



# Digital Democracy Initiative

## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS (ASIA/PACIFIC SUPPLEMENTATION):

### Join the DDI Advisory Board and enhance civil society's work for an inclusive and rights-based digital civic space

We are pleased to announce an extended call for applications to the Advisory Board for the Digital Democracy Initiative (DDI) with a particular focus on Asia/Pacific regional contexts.

The board is currently composed of eleven (11) outstanding civil society representatives from the Majority World, all with track records of engagement in their local communities as well as global perspectives and expertise on the technological challenges and potentials for expanding and safeguarding civic space, human rights, and democracy in a rapidly transforming digital world.

We are now seeking up to four (4 ) additional Advisory Board members based in or originating from contexts across Asia and the Pacific to supplement the current representation from Latin American, African, and MENA contexts.

The Advisory Board is envisioned as a cross-culturally collaborative, future focused, inclusive, independent, and innovative consultative body integral to the governance structure of the DDI. In the Advisory Board, civil society will identify needs and propose paths forward in the intersection between digital technology, human rights, and democracy.

We are currently seeking applications for representatives from the Asia/Pacific region to join the DDI Advisory Board.

### Apply now

Apply through the online application form: <https://form.jotform.com/242973613600353>

**Applications due: 15 December 2024 at 23:59 UTC**

The application form is end-to-end encrypted. Any data entered will be accessible only to relevant staff at Global Focus and to entrusted Review Committee members. Unless expressly requested before the end of the review process, your data will be deleted upon the conclusion of the supplementary call.

If something is not working as it should technically or if you have questions about the form or application procedure, please do not hesitate to contact us.



## WHAT IS A CIVIL SOCIETY ACTOR?

In the context of the DDI, civil society actors are understood as social movements, formal organisations, informally organised groups, as well as individual activists living up to this definition: A civil society actor serves a public interest, through democratic processes, as an intermediary between state authorities and the general population. Civil society encompasses non-state, non-profit actors who are not affiliated with political parties, and who are committed to non-violence and enable people to organise in the pursuit of common goals and ideals, whether political, cultural, social, or economic.

## REQUIREMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS

It is a key goal of the DDI to achieve broad, diverse representation within the Advisory Board with regard to expertise, geography, and identity. Relevant candidates for membership of the Advisory Board have demonstrated expertise in at least one of the following general areas of relevance to the intersection between digital technology, human rights, and democracy:

- **Technical:** The technical aspects of digital tools, with a strong emphasis on information security, data management, and infrastructural resilience.
- **Economic:** The business side and economics of digital transformation, such as the impact of digital tools on local economies or organisational management, including environmental and climate related impacts.
- **Legal:** The formal regulations of the digital world such as global internet governance as well as local, national, and regional political and legal limits and struggles, and in particular their human rights aspects.
- **Cultural:** The variety of cultural expressions of online media and their relationship to local and offline cultures as well as the intersecting risks, opportunities, and ethical challenges of digital life, such as racism, sexism, ableism, and other biases shaping technology.
- **Geopolitical:** The global power relations expressed through digital infrastructures and the challenges they pose to decolonisation, shifting power, and the expansion of democratic spaces.

Geographically, the applicants are expected to be based in or originating from countries on the *DAC List of ODA Recipients*. Applications will be prioritised according to the status of local civic space as reported in the *CIVICUS Monitor*, with weight given to applicants from countries with closed, repressed, and obstructed civic spaces.

Furthermore, priority will be given to applicants whose identities put them at risk of being digitally disempowered, exposed or targeted as civic space shrinks online and offline, for example women, LGBTQIA+ people, racialized groups, indigenous peoples, ethnic and religious minorities, youth, people with disabilities, and people on the move, and others at particularly risk. Ideally, the work of the board is directly informed by the lived experiences of at-risk applicants. However, civil society actors representing identities and communities at risk will also be given weight in the review process, even if the representatives themselves do not inhabit the identities or belong to the communities. Please note that no personal information about sensitive categories is required to apply. Disclosing sensitive information is entirely voluntary.



A Terms of Reference and a Code of Conduct for participating in the Advisory Board is integral to the contractual relationship between Advisory Board members and Global Focus as secretariat. For the purpose of applying to join the Advisory Board, applicants must agree to values of human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, non-discrimination, rule of law, human rights and feminist principles.

## **EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Members of the Advisory Board will receive quarterly honoraria in the order of 300 Euros as compensations for their participation in meetings and continual advancement of the Advisory Board's work plan, contributing to the relevance and quality of the DDI. Other expenses such as travel costs associated with Advisory Board participation will be covered by the programme. Members should expect to deliver a time commitment of approximately three workdays per quarter.

The key activity for all members of the Advisory Board will be to participate in quarterly meetings, primarily through videoconferencing but also physically in person yearly during the programme period, ideally coinciding with relevant events in the intersection of civic space and digital technologies. These meetings will be facilitated by Global Focus acting as secretariat for the Advisory Board.

Furthermore, representatives from the Advisory Board will participate in Donor Steering Committee meetings with allocated time and direct input to agendas to advise on the strategic direction of the DDI programme through policy reviews and recommendations.

Likewise, Advisory Board representatives will have allocated time and the opportunity to input agenda items to meetings in the Project Coordination Group consisting of the implementing partners and the DDI Programme Management Team (the DDI governance unit in the Danish MFA). Through these meetings and continuous interim dialogue with the implementing partners, the Advisory Board's role is to identify unmet needs in the technical project design, knowledge gaps that can be filled by the initiative, as well as map out support mechanisms relevant for strengthening the digital capacities and resilience of civil society actors.

Lastly, Advisory Board members will commit to participate actively in advocacy interventions for expanding civic space in a digital world, take part in relevant events, summits, and meetings, and contribute with their contextual and thematic knowledge into the work of the initiative.

## **REVIEW PROCESS**

A Review Committee selected by the implementing partners in the DDI will review incoming applications based on the criteria described above and select the additional members of the Advisory Board according to the principle of broad, diverse representation along the three dimensions of expertise, geography, and identity.

Before the applications are processed by the Review Committee, they will be screened for the purposes of due diligence by Global Focus staff and weighted according to the disclosed criteria.



## Background:

### Strengthen and safeguard civil society in a digital world

Around the globe and against the backdrop of a rapidly digitising world, we witness setbacks for peoples' ability to fully exercise their freedoms of association, assembly, and expression, and civil society actors face increasingly direct restrictions on their digital rights by repressive regimes. The digital advances have provided new tactics and tools for surveillance, disinformation, and harassment, posing significant challenges for long-term and sustainable development and to the protection and promotion of human rights.

Simultaneously, digital technologies also present new opportunities for increased participation, access to information, and for coordinating collective civic action. In order to seize these opportunities, and to do it safely and effectively, civil society actors need to seize the tools and skills that can mitigate risks and multiply momentum.

Alongside Access Now, CIVICUS, and Digital Defenders Partnership, Global Focus has partnered in the Digital Democracy Initiative (DDI) – an ambitious programme aiming to strengthen and safeguard inclusive democracy under pressure in the digital age.

Together with CIVICUS, Global Focus drives the effort to **enable and amplify** the use of digital technology among local civil society actors in restrictive contexts in the global Majority World. Access Now and Digital Defenders Partnership lead the work to **defend and protect** civic space and inclusive democracy by promoting stronger rights-focused policies and standards on digital technologies and improved security provision for civil society.

It is a clear ambition across the DDI to support Majority World civil society organisations as well as informally organised civil society actors and social movements who often face barriers to funding and other resources.

DDI was launched and funded by The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the European Union. The Danish MFA and the EU has committed 40 and 11 million Euros respectively to the Digital Democracy Initiative from 2023 to 2026, while continuing the effort to bring on board additional donors.

### Our role

Global Focus has two projects under the DDI:

1. **Advisory Board:** Global Focus convenes and facilitates the Advisory Board for the DDI and acts as its secretariat. The Advisory Board is envisioned as a cross-culturally collaborative, future focused, inclusive, independent, and innovative consultative body integral to the governance structure of the DDI. The core purpose of the Advisory Board is to ensure that the voices of local civil society actors are present at all levels of the programme, from the strategic direction to the programmatic implementation, providing expert advice on policy as well as operational matters.
2. **Knowledge Hub:** In concert with CIVICUS, Global Focus is working to construct a global digital learning platform that curates relevant information and knowledge products – including from other DDI projects and beyond – in localised and accessible formats.



The goal is to enable peer-learning within and across borders and organisations about the challenges, opportunities, and impact of digital technologies on civic engagement and inclusive democracy. It is key for this platform to have longevity beyond the time frame of the DDI.

**For more information, contact:**

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