**Background**

As part of the preparations for “the day after the war,” the Zulat for Equality and Hunan Rights research institute has developed a proposal for regulating the media landscape in Israel, which is essential for promoting equal rights and protecting press freedom and freedom of expression. The project has already received an emergency grant from the New Israel Fund. The aim is to formulate a set of decisions, reforms, and legal initiatives, and to shape these in a way that meets public interest and anchors the status of the media within a democratic society. The proposal also seeks to develop specific regulations aimed at preserving freedom of expression and opinion, and preventing incitement, hatred, racism, and false statements.

This proposal is a request for the continuation of the project. In light of political and legislative developments regarding the media market led by Minister of Communications Shlomo Karhi, in-depth work is required to analyse the failures in the structure of Israel’s media market, and to provide an immediate response to legislative initiatives as they arise. This is in addition to the need to develop the long-term holistic legislative and institutional plan on which Zulat is working (the media market regulation initiatives that were the subject of the previous grant), and to engage in defensive campaigns to bolster the position of the free press in light of proposed legislation by the Minister of Communications.

The purpose of the grant is to bolster Zulat’s work in this area, both in the long-term and in terms of blocking current legislation. We find Zulat’s work in this area to be effective and successful. Just last week, Zulat successfully blocked a bill that would have granted benefits, including the cancelation of debts, to Israel’s Channel 14.

**Workplan**

To continue the media regulation project such that, in addition to developing legislative reforms for media regulation and drafting accompanying legislative amendments, the team of experts and legal professionals working on the project will also produce a number of other outputs:

* Publishing position and policy papers in response to private members’ bills proposed by Members of Knesset, where these relate to the media market;
* Briefing Members of Knesset to prepare objections in the Plenum to legal bills, using a set of parliamentary tools such as: preparing questions, agenda motions, proposals for quick discussions, one-minute speeches, etc.
* Monitoring the parliamentary agenda in Knesset committees, the Plenum, and the government, and identifying bills/memoranda of law, and government decisions related to the media market, and providing a response in accordance with each of the measures.

**Budget**

Requested budget:

* Legal work by lawyers and preparing submissions to the High Court of Justice -- $25,000.
* Policy advocation for six months -- $5,000
* Total -- $30,000.

**Outputs**

* Curbing legislation by Minister Karhi that would politicize media organizations.
* Briefing at least seven Members of Knesset and ministers/decision-makers with the aim of blocking legislation.

**Outcomes**

* Preventing the weakening of the free press in Israel, curbing press freedom violations and violations of the right to know of the public, journalists, and media professionals.

**Purpose of the grant**

A proposal for regulating the media landscape in Israel within a new civil order, and the continuation of work to block legislation in the short-term.