



## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **Research on the human rights impacts of tech company operations in Myanmar**

#### **1. Introduction**

ARTICLE 19 works for a world where all people everywhere can freely express themselves and actively engage in public life without fear of discrimination. ARTICLE 19 does this by working on two interlocking freedoms which set the foundation for all our work. The right to freedom of expression concerns everyone's right to express and disseminate opinions, ideas and information through any means, as well as to disagree with and question power-holders. The right to information concerns the right to demand and receive information by power-holders in support of transparency, good governance and sustainable development. When either of these rights comes under threat, ARTICLE 19 speaks with one voice, through courts of law, through global and regional organisations, and through civil society.

ARTICLE 19 seeks a consultant to conduct research and draft a report on the human rights impacts of tech company operations in Myanmar. The research contributes to Engaging Tech for Internet Freedom, an international human rights project that seeks to create an evidence base to inform CSO capacity-building and advocacy activities through research on internet freedom issues in authoritarian countries; enhance the capacity of Asia-Pacific CSOs to engage with tech companies operating in authoritarian and semi-authoritarian contexts and advocate for stronger human rights practices; and strengthen international resistance to authoritarian internet regulation models through advocacy at the UN and other international fora and with tech companies.

#### **2. Research timeframe, budget, and methodology**

ARTICLE 19 seeks a consultant or group of consultants to conduct research focused on the human rights implications of tech company operations in Myanmar and draft a report for publication by ARTICLE 19. Research proposals should address the post-coup environment but may also consider pre-coup factors that contributed to the current context.

Potential areas of research could include the following:

- How have measures to control the internet in Myanmar affected the ability of tech companies to uphold the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights;
- How have measures to control the internet in Myanmar affected the decision of tech companies to enter and exit Myanmar? Where tech companies have withdrawn from the market, what effect has that decision had?
- How have responses from the international community, for example sanctions, aided or hindered the ability of tech companies to operate in Myanmar while respecting human rights?

- How have tech companies adapted their operations in Myanmar and what effects have these adaptations had on human rights? What are the positive and negative examples of such adaptations?
- How has civil society advocacy, mobilisation, or engagement with tech companies operating in Myanmar succeeded or struggled to affect intended results, such as regarding content moderation policies, transparency reporting, or accountability mechanisms?
- Any other research question focused on the human rights implications of tech company operations in Myanmar.

### **Timeline**

All activities and outputs described in these terms of reference must be completed no later than **1 June 2023**.

### **Budget**

The total budget should not exceed USD 25,000.

### **3. Outputs and Collaboration with ARTICLE 19**

ARTICLE 19 seeks a collaborative approach with the selected applicant to ensure smooth delivery of the research outputs. The selected applicant is expected to:

- Work closely with ARTICLE 19 staff on all stages of the process, including scoping research, methodology development, report structuring, and the interviewing process.
- Commit to brief check-in calls (once a month) to check the status of the project and provide space for questions and feedback.

The Consultant will be expected to deliver the following:

- A first draft of a report addressing the research questions above.
- Collaboration with ARTICLE 19's Asia and Digital Teams in revising and finalizing the research (committing to a minimum of two rounds of revisions based on ARTICLE 19 feedback).
- A final draft of the report of approximately 30-50 pages, that incorporates both rounds of feedback and is publication-ready. ARTICLE 19 is responsible for formatting the report and ensuring the report complies with its house style. ARTICLE 19 is responsible for dissemination of the report.
- Raw data collected through the research process, including consent forms where applicable.
- Participation in at least one event to disseminate the findings of the research.
- Participate in at least one event as a resource person at a regional workshop organized by ARTICLE 19 in June or July 2023.

### **Submission of expressions of interest**

Interested individuals, groups or coalitions should submit an expression of interest and budget to Caroline Stover, Head of Asia Programme, at [caroline@article19.org](mailto:caroline@article19.org) by 30 November 2022.

The expression of interest should be no longer than three pages and address the following matters:

- Composition of research team, including CVs of all research team members;

- One example of past unedited work relevant to the current TOR;
- Proposed research methodology, including manner of collecting information, and type and number of stakeholders engaged;
- Proposed research locations. Note that ARTICLE 19 does not expect consultants to travel to Myanmar to conduct the research;
- Detailed timeline of research;
- Discussion of how gender and diversity will be mainstreamed into the project;
- Discussion of how ethical and security considerations will be identified and managed; and
- Contact details for at least one reference person who can speak to previous research output.

The budget should specify how project funds would be spent to achieve the research objectives. The total budget should not exceed USD 25,000. The budget should include all expenses that will be incurred by the researcher(s) including travel expenses, expenses associated with research activities such as interviews or focus group discussions, and compensation for the research team.

ARTICLE 19 will notify applicants on the status of their applications no later than 15 December 2022. After reviewing expressions of interest, ARTICLE 19 will work with the selected applicant to refine the research plan and budget prior to signing a contract.