

HUMANS OF BREATHE CITIES

Request for Proposals (RfP)

July 31, 2025

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

BUDGET

Q: How many total videos are expected to be produced under the \$70,000 budget?

A: The minimum number is 5 and maximum, 14. We understand that there is a direct trade-off between quantity and quality, especially with a modest budget and a global scope like this project. Hence, we suggest that you prioritise quality by proposing 5–7 strong, high-impact videos rather than aiming for the maximum of 14. Focus on:

- One city per region to meet the minimum requirement while ensuring diverse representation
- Deep storytelling: Spend more time co-developing narratives with protagonists and local teams
- High production value: Strong visuals, sound, editing, and emotional storytelling

Q. Does the total budget cover the editorial and video production services (of all professionals involved) and travel expenses (such as flights/trains, accommodation, meals, local transport)?

A: Yes, the total budget is inclusive of all the above costs.

Q. Given that the specific cities or filming locations have not yet been confirmed, and travel and DSA costs vary significantly by country, could you advise how we should approach budgeting for travel and accommodation?

A: Please develop a budget based on what is possible and how you plan to accommodate the travel based on this. Please consider working and sub-contracting local partners to reduce travel costs.

STORYTELLING APPROACH

Q. Is there flexibility for the storytelling approach to vary across cities based on local context and insights, or should the narrative and format remain consistent across all videos?

A: Yes, there is flexibility for the storytelling approach to vary across cities based on local context and insights.. While all videos should align with Breathe Cities' overarching messaging and values of equity, health, and community impact, the format can adapt to suit cultural nuances, local storytelling styles, and the individuality of each human story.

Q. Will protagonists and storylines be identified by the Breathe Cities local teams, or are we expected to support the selection and development process?

A: The protagonists and storylines will be identified by Breathe Cities local teams from an existing pool. The selected partner will work with local teams to turn the storyteller and story into a meaningful video. As mentioned, many storytellers may not have had experience with filming etc so knowledge and capacity to support people without this type of experience is an asset.

Q. If the protagonists are already known to you, who would be responsible for managing their engagement including coordinating any necessary honoraria?

A: The selected partner is expected to lead on both ethical and logistical aspects of storyteller engagement including coordinating any necessary honoraria with the protagonist.

Q. Are/ will protagonists be attached to specific clean air actions prior to interviews, or do we expect to draw these out through the interview?

A: While some links to clean air action may be known upfront, the selected partner is expected to draw out and deepen those connections during pre-interviews and storytelling development, ensuring the narrative reflects both personal experience and the broader impact of Breathe's work.

Q. Beyond adherence to brand and messaging guidelines, are there specific narrative elements, themes, or storytelling frameworks that you see as non-negotiable?

A: All stories must centre real people and reflect non-negotiable themes of equity, inclusion, health, and empowerment, showing how clean air action improves lives and communities. Narratives should be authentic, emotionally engaging, and grounded in lived experience, aligning closely with Breathe Cities' messaging that clean air delivers multiple co-benefits—health, climate, access, and wellbeing. While creative formats may vary, all storytelling must reinforce people-centered, hopeful, and inclusive clean air solutions.

Q. Are the storytelling videos on a thematic level or a geographic level? is there scope for us to make a recommendation through the process?

A: The storytelling videos must ensure geographic diversity by covering all four Breathe Cities regions. However, there is flexibility to shape the stories thematically based on local context, collaborating with local teams to identify strong narratives that align with Breathe Cities' goals and messaging.

Q. Where does the Breathe Cities initiative envision itself in 5 years' time, and how do you envision this piece of work supporting that vision?

A: This video series is intended to lay the groundwork for long-term storytelling, showcasing real-life impacts of clean air action and building momentum among city leaders, funders, and the public - to ultimately build a strong rational, social and political case for scaling the Breathe Cities' approach.

PRODUCTION & LOGISTICS

Q. How much creative input is CAF looking for from the selected partner?

A: We expect the selected partner to play a key creative role, contributing significantly to story development, visual direction, and narrative design. This includes co-creating storylines with local teams, developing storyboards and guiding questions, proposing compelling visuals and messaging, and aligning all creative output with Breathe Cities' brand and communication strategy. The selected partner is expected to act as a collaborative creative lead, not just a technical producer.

Q. Within the 14 cities, have you identified priority locations for Batch 1 versus Batch 2, or would you like us to suggest?

A: Batch 1 must include at least one city from each of the four Breathe Cities regions and be completed within the project timelines to support major global events like COP30 and the C40 World Mayors Summit. For Batch 2, which is intended for social media and thematic moments between Dec 2025–Mar 2026, we can offer more flexibility in timing and selection.

Q. What is the quality standard you expect in terms of photography? Can you share some examples?

A: We expect high-quality, natural, and realistic photography that captures the protagonist's daily life in an authentic, documentary style. Each filming location should include 10 high-resolution photos, with at least 3 clearly featuring the protagonist. The images should be well-composed, emotionally engaging, and visually tell a holistic story of the individual's environment and experience. While specific visual examples will be shared after selection, you are encouraged to demonstrate similar past work and align with Breathe Cities' human-centred, equity-focused storytelling approach.

Q: Are there specific messaging priorities or narrative themes you would like each video to align with, such as health impacts, policy outcomes, or community voices?

A: This information is provided in the RFP - detailed throughout pages 1 to 4 of the RFP document, especially in the "Background" and "Project" sections.

Q. For the wrap-around video in Batch 1, do you envision it as a narrated compilation, a highlights reel, or something else?

A: Based on its intended use at high-profile events like COP30 and the C40 Summit, it is best envisioned as a highlights reel or montage—a visually engaging, emotionally resonant compilation of key moments from the individual stories. There is flexibility in format, so you can propose a creative approach that aligns with the event context and storytelling tone.

Q. Are there any cities/ filming locations that are a priority to you or are we free to make the selection?

A. While there is flexibility, the proposal must cover at least one city from each region among the listed ones for the initial five videos.

Q. Do you have preferred local partners or film crews we should plan to work with, or should we propose our existing creative resources?

A: Please propose but be weary that for some cities we may have teams on the ground that can compliment.

Q. How many rounds of feedback are expected for each video batch?

Up to two rounds of feedback are expected for each video batch. This applies to both Batch 1 and Batch 2 and includes reviews from the Breathe Cities global and local teams. Q. Can Batch 2 filming and edits take place concurrently with Batch 1, or must they follow sequentially?

Yes, Batch 2 filming and editing can take place concurrently with Batch 1, as the RFP does not require a strictly sequential approach. While Batch 1 has earlier deadlines to align with major events (October 2025), Batch 2 has a longer timeline, with final delivery due by February 27, 2026. You are free to propose an overlapping production schedule if it helps with logistics, efficiency, or budget optimization, as long as Batch 1 is prioritized and delivered on time.

Q. Are subtitling and translation expected only in English, or will local languages be required too?

A: Subtitling and translation are only required in English.

ETHICS, EQUITY & SAFEGUARDING

Q. How is “equity and ethics alignment” being scored—would partnerships with local orgs in the Global South boost that score?

A: “Equity and Ethical Alignment” accounts for 10% of the total score. Yes, partnering with local teams, especially for storytelling, filming, or community engagement, would likely boost your score in this area and align well with our values.

Q. Are suppliers expected to obtain formal ethics approval from an external review body (e.g. IRB), or is internal safeguarding documentation sufficient?

A: While internal safeguarding documentation and ethics approvals from partner organizations and protagonists will be sufficient, your proposal should outline a clear ethical approach, including how you’ll assess risk, ensure informed consent, and uphold safeguarding standards—especially when engaging with local communities and potentially vulnerable people.

Q. Does CAF require ethics materials to be reviewed by your team before filming starts, and if so, by when?

A: Yes, CAF requires all ethics materials to be reviewed and approved before filming begins. While the dates can be discussed and agreed upon during the contracting process, we recommend you plan the finalisation of all ethics materials in a way that allows some time for feedback or revisions if necessary.

Can you share any CAF-specific ethics guidelines or requirements we must align with for pre-approval of participants and stories?

A: These will be shared after the shortlisting stage.

Q. How do you define “vulnerable people” in this context, are there specific flags we should use to determine if ethics approval is needed for a story?

A: “Vulnerable people” include individuals or groups who may be at greater risk of harm or exploitation due to age, health, socioeconomic status, disability, or marginalization. This may include children or minors, elderly individuals, people with chronic health conditions, low-income or marginalized community members, informal or undocumented workers and those facing environmental or housing insecurity. The selected partner is to identify when ethics approval is needed, particularly if storytellers fall into any of these categories:

- Interviewees under 18 years old*
- Stories involving health disclosures or medical context*
- Individuals from underserved or at-risk communities*
- Filming in sensitive locations (e.g., hospitals, informal settlements)*

In case of doubts, we suggest flagging the case and seeking guidance/approvals. Consent forms and ethical review processes will be coordinated with partner organizations and protagonists during pre-production.

We hope this FAQ has been helpful. For any queries that have not been answered above, please be assured that we will be addressing them after the shortlisting of top 3 applicants is complete. Good luck with your application!