

Call for consultants under USAID's media literacy project YouThink:

Media Literacy and Critical Thinking Resource and Training Development Consultants

USAID's media literacy project YouThink is recruiting for consultant positions with experience in media literacy and critical thinking, education, journalism, training design, fact-checking, communications, and/or related fields to become Resource Development Consultants.

Purpose:

USAID's Media Literacy Project YouThink is a five-year program that works with youth to help them navigate and shape an information ecosystem that informs and engages rather than divides and polarizes. The project is implemented by IREX, the Macedonian Institute for Media, the Institute of Communication Studies and the Youth Educational Forum in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Science, and the Bureau for Development of Education. The work focuses on utilizing a mix of local and international expertise to catalyze systemic change throughout the school system at the primary, secondary, and university levels, as well as non-formal education.

YouThink is recruiting for consultants with experience in media literacy and critical thinking, education and teacher training, journalism, communications, training design, fact-checking, and/or related fields. Selected Resource and Training Development Consultants will contribute to the development of YouThink training materials, curricula, teacher/trainer resources, etc. through the identification of examples, case studies, and similar materials tailored for particular target audiences in North Macedonia, as directed by IREX. The program's primary focus is on young people and teachers, but activities may address a range of age groups, linguistic or ethnic groups, geographic backgrounds, etc.

Selected consultants will also contribute to the development of teaching/training content related to the news media and information landscape in North Macedonia, specifically leveraging country-specific expertise to provide inputs and feedback that non-specialist or international consultants may not be equipped to provide. Through these efforts, consultants will support the work of IREX and the YouThink implementing partners, to develop a variety of training curricula, ensuring that materials and topics follow international and national standards related to content adaptation, appropriately reflect the situation in North Macedonia, and match the interests, needs, and habits of Macedonian youth and related audiences.

YouThink will select multiple candidates for this assignment that will receive Training of Trainers (ToT) in IREX's Learn to Discern program and approach as a methodology that will be continuously used to transfer knowledge and train current and future teachers, university professors and scholars, young journalists, youth activists and other youth about media literacy and critical thinking approaches. This concept, which has been implemented by IREX in 17 countries all over the world, is essentially a media literacy training program for dealing with disinformation, untruths, propaganda, with a focus on developing habits and demands for quality information and increasing the resilience to manipulation. After they receive ToT from IREX's international team of experts, the selected local consultants will deliver training for trainers of youth, young journalists, teachers and other groups and individuals in the area of media literacy and critical thinking.

Exact activity schedules, scopes of work, and deliverables may vary among selected candidates based on availability to meet YouThink deadlines and relevant background. Duration of consultancies are expected to cover a period of 1 year, with an expected engagement of up to 30 days, while the exact number of days/hours will be determined according to the program schedule and training/activity needs.

Scope of Work:

Illustrative tasks and deliverables may consist of the following and will be completed in close cooperation with IREX's YouThink program team in North Macedonia. Tasks may vary among selected candidates and will be assigned according to relevant background, need, and/or availability:

- Contribute to the development of training/educational curricula and materials, trainer/teacher resources, and/or methodologies as part of the YouThink project. Specifically, selected candidates will:
 - provide a comprehensive set of examples, case studies, and similar materials, tailored for various YouThink audiences, as defined by IREX.
 - provide case studies and examples tailored for both in-person and online training formats.
 - perform training aimed at youth, young journalists, teachers and other groups and individuals in the area of media literacy and critical thinking
 - Contribute to the development of content related to North Macedonia's media and information landscape, including the news media sector, journalism in the era of digital information, business incentives and models, ownership, engagement patterns and constraints, algorithms, and related topics.
- Participate in meetings with IREX and its implementing partners to review progress, receive feedback, and prepare revisions;
- Contribute to the development of other YouThink program resources, as requested by and agreed with IREX;
- Develop and refine training materials and/or online/multimedia content in the areas outlined above;
- Deliver training to trainers of youth, young journalists, teachers, and other groups and individuals in the area of media literacy and critical thinking;
- Other tasks as assigned.

The work of the consultants may fall under one or more of the following areas of interest:

- Area 1: Working with youth and youth activists
- Area 2: Working with young journalists
- Area 3: Working with school teachers and student support staff/professional services

In their applications, consultants are encouraged to note one or more areas of interest, based on their expertise and professional interest.

Qualifications:

- University degree in a relevant field (journalism, communications, education, political science, sociology, psychology, pedagogy/pre-service teacher training, or other social sciences), or equivalent experience **is required**;
- Basic understanding of media and information literacy, news literacy, digital literacy, and/or fact-checking **is preferred**;
- A minimum of 5 years of experience in designing or contributing to training materials and/or academic/school curricula (especially for youth, pupils/students, and/or teachers) **is strongly preferred**;
- Demonstrated understanding of North Macedonia's media environment, education sector, and related issues **is strongly preferred**;
- Experience designing training programs or educational resources **is preferred**;
- Knowledge of/experience using interactive training methods (e.g. small group discussions, case study reviews, role playing, quizzes and demonstrations, etc.) and digital tools (e.g. social

- media accounts and messaging applications, web search, reverse image search techniques, geolocation, etc.) **is preferred**;
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office and video conferencing platforms (e.g. Zoom, Teams, Google Meet);
 - Ability to communicate professionally in English and Macedonian is required. Spoken and written fluency in Albanian will be considered a strong asset.

Application Process:

Interested candidates should submit documents in English to respond to the above-mentioned specific tasks **no later than January 10 2022 (midnight CET)**, in electronic version, to the email info.youthink@irex.org with the subject “**Resource/Training Development Consultants**”. The documents should include:

- CV, emphasizing educational background, relevant experience, and previous similar work;
- Motivational Letter

Note: Daily Fees of Consultants are subject to negotiation as they will be based on level of experience and nationally established rates.

Short listed candidates will be invited for an interview. The selection committee will consist of representatives from the project.

Contact for further inquiries:

Any questions regarding the open call should be send to info.youthink@irex.org by December 31st 2021.

A selection will be made no later than January 25, 2022. The selection process will be based on the degree to which candidate’s qualifications and experience match YouThink project’s needs outlined above, and ability to adhere to the time constraints of the proposed activities. Selected trainers will sign contract for their duties with IREX and will work under USAID’s media literacy project YouThink with all implementing partners, based on the approved activities in the project.

Tentative timeframe:

Announcement date	December 20, 2021
Documents submission deadline	January 10, 2022
Selection process	up to January 25, 2022
Signings contracts	January 31, 2022

USAID’s Media Literacy Project YouThink is implemented by IREX together with the Macedonian Institute for Media (MIM), the Institute of Communication Studies (ICS) and the Youth Educational Forum (YEF), and in cooperation with the Ministry of Science and Education and the Bureau for Development of Education. YouThink activities are made possible by the support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).