



## TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

### Project: Protecting and Promoting Whistleblowing in South Africa (PPW)

#### Call for Professional Proofreading and Editing Services

#### 1. Background

[Democracy Works Foundation](#) (DWF) opened its doors in 2014 in South Africa in response to the weakening of public institutions, corruption and declining citizen participation. It is an organisation committed to promoting and building democracy in Southern Africa and supporting inclusive development and regional cooperation. DWF believes in developing homegrown and innovative solutions that support public officials and states to be more open, transparent, responsive and accountable. We also work to build the capacity of citizens and provide tools enabling them to better impact their democracies, meet their obligations and claim their rights. DWF works on the supply and demand side of democracy.

The [Protecting and Promoting Whistleblowing in South Africa](#) (PPW) project is a three-year initiative implemented by DWF in partnership with the Whistleblower House (WBH). It aims to build an inclusive, enabling, and protective environment for whistleblowers as essential actors in safeguarding human rights and promoting accountable governance. The project is supported by the European Union under its Human Rights and Democracy programme.

The project includes two interlinked streams of work: (1) providing direct holistic support to whistleblowers and their families, and (2) strengthening the legal, policy and social environment to better protect and enable whistleblowing in South Africa.

The PPW project aims to promote high ethical and moral standards in government and the private sector by strengthening whistleblower protection systems and empowering those who expose corruption and human rights violations.

A key component of the PPW project is building a strong evidence and knowledge base on whistleblowing in South Africa. This includes the production of high-quality research outputs such as research reports and policy briefs intended to inform policy reform, strengthen advocacy, and support civil society efforts to build an enabling whistleblowing ecosystem. To ensure the quality, clarity, and professionalism of these outputs, DWF seeks a qualified service provider to deliver proofreading and editing services.

#### 2. Purpose of the Assignment

The purpose of this assignment is to provide **professional proofreading, language editing, and structural refinement** for various PPW research outputs. The service provider will ensure that the documents meet high editorial and academic standards, are accessible to diverse audiences, and are polished for publication and dissemination.

#### 3. Scope of Work

The service provider will be responsible for editing and proofreading the following PPW Research Outputs:



- **Two full research reports** (approximately 30–40 pages each), including accompanying policy briefs submitted (6-8 pages).
- **One literature review** (34 pages).

The scope includes:

#### **a. Language Editing**

- Correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and syntax (Please use consistent UK English language and grammar conventions).
- Improve sentence structure, flow, and overall readability.
- Ensure consistency of tone, terminology, tense, and voice.

#### **b. Structural and Content Editing**

- Strengthen clarity, coherence, and logical structure.
- Refine transitions, paragraph flow, and argument clarity.
- Flag areas that require clarification or improvement (no rewriting of research content).

#### **d. Quality Assurance**

- Ensure all tracked changes and comments are clear, constructive, and easy to implement.
- Tracked changes to be submitted to DWF for review and final approval.

#### **4. Deliverables**

The service provider is expected to deliver:

1. Edited drafts (with tracked changes and comments).
2. Clean final text versions (ready for publication).
3. Final Proofreading after all revisions are complete.

All deliverables must be submitted in Microsoft Word format.

#### **5. Timeline**

The assignment will run from **12 January to 28 February 2025**, aligned with the PPW research production schedule.

Indicative timelines per document:

- Initial edit: **7–10 working days** from receipt.
- Second-round proof: **3–5 working days** after DWF revisions.
- Final approval: within the contracting period.

Exact timelines will be agreed upon at the start of the contract.

#### **6. Required Qualifications and Experience**

The service provider should have:

- Proven experience in **professional editing and proofreading**, especially for research, policy, academic, or governance-related outputs.
- Strong command of written English, with demonstrated ability to refine complex content into clear and accessible language.
- Experience working with civil society organisations, governance, human rights, or democracy-related research (advantageous).



- Ability to work efficiently, meet deadlines, and collaborate with researchers and project managers.
- Advanced degree in language studies, communications, social sciences, public policy, or related fields (preferred).

## 7. Application Requirements

Interested service providers should submit:

- A concise CV or organisational profile.
- Examples of previously edited work (published written samples).
- A brief proposal, including:
  - Editing approach and methodology
  - Alignment to DWF publication history
  - Turnaround times
  - Proposed budget
- Contact information for two referees.

Applications must be submitted to [recruitment@democracyworksfoundation.org](mailto:recruitment@democracyworksfoundation.org) with the subject line: **PPW-Proofreading and Editing Services** before 17:00 SAST on **5 December 2025**

Only the selected service providers will be notified. **If you have not heard from us within two (2) weeks after the closing date, please consider your application unsuccessful.**

----- CONSENT TO PROCESS YOUR INFORMATION:

By sending us your application, Curriculum Vitae, academic records, qualifications, or any other personal information as defined by the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (POPIA):
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• you have disclosed up-to-date and accurate records; and</li><li>• you agree to us keeping your records in our database as per our Retention Policy.</li></ul> |
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Declaration:

By agreeing to the terms herein, you give Democracy Works Foundation (DWF) the authority to process your personal information. This consent will remain valid until such time as we have received instructions from you to request, subject to any applicable law and where appropriate, the correction, updating or deletion of your personal information held by us. You further acknowledge and declare that all personal information supplied to DWF is accurate, up to date, not misleading and complete in all respects.
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