

## Call for Proposals

### Consultancy to Develop and Implement a Communications Strategy for the Mpala Research Centre

#### OBJECTIVES

Princeton University and the Mpala Research Centre seek to hire an experienced communications consultant to develop and implement a comprehensive communications strategy. The goal is to elevate Mpala's profile, deepen stakeholder engagement, and expand donor support. The strategy will target:

- U.S. and U.K.-based donors, including family foundations and philanthropic organizations.
- Researchers, faculty, and students from all over the world who would utilize Mpala's unique field environment and laboratory facilities for research and coursework.
- Kenyan stakeholders, including government entities and the Laikipia community (ranchers, pastoralists, and farmers), who support and benefit from Mpala's research.

#### ABOUT MPALA RESEARCH CENTRE

The Mpala Research Centre, established in 1994, is a premier ecological research institution located on 48,000 acres in Laikipia County, Kenya. It is a partnership of Princeton University, the Smithsonian Institution, the Kenya Wildlife Service, the Kenyan Wildlife Research and Training Institute, and the National Museums of Kenya. Mpala serves as a "living laboratory" where scientists and scholars conduct cutting-edge experimental, manipulative, and interdisciplinary research and teaching in conservation, ecology, and sustainable land use. Mpala is home to two of the longest running field experiments in Africa. Research at Mpala has resulted in over 750 publications over its 30-year existence. Having recently completed its first strategic plan, Mpala now seeks to implement a communications strategy that aligns with its long-term vision and objectives.

#### Project Scope

The consultant will develop and execute a communications strategy with Mpala's three main goals in mind:

1. **Strengthen donor engagement:** Communicate Mpala's impact to attract and retain donors, securing funding for research, teaching, conservation, and operations.
2. **Increase facility use:** Promote Mpala's research and teaching facilities to local and international researchers, faculty, and students.
3. **Enhance stakeholder relations:** Showcase Mpala's research contributions to foster goodwill among local and national stakeholders.

## KEY DELIVERABLES

### 1. Strategic Planning

Working closely with the Princeton/Mpala communications strategy committee, the consultant will be responsible for developing:

- **Communications audit:** Conduct a comprehensive assessment of Mpala's current communications, including digital presence, brand positioning, and outreach effectiveness.
- **Stakeholder analysis:** Identification and segmentation of Mpala's key audiences, with tailored messaging for each group.
- **Comprehensive communications strategy:** A framework outlining key messages, goals, channels, and tools for engaging donors, researchers, faculty, students, and local partners. This strategy should include:
  - **A brand strategy and manual:** A refined brand strategy and guidelines to ensure consistency, distinction, and alignment with Mpala's strategic mission and vision.
  - **Donor engagement plan:** A targeted strategy for strengthening relationships with philanthropic groups and high-net-worth individuals.
  - **Research and academic community outreach plan:** A plan for increasing Mpala's visibility among researchers, faculty, and students who can benefit from its unique field environment and laboratory facilities.
  - **Local Engagement Plan:** A targeted outreach plan which will highlight Mpala's impact on the Laikipia community and its role in supporting sustainable practices.
  - **Digital Strategy:** Recommendations for strengthening Mpala's online presence.
- **Implementation Roadmap:** A clear execution plan with timelines, deliverables, and responsibilities, including recommendations about appropriate staff to lead this work.
- **Evaluation Framework:** Key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the strategy's success.

### 2. Implementation

Working closely with the Mpala Communications Strategy Committee, the consultant will oversee the execution of the communications strategy, including:

- **Website redesign:** Redesign Mpala's website to be modern, visually compelling, and optimized for engagement with key audiences.
- **Institutional content development:** Creation of high-quality digital and print collateral, including videos, brochures, and presentation decks that bring Mpala's narrative and unique selling proposition (USP) to life for use by fundraisers and other Mpala ambassadors.

- **Project Management:** Coordination of vendors and implementation committee to ensure seamless execution.

### **Consultant Requirements**

The ideal consultant or firm must have:

- Proven experience in developing and executing communications strategies for research and teaching institutions, conservation organizations, or non-profits.
- Expertise in donor relations, fundraising, and philanthropic engagement, particularly with U.S. and U.K.- based foundations and high-net-worth individuals.
- Strong background in digital communications, including website design, social media strategy, and media outreach.
- Ability to develop targeted messaging for diverse audiences, from international donors to local community stakeholders.
- Capacity to manage project implementation, including overseeing website and collateral development.

### **Proposal Submission**

Interested consultants or firms should submit a proposal including:

1. A cover letter outlining relevant experience.
2. A detailed work plan, including methodology, timeline, and deliverables.
3. Examples of previous projects related to research institutions, conservation, or non-profits.
4. Budget proposal detailing anticipated costs.
5. References from past clients.

Submissions should be sent with subject line MPALA COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANT RFP RESPONSE to [mpala@princeton.edu](mailto:mpala@princeton.edu) by April 18, 2025.

Mpala Research Centre and Princeton University look forward to reviewing proposals that will amplify Mpala's reach, impact, and global visibility.