

**ROMANIA**  
**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**  
**FOCUS GROUPS**

**Purpose:**

The National Democratic Institute (NDI) requests proposals for the organization, implementation, and analysis of qualitative research (e.g., focus groups) in Romania to identify and analyze prevailing attitudes among likely voters, and in particular, Roma voters, ahead of fall 2024 elections toward political parties, Roma candidates, as well as their policy priorities, likely voting patterns, and factors influencing Roma voter turnout.

Applicants are expected to propose a plan for focus group recruitment, moderator guide development, and proposed focus group framework and methodology according to the description below. Applications are due **March 1, 2024**.

**Scope of Services:**

The contract will last approximately from April 1 through July 5, 2024 and include research and a presentation of key findings from a maximum of five (5) focus groups. Focus groups should consist of approximately eight to ten citizens each and should be completed by May 9, 2024. Focus groups should comprise a sample of likely voters from across geographic communities, political parties, and civil society groups. There should be up to two focus groups of Roma women and two of Roma men. There should also be a separate focus group with citizens from the Hungarian-speaking Roma community and one devoted to first time Roma voters. Participants should include both regular voters and undecided voters, and the applicant may propose recommendations regarding this distribution across focus groups.

Group discussions should cover topics pertinent to the upcoming elections, including voter motivations, drivers of turnout, and potential impediments to election participation; preferred candidates' characteristics (e.g., affiliation, demographics, profiles); good governance and accountability standards for political parties; perceived or actual conflicts within society impacting constituent voting; and Roma involvement in politics/decision making.

NDI will evaluate applications against the required qualifications listed below, as well as the technical and cost applications. NDI requires the technical application to include:

- Methodology for focus group participant recruitment;
- Proposed focus group framework and methodology, including a plan for developing a moderator guide that covers focus group discussion topics related to the upcoming elections, and in particular, voter motivation and sentiment;
- Applicant background, including a record of international affiliations or any certificates related to qualitative research, whether the applicant has at least five years of experience conducting qualitative research in Romania, a list of previous clients, and at least two references from international organizations/institutions; and
- Plan for identifying suitable premises and equipment for the focus groups.

Please note that any equipment shall be at the cost of the applicant. The applicant shall provide the exact locations where the focus groups will be held in the submitted methodology (i.e., geographic location).

NDI requires bidders to submit a cost application with a budget specifying the estimated costs required to complete the deliverables within the timeline described below, including:

- Preparation and implementation of no more than five (5) focus groups;
- Expenses associated with the proposed premises and estimations for expected travel; and
- Preparation of final reports and PowerPoint presentations following the focus groups;

### **Deliverables and Timeline:**

Deliverables and approximate timelines are as follows:

- The contract will be awarded and agreed upon by the selected applicant and NDI approximately by **April 1, 2024**.
- **An inception report** in English describing the political context, research scope, hypotheses, and focus group methodology, including main questions, tools and modes of participant recruitment, proposed location(s) of the focus groups, proposed moderator, and a timetable for conducting the focus groups. NDI will review and provide feedback on the inception report one week after receipt with a final version due prior to the start of focus groups (inception report due to NDI approximately by **April 12, 2024**).
- Organization and implementation of no more than **five (5) focus groups**, per agreed upon methodology, financial offer, and timeframe. Focus group discussion guides shall be prepared in English in cooperation with NDI. The selected agency will be expected to secure suitable premises and equipment for the focus groups. The equipment used shall be at the cost of the selected agency. The selected agency shall provide NDI with transcripts of all focus groups held within one week of the last focus group (focus groups completed approximately by **May 9, 2024**, with transcripts provided approximately by **May 16, 2024**).
- **A brief analysis of each focus group** summarizing key takeaways, submitted in English to NDI no later than ten (10) days after the last focus group is held. The analysis NDI receives should be written legibly and edited and proofread at the cost of the agency (approximately by **May 27, 2024**).
- **A final report** in English of all research activities, presenting disaggregated data by age, gender, education, locality, and social status, as well as visualizations of the findings. The final report should contain an executive summary, general conclusions across all focus groups, specific conclusions drawn on each topic, and illustrative data from the focus groups to support each conclusion (approximately by **June 14, 2024**). The report NDI receives should be written legibly and edited and proofread at the cost of the agency. NDI will review and provide feedback on the final report two weeks following submission. A revised, finalized version is due to NDI by the end of the contract period.
- **Up to five presentations covering the main findings from the focus groups** (in English, may be delivered virtually or in-person) that are high-quality, professional, targeted to various stakeholders and NDI partners, and accompanied by a PowerPoint slide deck. Audiences will include political parties, the international community (e.g., embassies), and local and international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The research presentations will be scheduled in

consultation with NDI, and NDI will accompany the selected applicant to all presentations and stakeholder meetings (approximately by **June 17-28, 2024**).

**Remuneration for Completion of the Assignment:**

The selected agency will receive a contract describing a proposed remuneration in installments based on satisfactory delivery of the deliverables described above.

**Required Qualifications and Specialized Knowledge/Expertise:**

- At least five years of experience conducting qualitative research in Romania, including interpreting focus group data and formulating recommendations based on the findings; and
- Excellent organizational skills and ability to cope with tight deadlines.

The selected agency and its research must be politically unbiased.

**Proposal Guidelines and Submission Process:**

Proposals should include the following information:

- Company history and core services;
- Client list, particularly any international, political, or non-profit organizations;
- Detailed budget containing all costs as described above; and
- Portfolio of past work.

If the execution of work to be performed requires hiring of subcontractors, you must clearly state this in your proposal. NDI will not refuse a proposal based upon the use of subcontractors. However, NDI retains the right to refuse the subcontractors selected by a vendor.

All final proposals should be submitted via email to Alice Pop ([apop@ndi.org](mailto:apop@ndi.org)) at the National Democratic Institute by **5:00 pm ET on March 1, 2024**. Early submissions are welcome and appreciated.

NDI will evaluate bids based on the vendor’s experience, costs, and ability to satisfy the proposed tool requirements. NDI may request meetings or calls to discuss proposals and reserves the right to reject any and all bids. NDI also reserves the right to consider bids for modification at any time before an award is made. NDI will not be liable for any costs associated with the preparation, transmittal, or presentation of any materials submitted in response to this RFP but reserves the right to request further information before making an award. Please note that selected vendor(s) would be expected to use NDI’s standard contract template, a copy of which is available upon request.

**Appendix A: Illustrative Summary of Key Dates and Activities**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>
Proposals submitted	March 1, 2024
Contract begins	April 1, 2024
Inception report	April 12, 2024
Completion of focus groups	May 9, 2024

Focus group analysis	May 27, 2024
Final report	June 14, 2024
Research presentations/dissemination	June 17-28, 2024
Contract concludes	July 5, 2024