



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Vacancy: Strategic Plan Development Consultant

Start date: January 2026

1. ABOUT ISDAO

Initiative Sankofa d’Afrique de l’Ouest (ISDAO) is an activist-led fund dedicated to building a West African movement for sexual diversity and sexual rights through a flexible approach to grant-making and the strengthening of a philanthropic culture committed to promoting human rights and social justice. Our Working Principles – The principles and values that guide ISDAO work are Activist-led, Feminism, Transparency, Accountability, Empowerment, Inclusion, Diversity and Intersectionality, Self-Determination, Flexibility, Equity, and Sustainability.

2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF MISSION

ISDAO has successfully established itself and reached a stable phase in its growth. We are now entering a transformational period, fuelled by both internal insights and external shifts and challenges. To navigate this next phase, it is essential to align our focus, resources, and operations with a strategic vision that will drive ISDAO’s growth, impact, reach, and operational efficiency.

The primary objective of this process is to develop and execute a comprehensive organizational strategic plan that will guide our work over the next five years. This plan must clearly articulate the strategic goals and key activities of ISDAO’s various stakeholder groups, including the Board, staff, and external partners (such as grantees and supporters), ensuring that each group is aligned with ISDAO’s overarching objectives.

The strategic planning process will be led by an experienced Consultant or a consulting team, with support from ISDAO’s Executive Director and governance board. In light of this, we invite African Consultants who meet the criteria outlined in these Terms of Reference, and who possess a genuine commitment to supporting the Human Rights movement, to apply for the role of Strategic Plan Consultant.

3. STRATEGY CONSULTATION SERVICES REQUIRED OVERVIEW

In 2026, ISDAO will work with a consultant (or team of consultants) to draft its FY2026-FY2030 strategic plan. This plan will encompass all areas of the organization’s work including governance, operations, communications, development, finance, and administration with a special focus on the grant making and philanthropic advocacy functions of ISDAO. The consultancy will encompass the following areas of work:

A. Development of overarching process for strategic planning:

This will be undertaken in conjunction with ISDAO’s Executive Leadership and governance board so that sequencing and planning accounts for organizational priorities and timelines.

B. Preparatory Research:

- ISDAO team members have started preparatory work to lay the groundwork for the strategic planning process. There are several existing resources, including external evaluation consultant(s) will consolidate and refine the preparatory research.
- The Consultant(s) will be responsible for the enrichment and augmentation of the research by conducting additional desktop research, facilitating structured conversations with different stakeholders, drawing on experience and sectoral trends.

C. Facilitation of strategic planning process, including:

- Refinement of ISDAO's mission, vision, and theory of change
- Review of ISDAO's risk register
- Development of ISDAO's 5-year strategic plan, which outlines pillars of work and roles and responsibilities for strategic objectives and the pillars of work.
- Assess ISDAO's current internal capabilities, resources, and talent, identifying gaps and ensuring the strategy is both realistic and implementable.
- In alignment with the strategic plan, identification and development of enhanced ways of working, cross-team processes, workflows and priorities, informed by the values and principles of ISDAO.
- Development of implementation roadmap for staff and board

D. Develop the final Strategic Plan that includes:

- A comprehensive 5-year strategic plan with clear goals, pillars of work, and departmental strategies.
- Clear **Implementation roadmap** for both the staff and board, outlining roles, responsibilities, and steps for executing the strategic plan.
- **Resource Mobilisation & Funding strategy**
- Updated and detailed **M&E Framework** and **Risk Register**, in alignment with the Strategic Plan.

4. Consultant's Deliverables:

- A. Inception report** that includes a detailed Strategic planning process timeline, methodology and structure.
- B. Consolidated and enriched preparatory research findings**, including stakeholder insights and existing resources as mentioned in paragraph B as above.
- C. Refined mission, Vision and Theory of change.**
- D. Detailed Strategic Plan** including:
 - Strategic Direction & Goals

- Resource Mobilisation and Funding Strategy
 - Stakeholder Engagement Strategy
 - Risk Mitigation & Contingency Planning
 - Internal Coordination Plan
 - Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) framework to accompany the Strategic Plan with KPIs and regular check-ins to track progress.
- E. Clear **Implementation roadmap**** for both the staff and board, outlining roles, responsibilities, and steps for executing the strategic plan.
- F. Updated and harmonized **M&E Framework and Risk Register, in alignment with the Strategic Plan****
- G. Consultant’s Recommendations and Insights,** including insights from the consultancy assignment and consultant’s recommendations to ISDAO

5. APPLICANT PROFILE

As an organization led by West African LGBTQI activists, ISDAO seeks to recruit people who identify as part of the LGBTQI communities and movements in the sub-region, where possible.

Our ideal candidates are thus those who have not only the technical expertise and professional knowledge required, but also the familiarity, connections, and lived experience within the community and movement. Applications from LBQ women, trans, non-binary, and intersex people are strongly encouraged.

We welcome and **encourage individuals who meet the following criteria to apply to be our Strategy Consultant or Consulting Team:**

Role requirements	
Community and Geographic Connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Consultant should be working, living and/or from a West African country. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If a consulting team, at least one of the key team members must fulfil this requirement. • The Consultant must have extensive experience with and connection with the LGBTQI community in West Africa. Candidates who identify as part of the LGBTQI community will be prioritized. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If a consulting team, at least one of the key team members must be someone who identifies as part of the LGBTQI community.



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<p>Ideological Alignment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a personal commitment to feminism, feminist principles inclusion and equity. • Display a commitment to power shifting, desire to learn and forward thinking
<p>Languages</p>	<p>Excellent written and spoken communication skills in one or both of ISDAO's working languages (French and English).</p> <p>NB: As this consultancy will require close interaction and engagement with ISDAO constituencies from both Francophone and Anglophone West Africa, and review of documents in English and French, it is strongly desired and preferred that the Consultant be bilingual, or at minimum, have a strong ability to work in both languages. In the case of a consultancy team, it is strongly desired and preferred that the team include both English and French speakers.</p>
<p>Experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous experience developing similar strategic plans or strategy documents, especially for a grant-making organization or regional organization • Previous experience leading or implementing research initiatives • Facilitation experience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In organizing and facilitating participatory discussions, guiding consensus-based decision-making among diverse stakeholders; and mediating disputes among diverse stakeholders ○ In undertaking strategic planning, implementation of strategic plans, and problem-solving. ○ To support cross-team, cross-departmental collaboration and cocreation processes • Experience working with grant-making organizations • Experience working with organizations that work regionally or across multiple countries • Strong intersectional experience leading processes that navigate privilege and power within a non-profit or grant-making organization. • Strong Organisational Development or Human-Centred Design experience • Demonstrated ability to maintain confidentiality and exercise discretion.
<p>Knowledge</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth knowledge of strategic plan development models and best practices in strategic planning. • In-depth knowledge of the West African regional context, including contextual realities in both Anglophone and Francophone parts of the region • Sectoral (LGBTQI Civil Society Organising) trends and insights. • Philanthropic sector and current funding environment



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep understanding of philanthropy, feminist organizing, feminist principles, international development and sexual rights landscapes. • Deep understanding of the concerns and human rights context of communities who experience stigma, discrimination, violence and criminalization due to their sexual orientation, gender identity, sex characteristics, HIV status, mental health, economic status, profession and drug use. • A strong international perspective: ability to understand the different regional, country, social and cultural contexts. • Working Knowledge of advocacy, promotion of human rights and gender equality, public health, international finance and development and fundraising • A working knowledge of work organisation principles, models and best practices • Knowledge of principles and practices to building organizational culture and supporting collective care
<p>Skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding a safe, engaging, constructive, focussed, explorative and gentle participatory space. • Defining long-term strategies based on evidence, suitable models and best practices. • Guiding power shifting and forward-thinking conversation and processing that centre an intersectional lens including, gender justice, healing justice, economic justice, LGBTQI rights, decolonisation and feminism. • Ability to elicit intentional and focussed contributions and to steward and support stakeholders in engaging authentically, constructively, openly and respectfully. • Operations planning and improvement. • Ability to conduct risk assessments and facilitate development of mitigation strategies • Ability to formulate a balanced and impartial view independently of organizational positions. • Excellent written and spoken communication skills in English or French (additional languages are beneficial). • Challenging thinking, views and decisions gently, intentionally and constructively • Excellent Interpersonal Skills
<p>Essence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic thinking • Tactical • Curious • Flexible • Reliable, assertive and resilient • People-centred in approach • Warm and gentle • Mindful of power and power dynamics



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wise • Discreet • Resourceful • Be inclusive, respectful and tolerant of people’s differences • Respect for human rights • Have a high level of emotional intelligence, cultural competency and respect for people working in different roles, issue areas and geographic regions. • Engages authentically, constructively, openly and respectfully.
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness and ability to travel regionally, in West Africa • Ability to work in a virtual, remote environment as well as in-person, and build strong relationships across the organisation and with external partners.
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop constructive relationships with key ISDAO stakeholders e.g., organizational colleagues, constituents, suppliers and other stakeholders.

6. DURATION

The timeframe of this consultancy is 4 months (maximum). We seek to begin our planning process in January 2026, with the goal of completing the process and having a final strategic plan by the end of May 2026.

We envision that the inception report and initial groundwork will be completed within the first month, with the second month being for analysis and the development of the first draft of the plan. The third and fourth months would be for the engagement and feedback process, revisions and finalization of the plan.

7. APPLICATION PROCESS:

Please submit a 2-3 page CV for all members of your team, a 2-3 page technical proposal and a budget, in English or French (or both), by e-mail to recruit@isdao.org by **15 December 2025, at 11:59 pm GMT.**