

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Country Researchers

Legal framework governing the exercise of association and assembly rights in the digital space

The International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) is pleased to invite applications from local partners in **Benin, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda** and **Zimbabwe** for research grants under ICNL's program on *Responding to Digital Space Restrictions on Freedom of Association and Assembly in Africa*. Applications should be submitted directly to ICNL as specified below.

Background

The International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) is an international not-for-profit organization that promotes an enabling legal environment for civil society, freedom of association, assembly, expression and public participation around the world. ICNL has provided technical, research and capacity-building assistance to support the reform of laws affecting civil society organizations (CSOs) in over 100 countries. We draw upon a worldwide network of partners and experts to produce innovative research and analysis on legal topics affecting civil society. To learn more about ICNL's programs in Africa, visit www.icnl.org.

In February 2019, ICNL supported a convening in Nairobi, Kenya of CSOs, media and tech organizations from 19 African countries to discuss their experiences in exercising the rights of peaceful assembly and association in the digital space. Key issues identified by participants as requiring deeper interrogation included the impact on these rights of:

- A. Various laws, policies and administrative practices relating to cybercrime; registration of platforms, online content and telecom services; false news and hate speech);
- B. Content regulation policies;
- C. Network disruptions and internet and telecom shutdowns;

- D. State surveillance against activists, CSOs and media by government and the private sector, exacerbated by new forms of technology, including artificial intelligence and facial recognition tools; and
- E. Collection and use of personal data.

In follow up to this consultation, ICNL is now conducting research to promote learning and exchange on the exercise of the rights of association and assembly in the digital space. In a range of African countries, the research will examine:

- (i) the laws, regulations, policies and government practices that affect or are relevant to the exercise of association and assembly in the digital space and through digital technologies;
- (ii) the compliance of the identified laws, regulations, policies and practices with international human rights law;
- (iii) how states are using these laws, regulations, policies and practices to regulate digital space; and
- (iv) the impact (positive and negative) that these laws, regulations, policies and practices have had on the exercise of the freedoms of association and assembly in and through the digital space by non-profit organizations and social movements.

ICNL may consider the research products for publication.

Content of Research

Through a research grant, ICNL will support one local researcher per country to conduct a review of laws affecting the exercise of association and assembly in the digital space, analyze those laws in accordance with domestic jurisprudence, and compare those laws to international standards and principles. Specifically, the research should consider existing and proposed legislation, regulations, directives, case law and procedures that regulate assembly and association through existing and emerging digital technologies. ICNL will provide an overview of international standards and principles, as well as a template to guide the research.

The grant recipient will be responsible for all desk and field research, and for drafting and submitting the Country Report to ICNL at the end of the research grant. ICNL and its Africa regional technical partners will work with the researcher to review and finalize the Country Report. The research must be finalized by December 15, 2019.

Application Instructions

Applicants must submit the following fully completed items, with the Application Coversheet via email, with the subject “**Digital Space in Africa**” to africa@icnl.org:

- Resume, Curriculum Vitae (CV) or other statement of relevant work history and education (no more than 3 pages), and a writing sample;
- Line item budget (not more than 1 page and not to exceed **US\$ 3,000**); and
- Proposal (see below).

Content of Proposal

In no more than three (3) pages, please describe the following:

- i. Your experience and expertise on issues relating to the freedom of association and assembly;
- ii. Your experience and expertise on the legal framework relating to regulation of not-for-profit organizations and regulation of digital technologies;
- iii. Likely sources of documents/information that will be investigated, including whether interviews and other on-the-ground research will be involved;
- iv. Proposed timeline for: completing the research, submitting an initial and second draft of the Country Report, and submitting a final draft of the Country Report.

Eligibility Requirements

This research call is open to individuals or organizations, including CSOs, academic institutions, think-tanks, and other research-oriented legal entities based in **Benin, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe**. Lawyers or organizations focused on legal issues are strongly preferred. Knowledge of developments in digital technologies and their regulation, impact and consequences on fundamental freedoms is an added advantage.

One researcher from each country will be chosen, and applicants must focus proposals on one country. Applicants are expected to strictly comply with submission deadlines. The project must be completed by December 15, 2019, including submission of an initial draft of the Country Report by mid-September and a further draft by mid-October, with an opportunity for ICNL and its technical partners to provide comments on drafts. Earlier timelines for the project and submission of drafts are preferred and are a favorable factor in the application review process. Additionally, the grant recipient will be required to travel to at least one event organized and funded by ICNL in either Ethiopia or The Gambia during the research phase to present and discuss the draft research before it is finalized.

Selection Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on the following factors:

- i. Legal education and experience;
- ii. Familiarity with the laws, rules, practices and treaty obligations applicable to freedom of association, assembly and digital rights in the selected country;
- iii. Excellent research, analytical and writing skills;
- iv. Compliance with eligibility requirements and application procedures;
- v. Commitment to, and track-record in complying with project submission deadlines;
- vi. Quality of proposal, including feasibility of the research (e.g., the research is targeted to answer the relevant questions, and the scope of the research is achievable within the time frame);
- vii. Timeline for the research and draft submissions;
- viii. Competitiveness of the budget, consultancy rate, time availability and value for money.

Additional information

All grant recipients must submit a final report on the use of the funds, activities conducted, and outcomes of their projects prior to receiving their final grant disbursements.

All grant recipients must finalize their projects by December 15, 2019.

Please contact us via email at africa@icnl.org should you have questions.

Deadline

The deadline for applications is **August 16, 2019**.

APPLICATION COVERSHEET

Please complete the coversheet and submit it, along with your proposal and other application documents to africa@icnl.org. Please ensure that the subject of your email is: "*Digital Space in Africa*." If you do not receive confirmation that your application was received within 48 hours, please contact us by email again.

Full Name:

Position:

Organization:

Mailing Address Line 1:

Mailing Address Line 2:

Mailing Address Line 3:

Country:

Email Address:

Telephone Number:

Check the boxes below to indicate that you have properly completed the application.

- I have attached a proposal that is no more than three pages in length.
- I have attached a CV and a writing sample.
- I have attached a line-item budget.
- I reside and work in an eligible country.