

Terms of Reference for an Advocacy Consultant

Background

Child rights online is a topic that brings together various civil society organisations, from ones working on child protection to ones focused on education, wellbeing, access and accessibility, digital design, and more. It also brings in technical and technological organisations, along with other digital actors such as digital rights or digital governance organisations. In the upcoming EU mandate, the implementation of the Digital Services Act and the AI Act, together with the drafting of the Regulation and Directive combatting child sexual abuse online and new initiatives surrounding age assurance and age verification, will require the civil society to stay united and work together to ensure the best outcomes for children.

In June 2024, ten Brussels based civil society organisations came together and decided to look into the need to establish a new form of collaboration on the topic of advocacy on child rights online. Given the complexity of the ecosystem and the different roles played by the different organisations, any further action must be developed based on the shared understanding and knowledge of the actors involved. Therefore, to ensure there is a comprehensive understanding of the current state of play of the field, the real needs of the organisations involved, and the fitness of the potential selected solution, it was decided that a mapping and detailed analysis would be required as a first step.

Objectives and scope of the assignment

The consultant will provide a mapping and an analysis of the existing work and initiatives of actors working on EU advocacy on children's rights online, with the goal of identifying potential gaps that a new civil society Alliance could fill and providing guidance on next steps. Objectives:

- Understand the current field of civil society collaboration on child rights online advocacy at EU level
- Identify current projects, alliances, networks and other groups existing in this space and the key issues/areas covered (including but not limited to online safety, privacy, child participation on digital topics, media literacy for children, age verification and assurance, and prevention of online harms – including child sexual abuse)
- Understand if there is a need for a new form of collaboration and if yes, why and what form this collaboration should have

Expected outputs/Deliverables

1. An initial work plan detailing how the analysis and redaction of the third output would be carried out
2. A mapping of the existing networks and relevant initiatives related to EU level advocacy and cooperation on child rights online.
3. A gap analysis of the need for further collaboration and, if justified, a proposal of how to best fill that gap, based on interviews, the above mapping, and other relevant sources.

Required expertise

Qualification and skills:

- Education to Master's level, with a qualification in international relations, economics, politics, law, a related EU policy field or similar is an advantage.

Specific experience:

- Experience working with civil society organisations on strategy development or support
- Experience in analysing and mapping working ecosystems or sectors

Specific knowledge:

- Extensive knowledge on EU Advocacy and civil society alliances at EU level
- Excellent knowledge on children's rights and the digital policy landscape at EU level

Languages:

- Fluent knowledge of English
- Knowledge of French is desirable

Working language: English

Time frame and location

The consultant is expected to start work before the end of 2024. The contract will be subject to deliverables, which will be due max. three months after the start of the contract. Work is expected to require 11 working days. The consultant will work preferably with a hybrid regime, with in-person (Brussels) and online meetings.

Applications

Interested applicants should submit their bids, including a CV, a cover letter, and a financial proposal, as well as any supporting documents, to fabiola.palomares@eurochild.org and katerina.nanou@savethechildren.org. The financial proposal shall specify the number of hours covered, and the total lump sum amount, including VAT.

Deadline to send an application is 12 December 2024 – contract to be signed by 18 December.