

Global Learning Partner: Design, Adoption, and Implementation of policies with Air Quality impacts.

Request for Proposals

June 2025

The Clean Air Fund (CAF) is seeking a learning partner with specialist expertise in the generation, synthesis and dissemination of evidence and learning. They will lead an **action-focused evaluation and learning series** regarding the most effective ways for the Clean Air Fund to support policies with air quality impacts. Specifically, this assignment will support the Clean Air Fund to understand the role of public demand, at both national and city levels, in effective policy action especially in the context of **push-back, political polarisation and rising misinformation**.

The selected Global Learning Partner (GLP) will have demonstrated experience working with INGOs, or preferably re-granters or foundations, to generate and synthesize evidence and learning to feed into **concrete, robust and actionable insights** for organisational strategy development, insights for Portfolio programmes and investments as well as for wider knowledge dissemination. The GLP must have substantial experience in developing **specific, tangible, and actionable recommendations**, which ensure insights are useful and applied. Significant evaluation and learning expertise in the areas of policy, influencing and systems change is essential.

Background to Clean Air Fund

Launched in 2019, the Clean Air Fund (CAF) is a philanthropic initiative with a mission to tackle air pollution around the world. Our aim is to help build and support a powerful global movement for clean air. We achieve this by bringing together funders, researchers, policy makers and campaigners working on a wide range of issues to find and scale solutions that will provide clean air for all. We work where the need and potential for impact are greatest: in the EU, Poland, Ghana, India, South Africa and the UK and global cities across Africa, LatAm, Asia and Europe. We also have global thematic programmes, raising air pollution up the international climate and health agendas. Our global themes span data, health, advocacy, Super-Pollutants and Private Sector Engagement. More information about the Clean Air Fund can be found on our website: www.cleanairfund.org

Background to assignment

This project is driven by CAF's strategic learning agenda, which identifies three critical open questions that must be answered to ensure CAF achieves its intended impact. This assignment helps answer one of them, specifically: **"what are the most effective ways the Clean Air Fund supports the design, adoption, and implementation of policies with air quality impacts?"**.

Given the breadth of this question, the assignment will concentrate on the 'Demand' pillar of CAF's Theory of Change (included in the Annex). The 'Demand' pillar centres on heightening public awareness and political will to create change. CAF supports aligned campaigns and targeted communications that aim to grow public demand and support for new air quality policies to create long-lasting change. This support is also intended to create air quality champions among critical stakeholders (e.g., policymakers, corporate leaders, civil society organisations, the general public). We do this because having a diverse set of champions can add further momentum for action and enhanced accountability, leading to the development and adoption of clean air targets and policy at local, regional and national levels.

Specifically, this assignment will test the critical assumption:

That public awareness and access to air quality data, alongside public engagement and campaigning, will drive demand for change, which in turn leads to meaningful policy action. With public pressure and data on levels and sources of air pollution, policy makers will take action to establish targets, laws, regulations, policies and funding schemes to improve air quality.

This assumption is being tested in an increasingly challenging external context, including misinformation, political polarisation, 'green-hushing', and policy rollbacks in several regions. Therefore, CAF seeks to understand:

- The extent to which the assumption holds true
- Under which conditions – and contexts – it applies or does not
- How tactics must evolve to effectively progress policies – especially in increasingly hostile political environments at city, regional and national levels

We recognise that the conditions shaping whether public demand influences policy vary not only across countries, but also within them – and often shift over time. This assignment is not about generating universal conclusions, but about building a nuanced understanding of *what works, in what kinds of contexts, and under what conditions*. The goal is to equip CAF with clear decision-making criteria to guide when – and what kind of – demand-focused strategies are likely to be effective, and when alternative approaches may be more appropriate.

This request for proposals intends to drive in-depth strategy-informing learning in this crucial area for the Clean Air Fund. It will help answer part of our strategic learning agenda and in doing so contribute to the development of CAF's post-2026 organisational strategy. It is essential that learning resulting from this assignment is specific, tangible and action-focused.

Project objectives and scope

This project aims to test the critical assumption described above. Given this focus, the project will explore the following specific learning questions:

1. What role does public demand play in driving effective air quality policy action across different geographical contexts? *This question tests CAF's ToC assumption.*
2. What contextual factors (e.g. political dynamics, strength of civil society, media, misinformation) most influence the effectiveness of public demand in shaping air quality policy? *This question identifies the enabling conditions and barriers to success to help CAF to target work more strategically.*
3. What combinations, sequences and specific public engagement tactics – alone or in combination with inside track advocacy or technical support – are most effective in progressing air quality policies? *This question is to inform specific tactics and strategic investment.*

A cross-cutting lens for all questions will be the effectiveness of these tactics in politically polarised or hostile environments.

Workstreams and outputs:

CAF seeks a GLP to implement this assignment across four interconnected workstreams, designed to build progressively over the life of the project. The below workstreams will be implemented following a detailed inception phase:

1. Literature review

Conduct a literature review to understand the broader evidence landscape related to the role of public demand in influencing policy in polarised contexts and identify effective and proven strategies, as well as unsuccessful strategies, and knowledge gaps which need to be addressed. This will outline examples of campaigning where policy action was achieved and not achieved, and why. The review will draw on evidence from the air quality, health and climate sectors where available, as well as any wider relevant fields (e.g. tobacco, plastics, gender rights).

The literature review should be conducted in two phases:

- **Phase 1:** (Inception) Rapid scan to inform evaluation design – including initial typologies of public demand mechanisms and hypotheses to test.
- **Phase 2:** (Post evaluations) Deep dive into gaps or themes that were not covered by / where there was insufficient evidence as part of the evaluation series (workstream 2 below).

Key outputs:

- **Phase 1:** Summary of early insights from published literature to inform evaluation framework, including initial typologies of public demand mechanisms and hypotheses to test.
- **Phase 2:** Final action-focused review summarising tactics that succeeded and failed, contextual enablers/barriers, and knowledge gaps – as relevant for the work of the Clean Air Fund.

2. Deep dive evaluation series

Conduct three theory-based evaluations in Ghana, Poland and the UK to understand what has worked, what hasn't, and why, in driving air quality policy progress—focusing on the role of public demand in influencing policy action. These geographies represent contexts in the global north and global south, as well as some of CAF's more mature policy workstreams. It is expected that in all three contexts, both national and sub national/city level policies and campaigning will be featured in the evaluations.

Key outputs:

- One consolidated evaluation report outlining tangible, specific and action-focused recommendations to inform Portfolio and organisation-level strategies and investments.
- A short, engaging and practical internal presentation of consolidated findings, with recommendations for Portfolio-level strategies, and CAF's new organisational strategy.

3. Learning and sense making workshops

Run three cross-Portfolio learning and sense-making workshops to build on and validate emerging findings from the above workstreams, involving CAF Portfolio staff and selected grantees.

Key outputs:

- Three learning – and sense making workshops with CAF staff and key grantees.
- A final action-focused learning report, synthesising and distilling findings and recommendations from workstreams one to three above.
- A short, accessible learning output for external publication (learning blog, webinar, video etc.).

4. Actionable Learning Product(s) Co-Designed with CAF

This workstream will culminate in a practical output that synthesises and operationalises findings from across workstreams 1-3 for use internally by CAF teams. The output will be defined collaboratively between the learning partner and relevant CAF teams during the project, ensuring its relevance, usability and uptake. This could include outputs such as (but not limited to):

- A decision-support matrix / decision-tree to help Portfolio teams and grantees prioritise between public mobilisation strategies, inside-advocacy and technical assistance, depending on their context
- A set of tactical scenarios or 'if-then' pathways for decision-making in different political and civic contexts
- A toolkit or playbook for CAF staff and grantees, including guidance on sequencing, combinations of tactics, and enabling conditions

- Modular learning briefs that can be adapted for strategy sessions or grantee capacity-building
- Policy outcome case studies structured for application and learning.

Key outputs:

- One or more action-focused learning product(s) – as defined in collaboration with CAF teams.
- A short learning uptake plan, outlining how these will be used across CAF teams, including proposed moments for integration into CAF and Portfolio strategy reviews.

Methodological Approach

Contextual analysis: We propose the development and use of a contextual factor matrix or rubric to support consistent analysis of contextual factors across workstreams. Consistent tools (to be defined by the GLP – e.g. political economy scans, media ecosystem mapping, system mapping) should be applied across contexts to assess key enablers/barriers to public demand and policy action.

Evaluation deep-dives: Given the focus on contributions to complex policy interventions and the intention to test assumptions within our ToC, we expect a theory-based evaluation approach to be employed in the design of the evaluation series, such as:

- Realist Evaluation
- Contribution Analysis
- Bellwether methodology
- System mapping
- Process Tracing
- Outcome Harvesting
- Systems Mapping
- Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA).

We are open to consider different options dependent on the specific expertise of the global learning partner team but expect the evaluations to follow a theory-based methodology at their core.

Adaptive Learning: This assignment should take a flexible, adaptive approach to learning. As part of this, we are interested in proposals which:

- Emphasise co-design with CAF staff as part of the inception phase and throughout to stress-test assumptions, refine questions and approach, and identify priority gaps
- Build in flex points and feedback loops during the process (e.g. post evaluation reflection workshops) to re-prioritise evidence gaps or deepen specific or promising strands of enquiry.

Target audience and users

Primary audiences:

- CAF Senior leadership and Portfolio teams within CAF for use in strategy review and programming.

Secondary audiences:

- CAF grantees
- Existing and potential funders
- Wider actors in the Clean Air field.

Timing

Workstream two is expected to be completed by the end of December 2025 and workstreams one, three, four and five by the end of April 2026. A summary of the deliverables and key dates are outlined below:

<u>Phase / Workstream</u>	<u>Deliverables</u>	<u>Tentative Date</u>
Inception, co-design, and Lit review phase 1	Phase 1 literature scan output: Early scan of relevant literature and case studies report to inform evaluation design	August 2025
	Co-design with selected CAF team members to refine learning questions, identify priority themes, and shape the approach (possibly a workshop-based approach)	August 2025
	Inception report detailing approach to workstreams 1-3 informed by rapid literature review, document review, KIIs and co-design workshop – must include refined evaluation framework, stakeholder engagement plan and contextual analysis methodologies	September 2025
Workstream 2: Evaluations	Draft evaluation report covering national and sub national policy workstreams of Ghana, Poland and UK Portfolios	End November 2025
	Evaluation reflection workshop to present and sense-check initial findings	December 2025
	Final evaluation report covering national and sub national policy workstreams of Ghana, Poland and UK Portfolios	December 2025
Workstream 1: Lit review phase 2	Phase 2 Literature Review Output – consolidating external learning relevant to CAF	January 2026
Workstream 3: Sense-making	3 x virtual learning and sense making workshops with CAF staff and selected grantees	January 2026
Workstreams 1-3: Final synthesis	Draft Synthesis Learning Report	February 2026
	Internal presentation of findings and recommendations	February 2026
	Final Synthesis Learning Report	March 2026
	An accessible learning output for external publication based on evaluation findings (blog, vlog, webinar etc).	March 2026
Workstream 4: Learning Product(s)	Actionable learning product(s), to be defined collaboratively with CAF team	April 2026
	Learning Uptake Plan	April 2026

Costs

The maximum available budget for this partnership (assignment) is \$300,000.

Proposal format and requirements

The successful consultancy company or individual(s) will have a demonstrated track record of delivering similar strategic activities for global organizations. We welcome bids from consortia and encourage proposals from organisations (consortium or otherwise) which reflect the diversity of the CAF network.

Applicants should provide:

- A proposal for executing this assignment. This would include a short cover letter, your approach, an expanded set of proposed activities, methodologies, deliverables, and associated deadlines to meet the assignment objectives.
- A budget with activity and cost breakdown, including estimated days and day rates. The proposal and budget will not exceed 10 pages, with CVs of the proposed team members included as Annexes.
- An overview of similar assignments you may have conducted for other organisations.

After the application deadline the Clean Air Fund will review proposals and engage with preferred suppliers to expand on the project objectives and approach, and to develop an agreed set of activities and associated budget before contracting. Submissions may be shared with partner stakeholders such as the CAF Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Advisory Group.

Timeline and submission

The deadline for questions is the 30th June, 2025.

The deadline for submission of proposals is **9:30am BST on Monday 14th July, 2025**. Proposals must be submitted via email to tnelson@cleanairfund.org.

Activity	Date
Deadline for questions	30 th June, 2025
Deadline for proposals	14 th July, 2025
Interview with shortlisted companies/individuals	Weeks of 14 th and 21 st July 2025
Decision on preferred bidder	Week of 21 st July 2025
Proposal finalisation and agreement	Week of the 28 th July, 2025
Contracting and project start	Week of the 4 th August, 2025
Deadline for completing the work	30 th April, 2026

Related Work on Equity

CAF is planning a separate assignment focused on equity. This assignment is likely to cover overlapping Portfolios, geographies, and grants. Note: The successful partner for this assignment will be expected to make relevant raw data and insights available to support the equity-focused work.

Annex.

Clean Air Fund Theory of Change

