

Call for Proposals: Professional Translation Services

English to Arabic, French, and Spanish

Open to individual translators and small, focused teams.

Large multi-language, multi-domain translation companies are kindly asked not to apply on this occasion.

About Sphere

The Sphere movement was started in 1997 by a group of humanitarian professionals aiming to improve the quality of humanitarian work during disaster response.

Initially developed by non-governmental organisations, along with the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the Sphere standards have become a primary reference tool for national and international NGOs, volunteers, UN agencies, governments, donors, the private sector, and many others. Today, Sphere is a worldwide community which brings together and empowers practitioners to improve the quality and accountability of humanitarian assistance.

Sphere's flagship publication, the Sphere Handbook, is one of the most widely known and internationally recognised sets of common principles and universal minimum standards in humanitarian response.

Required competences and experience

- Several years of professional translation experience from English into Arabic, French, or Spanish, including work for humanitarian or development organisations.
- Strong familiarity with humanitarian terminology and concepts. Experience translating standards, technical guidance, or policy documents is an asset.
- Excellent attention to detail and a demonstrated commitment to clear, plain, and inclusive language.
- Ability to work with structured file formats (e.g. IDML, XLIFF) using professional CAT tools (e.g. Trados, memoQ, or equivalent).
- Commitment to high professional and ethical standards, including the responsible use of automated translation tools.

We warmly encourage applications from translators with lived experience of humanitarian crises or from crisis-prone contexts. Diverse professional and personal backgrounds strengthen the quality and relevance of our work.

Use of Technology

The translation landscape has evolved significantly in recent years. While we consider professional human translation essential to ensure accuracy, nuance, and contextual appropriateness, we recognise that many translators now use AI-assisted tools to enhance productivity and consistency.

Sphere permits the responsible use of automated translation tools, provided that:

- Quality, accuracy, and confidentiality are fully maintained.
- Sensitive or confidential documents are handled using secure or offline tools only.
- The translator retains full responsibility for the final output.

We welcome transparent descriptions of your workflow, including how technology supports – but does not replace – your professional expertise.

Terms

- Sphere conducts regular quality assurance reviews through native speakers within our team and network to monitor consistency and accuracy.
- Subcontracting is not permitted without prior written approval from Sphere.
- Successful candidates will join our pool of approved translators via a framework agreement, with assignments offered as projects arise¹.
- Compensation is per word translated and/or proofread.

As AI-assisted workflows may improve efficiency, we expect proposals to reflect current market conditions. We are committed to fair and transparent collaboration and welcome clearly justified rate structures.

How to submit a proposal

Interested translators are invited to apply via the following online form:

<https://wkf.ms/4bpiLHZ>

Please be prepared to include:

- A detailed résumé (or small agency profile)
- Cost per word for translation (you may define multiple rates if relevant)
- Cost per word for proofreading/revision (you may define multiple rates if relevant)
- CAT tool(s) used
- Description of your workflow, including any automated translation tools
- Two translation samples (English into Arabic, French, or Spanish)
- Contact details for two current or recent clients

All applications must be submitted by **17 April 2026**

As part of the selection process, shortlisted applicants may be invited to complete a short translation test (maximum 500 words).

¹ Prior to 2025, Sphere was systematically translating blog posts (~20 per year @ ~500 words each) and newsletters (~6 per year @ ~300 words each) into French, Spanish and Arabic – and intends to return to this approach. In addition, Sphere occasionally produces a new report or e-learning course which could be ~10,000 words, though this is less likely during 2026 and 2027 as this is a Sphere Handbook revision period. Sphere maintains several websites in four languages so any updates must be reflected in four languages.