

TERMS OF REFERENCE RESEARCH CONSULTANCY

ON THE PLATFORMS ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE 2022 MALAYSIAN ELECTION

A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

DigitalReach on behalf of the Southeast Asian Coalition on Tech Accountability (SEACT) are looking for a short-term consultant to document the social media platforms accountability in the upcoming 2022 Malaysian General Election #GE15. Given that elections around the world are affected by disinformation, misinformation, and hate speech which occur on social media platforms, documenting the platforms' response to the elections and its accountability to protect human rights and democracy would provide more understanding on how social media platforms can adopt better approaches in the situation. This project is part of the regional initiative to observe social media accountability in elections in Southeast Asia.

B. OBJECTIVES

- To explore how social media platforms handle hate speech and disinformation/misinformation in the 2022 Malaysian General Election.
- To address the areas that social media platforms have overlooked in the 2022 Malaysian General Election.
- To use the result for advocacy for greater accountability of social media platforms.

C. WORK DESCRIPTION

The researcher is responsible for the project on the following tasks;

- Document the situation using mixed approaches such as online research, observations, and in-depth interviews.
- Analyze the situation based on the given framework.
- Write a report based on the findings.

D. QUALIFICATIONS

- Fluency in Bahasa Malaysia and English. Mandarin, Chinese 'dialects', and Tamil language abilities are a plus.
- Demonstrable knowledge of the Malaysian politics and its structure
- Have at least a bachelor's degree in political science or related fields.
- Have proven research and written communication skills in English.

- Demonstrable knowledge of human rights in Malaysia, particularly freedom of expression and access to information and understand threats of disinformation and misinformation to democracy.

E. TIMELINE AND DELIVERABLES

TIMELINE	ACTIVITIES
November - December 2022	The researcher works to monitor the situations in the lead-up to the GE15. During the period, the researcher simultaneously conducts an in-depth interview with related stakeholders, particularly social media platforms regarding their preparation (If it's not available on the online source already).
December 2022 (post-election)	The researcher analyzes information gathered during the pre-election and conduct post-election interviews with social media platforms to learn about their success measures in terms of their efforts and whether the efforts are effective.
January 2023	The first draft is expected to be submitted by the second week of January. The final draft is expected to be finished by the final week of January.

*The timeline might be changed for the report to be submitted in early February given that December is also a holiday period which might affect the interviews after the election. This will also allow the researcher to have more time to write.

F. CONTRACT DETAILS

The researcher will work from November 1st, 2022 - January 31st, 2023, during which the consultant is expected to complete the tasks described above, based on a work plan agreed upon with DigitalReach, the SEACT's secretariat. The researcher will work under the direct supervision of the Executive Director. The work is full time and the consultant is required to be responsive to communications and provide updates related to the work on a weekly basis. The compensation is 5,400 USD (five thousand four hundred dollars) for completing the tasks.

G. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION

Please submit the following application documents to digitalreach@digitalreach.asia by October 26th, 2022.

1. Your CV/Resume
2. 1-page max cover letter detailing why you are interested in this consultancy, and how you will be able to contribute to the consultancy given your experience.
3. Names and contacts of two references
4. 2 unedited writing samples (preferably in PDF)

About DigitalReach

DigitalReach was founded in 2019 with the objective of assessing the impact of technology on human rights in Southeast Asia. The organization's mission is to safeguard digital rights and internet freedoms in the region. Our work revolves around three core strategies, which are research and monitoring, advocacy, and community building and empowerment.

About the Southeast Asian Coalition for Tech Accountability (SEACT)

The SEACT was founded in 2021 as a coalition that looks into accountability of social media platforms on human rights and democracy in Southeast Asia. The coalition was founded as a result of DigitalReach's observation that sees attempts of digital authoritarianism in the region in controlling how social media platforms should operate. As of 2022, the coalition has 14 member organizations across 8 countries in Southeast Asia.