

Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues (S/GWI)
Limited Source Full Proposal Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO):
Global TFGBV Rapid Response Fund (SFOP0010150)
Questions & Answers

Applicant Questions and Responses

Q1. Eligibility Criteria. *Please clarify the eligibility criteria.*

A1. Per the NOFO announcement, organizations interested in submitting a full proposal must meet the following criteria:

- Be a U.S.- or foreign-based non-profit and non-governmental organization (NGO); **or**
- Be a private, public, or state institution of higher education; **and**
- Have existing, or the capacity to develop, active and equitable partnerships with in-country partners, entities, and relevant stakeholders, including NGOs and private sector actors; and
- Have demonstrable experience administering successful and preferably similar programs in size, scope, and focus. S/GWI reserves the right to request additional background information on organizations that do not have previous experience administering federal awards. These applicants may be subject to limited funding on a pilot basis.

Public International Organizations (PIOs) are **not** eligible to apply as prime applicants under this NOFO; however, they may partner on a proposal as a sub-awardee. Individuals are **not** eligible to apply under this NOFO.

In order to be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number issued via www.SAM.gov as well as a valid registration on www.SAM.gov. See section D.3 of the NOFO for more information.

We are aware of, and have corrected, a systems issue that resulted in some eligibility information not transferring correctly from the SAMS Domestic announcement to the Grants.gov announcement. Both systems now make clear that the following entities are eligible to apply as prime applicants:

- Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
- Nonprofits that do not have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
- Private institutions of higher education
- Public and State controlled institutions of higher education

Q2. English Language Requirement. *Can the solicitation documents be provided in French? Is it required to submit the proposal in English?*

A2. S/GWI is unable to translate the solicitation materials into foreign languages. Per the *Content and Form of Application Submission* and *Technical Eligibility* sections of the NOFO, all proposal documents must be written and submitted in English.

Q3. Consortium Clarification. *Can S/GWI please confirm whether a consortium may include regional and global organizations, with the lead applicant being a hemispheric organization that collaborates with regional partners from other geographic areas?*

A3. The consortium may include any combination of regional and global partners. It is fine for the lead applicant to be a hemispheric organization; however, per the NOFO, they must still be able to demonstrate their capacity to operate (i.e., partner, manage, monitor, etc.) globally.

Q4. Geographic Scope. *Could you please indicate the extent to which you would like us to propose countries/geographies in our proposal (drawing of on our research, networks and current country contexts)? Can S/GWI confirm that it expects offerors to propose an illustrative list of countries in which to focus, while also describing its capacity to respond in countries outside of this list?*

A4. Applicants may propose specific countries/geographies that demonstrate the global reach of the project/consortium partners and should prioritize locations currently experiencing instability, political transitions from conflict, and those with upcoming local and/or national elections between 2024-2026. Objective 1 should be designed to operate globally. Under Objective 2, applicants may propose country-specific interventions that align with the NOFO criteria; the proposal narrative must also include a brief justification for these proposed locations.

As part of the interagency review process, panelists will take these justifications into consideration and may ask clarifying questions and/or seek to add or remove a specific country/location. Please refer to section E.2 of the NOFO for the review criteria that will be used to assess the overall project strategy and organizational capacity to implement activities in the proposed locations.

Q5. Priority Countries. *Given the rapid response approach expected of the Fund, please clarify to what extent you would expect this to be split between award-stage identified countries and those that may become priorities during the course of implementation? Are there specific priority geographic regions we should particularly highlight (noting the global nature of the Fund and the country context requirement)? Are we allowed to choose and apply for funding across two countries? Or is this call limited to one country only?*

A5. There is not necessarily a specific split that S/GWI is looking for and S/GWI is not prioritizing certain regions for this solicitation; it is expected that rapid response support/assistance under Objective 1 will have the capacity to operate globally and any country-specific interventions under Objective 2 should prioritize locations currently experiencing instability, political transitions from conflict, and those with upcoming local and/or national elections between 2024-2026.

As a general matter, S/GWI does not use foreign assistance resources to fund programs to benefit developed countries. Developed countries are considered to be those in the high-income category as defined by the World Bank using the GNI per capita (Atlas method).¹ The World Bank's list of countries by GNI can be found on their website.²

Final location selections will be confirmed in consultation between the successful applicant and S/GWI. Please keep in mind that assistance to certain beneficiaries and/or countries may also be subject to additional approvals and/or vetting.

¹ <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519>

² <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.CD>

Applicants should be able to articulate a clear vision for how they expect to operationalize the rapid response fund activities, but S/GWI understands that certain details may need to be determined in consultation with S/GWI, including through the preparation and approval of Standard Operating Procedures for rapid/flexible response support (listed under “Substantial Involvement”).

Q6. Scope of Activities. *Noting the potentially broad geographic scope for proposed programs under this solicitation, does S/GWI have an expected or preferred percentage breakdown of the budget between Objective 1 (establishing a rapid response mechanism) and Objective 2 (fostering safe spaces)? The program clearly contemplates rapid response support and advocacy work in countries of operations. Does S/GWI have a preferred balance of activities between the advocacy and rapid response/immediate relief components?*

A6. The two objectives of this announcement are to:

- Establish a rapid/flexible response mechanism to address the immediate needs of women politicians, political candidates, and civil society leaders who have experienced extreme forms and/or threats of TFGBV.
- Foster safe spaces for longer-term community, connection, advocacy, and learning with and amongst women politicians, political candidates, and civil society leaders who have experienced extreme forms and/or threats of TFGBV.

The priority of this solicitation is to establish a global rapid response mechanism that can address the urgent/short-term needs of those experiencing or at-risk of TFGBV, and then subsequently foster safe spaces and connect individuals for medium and long-term support/engagement. S/GWI is looking to applicants to propose a model/structure that is realistic and feasible to implement and based on existing evidence/research about needs related to TFGBV prevention and response.

Applicants should tailor activities and proposed rapid/flexible response support according to needs identified in the existing evidence base and by potential beneficiary populations. In line with Do No Harm principles, all activities should be grounded in and informed by survivor-centered and trauma-informed approaches.

Please see sections D.2.V-VI and E.2 of the NOFO for budget/budget narrative requirements and the specific review criteria that will be used to assess the budget and budget narrative.

Q7. Clarification Regarding Platforms. *In the theory of change S/GWI notes: "if they [women politicians, political candidates, and civil society leaders] have a platform to strategize and advocate for the prevention of TFGBV..." Does S/GWI contemplate a specific single platform, such as an online community, to support survivors or can the offeror make recommendations for the most appropriate platform based on the individual situations or country contexts?*

A7. The applicant should make recommendations to S/GWI for the most appropriate platform(s) and/or approaches based on specific country contexts and the needs identified in existing research/evidence and by potential beneficiary populations. If multiple platforms/spaces are recommended versus a single platform/online community, the applicant should clearly describe if and how it will facilitate communication and connection across spaces and/or groups. Applicants may also consider how to include organizations with existing platforms as direct consortium partners/members.

Q8. Other Donor Contributions. *On page 4 of the NOFO, it states that the TFGBV program should “be designed to allow other donors...to contribute additional resources.” Will there be requirements to track and report against that funding separate from funding from S/GWI? Does S/GWI currently contemplate any restrictions or controls on the outside funding that may impact implementation?*

A8. There may be additional reporting requirements depending on other donor requirements and/or directives. S/GWI will work with recipient to structure the mechanism to streamline communications and reduce reporting burdens to the extent practical and allowable.

Q9. S/GWI Substantial Involvement and Approvals. *In many rapid response programs, donors participate in the selection and approval of rapid response fund issuance to support survivors affected by GBV. Does S/GWI currently contemplate participation in selection and issuance of funds to survivor recipients or the service providers supporting them? How do you see the “substantial involvement” of the partners as part of a cooperative agreement (as outlined on page 2)? Can you provide any more details or example on what this would involve?*

A9. S/GWI will be involved in the program and management performance of the award in the form of a cooperative agreement, which allows S/GWI to undertake reasonable and programmatically necessary substantial involvement such as consultation and technical collaboration rights on specified project activities. Amongst others listed in the NOFO, examples of substantial involvement may include:

- a. Approval of Recipient annual work plan, including planned activities for the following year and changes to any activity to be carried out under the agreement;
- b. Collaboration on and approval of Standard Operating Procedures and selection criteria for rapid/flexible response support, including how to determine which cases qualify as “extreme” forms or threats of TFGBV; and
- c. Approval of sub-award recipients, concurrence on the substantive provisions of the sub-awards, and coordination with other cooperating agencies.

As part of its review and approval of Standard Operating Procedures, in consultation with the selected implementer, S/GWI expects to determine its roles in approving the selection and issuance of funds to individual recipients. Due to the nature of rapid response funds and the urgent need to provide assistance as quickly as possible, S/GWI does not expect to be involved in approving every individual case but rather in the overall criteria for determining which cases qualify, how much is provided, and for which services. S/GWI will also work with the selected implementer to determine which instances may require additional approvals (i.e., for certain stakeholder groups and/or countries).