

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- **Organisation:** Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD)
 - **Contract type:** Consultancy
 - **Reporting to:** Manager, Strong Cities Network
 - **Location:** United Kingdom
 - **Preferred Start Date:** March 2020
 - **Remuneration:** Competitive
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About ISD

ISD is a global counter-extremism organisation dedicated to powering solutions to extremism and polarisation. For over 10 years, we have responded to the rising challenge of extremist movements and the ideologies that underpin them, delivering cutting-edge programmes built from world-leading expertise in communications and technology, grassroots networks, knowledge and research, and policy advice.

As a non-profit organisation with teams in London, Beirut, Toronto and Washington D.C., ISD enjoys strategic partnerships with the world's leading technology companies and supports more than a dozen prominent governments and institutions in stemming the rise of violent extremism and hate.

About the Strong Cities Network

Launched at the United Nations in September 2015, the Strong Cities Network (SCN) is the first ever global network of mayors, municipal-level policy makers and practitioners united in building social cohesion and community resilience to counter violent extremism in all its forms. Led by ISD and comprised of more than 130 cities and local governments, the SCN builds collaboration between mayors, political actors and frontline teams to tackle polarisation, hate and violence in local communities in every major global region. The network catalyses, inspires and multiplies community-centric approaches and action to counter violent extremism through peer learning and expert training. It operates with a set of fundamental principles, agreed by all members, that protect and promote human rights and civil liberties in all aspects of its work to prevent violent extremism.

Project context

ISD is partnering with the Centre for the Analysis of Social Media (CASM) to create a bespoke data analysis function to capture, geo-locate and analyse online extremist-related content at regional level (hereafter referred to as an "online extremism index").

This capability will be deployed in support of on-the-ground capacity-building work taking place in South Asia. It is intended to provide insight into the nature and quantity of extremist and hateful speech on key social media platforms in the region and will assess key narratives, geographical concentration and provide some network mapping. For indicative purposes, India (West Bengal) and Bangladesh are the key geographies in South Asia to which the findings and analysis of the regional indices will need to be relevant.

The development of this capability and analysis is designed to inform a comprehensive programme of work taking place under the SCN, which will include the identification of key infrastructural, policy and training needs for municipalities to be able deliver effective local prevention activities in partnership with civil society organisations and key civic stakeholders. Mayors, city-level policymakers and local community stakeholders have a deep understanding of the drivers and risks related to violent

extremism in their own communities but too often have an incomplete picture of the nature and extent of online risks that may emanate from and/or affect their own towns and cities. The development of the online extremism index will aim to bridge this gap, with findings informing how the SCN develops and directs its offline capacity-building efforts.

Scope of work and deliverables

ISD is seeking to contract research consultants to deliver specific research outputs that will contribute towards the delivery of the online extremism index to assess the nature and extent of extremist and hate speech online in South Asia. The online extremism index will be used in multi-lingual contexts, draw upon a broad array of online and, where possible, offline data sources and produce meaningful analysis for city level practitioners using data visualisation.

Working in close cooperation with ISD and CASM, the successful contractors will need to produce, in priority order, the below key deliverables across a 6-month project timeframe, completed by the end of July 2020. It is anticipated that the consultant will be able to produce all of the deliverables outlined below within no more than 50 days' work over the period March 2020 to August 2020.

The consultant will report into the Strong Cities Network Manager and will be required to work directly with the HQ-based team in London, through a mix of in-person and remote meetings.

1. Compile a list of easily scrapable sources such as international, regional, national, and local online portals, including social media pages.
2. Identify the thematic and geographic scope of the research in partnership with ISD researchers.
3. Identify key search terms and translation of data in languages relevant for the thematic and geographic scope. These would include but not be limited to Bangla and English.
4. Filter and classify data using bespoke software and other off-the-shelf products (e.g. CrowdTangle, Crimson Hexagon) to complement the research if appropriate.
5. Analyse data and produce a findings report in partnership with ISD researchers and CASM.

Consultant specification

We seek an experienced, proactive and dedicated consultant to work with the SCN team to ensure our ambitious plans are achieved. The successful candidate will be a collaborative and solutions-focused professional with the ability to work to tight deadlines and produce outputs to a high quality. We welcome applications from consultants who meet the following criteria:

	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge, training and qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive understanding of Islamist groups, narratives and recruitment trends in Bangladesh and India. • In-depth knowledge of regional online extremist-related discourses. • In-depth knowledge of prominent social media platforms and news websites. 	
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting analytical research on conflict-related issues in the region. 	

- Working with teams with diverse backgrounds working in multiple locations.
- Working across a range of counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism related policy and research.

Skills

- Excellent oral and written English and Bangla.
- Excellent knowledge of digital research methods (both quantitative and qualitative), tools and ethics.
- Working knowledge of one or more of the following languages: Hindi, Urdu, Nepali, Odia and Santhali.
- Experience of coding (e.g., Python / R).
- Excellent working knowledge of social listening technology, natural language processing, open source intelligence and machine learning techniques and tools.
- Excellent command of data visualisation techniques and software.

How to submit applications

All applications must be submitted via email to vacancies@isdglobal.org by **17:00 UK time on Friday 21st February 2020.**

All applications should include:

- CV
- Cover letter, including how the applicant fulfills the listed criteria and will meet the deliverables, as well as the expected daily rate
- Names and contact details for two referees

ISD reserves the right to reject any and all proposals submitted and to request additional information from all applicants as necessary to evaluate applications. Please note that applications will be considered on a rolling basis and ISD reserves the right to appoint before the end of the advertisement.