

Southern Poverty Law Center
400 Washington Ave
Montgomery, AL 36104
splcenter.org



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

for

Analysis of SPLC's narratives and framing on poverty issues
Media analysis of racist stereotypes of poverty at state and national level
Analysis of media coverage adopting SPLC's narrative and framing

Issued: Wednesday, April 17, 2024

Due: Friday, May 13, 2024 by 5 p.m. PST

Contact:

Lina Romero
Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning Senior Specialist
lina.romero@splcenter.org

1. Background and Purpose

The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) is a national civil rights organization with offices in five states and the District of Columbia. Our organization has grown substantially over the last several years, with staff nearly doubling in size.

The SPLC is a catalyst for racial justice in the South and beyond, working in partnership with communities to dismantle white supremacy, strengthen intersectional movements and advance the human rights of all people.

During the last three years, the organization has been prioritizing and deepening its work in key areas, launching new initiatives and increasing organizational alignment. By articulating five long-term goals, the SPLC expects to strengthen its organizational capacity along with an increase in the impact of its work in the communities we serve.

To better understand our work against our long-term goal around poverty, we are seeking a qualified research institution or subject matter experts to provide expert media and narrative analysis related to poverty issues in the Deep South. The Center has until November 30, 2024, to complete the research analysis described below.

2. Who May Respond

The SPLC seeks a diversity of partners with experience and expertise in media and narrative analysis research, including but not limited to small businesses and firms owned by women and people of color. In addition, we seek partners who have deep respect for and demonstrated expertise in:

- A. Serving the diverse and complex communities we represent and serve.
- B. Working with large and complex, social sector organizations with offices in Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, Georgia, Florida, and Washington DC.
- C. Interviewing and engaging staff at all levels of our organization with respect; and
- D. Assembling an experienced, diverse team that includes qualitative and quantitative researchers with specialized expertise in media and narrative analysis focused on poverty issues at national and state levels.

3. About the SPLC

Founded in 1971, the SPLC is a 501(c)(3) organization that envisions a world where everyone can thrive, and the ideals of equity, justice, and liberation are a reality for all.

Theory of change

To protect our democracy and the rights of exploited and oppressed communities in the South, we must ensure that governments and institutions are responsive to the needs, hopes, and futures of all. We must create a culture in the South that allows all residents to thrive. We must dismantle systems that oppress the most vulnerable and deny accountability for human rights violations. To achieve institutional effectiveness, we need to partner with and support communities that demand accountability and take action to achieve change. We recognize that there are many entangled barriers to these demands. The SPLC's role is to overturn and eliminate

barriers and align ourselves with communities to demand and effectuate change.

We have identified five areas of work that offer the greatest opportunities to achieve our mission. We have the following long-term impact goals:

Organizational goal: Increase power and capacity for multi-racial, inclusive democracy in the South.

Four programmatic impact goals:

1. Strengthen democracy by increasing voter turnout, challenging voter suppression measures, and ensuring representational diversity.
2. Relegate white supremacy out of the mainstream, reduce its impact on American democracy, and prevent violent harms inflicted on Black and brown people.
3. Reduce the incarcerated and detained population by decriminalizing and decarcerating Black and Brown people.
4. Eradicate poverty by expanding access to opportunity and eliminating racial economic inequality.

The Center selected eight impact goal indicators to measure its progress against these long-term goals. We are developing the tools and research design to measure each indicator.

This Request for Proposals is focused on expert technical support to measure the impact indicator under goal No. 4: “Shift in media coverage that adopts SPLC’s narratives and framing on poverty from a human rights approach countering ‘racist stereotypes’ used to justify dismantling public assistance”.

The SPLC centers its advocacy on poverty issues related to access to adequate schools and education; against discrimination in the use of and access to antipoverty public funds and programs; protection of land ownership rights and generational wealth; state, federal and international advocacy on the right to adequate housing, and against the criminalization of extreme poverty and unhoused people; protection of low-income workers rights and forced labor.

Along with litigation and community engagement, SPLC’s advocacy efforts are disseminated through varied media coverage strategies. The impact indicator’s purpose is to measure if the narratives and framing of poverty we articulate and disseminate through those media coverage strategies changes the audience’s perceptions and their understating of the issue to a human rights perspective. Currently, SPLC tracks press and social media coverage of its stories and activities, in state and national outlets. SPLC seeks to better understand the type of stories told by press and in social media and whether they are framed with human rights-centered and people-first narratives.

4. Proposal Content: Qualifications, Scope of Work, and Budget

Proposals must be submitted as a single PDF document, and include the following:

A. Statement of Qualifications

1. Provide a brief overview of your capacity to perform this research.
2. Detail your experience in providing media analysis to entities in the not-for-profit sector, as well as organizations of comparable mission to SPLC (civil and human rights, progressive, social justice focused).
3. Detail your experience in using appropriate software and research design to gather and filter valuable information from numerous media sources, analyze media content and identify trends and patterns.
4. Experience in researching media-related data to provide advice and suggestions, to stay updated on emerging trends.
5. Experience in content analysis of news articles and social media to determine the characteristics and trend of the narratives.
6. Experience in using technology to analyze audience reach and understanding the target audience.
7. Proficiency in performing media monitoring, using web analytics systems, and using social media analytics tools.
8. Experience in collecting and analyzing data from interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, or other qualitative or quantitative research.
9. Experience in conducting statistical analysis of communication campaign results.
10. Ability to collaborate with SPLC's teams and key stakeholders to ensure their analysis supports the organization's goals.

B. Statement of Proposed Work and Deliverables

We envision three main components as part of this research process:

1. Analysis of SPLC's narratives and framing on poverty issues.
2. Media analysis of racist stereotypes of poverty at state and national level, with focus on five states in the Deep South: Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, Georgia, and Florida.
3. Analysis of media coverage at national and state level adopting SPLC's narrative and framing.

The SPLC expects to use the research results as an evidence base for improving and informing decision-making regarding the influence of narratives on poverty support a human rights-framed understanding of the issue and its solutions. Towards that, SPLC requests recommendations of methods for tracking narrative change on an annual basis.

Please describe in your proposal the methodology to carry out this research (sampling, data collection and management, analytical procedures, and reporting). Include a six-month work plan describing the logical sequence of research objectives, main activities, milestones, key deliverables, and timeline. Finally, provide a budget based on the

proposed workplan.

C. **Budget & Timeline:**

Please propose a budget specifying costs per activities and staffing as applicable. The start date of the research would be June 1, 2024. The end date is November 30, 2024. The key deliverables for each component should be within that timeframe.

5. Proposal Evaluation Criteria and Timeline for this RFP

SPLC reserves the right to reject any and all proposals. Responses will be evaluated along several dimensions including, but not limited to, the following:

- A. Statement of Qualifications
- B. Understanding and practice of diversity, equity, and inclusion
- C. References
- D. Statement of Proposed Work
- E. Proposed Budget & Timeline
- F. Interviews

RFP timeline:

- April 17, 2024: RFP is released.
- May 13, 2024: RFP responses are due.
- May 14 – May 17, 2024: We will invite a limited number of finalists to deliver a virtual presentation.
- May 20 – 24, 2024: Second interview if determined necessary.
- May 30, 2024: We intend to award a contract.

6. Process for Proposal Submissions

- A. **Inquiries.** Please direct all questions regarding this RFP to lina.romero@splcenter.org no later than 5 p.m. PST on April 30, 2024.
- B. **Closing date.** Proposals are due by 5 p.m. PST on May 10, 2024.
- C. **Conditions of the proposals.** All costs incurred in preparing a response to this RFP, including costs associated with interviews or in-person visits, are the bidder's sole responsibility and will not be reimbursed by the SPLC.
- D. **Submission instructions.** Proposals must be a single PDF document, and the file name must include the contact person name. Email your proposal to lina.romero@splcenter.org. Hard copy, U.S. mail submissions will NOT be accepted.