



BRIEFING NOTE for External Consultant

ASEF Communications Strategy

INTRODUCTION

The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) is an intergovernmental not-for-profit organisation located in Singapore. Founded in 1997, it is the only institution of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM).

ASEF promotes understanding, strengthens relationships and facilitates cooperation among the people, institutions and organisations of Asia and Europe. ASEF enhances dialogue, enables exchanges and encourages collaboration across 7 thematic areas: Culture, Education, Sustainable Development, Public Health, Governance, Economy and Media.

ASEF is seeking proposals from communications/PR agencies or independent consultants with experience in organisational communications, to develop an overall communications strategy for the organisation.

1. BACKGROUND

In 2017, ASEF adopted a “decentralised yet coordinated” communication management model. This approach has been identified as the most suitable for the organisation due to the diverse nature of ASEF’s activities through different thematic areas and departments. As such, ASEF conducts a variety of programmes that engage different target audiences through different communication channels.

As the central point of coordination, the Communications Department takes charge of corporate branding standards and ASEF’s overall organisational communications efforts. As decentralised communications centres, each Programme Department strategises and executes its respective communications plans in strict compliance with the corporate branding requirements set by the Communications Department.

Such an approach allows for the timely release of publicity materials for projects and events organised by the various departments, as well as a more targeted approach for the different interest groups. In addition, the Communications Department and the Programme Departments multiply and reinforce each other’s publicity efforts.

2. OBJECTIVES

The communications strategy aims to achieve the following:

- **BRANDING:** To standardise and align the image of ASEF (how audiences perceive us) with its identity (who we are).
- **CONSOLIDATION:** To deepen engagement with current audiences and stakeholders.
- **OUTREACH:** To reach out to new audiences.
- **ACCOUNTABILITY:** To show evidence of our publicly funded work.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

The communications strategy must be formalised into a written plan including a 3-year action plan with timelines, targets and metrics.

The consultant will be responsible for designing a tailored communications strategy for ASEF involving both online and offline channels. ASEF's Communications Department will be responsible for ensuring the implementation of the resulting strategy.

4. DURATION

The design of the communications strategy shall span from March to mid-June 2019. It will commence upon receipt of the consultant's final proposal and quotation, and the subsequent signing of the Terms of Agreement with ASEF. It will continue until completion of the written strategy document and its presentation at the next ASEF Board of Governors' Meeting in June 2019.

5. DELIVERABLES

The consultant will communicate and liaise directly with ASEF's Communications Department and the Strategy Task Force to ensure all deliverables are completed to the satisfaction of ASEF.

Minimum requirements

1. Communications strategy document, including:
 - a. Situation analysis, considering PEST, SWOT and competitor analyses
 - b. Communications objectives aligned with organisational objectives
 - c. Audience and stakeholder identification, including a stakeholder map and considering a persona-based approach
 - d. Definition of tailored, targeted messages
 - e. Strategies and priorities for key communications channels
 - f. A 3-year action plan, detailing specific actions, target audiences, channels as well as resources (teams, budget needed) and timelines. The work plan should also identify particular milestones within the strategy
 - g. Tools and processes for evaluation
2. Executive summary

Additional tasks

- Visual identity alignment with the communications strategy
- Social media plans for specific channels
- Guidelines for departmental communications coordination
- Parameters for project communication
- Press /PR recommendations, including media engagement tactics
- PPT summary of the communications strategy document

6. LOCATION

To be able to execute the assignment, the consultant is expected to conduct the following:

- Meetings with ASEF staff, particularly the Executive Management, Communications Director, Communications Department, department directors and the Strategy Task Force (1 representative per department)
- Interviews with internal and external stakeholders

- Data analysis and investigation (Communications Strategy Concept Note, department's communications strategies, Social Media Strategy Draft, website and social media performance reports and other documents, to be provided by ASEF to the consultant)

The consultant may be provided with a workspace on ASEF premises to carry out the assignment for the period between mid-March to mid-May during ASEF working hours.

7. PLANNING

Good communication and planning between the consultant and ASEF is necessary to ensure all deliverables are completed according to the specified and agreed upon timeline.

The final publication shall be completed to the satisfaction of ASEF by Monday, 6 May 2019. The phases of work are as follows:

	February	March	April	May	June
ASEF's tasks	Convening & briefing of Strategy Task Force	Departmental inputs	Check drafts with Strategy Task force, department directors & Executive Management	Clear with department directors & Executive Management	Presentation at ASEF BoG 40 (11-14 June)
Consultant's tasks	-	Start developing ASEF's communications strategy	Subsequent draft presentation & feedback	Prepare final document	Get feedback after strategy presentation at BoG & apply corrections if needed by 20 June.
Deliverables (indicative dates)	-		15 April: First draft	6 May: Final Document 13 May: Executive Summary	20 June revised version & Executive Summary
Others	-	ASEF premises available	ASEF premises available	ASEF premises available	-

8. REMUNERATION & QUOTATION

ASEF will provide the consultant a fee for their services and will allow the consultant to use ASEF facilities and equipment during the inhouse period agreed upon. ASEF will not cover meals, transport or any other allowances for the consultant.

ASEF will consider all quotations received from communications/PR companies and consultants by 7 March 2019.