Please indicate the RFP number in the "subject" line of your request: **# RFP-04-UA-2025**

Background:

CRDF Global is an independent nonprofit organization founded in 1995 in response to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the threat of large-scale proliferation of weapons technology from the region. With support authorized by the Nunn-Lugar Act of 1991 and the Freedom Support Act of 1992, as well private foundation contributions, CRDF Global embarked on bolstering the global scientific community and fostering alternatives to weapons research.

In the past 25 years, our work has expanded to address ever-changing global concerns, but our commitment to ensuring the success of our partners remains the same. We are a leading provider of flexible logistical support, program design and management, and strategic capacity building programs in the areas of higher education, CBRNE security and nonproliferation, border security, cybersecurity, global health, technology entrepreneurship, and international professional exchanges.

With offices in Arlington, VA; Kyiv, Ukraine; and Amman, Jordan, CRDF Global's diverse staff and networks of local community and government stakeholders deliver tailored programs that meet specific regional needs in over 100 countries across the globe.

Vision Statement:

Our world, healthy, safe, and sustainable.

Mission Statement:

Safety, security, and sustainability through science, innovation, and collaboration.

Values:

We do the right thing.

We care about each other and the people we work with.

We work together to deliver excellence

CRDF Global provides equal opportunities to all qualified individuals without regard to age, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, protected veteran, or disabled status. We are committed to prioritizing an inclusive and collaborative space in which diversity and equity is discussed, championed, and supported. We acknowledge and honor the fundamental value and dignity of all individuals. We pledge ourselves to creating and maintaining an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, and experiences.

More information is available at www.crdfglobal.org.

Solicitation Terms & Conditions:

Right to Select Suppliers. CRDF Global reserves the right to negotiate with and select all qualified suppliers at its own discretion and is not obligated to inform suppliers of the methods used in the selection process. CRDF Global reserves the right to dismiss any and/or all suppliers from the bid process and reject any and/or all proposals.

Obligation. This RFP does not bind nor obligate CRDF Global in any way. CRDF Global makes no representation, either expressed or implied, that it will accept or approve in whole or in part any proposal submitted in response to this RFP. CRDF Global may reward, in whole or in part, the proposal at its sole discretion.

Notification. CRDF Global will notify bidders following completion of the evaluation process, as to whether or not bidders have been awarded the contract. The only information regarding the status of the evaluation of proposals that will be provided to any inquiring bidder shall be whether or not the inquiring bidder has been

awarded the contract. CRDF Global may, at its sole discretion, inform any inquiring bidder of the reason(s) as to why it was not awarded the contract.

Binding Period. Following the due date of submission of this Proposal, the pricing included in this RFP shall be binding upon the supplier for the duration of the contract.

Hold Harmless. By submitting a response to the RFP, the bidder agrees that CRDF Global has sole discretion to select any and/or all suppliers. During or following the conclusion of this process, bidders waive their rights to damages whatsoever attributable to the selection process, materials provided, supplier selection, or any communication associated with the RFP process and supplier selection.

Transfer to Final Contract. The terms and conditions of the RFP, including the specifications and the completed proposal, will become at CRDF Global's sole discretion, part of the final contract (the "Agreement") between CRDF Global and the selected bidder. In the event that responses to the terms and conditions will materially impair a bidder's ability to respond to the RFP, bidder should notify CRDF Global in writing of the impairment. If bidder fails to object to any condition(s) incorporated herein, it shall mean that bidder agrees with, and will comply with the conditions set forth herein.

Exceptions. Any exceptions to the terms and conditions or any additions, which bidder may wish to include in the RFP, should be made in writing and included in the form of an addendum to the applicable Section in the RFP.

CRDF Global Proprietary Information. Supplier agrees that all non-public information contained in this document and communicated verbally in reference to this RFP by CRDF Global shall be received for the sole discretion and purpose of enabling the supplier to submit an accurate response to this RFP. The information contained in this RFP and disclosed during the course of negotiations and communications are proprietary in nature and under no circumstances to be disclosed to a third party without prior written consent from CRDF Global.

Supplier Proprietary Information. Information contained in the response to this RFP will be considered proprietary in nature if marked "confidential" or "proprietary". Such marked documents will not be disclosed to third parties outside CRDF Global with the exception of retained consultants under contractual confidentiality agreements.