

Review and Updating of Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages

Terms of Reference

1. Background

Dóchas is the Irish Network for International Development and Humanitarian organisations. Dóchas connects, strengthens and represents a network of organisations who have a shared vision of a just, sustainable and equal world. Dóchas members value collaboration and believe that through working together, we can achieve greater impact and reach our collective goals. Further information is available at www.dochas.ie.

2. Context

In 2007 Dóchas published the Code of Conduct on Images and Messages. It was developed in partnership with members to ensure that Irish International Development NGOs always endeavour to communicate through the principles of respect for the dignity of the people concerned; belief in the equality of all people; and acceptance of the need to promote fairness, solidarity and justice.

In 2015, the Illustrative guide to the Dóchas code of conduct on Images and Messages was developed as a support resource. Over the years the code was seen as hugely important for members and others and was even used as a template for other international organisations.

However, as the international development sector evolves along with general communications practices, tools and digital platforms, and with a changing profile and attitudes of the Irish public, it is important that we review the code so it continues to be both a vital resource for our members and a living document.

In late 2021 Dr. Eilish Dillon from Maynooth University completed independent research into ethical communications in Ireland with particular regard to the Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages. This research, along with its recommendations, was presented to members for discussion at the end of 2021. During that discussion there was overwhelming agreement that the Code was a vital tool for INGO communications, but that it needed work to bring it up to date and to re-invigorate engagement with it to ensure the highest standards of ethical communications.

3. Purpose & Scope of work

The purpose of this piece of work is to review and update the Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages and its accompanying resources to bring them in line with current best ethical communications practices. It will also need to be examined in the context of today's digital world, which is vastly different to that of 2007, or even 2015 when the supporting resources were last updated.

Accompanying resources include:

- The illustrative guide to Code of Conduct on Images and Messaging
- Code Champion guide for signatories
- Implementation plan guide for signatories

It is of vital importance that members are engaged in the process of reviewing and updating the code, in order to make it, and its resources, as relevant as possible. Therefore, the process should ensure that member views are gathered and incorporated. The following groups should be included in the consultation process:

- Dóchas Communications Group
- Dóchas Team
- Board
- Dóchas Public Engagement Working Group
- Voices from the Global South
- Voices from the wider INGO sector

In addition to this the consultant will also be required to review other similar codes and guidelines that are relevant to the Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages and learnings should be gathered from these other documents to help update the Code.

4. Methodology, Contract and Timing

The final methodology will be agreed as part of the tendering process, but it is expected to include:

- Partly desk research based
- Interviews or focus groups with key stakeholders, either remotely or in person
- Engagement with the relevant Dóchas Working Groups (primarily Communications) to inform research and for feedback on findings
- Ongoing engagement with the Dóchas secretariat

It is envisaged that this piece of work should take approximately 6 to 8 days, but variations will be considered depending on proposed methodologies

5. Skills and Experience Required

The ideal candidate for this piece of work should ideally;

- be familiar with current ethical communications practices in the NGO sector and beyond
- be familiar with the digital communications landscape
- have experience of qualitative and documentary research practices
- have experience using research data to write reports and make practical recommendations

6. Terms and Conditions

The consultant will report to Ronan Doyle, Head of Communications and Public Engagement, who will liaise closely with the consultant and guide the work as it is developed. Dóchas will provide relevant background documents and previous research and analysis conducted, along with timely feedback on draft analysis produced.

Specific Outputs:

- An updated code of conduct on images and messages for Board approval
- Updated supporting resources for the code of conduct and images and messages

We expect the consultancy to begin in July 2022. and be completed by October 2022.

Dóchas will not be liable for payment of PAYE, PRSI or USC in respect of this consultancy. Payment of all appropriate taxes remains the responsibility of the Consultant. Payment for the days worked will be made on the production of an invoice when work is completed to the satisfaction of Dóchas.

7. Confidentiality and Data Protection

A normal duty of confidentiality is expected in relation to Dóchas business, both during and after this consultancy. All documents (e.g. records, reports, plans, policies, papers, files) relating to work carried out in the course of this consultancy with Dóchas will remain the property of Dóchas at all times. The consultant will not retain copies of such records.

The consultant will not at any time either during the period covered by this contract or after its termination make use of or communicate to any unauthorised person/body any confidential information about Dóchas which may have obtained during the course of this consultancy.

On termination of this contract by either party the consultant will deliver to Dóchas all records, documents, equipment, etc. in their possession or control relating in any way to this consultancy with Dóchas.

Confidentiality relating to Dóchas data and processes not in the public domain will be respected by the consultant.

8. Application process

Please submit your expression of interest to ronan@dochas.ie by **5pm on Wednesday 22nd June 2022**. Your expression of interest should include the following;

- A brief outline of the methodology
- A proposed budget
- A timeframe you propose in line with this Terms of Reference
- a current CV

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.