



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL  
FOR STRATEGIC REVIEW OF VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLES INITIATIVE

RFP # VPSHR 21-3 [v.2](#)

Issued by

The Voluntary Principles Initiative Strategic Review Commission on behalf of the

The Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights Association (VPA)

[Revised version issued January 19, 2022](#)

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## 1.0 Terms, Overview and Purpose

### 1.1 Terms

<b>Commission:</b>	The VPI Strategic Review Commission comprised of six (6) leading practitioners in the field of business and human rights, elected by the VPI Steering Committee
<b>RFP:</b>	Request for Proposal
<b>Secretariat:</b>	Responsible for the day-to-day organizational requirements of the VPI & VPA, contracted to Compass Consulting International Ltd., based in Ottawa, Canada
<b>VPA:</b>	Voluntary Principles Association
<b>VPI:</b>	Voluntary Principles Initiative
<b>VPSHR:</b>	Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights

### 1.2 Overview

Created in 2000, the Voluntary Principles Initiative (VPI) is a multi-stakeholder initiative conformed by Governments, NGOs, and Companies that promotes the implementation of a set of principles – The Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights (VPSHR) – which guide companies on providing security for their operations while respecting human rights.

The VPI provides a platform for members to engage in dialogue and discussion related to best practice and lessons learned regarding security and human rights, especially in the natural resources sector. The VPI is governed by a Steering Committee composed of representatives from the three membership Pillars: Governments, NGOs, and Companies.

For additional information, please visit: <http://www.voluntaryprinciples.org/>

The Voluntary Principles Association (VPA), with whom the successful bidder will formally enter into a contract, is the formal not-for-profit legal entity, domiciled in the Netherlands, designed to address the basic administrative and financial needs of the Voluntary Principles Initiative (VPI). The VPA is governed by the Articles of Association and the Board of Directors.

The Secretariat, located in Ottawa, Canada, is responsible for the day-to-day business of both the VPI and the VPA and as such will act as a regular point of contact for the Corporate Services provider. The Secretariat services are currently contracted out to Compass Consulting International Ltd.

Having recently celebrated its twentieth anniversary, the VPI Steering Committee created a Strategic Review Commission (the “Commission”), comprised of six leading practitioners in the field of business and human rights, to evaluate the VPI’s work and determine whether any changes to its structure, governance, and objectives is required. The Commissioners were nominated by Members and Observers of the VPI and elected by the Steering Committee.

The Secretariat will be supporting the Commission in administering this request for proposals.

### 1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this consultancy is to perform an overall organizational and strategic evaluation of the VPI to inform the Commissioners recommendations regarding the future of the Initiative.

### 1.4 Documents

The documents listed below form part of and are incorporated into this RFP.

- This RFP document
- Appendix A: Scope of Work
- Appendix B: Declarations

## 2.0 Timeline and Notifications

Publication of RFP	December 16, 2021
Deadline for Submission of Questions	January 5, 2022
Publication of Bulletins (Answers to Questions) on website	January 10, 2022
Proposal Due date	January <del>21</del> 4, 2022
Review and evaluation	immediately upon receipt
Negotiation and Award notification	February 2022
Project Duration	Approx. six (6) months from contract start date

Please note that these dates are subject to change at the discretion of the Secretariat.

### 2.1 Submission of Questions & Publication of Bulletins

If any omissions from or discrepancies in any of the RFP Documents are found, or if Bidder is in any doubt as to the meaning of anything in the RFP, Bidder should immediately e-mail a written question, before submitting a Proposal. All such requests must be received not later than January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022. The originator of any such request is solely responsible for its timely receipt by the Secretariat.

Bulletins in reply to all such questions will be posted on the [voluntaryprinciples.org](http://voluntaryprinciples.org) website by January 10, 2022. The VPA shall not be bound by any other interpretations of the RFP Documents.

Should the Bidder not receive a reply to a question in time to use the reply in writing the Proposal, then the interpretation upon which Bidder relies must be set forth within a cover letter or the Proposal itself.

Any other additions to the RFP Documents may be issued as written bulletins at any time prior to the Proposal Due Date set forth in Section 2.0 above. All bulletins are to be considered as an integral part of the RFP Documents. Bulletins will be posted to the [voluntaryprinciples.org](http://voluntaryprinciples.org) website.

Bidders are required to consider all bulletins received during the bid period in preparing their Proposals and to confirm which bulletins have been received.

### 2.2 Bidder Interviews

Bidders shortlisted by the Commission Evaluation Team may be invited to an interview by video conference. Guidelines and location/platform for this interview will be distributed as required.

## 2.3 Final Decision and Notification

A final decision and notification will entail the following steps:

- Selection of preferred bidder
- Contract negotiations with successful respondent
- Notification of successful bidder posted to [voluntaryprinciples.org](http://voluntaryprinciples.org) website

## 3.0 General Requirements

### 3.1 Communications

The Secretariat is the official point of contact for the bid process. Any questions or other communications must be directed to the Head of the Secretariat at [tenders@voluntaryprinciples.org](mailto:tenders@voluntaryprinciples.org).

Any communication with parties not expressly named in this RFP may result in the disqualification of your organization from further consideration.

### 3.2 Eligibility

Bidders must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- I. The bidder must not have participated in the development of this RFP or been privy to any confidential information related to this RFP. For greater clarity, making a submission under the Request for Information process does not deem a bidder to have participated in the development of this RFP.

### 3.3 Proposal Validity

- I. Bidders are required to present their offers in United States Dollars (USD);
- II. Bidders are required to present their offers based on the total project budget inclusive of all costs and fees; and

## 4.0 Required Format and Submission

### 4.1 Proposal Responses

Proposal responses should be organized and submitted in accordance with the instructions in this section. Responses should be organized into separate pdf documents as follows:

- I. Cover Letter
- II. Technical Proposal
- III. Financial Proposal
- IV. Signed Declaration (Appendix B)

#### I. COVER LETTER

A one (1) page covering letter should be submitted and include the following:

- a) A reference to the RFP number and RFP title;
- b) A statement confirming that the signatory has read and understood the instructions contained within this RFP;
- c) The primary contact person with respect to this RFP: the individual's name, address, phone number and email address; and

- d) The letter must be signed by person(s) duly authorized to sign on behalf of the Bidder and bind the Bidder to statements made in response to the RFP.

## II. TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

The technical proposal should respond to Appendix A: Scope of Work by describing the following:

- a) Description of the consultant team and experience working independently and/or collectively on similar projects, and a statement that the bidder has the qualifications, capacity and experience to carry out the work.
- b) Proposed methodology for carrying out the work described in Appendix A: Scope of Work.
- c) CV for each consulting team member named in the project bid with proposed team lead identified.

The technical proposal should be no longer than 12 pages exclusive of CVs.

## III. FINANCIAL PROPOSAL

The Bidder should provide a separate document relative to the pricing of its proposal.

All proposals must address the following financial requirements:

- a) The Bidder is to state the assumptions underlying its financial proposal.
- b) All prices should be quoted in USD, excluding VAT and other taxes.
- c) A detailed breakdown of the total costs to deliver the project including level of effort expected of each consulting team member and their daily rate.

The financial proposal must not exceed the maximum funding available for any contract resulting from this RFP. The maximum funding is USD \$100,000. No travel is anticipated.

## IV. SIGNED DECLARATION

The Declaration in Appendix B must be signed by a duly authorized representative of the bidder and included in the bid.

### 4.2 Electronic Submission

Proposals shall be submitted electronically in pdf format to the Secretariat at [tenders@voluntaryprinciples.org](mailto:tenders@voluntaryprinciples.org).

- Submissions should include the RFP number (VPSHR 21-3) in the subject line.
- Please attach Technical and Financial Proposals as separate pdf documents.

### 4.3 Receipt by Bid Due Date

The Evaluation Team must receive the Proposal no later than 11:59pmEST on the Proposal Due Date set forth in Section 2.0 of this RFP.

### 4.4 Other Communication

No other communication is to be sent in which the rates/prices composing the Proposal are disclosed.

#### 4.5 References

Bidders must supply at least two references from current or recent clients (within the past 36 months) for either the bidding organization and/or for each of the individual experts proposed, as appropriate, which are able to:

- substantiate claims put forward in the Proposal with regard to previous work completed
- vouch for the quality and scope of previous relevant work completed

Where a reference is supplied, the following details should be provided:

- the name of the client or partner organization
- the name and contact details of an individual from said organization with direct familiarity of the organization and the relevant project(s)
- a brief overview of the nature of the relevant project(s) to which the reference relates

#### 4.6 Declarations

Each Bidder shall include a signed Declarations form (Annex **CB**) confirming that they meet the eligibility requirements and will comply with VPA expectations regarding proper conduct. ~~To avoid any potential conflicts of interest, any successful bidder must disclose any and all commercial relationship(s) with existing VPI participants and VPA members and propose a plan for mitigation.~~

### 5.0 Evaluation Criteria

Proposal evaluation will be weighted 80% technical and 20% financial. Financial proposals will only be scored if the bidder receives a minimum score of 70% upon evaluation of the technical proposal. Proposals not complying with the mandatory requirements will receive no further consideration.

The following criteria is mandatory:

- I. The proposed team must possess a proven ability to work and communicate in English with a very high degree of proficiency.
- II. The proposed team must demonstrate significant expertise in performing strategic and organizational evaluations.
- III. The proposed team must possess knowledge of, or experience with, multistakeholder initiatives.

		<b>Weighting</b>
<b>Technical</b>		<b>80%</b>
	Methodology, assessed on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed methodology for completing the work including level of detail, thoroughness, and achievability.</li> <li>• Likelihood that proposed methodology will yield the desired results.</li> </ul>	35%
	Quality of proposed team of experts assessed on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team leader’s proven ability to design and manage a project and project team</li> <li>• Relevance and level of education of each expert and any relevant personal background or experience that enhances their suitability</li> </ul>	45%

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any additional skills, knowledge, or experience that may be considered an asset, such as proven experience in evaluations pursuant to an external standard (such as OECD DAC evaluation criteria) additional languages, experience researching or working in the area of business and human rights; etc.</li> </ul>	
<b>Financial</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dollar amount</li> <li>Overall value for money and appropriateness of budget</li> </ul>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

## 6.0 Reservation of Rights

This RFP and the Statement of Work are for use in the preparation of the Proposal. All such documents remain the intellectual property of the VPA.

During proposal evaluations, the VPA reserves the right to contact or meet with any individual bidder in order to obtain clarification of its submission or to gain insight into the quality and scope of relevant services. A bidder will not be allowed to add, change or delete any information during the process. The VPA is in no way obligated to meet with any or all bidders for this purpose.

The Evaluation Team reserves the right to award a modest bonus to organizations which made a submission under the public Request for Information process, for example, for the purposes of breaking a tied score between two bidders.

The VPA reserves the right to reject any or all responses to this RFP. The VPA reserves the right to cancel in whole or in part the RFP at its sole discretion.

The VPA reserves the right to alter the timeframes published in this RFP, as required to effectively administer the RFP.

This RFP should in no way be construed as an offer of purchase, but rather it is a request for services, products, fees and expenses information to assist the Evaluation Team on behalf of the VPA in selecting a vendor for supplying the scope of services listed in the RFP.

The VPA hereby assumes no financial responsibility, direct or indirect, for the cost of preparing any proposals, or amendments thereto. The VPA has the right to retain all proposals submitted in response to this RFP.

The VPA makes no commitment in or by virtue of this RFP to purchase any services and expressly reserves the right to alter or waive the RFP requirements or to cancel or re-issue the RFP at any time.

## 7.0 Debriefing

An unsuccessful bidder may request a debriefing within 10 business days of award notification.



## Appendix A: Scope of Work

The consulting team will gather data and draft an evaluation report relating to the Voluntary Principles Initiative.

The evaluation is expected to focus, *inter alia*, on the following:

- (1) **Member satisfaction:** is the VPI meeting member expectations? Can we seek to understand the value proposition for VPI membership, considered uniquely for each Pillar and within each Pillar?
- (2) **Strategic Objectives:** A consideration of the VPI's strategic objectives for the next 5-10 years, including issues related to expansion of membership and growth beyond the extractive sector.
- (3) **Governance:** Can the organizational governance of the initiative be strengthened, including effective decision-making structures, and roles and responsibilities of key positions such as the Chair, Pillars and Pillar Chairs, Plenary, Steering Committee, Secretariat? Key concepts underpinning governance are accountability (see below), participation, inclusion and transparency.
  - a. **Accountability:** How do members evaluate the current accountability mechanisms? How should the VPI strengthen accountability for members with respect to their compliance with the Principles and their obligations as members of the VPI? This would require examining the VPI's existing accountability mechanisms, including, without limitation, annual reports, verification presentations, and grievance mechanism.
  - b. **Management Concerns.** Are there improvements members would like to see in the management of the VPI?
- (4) **Non-member perspectives:** Perceptions and perspectives on the Voluntary Principles Initiative by non-member stakeholders, including Observers, industry associations and related compliance-based initiatives (such as IRMA).

This review should include:

- I. Review of key Voluntary Principles governance documents to understand the VPI/VPA structure, the various roles of its Members and identify any issues related to governance & accountability.
- II. Mixed methods of engagement of internal stakeholders (VPI Members, Observers, In-Country Working Group Members) and external
- III. Regular communication with the Commission and Secretariat on the progress of the evaluation, as determined by the Secretariat.
- IV. Presentation of findings to Commission via written report, which incorporates feedback from a draft version shared with the Commission.

## Appendix B: Declaration\*

We, the undersigned, offer to provide the services for [Insert Title of services] in accordance with your Request for Proposal No. [Insert RFP Reference Number] and our Proposal. We are hereby submitting our Proposal, which includes the Technical Proposal and Financial Proposal.

We hereby declare that we meet all eligibility requirements as set out in section 3.2. We declare that we have a corporate sexual harassment policy in place or will have one before entering any contract that may result from this process.

We hereby declare that our firm, its affiliates or subsidiaries, including any joint venture/consortium /association members (as applicable):

- a) will comply with all applicable laws in our jurisdictions of registration and operation, including, without limitation, laws against bribery of foreign officials;
- b) have not declared bankruptcy, are not currently engaged in bankruptcy or receivership proceedings, and there is no judgment or pending legal action against them that could impair their operations in the foreseeable future;
- c) undertake not to engage in illegal practices, including but not limited to corruption, fraud, coercion, collusion, obstruction, funding of terrorism, or any other practice that exposes the VPA to undue financial, operational, reputational or other risk;
- d) are not under sanction for an offence involving fraud, bribery or corruption imposed by a government or an international organization; and
- e) are not engaged in practices or transactions that would violate the sanctions laws and regulations of the United Nations, the European Union, or the United States.

We declare that all the information provided and statements made by us in this Proposal are true and we accept that any misinterpretation or misrepresentation contained in this Proposal may lead to our disqualification and/or sanctioning by the VPA. We offer to provide services in conformity with the Bidding documents and in accordance with the Statement of Work. Our Proposal shall be valid and remain binding upon us for 120 days upon receipt. We understand that you are not bound to accept any Proposal you receive.

We declare that any supplier or subcontractor to be used in connection with this project shall be contractually required to make representations substantially similar to the declaration set out herein.

I, the undersigned, certify that I am duly authorized to sign this Declaration on behalf of the Bidder.

Name:
Title:
Date:
Signature:

\* Annex B revised on January 19, 2022 to remove reference to conflicts of interest (former (b))