

**CONSULTANCY OPPORTUNITY – German-speaking Digital Methods
Consultant**

Role	German speaking Digital Methods Consultant	Reports to	Project Lead
Contract type	Consultancy / freelance contract	Duration	ASAP until 30 June 2027
Volume	Average of 65-85 days over project timeframe (depending on day rate)	Location	Germany (preferred), other locations will be considered
Daily rate	To be agreed based on experience	Languages	English and German (essential)

ABOUT ISD

The Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) is an independent, non-profit think-and-do tank dedicated to safeguarding human rights, democracy, and security in the face of rising extremism, hate, polarisation, and information manipulation. For more than 20 years, ISD has been at the forefront of analysing, exposing, and countering these threats, helping governments, institutions, communities, and the private sector build the tools, strategies, and capabilities they need.

ISD's work combines cutting-edge digital analysis, policy expertise, and operational programmes. Our teams in Berlin, London, Washington DC, Amman, and Toronto span more than 150 researchers, analysts, policy specialists, and practitioners.

ABOUT THE DIGITAL ANALYSIS UNIT

ISD's Digital Analysis Unit (DAU) is a central hub for digital methodologies and technology within ISD. Working closely with analysts and managers in the research team, the DAU is responsible for overseeing research methodologies across ISD projects, selecting appropriate tools and technical partnerships, providing internal training and upskilling, and ensuring standardised research practices across various projects and entities.

In collaboration with strategic technology partners, the DAU leverages data analytics, natural language processing, open-source intelligence (OSINT) techniques, and rigorous ethnographic research to enable ISD researchers to gain real-time insights into extremist, hate and terrorist networks, movements, and online narratives. It also supports ISD's efforts to identify instances of covert content manipulation, identity deception and misleading behaviours with the goal of countering the spread of false information. As well as monitoring

online risks, the DAU provides empirical evidence to guide ISD's digital policy work on assessing the effectiveness of social media platforms' efforts to mitigate online harms in line with digital regulation, including policy enforcement and content moderation.

Increasingly, the DAU also integrates representative survey research as a complementary methodology, enabling ISD to measure not only the supply of online narratives but also their reach, credibility, and behavioural effects among target populations.

THE ROLE

We are seeking a Digital Methods Consultant to lead the digital research and survey components of two parallel research projects, each under its own consultancy contract with its own timeframe and volume. Working alongside the qualitative analysts, the consultant will pull and prepare public social media data, run quantitative analyses, and design and oversee representative surveys.

Project 1 — Information manipulation targeting Germany's economic interests (German Federal Foreign Office). A 14-month project examining manipulated narratives about Germany — as an economy, employer, trading partner, and destination for skilled labour — circulating in Brazil, India, and South Africa, combining digital ethnography with representative surveys (~1,000 respondents per country).

Estimated volume of work for Project 1: an average of 50-60 days over the project timeframe, starting as soon as possible until 30 June 2027.

Project 2 — Climate disinformation and its impact on public discourse in Austria (BMLUK). A study mapping the climate-disinformation ecosystem across X, Facebook, Telegram, and Reddit — identifying key actors and narratives and tracing their move from fringe to mainstream — paired with a representative online survey (CAWI) of ~1,000 Austrians measuring how exposure shapes attitudes to climate policy.

Estimated volume of work for Project 2: approximately 1.5–2 days per month (around 15–25 days in total), from July 2026 to March 2027, subject to confirmation of the project start date.

Key responsibilities

Digital research & data collection (~35%)

- Collect public social media data via platform research APIs and other tools, and troubleshoot platform-specific access constraints.
- Operationalise the narrative salience and relative traction frameworks, ensuring measurement is consistent and defensible across contexts.
- Run quantitative analyses of spread, engagement, and cross-platform diffusion; contribute to actor and narrative mapping.

- Maintain keyword lists, actor lists, and codebooks, documented for reproducibility and audit.

Survey design, fielding & analysis (≈45%)

- Translate qualitative findings into structured survey instruments, retaining a common core for cross-country comparability (Project 1) and supporting German-language instruments (Project 2).
- Specify sampling, weighting, translation, and cognitive pre-testing requirements, and develop quality-assurance protocols for fielding.
- Manage local survey partners, including tendering and contracting support (Project 1).
- Lead analysis of weighted survey data, including subgroup analysis and basic inferential statistics, and ensure data handling complies with applicable data-protection and ethical standards.

Triangulation, reporting & stakeholder support (≈20%)

- Triangulate survey findings with qualitative evidence to produce policy-relevant insights.
- Contribute methodological and analytical sections to each project's core deliverables.
- Support validation/roundtable sessions with stakeholders, presenting methods and findings accessibly.
- Flag methodological risks to the project lead and contribute to adaptive course-correction.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

We are looking for a consultant who combines methodological rigour in digital research methods with hands-on experience in survey design, fielding, and analysis. The criteria below describe the profile we are seeking.

	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge, training and qualifications	Educated to degree level in a related field (political or social science, area studies, computational social science, statistics, international relations, or security studies).	Master's degree or PhD in a relevant discipline, particularly in survey methodology or computational social science.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3+ years of project delivery experience, with a proven ability to lead the methodological design and execution of mixed-methods research projects. • Experience designing research methodologies on online information manipulation, disinformation, and/or related digital harms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarity with the information environments of at least one of India, Brazil, or South Africa (for Project 1). • Experience conducting or supervising digital ethnographic research on non-Western platforms and publics.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated experience working with or commissioning quantitative survey research, including questionnaire design, sampling, weighting, translation, cognitive pre-testing, and analysis. • Experience commissioning and overseeing local survey partners, ideally across multiple country contexts. • Experience integrating qualitative and quantitative findings in mixed-methods designs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior experience working on projects examining economic, migration-related, or reputation-focused narratives.
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong working knowledge of digital research methods, including content analysis, network analysis, and approaches to assessing narrative prominence and engagement in data-constrained environments. • Practical experience collecting public social media data via platform research APIs (e.g. TikTok Research API, Meta research tools, YouTube Data API) or comparable tools. • Ability to analyse weighted survey data, including subgroup analysis and basic inferential statistics, in R, Stata, SPSS, or equivalent. • Strong working proficiency in English and German. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarity with weighting procedures such as iterative proportional fitting. • Experience with data wrangling in Python or R, including common libraries (e.g. pandas, tidyverse). • Proficient use of data visualisation tools (e.g. Tableau, Flourish, ggplot). • Familiarity with applicable data protection requirements and platform Terms of Service in research contexts.
Additional requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outstanding attention to detail. • Highly organised, with the ability to be flexible, multi-task, and respond proactively in a fast-paced research environment. • Ability to work well both independently and as part of a distributed project team. 	

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

ISD is committed to building a diverse and inclusive team. We particularly welcome expressions of interest from individuals who are currently underrepresented in our networks, including consultants from diverse ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, people with

disabilities, and members of the LGBTQ+ community. If you have specific access needs or adjustments you would like us to consider during the selection process, please let us know.

HOW TO EXPRESS INTEREST

Interested consultants are invited to share the following with the ISD Germany project team at germany@isdglobal.org:

- A current CV or short profile (max 3 pages)
- A short cover note (max 1 page) outlining relevant experience, country expertise, and availability
- One or two examples of relevant prior work (links or attachments)

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to a 40-minute conversation with members of the ISD Germany project team.