



www.pollicy.org
info@pollicy.org
7 Kulubya Close, Bugolobi
+256 708 310 397
+256 760 193 143

Terms of Reference (ToR) for a Consultant to Review the Performance of the Africa Data Governance Hub

Background

The Africa Data Governance Hub is an inclusive, transformative knowledge resource platform that compiles data governance resources and actors. The Hub's main strategy is to foster just data governance practices by offering the necessary support and resources to practitioners working to shape an ideal digital society. This goal is achieved by continually mapping digital rights work, organisations, resources, funders, and pinpointing existing gaps that the Africa Data Governance Hub can address. The project, African Data Governance 2.0, led to the development of the Knowledge Hub with financial support from the Hewlett Foundation, Ford Foundation, and Omidyar Network. The African Data Governance Knowledge Hub is an online platform that promotes collaboration among data governance actors and the sharing of data governance resources in Africa. It is implemented by Niyel and Pollicy.

Objectives

The consultant or consulting firm is expected to undertake an extensive review of the Hub's performance to date, with a specific focus on ensuring that Phase 2 builds upon the lessons learned from Phase 1. This includes assessing its effectiveness, efficiency, and impact, and providing recommendations to improve its activities and work plan. The feedback will also contribute to potential modifications in the Hub's user interface (UI) and user experience (UX), or even a potential rebranding. Reviewing Phase 1 before implementation of Phase 2 is crucial, as Phase 1 experienced initial success but faced a drop in engagement afterward. It is important to learn from Phase 1 to ensure that the proposed activities in Phase 2 effectively create and maintain the engagement of data governance actors..

1. Scope of Work

The consultant will undertake the following tasks:

- a. Assess the Hub's performance and effectiveness in achieving its functionality.
- b. Identify any existing gaps and challenges in the Hub's performance and propose appropriate solutions to address them.
- c. Assess how the Hub is utilised by players within the African data governance ecosystem and how they would prefer to utilise it.
- d. Evaluate the Hub's operational efficiency and the impact of its activities on digital rights activists, technologists, and other stakeholder groups and gather insights on their preferences and needs..
- e. Provide evidence-based recommendations to refine the Hub's activities and work plan focusing on its feminist approach to providing content on data governance.
- f. Evaluate the Hub's efficiency, in terms of resource utilisation, operational management, and decision-making processes.



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- g. Assess the impact of the Hub's activities, focusing on outcomes for digital rights activists, technologists, and stakeholder groups, especially those in Africa and the global South.
- h. Identify any potential areas for improvement and provide evidence-based recommendations to refine the Hub's activities and work plan.
- i. Consider UX/UI aspects of the Hub's platform, suggesting improvements or a potential rebranding to enhance user engagement and satisfaction.
- j. Identify strategic positioning opportunities for the Hub at events and networking sessions to promote data governance in Africa. These could include DataFest Africa, Smart Africa, Forum on Internet Freedom in Africa (FIFAfrica22), Team COMMUNITY's Africa Monthly Meetup, Africa Evidence Network's EVIDENCE 2023, Data Protection Africa Summit, and others.
- k. Engage with the Hub's advisory board, Niyel, and Pollicy on a monthly or biweekly basis to gather valuable insights and feedback for the evaluation.
- l. Engage with other key stakeholders, including those at the African Union, regional bodies like The East African Community, ECOWAS, COMESA, SADC etc and players within the African data governance ecosystem, to gather valuable insights and feedback for the evaluation.

2. Expected Outputs

The consultant is expected to deliver the following outputs within three months from the date of contract signing:

- a. A comprehensive report detailing the Hub's performance to date, identifying gaps, and outlining actionable recommendations for improvements by 29th February 2024.
- b. Specific recommendations for UX/UI enhancements or a potential rebranding, based on user feedback and industry best practices.
- c. An outline of strategic positioning opportunities for the Hub at key events and networking sessions to enhance data governance promotion in Africa.

3. Timeline

The duration of the assignment is 4 months from the date of contract signing. This is a flexible consultancy, with a completion timeframe of up to four months from the date of contracting. The assignment is to take place between October 2023 and February 2024.

4. Qualifications

Interested consultants should possess the following qualifications:

- a. Proven experience in performance evaluation, strategic planning, and project management.



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- b. Extensive knowledge of functionalities of digital platform and managing online communities
- c. Extensive knowledge of data governance and digital rights issues in Africa and the global South.
- d. Experience in assessing UX/UI design and branding from a user perspective
- e. Strong analytical, report-writing, and communication skills.

5. Evaluation Criteria with Grading System (Points):

The selection of the consultant to conduct the performance review of the Africa Data Governance Hub will be based on the assessment of submitted proposals. The selection committee will use the following criteria to evaluate each proposal:

- 1) **Relevant Experience (10 points):** The committee will assess the consultant's experience in conducting performance evaluations, strategic planning, and project management, particularly in the context of data governance, digital rights, and related fields in Africa or the global South.
- 2) **Understanding of the ToR (10 points):** The proposal will be evaluated based on the consultant's demonstrated understanding of the Terms of Reference (ToR) provided for the evaluation. A clear and comprehensive grasp of the objectives, scope of work, and expected outputs outlined in the ToR will be essential.
- 3) **Proposed Methodology (15 points):** The selection committee will review the consultant's proposed methodology for conducting the performance review. It should demonstrate a well-structured and systematic approach, including data collection methods, data sources, and techniques for analysis and synthesis.
- 4) **Expertise in Digital Platforms (10 points):** The committee will assess the consultant's extensive knowledge of the functionalities of digital platforms and experience in managing online communities, as this expertise is vital for evaluating the Hub's digital presence and user engagement.
- 5) **Familiarity with Data Governance and Digital Rights Issues (15 points):** The consultant's demonstrated expertise and familiarity with data governance and digital rights issues specific to Africa and the global South will be considered. This knowledge will be crucial for a comprehensive evaluation of the Hub's impact.
- 6) **UX/UI Assessment Experience:** The committee will evaluate the consultant's experience in assessing user experience (UX) and user interface (UI) design, as this will play a significant role in providing recommendations for potential improvements or rebranding.
- 7) **Analytical and Communication Skills:** The proposal will be assessed based on the consultant's demonstrated analytical and report-writing skills. Clarity, coherence, and the ability to present findings and recommendations effectively will be crucial evaluation factors.



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- 8) **Budget and Timeline:** The committee will evaluate the proposed budget to ensure it aligns with the scope of work and expected outputs. Additionally, adherence to the three-month timeline specified in the ToR will be considered.
- 9) **Ethical Considerations:** The consultant's proposal will be assessed based on their approach to ethical considerations, particularly concerning data privacy, informed consent, anonymity, and safeguarding the interests of stakeholders.

6. Final deliverables

- a. **Mapped Out List of Stakeholders Consulted:** A comprehensive list of stakeholders consulted during the evaluation process, including their roles and contributions, to provide transparency and context for the findings and recommendations.
- b. **Recommendations and Action Plan:** A set of actionable recommendations based on the evaluation findings. These recommendations should be prioritised and include a clear action plan with specific steps for implementation.
- c. **Comprehensive Evaluation Report:** A detailed report summarising the findings of the performance evaluation, including strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This report should provide a clear analysis of the Hub's performance, its impact, and recommendations for improvement.
- d. **Presentation or Workshop:** A presentation of the evaluation findings and recommendations to key stakeholders, which may include the Hub's advisory board, Niyel, Pollicy, and other relevant parties. This presentation can also include a discussion of the proposed action plan.
- e. **Progress Updates:** Regular progress updates and interim reports or update meetings, as specified in the contract or terms of reference (ToR), to keep the client informed about the status of the consultancy work.

7. Application Process

Interested consultants should submit a proposal outlining their understanding of the ToR, proposed methodology, two referees available to promptly conduct a reference check timeline, and a detailed budget. Please also include a CV demonstrating relevant experience and qualifications. Proposals should be sent by email to recruitment@pollicy.org by October 23, 2023.

8. The Africa Data Governance Hub team reserves the right to reject any or all proposals without assigning any reasons. Only shortlisted consultants will be contacted for further discussions.