Request for Proposals

Mapping and Analysis of Labour Rights and Environmental Protection Provisions in Trade Agreements

Laudes Foundation is inviting proposals from an independent consultant, research team, or organization to undertake research in mapping and analysis of labour rights and environmental protection provisions in trade agreements. Complete proposals must be submitted to Charu Jain at c.jain@laudesfoundation.org by 30 April 2021. More details are given below.

A. Introduction

Founded in 2020, Laudes Foundation is part of the Brenninkmeijer family enterprise and builds on six generations of entrepreneurship and philanthropy. Laudes Foundation is an independent foundation joining the growing movement to accelerate the transition to a climate-positive and inclusive global economy. Responding to the dual crises of climate breakdown and inequality, Laudes supports brave action that inspires and challenges the industry to harness its power for good. We work collaboratively to influence finance and capital markets and transform the industry with a focus on the built environment and fashion.

A key goal of our industry programme in fashion is to leverage policy reform to promote equity and inclusion as well as climate-positive business practices.

Recognising the importance of sustainable development in the European Union’s [EU] trade policies and that trade agreement with labour and environmental provisions provide strong incentives for large scale industry change - Laudes Foundation’s fashion programme is keen on identifying opportunities to support advocacy to improve labour and environmental protection clauses within trade agreements.

The request for proposals presents a brief description of the study's expected outcomes, the background and context, scope, purpose, expected deliverables, and indicative timelines.

B. Purpose and Scope

Initial research\(^1\) indicates that all EU Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) include a Trade and Sustainable Development (TSD) chapter, which seeks to ensure that partners follow international requirements in the three pillars that comprise sustainable development: economic, environmental, and social. By linking the benefits of enhanced market access to commitments to follow international labour and environmental standards and agreements, these provisions seek to "maximize the leverage of increased trade and investment on issues like decent work, environmental protection or the fight against climate change to achieve effective and sustainable policy change." (EU Commission services, 2018, p. 1)

The purpose of this research is to provide an overview of the major mechanisms in trade policies to promote environmental and labour rights protections with a focus on the EU, US, and implementing countries where Laudes Foundation works.

The study will comprise a report summarising the major trade instruments, incorporating environmental and labour rights protection provisions and recommendations on how such provisions could be strengthened within existing or future trade agreements, preferences, and sanctions.

---

1\(^1\) [https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/policy-making/sustainable-development/]
The outcomes of the study will help Laudes Foundation explore opportunities for meaningful grant making to address the twin Laudes goals of reducing inequality and addressing climate breakdown in focus industries, including fashion. Grant making is intended to promote or improve labour and environmental protection clauses or chapters in trade agreements and their revisions.

**Geographical coverage:** The countries where Laudes Foundation focuses its grant making, and thus the country’s most relevant for this scoping exercise, are EU, UK, US, India, Brazil, Indonesia, Vietnam, and other secondary relevant countries could be the countries where trade agreements are relevant/implemented for the fashion industry.

**Duration of the research:** The duration of the research effort is expected to be approximately three to four months.

The additional research-related details will be provided to the researcher/research team in the inception phase. The specific scope and deliverables of the study are mentioned in the relevant sections below.

**C. Key Questions**

This research should focus on understanding the landscape of trade policies and how environmental and labor rights protection mechanisms are being/can be incorporated into agreements. The key research areas (along with indicative questions/focus areas and coverage of scope) are but not limited to the following:

1. **A primer and overview of trade policies and instruments (10%)**
   - What are the main components of a trade policy?
   - How can trade policy influence trade flows?
   - What are some of the various instruments of a trade policy and their interplays (tariffs, trade agreements, etc.)?
   - What are some of the major international trade regulations and legislation?
   - What are some of the major international trade regulatory bodies and their roles (WTO, EU, and regional trade bodies)?

2. **A mapping & analysis of trade policies and agreements (60%)**
   - **Mapping & overview of major trade agreements in regions of focus (40%)**
     i. An overview of the major trade agreements (US, EU, and regional), preferences, and sanction regimes that include relevant environmental and labour rights mechanisms (specific to the geographies listed above)
     ii. An overview of the types of environmental and labour rights protection mechanisms incorporated into specific trade agreements
     iii. An analysis on the success, failures, and lessons learned about the implementation of labour and environmental provisions of trade agreements, preferences, and sanctions regimes
     iv. Timelines of upcoming revisions in existing trade agreements, new upcoming agreements, and prioritising the most promising agreements to
influence and why

v. Overview of the actors/stakeholders involved in influencing labour rights and environmental provisions in trade agreements, including a stakeholder analysis of influence and interest

b. Trade agreements within the textile industry (20%)

i. Major textile trade agreements that are governing the textiles/multifibre trade scenario between exporting and importing countries

ii. Assessment of environmental and labour rights provisions in textile trade agreements

iii. Revisions of major textile agreements that impact the trade of synthetics in textiles

iv. Implementation of these agreements in value chains – impact assessment

v. Textile trade agreements that are up for reforms and revisions, including environmental and labour rights provisions

3. A list of recommendations based on research conducted focused on integrating environmental and labour rights protection provisions into trade policies (30%)

- Recommendations on how labour rights and environmental protection provisions could be replicated/strengthened/extended within existing or future trade agreements, preferences, and sanctions.

- Recommendation on key organisations working in these areas.

D. Methodology

As outlined above, the research's key aim is to map, understand, and analyze trade policies and agreements with a view of making recommendations on integrating environmental and labor protection provisions into them. As such, it is expected that the researchers would provide a framework and approach to research, including an outline of the proposal’s research methodology.

It is recommended to engage in mixed-method research focused on qualitative data collection and analysis through desk-based research, stakeholder interviews, and consultations.

The research team must ensure that the methodology and approach proposed meet ethical standards, is inclusive from the lens of gender & equity, considerate of context, and impartial, with safeguards to mitigate bias.

E. Roles and Responsibilities

The Senior Advocacy Manager, Materials team, Laudes Foundation (the Manager) is responsible for:

- Overall responsibility and accountability for management and delivery of the research up to and including approval of the research report (in consultation with the Effective Philanthropy team at Laudes Foundation)

- Technical guidance for the research consultant(s) throughout the research phase up to and including participation/observation of data collection as necessary
• Identification of peer reviewers (internal and external) and management of peer review process

• The leadership of the research draft report review process including collating comments and facilitating discussion and feedback

• In all these roles, necessary support will be provided by other members of the Materials and Labour Rights team

• Leadership in use of the research and its publication with support from the brand and communications team at Laudes Foundation

The peer reviewers (internal and external) are responsible for:

• Reviewing the draft research report

• Providing peer review feedback to ensure the quality of the research report

• Liaising with the Manager, as required

The research consultant(s) is responsible for:

• Conducting all necessary literature review and qualitative assessments and data collection as necessary

• Day-to-day management of the research

• Regular formal and informal reporting to the Manager

• Participation in key research-related meetings (kick-off meeting, inception report meeting and draft findings meeting, etc.)

• Addressing peer-review feedback in the research

• Production of deliverables (inception report and research report) in accordance with the request for proposals, Laudes Foundation editorial style guide, Laudes Foundation report style guide, and contractual arrangements

F. Process

The consultant(s) will prepare an inception report and work plan that will flow from the Request for Proposals. The inception report and work plan will address the following elements: expectations; any refinements and elaboration to questions; methods including possible constraints; an outline of the final field scoping report, including a bibliography. The inception report and work plan will be approved by the Manager and act as an agreement between the consultants and the Laudes Foundation on how the review is to be conducted.

The consultant(s) will prepare the draft and final reports that form a short paper mapping all involved groups and individuals involved in the research.

The consultant(s) will also present findings to Laudes Foundation to enable discussion and decisions on key focus areas. This product may stimulate further analytic studies or evidence reviews.

The main activities and timetable for this consultancy are set out below:
G. Deliverables

The mapping requires the consultant to submit the following deliverables:

- Inception report by 28 May 2021
- A draft report by 16 July 2021
- Presentation meeting (virtual meeting with relevant Laudes Foundation staff)
- Final report, with a two-page executive summary and bibliography by 6 September.

H. Audience and Dissemination

The main audience for the report will be Laudes Foundation, with the potential to publish the results. The report must be an original body of work following international research ethics.
I. Consultant Requirements and Level of Effort

The expected level of effort for the analysis is approximately 30-45 working days. This is an estimate – the level of effort proposed must be aligned with the proposed methodology.

Proposals [requirements can be found in Annexure 1 of this document] are invited from organisations/experts/consultants with relevant experience in the trade policy, trade agreements, sustainable trade, and social and environmental protection space to support our efforts in understanding the subject better.

To conduct this research, applicants must have:

- Proven experience and expertise in sustainable trade policy research with the lens of assessing labour rights and environmental clauses included in various EU and US economies’ trade instruments.
- Expertise in qualitative analysis with an ability to synthesize information in the form of consumable graphs and data charts/infographics and analysis
- Excellent verbal and written skills in English, with the ability to prepare and write (as well as edit and proof-read) reports and present quantitative data in narrative and non-narrative formats
- No conflict of interest with Laudes Foundation

Please submit all proposals with the subject line “Organisation Name Proposal: Mapping and Analysis of Labour Rights and Environmental Protection Provisions in Trade Agreements” to Charu Jain via c.jain@laudesfoundation.org 5:30 pm (IST) on 30 April 2021. Submissions received after the deadline will be rejected.

Any questions should be sent in writing by e-mail no later than Friday, 23 April 2021.
J. Annexures

Proposal Requirements

Technical Proposal

A narrative proposal (no more than five to six–pages excluding annexes) and including the following sections:

a. Research methodology: Describe your overall approach and research methodology, including, and not limited to, brief literature review, research questions, research design, and methodology

b. Relevant experience: Provide details of projects of similar scope, methodology, complexity, and nature you have worked on previously. Please include any experience with researching similar subjects/themes and contexts

c. Specific expertise: Describe your level of knowledge and skill in researching trade agreements, EU trade policies, integration of environmental and social protection provisions in trade policies, and policy reform methods/approaches for effective legislation.'

d. Key personnel and staffing: Briefly describe the qualifications of key personnel. Include CVs (no more than three pages each and attached as annex) of key personnel who would be part of the proposed plan

e. Timeline: Include a detailed timeline of key activities

f. Sample reports: Two sample research reports (in similar subjects/themes) authored by the team lead (will be treated as confidential and used for purposes of selection) (in an annex)

Financial proposal

The financial proposal should include a line-item budget and a budget narrative. The cost estimates used to prepare the budget should be presented in euros.