



International Rescue Committee, Inc.

Global Research & Innovation Priorities (GRIP)

Request for Proposal

December 21st, 2020

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I. IRC OVERVIEW

IRC Background:

Founded in 1933 at the suggestion of Albert Einstein, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) responds to the world's worst humanitarian crises and helps people whose lives and livelihoods are shattered by conflict and disaster to survive, recover, and gain control of their future.

Working in over 40 countries, the IRC is a leader in humanitarian relief - bringing sustained support to regions torn apart by conflict and disaster. In addition to our work overseas, the IRC also has 29 U.S. resettlement offices that help newly arrived refugees by providing immediate services. The IRC advocates on behalf of the displaced by addressing the root causes of conflict and standing up for the world's most vulnerable populations. The IRC's strategy centers on its ambition to continue to improve the scale and effectiveness of IRC programs worldwide with evidence of what works best to impact people's lives in conflict and fragile settings.

II. PROJECT BACKGROUND

What is the Airbel Impact Lab?

With over 70 million people displaced, the world is facing an unprecedented crisis. To address the evolving and growing nature of this crisis requires not just more aid, but new thinking.

There is a lack of proven, cost-effective, scalable services for people affected by crisis. In some cases, there is a lack of evidence on what works. In others, evidence shows existing solutions are effective, but we need to find new ways of delivering them at scale in fragile states.

That's why the IRC created the Airbel Impact Lab. Our goal is to find and advance breakthrough solutions — with people and ethics at the center of all we do.

Research & Innovation at the IRC

At the Airbel Impact Lab, we design, test, and scale life-changing solutions for people affected by conflict and disaster. Our aim is to find the most impactful and cost-effective products, services, and delivery systems possible.

We work to develop breakthrough solutions by combining creativity and rigor, openness and expertise, and a desire to think afresh with the experience of a large-scale implementing organization.

We are keen to innovate with and through innovators on the ground, and design locally and scale globally.

Research and innovation is often needed not just to generate new solutions, but to take our most proven interventions and make them more cost-effective and scalable. It is only through intense efforts that we are likely to achieve the breakthrough solutions the sector needs.

IRC has undergone an extensive process to choose our Global Research and Innovation Priorities (GRIP):

1. **Tackling child malnutrition**: Scaling innovations that prevent malnutrition and improve access, coverage and cost-effectiveness of acute malnutrition treatment in children under five
2. **Sexual and reproductive health / Maternal and neonatal health**: Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of interventions to reduce unintended pregnancy and improving access, clinical quality, and dignity around maternal and neonatal health care.
3. **Education**: Improving access and learning; increasing the cost-effectiveness of education interventions on the learning outcomes of crisis-affected children, and understanding how our interventions work and for whom.

While this MSA will focus primarily on the Education Global Research & Innovation priorities (GRIP), there will also be opportunities to engage in projects under the other two GRIPs.

III. ENGAGEMENT BASIS

This RFP is structured in two parts:

1. **Master Services Agreement:**

The IRC is looking to contract with multiple firms for a minimum 3 Year Term under a master services framework agreement for a maximum USD\$100K per year that will allow us to utilize firms based on our requirements.

- We seek a pre-defined rate card for which we would issue individual Scopes of Work (SOWs) for specific project development as determined between the IRC and the firm(s).
- Individual SOWs will range from USD \$10K – \$80K dependent upon scope and budget.

2. **Active Scopes of Work:**

The IRC currently has two active SOWs for which we are looking to contract as soon as possible. Bidders are encouraged to bid on one or both of the SOWs listed:

- Exhibit A – **SOW I** – “Global EdTech Innovation Mapping ”
- Exhibit B – **SOW II** – “Local Design Sprints and Futures Lab”

You will not be excluded from bidding on the MSA portion of the RFP if you choose not to bid on the current active SOWs.

IV. RFP GOALS

The IRC is seeking to partner in particular with qualified innovators based (or networked) in the global south (e.g. Jordan, Lebanon, Kenya, India, Nigeria and others) to scale up its innovation efforts under the following areas:

- Creating spaces for local innovation
 - Identifying opportunities for local innovation - Innovation mapping, future-scaping, amplifying local innovation
 - Generating ideas - Acting as a catalyst for innovation
 - Developing & testing - Designing incubators, accelerators
 - Prototyping, rapid pilots and research
- Innovations in learning
 - Research, mapping, scanning of emerging educational technologies and methods

- Making the case - Testing, experimenting, building the case

V. MSA REQUIREMENTS

Specifically, IRC is looking for partners to support in the following three areas:

1. Localizing Innovation

- Design and launching physical/virtual incubators & accelerators for startups focusing on education innovation in crisis settings that work locally
- Provide a mix of:
 - Support - learning, mentoring, networking
 - Funding - grants, challenge prizes, seed funding, as part of existing grants
- Catalyze innovations at a community level, the community grants.
- Integrate innovation in new program or making part of proposals

Target audience

- Local startups
- Entrepreneurs
- Educators

Potential Initial Projects – Localizing Innovation

- Mapping of promising emerging educational technologies and partners, particularly with a focus on COVID 19 response
- Invest in emerging technologies that have promising applications for education in emergencies

Potential Initial Projects

- Design sprints with country teams, and external stakeholders to
 - Inspire - Share emerging edtech methodologies, technologies
 - Co-create ideas and possible solutions, incubate/scale promising ideas
 - Prioritization key issues to focus on
- Run Futures Lab
 - What can education look like for the next generation of learners?
 - Powered by teacher- and student-led future storytelling that can inform policy making and innovation strategies.
 - The Education Futures Lab will encourage interdisciplinary approaches and technologies such as combining the humanities, arts, and media in education. It will explore the ideas that are propelling the field into the future and convene global policy makers and educators.

2. Platform-Based Approaches for Scaling Delivery

- Develop strategies for platform-based approaches to education including
- Content creation, management and delivery, including local generation or localization
- Employing blended methodologies that are digital, but supported
- Leveraging the latest educational technologies
- Increasing capacity for using new digital approaches
- Developing sustainable business models for launching and maintaining platforms

- Identify existing platforms to design and deliver learning/training solutions, potentially based on existing learning material

Target audience

- Teachers
- Caregivers
- IRC Facilitators
- Youth upskilling
- Content advisory group (from country)

Potential Initial Projects - Platform Based Approach

- Co-create and build ideas for solutions addressing key current challenges with regional teams, with a separate lens for COVID-19 and its impact on everyday work.
- Build out future narratives to investigate emergent scenarios based on current trends and their projected impact.

3. R&D on Emerging Educational Technologies and Approaches

Scan emerging educational technologies that have proven effectiveness outside of the humanitarian sector, and have potential, e.g.

- Content - math, literacy, SEL, PSS, creativity, teacher prof development skills
- Methodologies - Self-guided, teacher/parent led, blended. Modular, sequenced and continuous learning (reduce face to face time)
- Technologies
 - Delivery - Self-guided, personalized
 - Education management - automation
 - Experiential - AR, VR
- Data driven measurement approaches -
- Teacher led collection of student progress data to inform continuous quality improvement at teacher, coach, program staff levels.
- Teaching to student levels
- Recognition/credentials - badges
- Online/offline - Last-mile, SMS
- COVID-relevant mapping - tech which is being used within and outside of the sector to support education
- Explore different technologies/channels to increase accessibility and break digital barriers, e.g. SMS, RCS, WhatsApp, IVR, low-tech CMS
 - Ideally identify and invest in local providers OR identify global providers and adapt to local contexts
 - Pilot and research promising edtech

Target audience

- Clients
- Teachers
- Caregivers
- IRC Facilitators

VI. ACTIVE SOWS FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

SOW I – Global EdTech Innovation Mapping – See Exhibit A

- **Global EdTech Mapping** – Research and create a publicly accessible interactive map of the global EdTech landscape. This map will serve as a landscape analysis for us and other humanitarian partners to track EdTech innovations and hotspots both outside of and within the humanitarian sector. The interactive map will be viewable, in-browser, with publicly available submissions for ongoing updates. Example output: <https://www.atlasofinnovation.com/>
- **Prioritisation sprints** - An internal strategic process of prioritizing EdTech innovations for investment and focused attention, in the form of several guided design sprints.

SOW II - Local Design Sprints and Futures Lab - See Exhibit B

- Co-create and build ideas for solutions addressing key current challenges with regional teams, with a separate lens for COVID-19 and its impact on everyday work.
- Build out future narratives to investigate emergent scenarios based on current trends and their projected impact.

VII. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposal Inclusions:

Please note that the finalist will need to pass a conflict of interest review that is standard for all International Rescue Committee partners.

The Bidder shall be responsible for all costs associated with the preparation and submission of its bid, and IRC hereinafter referred to as “the Purchaser”, will in no case be responsible or liable for those costs, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the bidding process.

- Initial description of the process by which the partner would undertake this work;
- Budget and budget considerations;
- Timeline for completion of work by June 2019;
- Examples of applicable previous work;
- At least two (2) references.
- The Bidder’s proposal shall comprise a technical and financial section as well as any other ancillary documentation that supports the proposal and associated costs.
- IRC Bid Contacts: A prospective Bidder requiring any clarification of the Bidding Documents may notify the Purchaser in writing during the specified Question and Answer period as indicated in the RFP Calendar. All questions and responses should be directed to Todd Veneziano todd.veneziano@rescue.org and copy to Atish Gonsalves Atish.Gonsalves@rescue.org.
- All questions from bidders and their subsequent responses during the RFP process will be shared with all of the bid respondents.

Please include the following in your proposal:

- Experience and references including names and CVs of the potential team that would work

on the International Rescue Committee account.

- Current client roster and length of time each client worked with consultant. This list should include all current relevant clients.
- Describe your view of the ideal partnership with a client and how you would structure the account.

VIII. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals will be scored using the following technical criteria. Points for each question will range from 0-4 with 4 being the highest score for any given category. Proposals should address each evaluation criteria focusing on the weight and importance of that category.

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EVALUATION CRITERIA	Weight (%)
Quality of Presentation	10%
Understanding of Requirements & Proposed Approach	25%
Technical Expertise & Delivery Team Capability	25%
IRC Fit (Methodology, Timeline, Support)	15%
Cost	25%
	100%

IX. PROPOSAL FORMAT

In order to secure information in a form, which will ensure that your proposal will be properly evaluated, you are asked to submit your proposal in the format listed below. Standard proposal formats are acceptable provided the following information is included:

1. **Cost:** Please provide a detailed schedule of fees that outlines all components of your services as any hourly or ancillary costs. Bidders are encouraged to provide fixed-fee, time and materials or a combination of both if applicable.
2. Name, address, telephone number and email address for principal contact.
3. A brief outline of your organization and services offered, including:
 - Full legal name, jurisdiction of organization or incorporation and address of the company
 - Full legal name and country of citizenry of company's President and/or Chief Executive
 - Year business was established
4. Name and professional qualifications of personnel who would provide the services.
5. Names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses of at least two clients of similar industry and scope of operations as IRC that can be contacted as references.
6. Current client roster.
7. Describe your view of the ideal relationship, and how you would structure the account.

1. **MASTER SERVICE AGREEMENT - RFP CALENDAR/TIMELINE**

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| • RFP Published | December 21 st |
| • Intent to Bid Received by IRC | December 28 th |
| • Questions regarding proposal due to IRC | January 4 th |
| • IRC responds to questions received | January 6 th |
| • Full RFP Proposal Submissions due | January 11 th |
| • Shortlist supplier meetings | Week of January 10 th |
| • Awards | Week of January 17 th |

All questions received by bidders will be shared with other respondents

2. **STANDALONE SCOPES OF WORK - CALENDAR/TIMELINE**

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| • Questions regarding proposal due to IRC | January 4 th |
| • IRC responds to questions received | January 6 th |
| • Full RFP Proposal Submissions due | January 8 th |

Dates may change based on IRC resources or supplier requests for additional time to prepare proposals

X. OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS

INSURANCE

Prior to the commencement of the work to be performed by the successful Bidder, the Bidder shall file with IRC Certificates of Insurance evidencing compliance with all requirements contained in this RFP. Acceptance and/or approval by IRC does not and shall not be construed to relieve Bidder of any obligations, responsibilities or liabilities under the contract awarded by this RFP.

IRC SMALL & DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS GUIDELINE

It is the policy of IRC to encourage the greatest possible participation of disadvantaged businesses as bidders. IRC has established goals for each of the following disadvantaged business categories:

- Small Business (SB)
- Small Disadvantaged (SDB) including Alaska Native Corporations and Indian Tribes,
- Women-owned and Economically Disadvantaged Women-Owned (WOSB)
- Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUBZone),
- Veteran Owned Small Business (VOSB)
- Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned (SDVOSB) Small Businesses and "Other than Small Business"

For purposes of this bid response, bidders should indicate their eligibility for any of the above-listed categories. If chosen as a finalist, you will be required to provide your registration number as well as additional information.

WITHDRAWAL OF RFP

Proposals may be withdrawn before the RFP submittal deadline by submitting a written request to the Contact Person. Re-submittal before the RFP submittal deadline can be made; however, they may not be re-submitted after the deadline.

RFP COSTS

All costs incurred in the preparation and presentation of proposals to the RFP shall be completely absorbed by the responding party to the RFP. All documents submitted as part of the RFP will become property of the IRC. Requests for specific material to be returned will be considered. Any material submitted that is confidential must be clearly marked as such.

AWARD BASIS

At the option of the IRC, finalists for the Agent designation may be selected for a final round of negotiations; however, applicants are encouraged to present their best offers with their initial submission. IRC reserves the right to accept or reject any and all proposals, to waive any irregularities in any proposal process, and to make an award of contract in any manner in which IRC, acting in the sole and exclusive exercise of its discretion, deems to be in IRC's best interest.

CONTRACTUAL DEVELOPMENT

Once an applicant is approved as the exclusive Agent, the successful respondent will enter into a contract with the IRC. Contract discussion and negotiation will follow the award selection. Bidders must be amenable to inclusion, in a contract, of any information provided whether herein or in response to this RFP, or developed subsequently during the selection process.

CONTRACT TERMS

Firms that are selected as the exclusive Agent are eligible to enter into a service contract. The IRC may terminate the contract upon written notice to the Agent of not less than thirty (30) days.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

The IRC emphasizes that all respondents will receive full consideration without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sex, disability, age or sexual orientation. Minority and women-owned firms are especially encouraged to respond to this RFP.

LIMITATIONS

The IRC, reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals and to waive any informality in the solicitation process. Total proposal length excluding cover letter, details of professionals who will provide services, and contact information of client references, should not exceed 12 pages.

TYPES OF EMPLOYEES

Consultant: A consultant is a type of independent contractor who is engaged through a consulting agreement or similar contract. A consultant may be an entity or individual. A consultant, like any type of independent contractor, is not an "employee" of IRC, receives no employee benefits and is not protected by employment, labor or tax laws. Properly classified individual consultants generally have their own ongoing businesses -- whether they are sole proprietorships, corporations, LLPs or LLCs --- offer their services to the public, have more than one client, and have their own equipment. Typically, consultant's fees are based on a schedule of deliverables.

Regular Employee: A regular employee is hired by the IRC to provide services to the IRC in exchange for compensation.

Limited Term /Temporary Employee: A limited-term employee is hired to provide services to the IRC in exchange for compensation. Their assignment has an end date which is noted in the hire letter and does not exceed three years.

Short Term/Casual Employee: A short-term employee (sometimes referred to as a casual worker) is hired by the IRC to provide services to the IRC in exchange for compensation and works no more than 180 days (six months) in any given 12 month period.

Occasional Employee: An occasional employee is hired by the IRC to provide services to the IRC in exchange for compensation and works less than 1,000 hours in a calendar year. An occasional employee's status shall be reviewed every three years.

Exhibit A – SOW I Terms of Reference – “Global EdTech Innovation Mapping”

Concept Note: Mapping Global Emerging Educational Technologies

Introduction:

Educational technology (EdTech) is a rapidly expanding global industry. In nearly every global market, organizations and individuals are creating original ways of educating with new forms of media, machine learning-driven adaptive systems, gamification, and global communication.

These innovations are critical to efforts at extending education resources to new populations. With lockdowns from the COVID-19 pandemic cutting off many students from their usual sources of education, EdTech’s importance has reached the point of urgency.

Many solutions exist, but lack of communication and exposure means people are unaware of what tools already are available, and end up reinventing the wheel. In many cases, further work is needed to extend existing solutions to a humanitarian context.

Project Overview:

In this project, we are seeking a provider who can create a publicly accessible interactive map of the global EdTech landscape. This map will serve as a landscape analysis for Airbel Labs and other humanitarian partners to track EdTech innovations and hotspots both outside of and within the humanitarian sector. The interactive map should be viewable in-browser, with publicly available submissions for ongoing updates. A reference example conducted with innovation hubs instead of EdTech is <https://www.atlasofinnovation.com/>.

In addition to this global mapping research, the provider will lead Airbel through an internal strategic process of prioritizing EdTech innovations for investment and focused attention, in the form of several guided design sprints.

Requirements:

Approach:

- Publicly accessible map of global EdTech research:
 - Landscape analysis
 - A deep scan of global EdTech innovations in all major geographies, with a particular focus on fast growing, youthful areas, e.g. Nigeria.
 - Expert/ Disruptor interviews
 - Leveraging our broad global network, interviews with

globalEdTech innovators and experts to gather contextual insights.

- Publicly available and editable database with browser-based UI:
 - Mapping the found information by geography on a live and updatable database that can be publicly contributed to and updated.
- Strategic analysis of EdTech innovations:
 - Prioritizing innovations for investment and strategic resources using a combination of foresight, scenario planning, and impact/effort mapping.

Timeline:

- How long will each of the deliverables take to complete?
 - Desktop research and interviews-
 - Writing and organizing research data and analysis-
 - Design and development of publicly available map and database
 - Internal strategic analysis-
- Total length of time need to complete the project?

Costs:

- Please provide the approximate cost (USD) for each of the project deliverables :
 - Publicly available, editable map of EdTech innovations:
 - Research
 - Desktop-
 - Interviews-
 - Writing
 - Analysis and documentation-
 - Copy Editing/ Proofing-
 - Graphic Design-
 - UI/UX-
 - Programming-
 - **Total Cost:**
 - Strategic analysis and prioritization (collaborative version):
 - Preparation and execution of 3 design sprints-
 - Writing and documentation-
 - Design-
 - **Total Cost:**

Exhibit B – SOW II Terms of Reference – “Local Design Sprints and Futures Lab”

Design Sprints + Speculative Futures

How can the IRC adapt its work to the new realities & challenges that COVID-19 poses?

Project Objectives

- Co-create ideas for solutions, interventions with IRC teams to combat challenges relating to COVID-19 and on-ground needs.
- Research and build future storytelling that can inform policy framing and innovation strategies.

Project Overview

On-ground constraints within low to middle income countries such as access to educators, information and technology, have limited the effectiveness of traditional learning models. Further impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a need to account for contextual realities and emergent shifts in learning ecosystems. Based on what we have learnt from our discussions, IRC is looking for:

1. Co-create and build ideas for solutions addressing key current challenges with regional teams, with a separate lens for COVID-19 and its impact on everyday work.
2. Build out future narratives to investigate emergent scenarios based on current trends and their projected impact.

Given the above two objectives, we propose to frame challenges and opportunities through the following framework, subject to finalization:

Type of Challenge / Opportunity	Current/Immediate	Emergent (2 - 10 year)
Learner-related		
Teacher-related		
Infrastructural		
Sustainability		
Other		

Proposed Plan

Phase	Plan & Prepare	Workshop	Resolve & Handover
Timeline	(3 weeks)	(4 weeks)	(3 weeks)

Aim	<p>Understand the organization</p> <p>Align on project objectives and work plans</p> <p>Gain a broader perspective on the sector and current trends</p> <p>Plan for the Workshop phase</p>	<p>Co-create ideas and possible solutions with Education Technical Unit (TU), Regional Hubs, IRC country teams and local innovators</p> <p>Identify promising ideas for future incubation/scaling</p> <p>Prioritization to agree on the “what” to focus on</p> <p>Identification of key future trajectories for trend forecasting</p>	<p>Development and iteration of ‘<u>prototype</u>’ solutions</p> <p>Narrative creation and visualization of 3 future scenarios</p>
	<p>Organize kick off meeting with core team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share pre-work with project staff - Understand current & future organizational goals - Align on 3 regions to work with <p>Conduct expert interviews with innovators, leadership, academics to understand relevant trends and future arcs in learning and edtech (IRC to facilitate)</p> <p>Create workshop plan and activity tools for Remote Workshops</p>	<p>Conduct remote workshops with country teams to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify key contextual challenges and opportunities - Understand how current trends will impact future learning ecosystems - Adapt a design led approach to opportunity framing and solution ideation - Frame early concepts for relevant solutions and interventions for current and future contexts - Gamify the process through competitive facilitation frameworks - Synthesis and further development of ideas 	<p>Prioritization of ideas across country teams.</p> <p>Development of prototypes* for interventions (including EdTech) that address identified issues.</p> <p>Testing and iteration of prototypes <i>*Prototypes are strategic outputs that might seed further enquiry or investments (internal or external)</i></p> <p>Create 3 Future Narratives on the future of education based on workshop findings</p>
	<p>Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workshop plan + stimulus - Workshop documentation - Final concepts and prototypes 		

- Design strategy and toolkit for running localized challenges, sprints for education
- Future-facing scenarios - 3 narratives
- Key visuals depicting inspirational 'next gen learner' personas through concept art
- Accompanying narratives to delve into each future scenario

Illustrative Plan

Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Plan & Prepare			Workshop				Resolve & Handover		
All			KO					Share		
R1				W	ID + C					
R2					W	ID + C				
R3						W	ID + C			

KO - Kick Off

R - Regions

W - Workshop Week

ID - Idea Development by Teams/Individuals

C - Check Ins

Illustrative Plan | 2 Week Design Sprint - Region-Wise

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
W1		W2		W3				C1		C2			
<p>Workshops</p> <p>W1 - Today's Needs & Innovations - 2 Hours</p> <p>W2 - Future Needs & Innovations - 2 Hours</p> <p>W3 - Prioritizing</p> <p>C1 - Check In 1</p> <p>C2 - Check In 2</p>													