

Statement of Interest (SOI)

SHE's BRIGHT - Supporting Her Empowerment: Building Resilient Initiatives and Girls' Hope Together

Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues, Department of State

Opportunity number: DFOP0017101

Application deadline: February 25, 2025

Contents

A. Basic Information.....	3
B. Eligibility	6
C. Program Description	7
D. Application Contents and Format	13
E. Submission Requirements and Deadlines.....	15
F. Application Review Information	22
G. Federal Award Administration Information	25
ANNEX A: Bureau-Specific Award Provisions	2
ANNEX B: Relevant Statutory Language.....	5

**U.S Department of State
Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues
Statement of Interest**

A. Basic Information

1. Overview

Funding Opportunity Title	SHE's BRIGHT - Supporting Her Empowerment: Building Resilient Initiatives and Girls' Hope Together
Funding Opportunity Number:	DFOP0017101
Federal Agency Contact:	SGWIProjectProposals@state.gov
Date Opened:	December 26, 2024
Questions Deadline:	January 24, 2025 by 23:59 (EST)
Statement of Interest (SOI) Deadline:	February 25, 2025 by 23:59 (EST)
Funding Mechanism Type:	Cooperative Agreement
Estimated Number of Awards:	1
Estimated Funding Amount:	Approximately \$493,339
Cost Sharing:	Not Required
Length of Project Period:	2 to 3 years
Fiscal Year of Funding:	FY 2024
Type of Funding:	Economic Support Fund
CFDA Number:	19.801
Anticipated Award Date:	September 30, 2025
Estimated Program Start Date:	No later than September 30, 2025

Please carefully follow all instructions below.

The submission of the SOI is the first step in a two-step process meant to minimize burden on applicants and allow for the development of better program outcomes. Applicants must first submit a concise, **three to five-page** SOI that clearly communicates a program idea and its objectives. This is not a full proposal; only a select number of applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal, based on feedback from reviewers. The purpose of the

SOI process is to allow applicants to submit program ideas for evaluation prior to requiring the development of a full proposal application. Full proposals will go through a second merit review before final funding decisions are made.

Each **prime** applicant may submit up to two SOIs. There is no limit to the number of SOIs on which an applicant may serve as a **sub-awardee**. Upon review of eligible SOIs, S/GWI will invite selected applicants to expand their ideas into full proposal applications. In the event that a prime applicant has submitted two SOIs and both are deemed competitive, the applicant will be asked to submit a full proposal for the **more** competitive of the two.

Funding Instrument Type: Due to the needs and risk factors associated with this project, S/GWI anticipates awarding these funds as a cooperative agreement. The distinction between grants and cooperative agreements revolves around the existence of “substantial involvement.” Cooperative agreements require greater Federal government participation in the project.

Program Performance Period: The Department of State intends to entertain applications for continuation of activities funded under this solicitation beyond the initial budget period on a non-competitive basis subject to availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the program, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the U.S. Department of State.

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

2. Executive Summary

Priority Regions and Countries: Applicants must propose work equal to the planned funding amount (\$493,339). S/GWI recommends applicants focus on **one country or one region** in the Statement of Interest, highlighting planned activities with girls, young women- or girl-led groups, organizations, networks, and/or collectives that are working to prevent GBV, and specifically female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) and/or child, early, and forced marriage (CEFM). Final country selection will be confirmed in consultation between the successful applicant and S/GWI and may be subject to additional approvals and/or vetting.

S/GWI’s priority regions and specific countries within them include the following:

- Sub-Saharan Africa: *Niger, Sierra Leone, or Somalia*
- East Asia and the Pacific: *Indonesia*
- South and Central Asia: *Nepal*
- Sub-Saharan Africa: *West Africa*

Other countries/regions will not be considered.

S/GWI does not, as a general matter, use foreign assistance resources to fund programs to benefit developed countries. Developed countries are considered to be those in the high-income category as defined¹ by the World Bank using the GNI per capita (Atlas method).² The World Bank’s list of countries by GNI can be found on their website.³

Applicants to this RSOI should be aware of, complement, build on, and not overlap with existing in-country, regional, and global programming.

Note: This solicitation will appear on MyGrants (<https://mygrants.servicenowservices.com>) and Grants.gov (www.grants.gov). **S/GWI strongly encourages applicants to immediately access MyGrants, the required system for submission, in order to obtain a username and password.** For further instructions, please see **Section E.4** below. Please also see **Section F.3** for information on other relevant registrations required to apply for solicitation.

Executive Summary

The Secretary’s Office of Global Women’s Issues (S/GWI) of the U.S. Department of State announces an open competition for organizations to submit a Statement of Interest (SOI) outlining concepts and capacity to manage a project that aims to prevent and address gender-based violence (GBV), including and especially the harmful practices of female genital mutilation and cutting (FGM/C) and/or child, early, and forced marriage (CEFM). S/GWI is particularly interested in efforts to address these harmful practices through girl-led initiatives by: (1) directly investing in and supporting girl-led and girl-serving groups, networks, and/or coalitions through small grants and capacity support to design and implement solutions tailored to their communities; and (2) coordination and facilitating engagement between girls and key stakeholders and decisionmakers on ending GBV and harmful practices. All activities should be designed to help girls build their own networks and individual capacity to participate in, inform, and lead and contribute to broader movements to end GBV and harmful practices in their communities. Statements of interest should clearly define and detail one country or one region of implementation. Applicants can select from the following five countries (Indonesia, Nepal, Niger, or Sierra

¹ The World Bank. “World Bank Country and Lending Groups.” The World Bank, n.d., <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519>

² *ibid.*

³ The World Bank. “GNI Per Capita, Atlas Method (Current US\$).” The World Bank, n.d., <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.CD>

Leone) or the West Africa region. This project should focus on girls and young women ages 10-19.⁴

B. Eligibility

1. Eligible Applicants

Organizations submitting a statement of interest must meet the following criteria:

- Be a U.S.- or foreign-based non-profit or non-governmental organization (NGO); a Foreign Public Entities (FPE) for example: Public International Organizations and Governmental institutions; 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.

S/GWI's preference is to work with non-profit entities; however, there may be some occasions when a for-profit entity is best suited.

Applications submitted by for-profit entities may be subject to additional review following the panel selection process. Additionally, the Department of State prohibits profit to for-profit or commercial organizations under its assistance awards. Profit is defined as any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs. The allowability of costs incurred by commercial organizations is determined in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) at 48 CFR 30, Cost Accounting Standards Administration, and 48 CFR 31 Contract Cost Principles and Procedures.

Please see 2 CFR 200.307 for regulations regarding program income.

⁴ Adolescence is a key developmental life phase, though it is not finite or linear. The U.S. government broadly defines youth as individuals between the ages of 10 and 35; it also recognizes that **those under age 18 are universally considered children** and subject to numerous national and international protections. This intersection of childhood and young adulthood is known as adolescence. **The different stages of adolescence include Early Adolescence (years 10–14) and Adolescence (years 15–19).**

Project activities can only benefit foreign nationals and should take place outside the United States.

S/GWI maintains an anti-discrimination policy in all its programs and activities. S/GWI welcomes full proposal submissions irrespective of race, ethnicity, heritage, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or other status. S/GWI is dedicated to promoting human rights, fundamental freedoms, and equality for all and seeks partners that will strive to inclusively implement these democratic values.

S/GWI works to ensure the integration of gender equality and the advancement of women and girls in U.S. foreign policy. S/GWI programs are flexible, civil society-focused, and global in reach. They are designed to incubate locally informed and implemented civil society-based solutions, inspiring and providing promising practices to advance women's equality and empowerment as a keystone of U.S. foreign policy. Learning from this program will inform other U.S. policy, programs, and partnerships.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Not required.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

All organizations must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) issued via SAM.gov as well as a valid registration in SAM.gov. Please see **Section E.3** for more information. Individuals are not required to have a UEI or be registered in SAM.gov.

Each **prime** applicant may submit up to two (2) SOIs. There is no limit to the number of SOIs on which an applicant may serve as a **sub**-awardee. Upon review of eligible SOIs, S/GWI will invite selected applicants to expand their ideas into full proposal applications. In the event that a prime applicant has submitted two SOIs and both are deemed competitive, the applicant will be asked to submit a full proposal for the more competitive of the two.

C. Program Description

1. Goals and Objectives

Background Information

U.S. government efforts to address GBV, including violence against women and girls, is a matter of national security, human rights, and economic security. Nations that perpetrate and tolerate GBV with impunity suffer most frequently and intractably from conflict, instability, lack of rule of law, low educational attainment, economic underdevelopment, and health crises. Research shows that the status of women and girls is strongly and significantly associated with a country's level of democracy; and democracies with higher levels of violence against women are as insecure and unstable as non-democracies.^{8 9}

Due to both their age and gender, girls and young women face disproportionate risks of GBV, including FGM/C and CEFM, which has lifelong consequences. However, girls can be powerful agents of change in addressing GBV and the specific issues that impact them, such as FGM/C and CEFM. 12 million girls a year are married before the age of 18 – 23 girls every minute whose health, education, and opportunities are at risk or ended forever.¹⁰ Up to 230 million women and girls alive today have undergone FGM/C.¹¹

Supporting girl-led organizations and movements can help reduce the practice and prevalence of both FGM/C and CEFM by strengthening their agency and ability to affect change at a local level, where both harmful practices are often most ingrained. Local, girl-led organizations are connected to their communities, have better community outreach, and an understanding of the cultural landscape in which they exist.¹² Girls, women, and the organizations and groups that they lead play a critical role in creating positive change and challenging the harmful norms that limit their opportunities and fuel violence and harmful practices that affect them and society.¹³ Despite this, only a small percentage of development assistance reaches girl- and youth-led organizations.^{14 15 16} This project aims to fill a clear gap in resourcing girl-led initiatives to address FGM/C and CEFM.

Despite some progress being made towards the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), harmful practices such as FGM/C and CEFM continue to be prevalent – and in some cases growing - in countries around the world and progress needs to be accelerated to achieve the 2030 goals.

The priority countries (Indonesia, Nepal, Niger, Sierra Leone, and Somalia) and the region (West Africa) identified in this RSOI have some of the highest rates of FGM/C and/or CEFM in the world. These practices, rooted in harmful norms and gender inequality, violate the rights of girls and women and have serious, long-term negative health, social, and economic impacts, not only for the girls and women subjected to the practices, but to the development of the communities and countries where these practices persist.

Through a new mechanism, S/GWI seeks to invest in girl-led solutions to prevent and respond to harmful practices—namely, FGM/C and/or CEFM—in their communities. This mechanism will focus on advancing girl-led or girl-serving groups and networks through small grants to realize their meaningful participation in advocacy to influence the development of laws, policies, and practices intended to reduce the prevalence of FGM/C and/or CEFM in their communities. The selected recipient should be a girl-led or girl-serving organization **or** have a record of working with girl-led and/or girl-serving organizations, that has a range of diverse girl leaders and networks and the technical capacity to enhance the leadership and advocacy skills of girls.

Safeguarding/Safety and Security

Working with girls and young women and the groups they lead requires dedicated and robust safeguarding policies and procedures. All SOIs must briefly outline existing practices for safeguarding, risk assessments, and risk mitigation strategies when working

with girls and young women. Appropriate budgeting for all relevant safeguarding activities must be factored into proposed activities to ensure safeguarding is at the forefront of any initiatives and that the safety and security of girls and young women is prioritized. Successful applicants will be asked to expand upon these safeguarding, risk mitigation, and budgeting decisions at the full proposal stage.

Policy Statement

The project resulting from this RSOI will support S/GWI and Department goals to advance human rights, security, prosperity, and democracy around the world by furthering girls' empowerment and reducing violence against girls.

Inclusive Programming Approach

S/GWI is committed to respecting human rights and promoting democratic values. S/GWI programs are expected to foster and/or address:

- **Inclusive Environments**, which means programs that are accessible to all and foster involvement, respect, and connection in which the richness of diverse ideas, backgrounds, and perspectives are valued for all individuals.
- **Social Inclusion**, which means improving how individuals and groups take part in society – enhancing the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity.

Proposal Results Framework

Theory of Change: *If* girl-led groups, networks, and/or coalitions are supported to design and implement the solutions they know their communities need to prevent FGM/C and/or CEFM, *and if* girls are able to reach and influence key stakeholders in their communities, countries and/or regions, *then* girls will experience less violence and be more empowered and equipped to lead change in their local communities and on the global stage.

Goal: To prevent FGM/C and/or CEFM through girl-led initiatives.

Prioritizing a do no harm approach with safeguarding as a central tenant, the following objectives focus on building the skills and influence of girls to equip them to lead efforts to prevent FGM/C and/or CEFM in their communities. Applicants should respond in their statement of interest utilizing both objectives.

Objective 1 – Support girl-led initiatives to address FGM/C and/or CEFM in their communities.

- Invest in girl-led groups, networks, and/or coalitions through small grants and capacity support to strengthen the capacity and leadership skills of girls to design, implement, and advocate for solutions to prevent FGM/C and/or CEFM in their communities.

Objective 1 activities *may* include:

- Provide resources and support for girl-led groups, networks, and/or coalitions through a small grants program.
- Conduct leadership, advocacy, and movement-building training workshops for girls and young women.
- Facilitate mentorship programs connecting girls and young women with more experienced advocates and leaders and broader women's rights movements.
- Support for individual girls to lead activities within their communities to raise awareness of the harms of FGM/C and/or CEFM and promote education alternatives.

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Objective 2 – Coordinate and facilitate engagement between girls and key stakeholders to end FGM/C and/or CEFM

- Enhance and influence key stakeholders' and decision-makers' abilities to engage with, listen to, and support girls and the groups that they lead in their communities, countries, and regions to prevent and address FGM/C and CEFM.

Objective 2 activities *may* include:

- Coordinate and host listening sessions between local leaders (community, religious, grassroots women's rights leaders, etc.), governments officials, and girl leaders and groups.
- Develop linkages and facilitate mentorship between girl-led groups and local women's rights organizations, as well as other key national actors working to end FGM/C and/or CEFM.
- Organize community forums and dialogues led by girls to raise awareness about the harms of FGM/C and/or CEFM.
- Develop and distribute educational materials designed by girls to inform community members and stakeholders about the harms and negative impacts of FGM/C and/or CEFM.
- Establish platforms for girls to present their solutions and advocate for policy and legal changes at local, national, and regional levels.

Additional illustrative project activities *may* include:

- Design and implement participatory assessments and analysis with local girl leaders and girl-led groups to identify needs, priorities, opportunities, and key stakeholders to advance girls' participation in advocacy and programming to prevent FGM/C and/or CEFM.
- Co-create or collaborate with girl leaders and girl-led organizations at the local level to design context appropriate and locally led innovative interventions with the aim of strengthening girls' participation in decision-making, advocacy, and programming that centers around ending FGM/C and/or CEFM.
- Develop locally led social and behavior change communication strategies and approaches that promote girls' empowerment and access to decision-making bodies at the local, national or regional level.

- Develop a research and learning agenda in collaboration with local girl leaders, girl-led groups, coalitions, or networks that fills evidence gaps in advancing girls' leadership and supports their advocacy efforts.
- Create or support a community of practice to engage girl leaders, local girl-led groups, networks, or coalitions to share challenges, promising practices, and opportunities to advancing girl's participation.

Intended Results

Possible results from your project aimed at preventing FGM/C and CEFM through girl-led initiatives could include:

- Girl-led groups, organizations, networks, or coalitions are established or strengthened to empower and support girls lead efforts to prevent FGM/C and/or CEFM.
- Girls and community members have increased awareness of and knowledge about the harms of FGM/C and/or CEFM.
- Key stakeholders, including community leaders and policymakers, are more informed about the issues and the importance of girl-led initiatives.
- Key stakeholders, including community leaders and relevant government officials and policymakers, understand the valuable contributions and insights girl leaders and girl-led groups provide and are motivated to engage with and listen to them.
- Establishment of new girl-led groups, networks, or coalitions focused on preventing FGM/C and/or CEFM.
- Strengthening of existing girl-led groups through training, resources, and support.
- Girls develop stronger leadership, advocacy, and decision-making skills.
- Increased confidence among girls to speak out and take action against FGM/C and/or CEFM.
- Successful execution of locally-led social and behavior change communication strategies.
- Greater involvement of community members in discussions and activities aimed at preventing FGM/C and/or CEFM.
- Enhanced collaboration between girl-led groups and key stakeholders, including community leaders and policymakers.
- Continued empowerment of girls to lead and advocate for their rights and well-being.
- Over time, a reduction in the rates of FGM/C and/or CEFM.
- Establishment of a culture of girls' leadership and participation in social change and decision-making processes, including a reduction in the acceptability of FGM/C and/or CEFM.

Applicants are encouraged to propose custom developed indicators relevant to the proposed activities for consideration, in addition to the Standard Foreign Assistance Indicators selected. S/GWI expects **at least one outcome indicator for each objective** in

the final MEL plan to reflect the overarching logic model for the proposal. S/GWI understands that the MEL plan will be finalized during the start-up stages of an award.

Indicators

Applicant monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) plans should include at least two of the following indicators, as relevant:

- GNDR-1: Number of legal instruments drafted, proposed or adopted with USG assistance designed to promote gender equality or non-discrimination against women or girls at the national or sub-national level
- GNDR-4: Percentage of participants reporting increased agreement with the concept that males and females should have equal access to social, economic, and political resources and opportunities
- GNDR-5: Number of legal instruments drafted, proposed, or adopted with USG assistance designed to improve prevention of or response to sexual and gender-based violence at the national or sub-national level
- GNDR-6: Number of people reached by a USG funded intervention providing GBV services (e.g. health, legal, psycho-social counseling, shelters, hotlines, other)
- GNDR-13: Number of people trained in gender-based violence (GBV) prevention, response, or risk mitigation with USG support
- DR.4-1: Number of USG-supported activities designed to promote or strengthen the civic participation of women
- DR.4.2-2b: Number of women's rights civil society organizations (CSOs) receiving USG assistance engaged in advocacy interventions
- YOUTH-5b: Number of females age 10-18 who participate in civil society activities following soft skills/life skills training or initiatives from USG assisted programs

Applicants can also consider the following indicators, as relevant:

- Number of girl-led initiatives funded through small grants scheme.
- Number of girls and young women trained in leadership and advocacy.
- Number of girl-led groups formed and actively working on initiatives.
- Number of girl-led initiatives funded through small grants scheme.
- Number of listening sessions held between local leaders, local government and adolescent girl leaders and groups.
- Number of community forums and dialogues conducted.
- Number of educational materials distributed and their reach.
- Number of engagements between girls and key stakeholders (e.g., community leaders, policymakers).
- Changes in community attitudes and policies regarding FGM/C and/or CEFM (measured through surveys or policy analysis).
- Increase in the confidence and leadership skills of participating girls (measured through surveys or assessments).

2. Substantial Involvement

Applicants should be aware that if their application results in an award, 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. Examples of substantial involvement can 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 in identifying/developing/approving additional countries/projects for implementation in consultation with U.S. embassies, as relevant;
- c) Review and approval of Safeguarding policies and procedures for all sub-award recipients, as relevant;
- d) Approval of sub-award recipients, concurrence on the substantive provisions of the sub-awards, and coordination with other cooperating agencies;
- e) Review of any notice of funding opportunities and selection of recipients;
- f) Approval of the MEL plan for the Recipient and sub-award recipients;
- g) Approval of Terms of Reference (TOR) for program evaluations;
- h) Approval of hiring/opportunity announcements and selection/assignment of technical experts on issues such as gender equality and gender-based violence, including but not limited to key personnel;
- i) Collaboration in assessing progress and identifying issues that might affect the success of the program; and
- j) Other approvals that will be included in the award agreement.

D. Application Contents and Format

Please follow all instructions below carefully. SOIs that do not meet the requirements of this announcement or fail to comply with the stated requirements will be ineligible.

1. Application Package Required Documents

Application forms required below are available via MyGrants and on Grants.gov.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

Please follow all instructions below carefully. Proposals that do not meet the requirements of this announcement or fail to comply with the stated requirements will be deemed ineligible. Please ensure:

- The SOI clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity;
- All documents are in English;
- All budget amounts are in U.S. dollars;

- All pages are numbered;
- All documents are formatted to 8 ½ x 11 paper; and
- All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12-point Calibri font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.
 - Captions and footnotes may be 10-point Calibri font. Applicants may also use a smaller font size for tables, charts, graphics, and text boxes included in the proposal documents to ensure that content fits within the page limits and margins.

Complete SOI submissions **must** include the following, submitted in English:

1. Completed and signed **SF-424, SF-424A, and SF-424B and SF-LLL**, if applicable, as directed on MyGrants and in Grants.gov; and,
2. **Program Statement** (not to exceed **five [5]** pages in Microsoft Word) that includes:
 - a. A table listing:
 - i. Name of the organization;
 - ii. The target countries;
 - iii. The total amount of funding requested from S/GWI, total amount of cost-share (if any; cost share is NOT required), and total program amount (S/GWI funds + cost-share); and,
 - iv. Program length;
 - b. A synopsis of the program, including a brief statement on how the program will have a demonstrated impact and engage relevant stakeholders. The synopsis must address how the applicant will conduct gender and inclusion analysis and MEL as well as foster sustainability, mitigate risk, and prioritize safeguarding. The SOI should identify consortium partners, and local partners as appropriate/relevant;
 - c. A concise breakdown explicitly identifying the program’s objectives and the activities and expected results that contribute to each objective; and,
 - d. A brief description of the applicant(s) that demonstrates relevant organizational and staff expertise and capacity to implement the program and manage a U.S. government award.
3. **Proposed Locations and/or Partners** (not to exceed **one [1]** page, to include a minimum of one country.

Applications that do not include the elements listed above will be deemed technically ineligible. More details on technical eligibility are provided below in Section E.4.

S/GWI reserves the right to request additional documents not included in this announcement. Additionally, to ensure that all applications receive a balanced evaluation, the S/GWI review panel will review from the first page of each section up to the stated page limit and no further.

Applicants should prioritize and propose **sufficient yet lean and scalable staffing structures** that provide adequate oversight and central management but maximize appropriate and local expertise and leadership (rather than defaulting to in-house experts). S/GWI welcomes creative partnership structures. As a general guideline, **at least 40 percent of funding under the award should go to local organizations and their activities**—this may include Contractual and Other Direct Costs in support of local organizations, for example, but generally should not include prime grantee staffing, travel, overhead etc. Applicants should also factor in appropriate budgeting for all relevant safeguarding needs and activities. Support for the establishment of new in-country offices is not envisioned under this RSOI.

While landscape assessments; gender equality and social inclusion analyses; monitoring, learning, and evaluation (MEL) plans; risk assessment and mitigation plans including safeguarding and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA); provision of psychosocial support for staff and beneficiaries; and detailed sustainability plans are **not** required as part of the SOI, all organizations that are invited to submit a full proposal **will** be required to submit this information at that time. Full proposals, once solicited, should also seek to minimize the harmful effects of local competition for resources in their program designs. Please review this RSOI in full – including all annexes – to inform your SOI design and ensure your requested budget amount sufficiently covers these award requirements.

Applicants are advised that an award may be conditioned upon vetting to evaluate the risk that funds may benefit terrorists or their supporters.

E. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

1. Address to Request Application Package

Required application forms are available via MyGrants and on Grants.gov.

2. Department of State Contacts

Questions must be submitted by the Questions Deadline (**23:59 (EST) on January 24, 2025**) to SGWIProjectProposals@state.gov using the email subject line, “SHE’s BRIGHT: [Applicant Organization Name] Questions.”

To maintain fairness and transparency in competition, S/GWI will compile any substantive questions received along with the responses and post them in a document appear on MyGrants (<https://mygrants.servicenowservices.com>) and Grants.gov (www.grants.gov). Substantive questions will not be fielded outside of this process or after the deadline.

During the solicitation period, with the exception of technical submission questions, U.S. Department of State staff in Washington D.C. and overseas will not discuss this competition with applicants until the entire proposal review process has been completed and approval and rejection letters have been transmitted.

Please remember, all completed applications must be submitted electronically via MyGrants (<https://mygrants.servicenowservices.com>) or Grants.gov (www.grants.gov) by the deadline of 23:59 (EST) on February 25, 2025.

3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov) Required Registrations

All prime organizations, whether based in the United States or in another country, must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and an active registration with the SAM.gov **before submitting an application**. S/GWI may **not** review applications from or make awards to applicants that have not completed all applicable UEI and SAM.gov requirements. A UEI is one of the data elements mandated by Public Law 109-282, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), for all Federal awards.

Note: As of April 2022, a DUNS number is no longer required for federal assistance applications.

The 2 CFR 200 requires that sub-grantees obtain a UEI number. Please note the UEI for sub-grantees is not required at the time of application but will be required before the award is processed and/or directed to a sub-grantee.

Note: The process of obtaining or renewing a SAM.gov registration may take anywhere from 4-8 weeks. Please begin your registration as early as possible.

- Organizations **based in the United States** or that pay employees within the United States will need an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code, and a UEI number prior to registering in SAM.gov. Please note that, as of February 2023, organizations based in the United States that do not intend to apply for U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) awards are no longer required to have a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code to apply for non-DoD foreign assistance funding opportunities.
 - If an applicant organization is mid-registration and wishes to remove an NCAGE code from their SAM.gov registration, the applicant should submit a help desk ticket (“incident”) with the Federal Service Desk (FSD) online at www.fsd.gov using the following language: “I do not intend to seek financial assistance from the Department of Defense. I do not wish to obtain a CAGE code. I understand that I will need to submit my registration after this incident is resolved in order to have my registration activated.”
- Organizations **based outside of the United States** and that do not pay employees within the United States do not need an EIN from the IRS, but do need a UEI number

prior to registering in SAM.gov. Please note that as of December 2022, organizations based outside of the United States that do not intend to apply for U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) awards are no longer required to have a NATO CAGE (NCAGE) code to apply for non-DoD foreign assistance funding opportunities.

- If an applicant organization is mid-registration and wishes to remove an NCAGE code from their SAM.gov registration, the applicant should submit a help desk ticket (“incident”) with the Federal Service Desk (FSD) online at www.fsd.gov using the following language: “I do not intend to seek financial assistance from the Department of Defense. I do not wish to obtain an NCAGE code. I understand that I will need to submit my registration after this incident is resolved in order to have my registration activated.”

Organizations based outside of the United States and that DO NOT plan to do business with the DoD should follow the below instructions:

Step 1: Proceed to SAM.gov to obtain a UEI and complete the SAM.gov registration process. SAM.gov registration must be renewed annually.

Organizations based outside of the United States and that DO plan to do business with the DoD should follow the below instructions:

Step 1: Apply for an NCAGE code by following the instructions on the NSPA NATO website linked below:

- NCAGE Homepage: <https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/sc/CageList.aspx>
- NCAGE Code Request Tool (NCRT): <https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/Codification/CageTool/home>

For NCAGE help from within the United States, call +1 (888) 227-2423.

For NCAGE help from outside the United States, call +1 (269) 961-7766.

Or, email NCAGE@dliis.dla.mil for any problems in applying for an NCAGE code.

Step 2: After receiving an NCAGE code, proceed to SAM.gov to obtain a UEI and complete the SAM.gov registration process. SAM.gov registration must be renewed annually.

All prime organizations must also continue to maintain active SAM.gov registration with current information at all times during which they have an active Federal award or application under consideration by a federal award agency. SAM.gov requires all entities to renew their registration once a year in order to maintain an active registration status in SAM.gov. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure it has an active registration in SAM.gov and to maintain that active registration. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements at the time of application, the applicant may be deemed technically

ineligible to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

Please refer to 2 CFR 25.200 for additional information.

Note: SAM.gov is not the same as MyGrants. It is free of charge to register in both systems, but the registration processes are different.

Information is included on the SAM.gov website to help international registrations, including “Quick Start Guide for International Registrations” and “Helpful Hints.” Navigate to www.SAM.gov, click “HELP” in the top navigation bar, then click “Explore” and “New to SAM.gov?” for general information. Please note, guidance on SAM.gov and the guidance on GSA’s website about requirement for registering in SAM.gov is subject to change and is currently being updated. Applicants should review the website for the most up-to-date guidance.

The attached “0. AQM Guidance for NCAGE-SAM” is a compilation of resources gathered by the Department’s Office of Acquisitions Management (AQM). Any content shown from SAM.gov is not owned by the Department of State. This guidance and instruction are to the best of our knowledge based at the time of posting this solicitation. **Where guidance in these attachments differs from the SAM.gov website, SAM.gov prevails and the applicant is encouraged to seek and document responses provided by the SAM.gov help desk.**

Exemptions

An exemption from the UEI and sam.gov registration requirements may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if:

- An applicant’s identity must be protected due to potential endangerment of their mission, their organization’s status, their employees, or individuals being served by the applicant.
- For an applicant, if the Federal awarding agency makes a determination that there are exigent circumstances that prohibit the applicant from receiving a unique entity identifier and completing SAM registration prior to receiving a Federal award. In these instances, Federal awarding agencies must require the recipient to obtain a unique entity identifier and complete SAM registration within 30 days of the Federal award date.

Organizations requesting exemption from UEI or SAM.gov requirements must email the point of contact listed in the RSOI at least **two weeks prior to the deadline in the NOFO providing a justification of their request.** Approval for a SAM.gov exemption must come from the warranted Grants Officer before the application can be deemed eligible for review.

4. Submission Dates and Times:

SOIs are due no later than **23:59 (EST) on February 25, 2025.**

MyGrants automatically logs the date and time an application submission is made, and the Department of State will use this information to determine whether an application has been submitted on time. Late applications are neither reviewed nor considered. Known system errors caused by MyGrants (<https://mygrants.service-now.com>) or Grants.gov (www.grants.gov) that are outside of the applicant's control will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Applicants should not expect a notification from S/GWI upon receiving their application(s).

All application submissions must be made electronically via MyGrants (<https://mygrants.servicenow.com>) or Grants.gov (www.grants.gov). S/GWI will **not** accept applications submitted via email, fax, the postal system, delivery companies, or couriers.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that it has an active account registration in MyGrants. Applicants are required to document that the application has been received by MyGrants or Grants.gov in its entirety. S/GWI bears no responsibility for disqualification that result from applicants not being registered before the due date, for system errors in either MyGrants or Grants.gov, or other errors in the application process. Additionally, S/GWI strongly encourages applicants to save a screen shot of the checklist showing all documents submitted in case any document fails to upload successfully.

Faxed, couriered, or emailed documents will **not** be accepted. Reasonable accommodations may, in appropriate circumstances, be provided to applicants with disabilities or for security reasons. Applicants must follow all formatting instructions in the applicable NOFO and these instructions.

S/GWI encourages organizations to **submit applications during normal business hours** (Monday – Friday, 9:00AM - 5:00PM Eastern Time [ET]). If an applicant experiences technical difficulties and has contacted the appropriate helpdesk but is not receiving timely assistance (e.g., if you have not received a response within 48 hours of contacting the helpdesk), you may contact the S/GWI point of contact listed on page 1 of this RSOI. The point of contact may assist in contacting the appropriate helpdesk.

It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all material submitted in the full proposal package is complete, accurate, and current.

Note: The Grants Officer will determine technical eligibility of all applications.

MyGrants Applications:

Applicants using MyGrants for the first time should complete their “New Organization Registration.” To register with MyGrants, click “Login to <https://mygrants.servicenowservices.com>” and follow the “create an account” link.

Again, organizations are strongly encouraged to save a screen shot of the checklist showing all documents submitted in case any document fails to upload successfully.

MyGrants Help Desk:

For assistance with MyGrants accounts and technical issues related to the system, please contact the ILMS help desk by phone at +1 (888) 313-4567 (toll charges apply for international callers) or through the Self Service online portal that can be accessed from <https://afsitsm.service-now.com/ilms/home>. Customer support is available 24/7.

5. Technical Eligibility

S/GWI reserves the right to award more or less than the funds requested, including estimated individual award floor and ceiling amounts, under such circumstances as it may deem to be in the best interest of the U.S. government.

Technically eligible SOIs are those which:

1. Arrive electronically via MyGrants or Grants.gov by the deadline.
2. Are written in English and budgeted in US Dollars.
3. Heed all instructions, ensuring all required documents are submitted, and do not violate any of the guidelines stated in this solicitation.

6. Funding Restrictions

The cooperative agreement would be funded from money appropriated under the “Economic Support Fund” (ESF) heading in the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2024 (Div. F, P.L. 11847) (SFOAA). ESF is available for foreign assistance programs promoting economic or political stability. Under section 531(e) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (FAA), ESF may not be used for military or paramilitary purposes. Given restrictions under section 660 of the FAA, assistance may be provided to law enforcement forces only under certain circumstances. Activities that involve assistance to law enforcement will be subject to vetting to ensure compliance with section 620M of the FAA (“[Leahy Vetting](#)”). There may also be country-specific or other restrictions that apply.

Organizations should be cognizant of potentially applicable restrictions when developing project proposals as these restrictions may require appropriate due diligence of program beneficiaries and collaboration with S/GWI to ensure compliance with any restrictions. Program beneficiaries subject to due diligence vetting will include any individuals or

entities that are beneficiaries of foreign assistance funding or support. Due diligence vetting will include a review of open-source materials.

The recipient is reminded that funds provided under the cooperative agreement must be used in a manner fully consistent with U.S. law. The recipient agrees that none of the funds provided by the award shall be used to lobby for or against abortion. The recipient agrees that none of the funds provided by the award shall be used to pay for the performance of abortion as a method of family planning or to motivate or coerce any person to practice abortions.

All beneficiaries and country locations must be approved in advance by S/GWI.

The following activities and costs **will not** be entertained under this announcement in proposals submitted by applicants to S/GWI:

- Construction.
- Activities that appear partisan or that support individual or party electoral campaigns.
- Engagement with religious leaders and communities is encouraged; however, direct support or the appearance of direct support for any religious organization for the purposes of promoting particular religious beliefs cannot be included for funding.
- Duplication of services immediately available through municipal, provincial, or national government.
- Funds for market research, advertising (unless public service related to grant program) or other promotional expenses.
- Initiatives directed towards a permanent diaspora community as ultimate beneficiaries.
- Projects that have a predominant academic or basic research focus.
- Social welfare projects that purely provide service-delivery or humanitarian assistance.
- Costs incurred to complete activities begun with other funds.
- Medical and psychological research or clinical studies using human subjects.
- Projects exclusively of a commercial or profit-making nature.
- Cultural presentations, cultural research, cultural clubs, or festivals, etc. unless they have a specific programmatic purpose.
- Entertainment costs (e.g., receptions, social activities, ceremonies, guided tours) unless they have a specific programmatic purpose.

Other funding restrictions include:

- I. Funding Restrictions for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA):
None of the funds awarded resulting from this Notice of Funding Opportunity may be made available for subawards, direct financial support, or otherwise used to

provide any payment or transfer to United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

- II. Prohibition on Funding Activities that Encourage Mass-Migration Caravans towards the United States Southwest Border
- III. S/GWI will not consider proposals that reflect any type of support for any member, affiliate, or representative of a designated terrorist organization.

7. Other Submission Requirements

This solicitation will appear on www.grants.gov and MyGrants. However, applications will only be accepted electronically through MyGrants.

S/GWI will not consider SOIs that reflect any type of support for any member, affiliate, or representative of a designated terrorist organization.

Organizations should be aware that S/GWI understands that some information contained in proposals may be considered sensitive or proprietary and will make appropriate efforts to protect such information. However, organizations are advised that S/GWI cannot guarantee that such information will not be disclosed, including pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or other similar statutes.

The information in this solicitation including its Annexes is binding and may not be modified by any S/GWI representative. **Explanatory information provided by S/GWI that may contradict this language will not be binding.** Issuance of the solicitation and negotiation of full proposals does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government. S/GWI reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program evaluation requirements.

F. Application Review Information

1. Review Criteria

Each SOI will be evaluated and rated as “Very Competitive,” “Competitive,” or “Not Competitive” on the basis of the evaluation criteria outlined below.

The ratings will be determined as follows:

- **Very Competitive:** Applicant meets all or nearly all the review criteria for a particular category and provides an exceptional level of supporting detail and/or justification.
- **Competitive:** Applicant meets most of the review criteria for a particular category and provides supporting detail and/or justification but may be lacking some specificity and/or clarity.

- **Not Competitive:** Applicant meets few or none of the review criteria for a particular category and provides little to no supporting detail or justification and lacks specificity and/or clarity on proposed activities.

The following criteria are listed in no particular order of importance.

1. Organizational Capacity and Past Performance:

- Applicant demonstrates an institutional record of successful relevant programs in areas such as:
 - Gender-based violence prevention and/or response
 - Small grants to girl-led and/or girl-serving organizations
 - Capacity support for girl, girl-led, and/or girl-serving networks
 - FGM/C and/or CEFM prevention
 - Gender equality advocacy
- Applicant demonstrates the expertise and capacity to co-design and implement programs globally in equitable partnership with existing local women- and girl-led civil society organizations.

2. Project Strategy:

- Applicant proposes evidence-based approaches to addressing the objectives of the RSOI.
- Applicant demonstrates concrete approaches for equitable partnership with a range of existing women-led, girl-led, and/or girl-serving civil society organizations to further their impact.
- Application complements / builds on / does not overlap with existing in-country efforts.
- Applicant proposes sufficient yet lean and scalable staffing structures that leverage appropriate internal and external expertise but maximize support and funding for local leadership. At least 40% percent of funding goes to local organizations and their activities, and appropriate safeguarding costs have been factored into budget planning.

3. Gender and Inclusion Analysis, Do No Harm:

- Applicant demonstrates plans and capacity for effectively applying a gender and inclusion analysis to program design and implementation.
- Applicant describes sound approaches to equity and inclusion.
- Applicant demonstrates application of Do No Harm, safeguarding, risk mitigation, and conflict sensitivity principles.

4. Performance Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL):

- Applicant clearly describes the results to be achieved and demonstrates capacity to measure progress towards those results in a way that reflects local perspectives.

- Proposed outcomes are tangible and achievable within the grant program period.

5. Local Engagement and Sustainability:

- Applicant articulates an approach to building local partner capacity to continue their work once funding from this program ends.

2. Application Review and Selection Process

The Grants Officer will determine technical eligibility for all SOI submissions. All technically eligible SOIs will then be reviewed against the same five criteria by an S/GWI Review Panel: Organizational Capacity and Past Performance; Project Strategy; Gender and Inclusion Analysis, and Do No Harm; Performance Monitoring, Learning, and Evaluation; and Local Engagement and Sustainability.

Additionally, the Panel will evaluate how the SOI meets the solicitation request, U.S. foreign policy goals, and S/GWI's overall priority needs. Panelists review each SOI individually against the evaluation criteria, not against competing SOIs. To ensure all SOIs receive a balanced evaluation, the S/GWI Review Panel will review each document up to the specified page limit and no further. All Panelists must sign non-disclosure agreements and conflict of interest agreements.

S/GWI Review Panels generally include representatives from S/GWI policy and program teams as well as other State Department offices; it may also include external expertise. Once a SOI is approved, selected applicants will be invited to submit full proposal applications based on their SOIs. Unless directed otherwise by the applicant organization, S/GWI may also refer SOIs for possible consideration for other U.S. government related funding opportunities.

The Panel may provide conditions and/or recommendations on SOIs to enhance the proposed program, which must be addressed by the organization in the full proposal application. To ensure effective use of limited S/GWI funds, conditions and recommendations may include requests to increase, decrease, clarify, and/or justify costs and program activities.

S/GWI reserves the right to make a final determination regarding all funding matters, pending availability of funds.

3. Next Steps

Following the review panel, any successful SOI applicants will be contacted and invited to submit a full proposal. In addition to the documents required in the full proposal solicitation, the application must include updated copies of:

- SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance – organizations)
- SF-424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs)
- SF-424B (Assurances for Non-Construction programs) for individual or organization exempted from registering in SAM.
- SF-LLL (Disclosure of Lobbying Activities), if applicable

4. Risk Review

i. Risk factors – must include

Under the merit review as required by 2 CFR 200.206, prior to making a Federal Award the Department will review and consider the following risk factors:

- Financial stability
- Management systems and standards
- History of performance
- Audit reports and findings
- Ability to effectively implement requirements
- If there are any program specific risk factors that will be considered, describe them here.

ii. Responsibility/Qualification Information in SAM.gov

The Federal awarding agency, prior to making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, is required to review and consider (see 41 U.S.C. 2313);

An applicant can review and comment on any information in the responsibility/qualification records available in SAM.gov.

Before making decisions in the risk review required by 2 CFR 200.206, the Department will consider any comments by the applicant, along with information available in the responsibility/qualification records in SAM.gov.

G. Federal Award Administration Information

1. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Before submitting an application, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply to this award, to ensure that they will be able to comply.

These include:

- [2 CFR 25 - UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT](#)

- [2 CFR 170 - REPORTING SUBAWARD AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION INFORMATION](#)
- [2 CFR 175 - AWARD TERM FOR TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS](#)
- [2 CFR 182 - GOVERNMENTWIDE REQUIREMENTS FOR DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE \(FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE\)](#)
- [2 CFR 183 - NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY](#)
- [2 CFR 600 – DEPARTMENT OF STATE REQUIREMENTS](#)
- [U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS](#)

In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget’s guidance located at 2 CFR part 200, all applicable Federal laws, and relevant Executive guidance, the Department of State will review and consider applications for funding, as applicable to specific programs, pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity in accordance with the following:

- [Guidance for Grants and Agreements in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations](#) (2 CFR), as updated in the Federal Register’s 89 FR 30046 on April 22, 2024, particularly on:
 - Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives through an impartial process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR part 200.205),
 - Promoting the freedom of speech and religious liberty in alignment with *Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty* (E.O. 13798) and *Improving Free Inquiry, Transparency, and Accountability at Colleges and Universities* (E.O. 13864) (§§ 200.300, 200.303, 200.339, and 200.341),
 - Providing a preference, to the extent permitted by law, to maximize use of goods, products, and materials produced in the United States (2 CFR part 200.322), and
 - Terminating agreements pursuant to the U.S. Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions, including, to the greatest extent authorized by law, if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR part 200.340).

Terms and Conditions: The applicant/recipient of the award and any sub-recipient under the award must comply with all applicable terms and conditions, in addition to the assurance and certifications made part of the Notice of Award. Before submitting the SOI, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply if a full proposal application is requested and awarded, to ensure that they will be able to comply. These include: 2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 600, and the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions which are available at: <https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/>.

Organizations should be aware that if ultimately selected for an award, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards

set forth in 2 CFR Chapter 200 (Sub-Chapters A through F) shall apply to all non-Federal entities, except for assistance awards to Individuals and Foreign Public Entities. Please note that as of December 26, 2014, 2 CFR 200 (Sub-Chapters A through E) now applies to foreign organizations.

In accordance with the [Executive Order on Advancing Racial Equity and Underserved Communities](#), SOIs should address how the program advances equity with respect to race, ethnicity, religion, income, geography, gender identity, sexual orientation, and disability. The SOI should also demonstrate how the program will further engagement in underserved communities and with individuals from underserved communities. SOIs should address how addressing racial equity and underserved communities will enhance the program's goals and objectives, as well as the experience of participants.

The support of underserved communities will be part of the review criteria for this opportunity. Therefore, SOIs should address how the program will support and advance equity and engage underserved communities in program administration, design, and implementation.

In addition, applicants/recipients of the award and any sub-recipient under the award must comply with the S/GWI-specific award provisions included in Annex A.

ANNEX A: Bureau-Specific Award Provisions

I. Gender and Inclusion Analysis

Prior to implementing activities, the Recipient must document a gender and inclusion analysis in consultation with local partners for each of the countries or geographic areas where they propose to program. The gender and inclusion analysis must demonstrate how activities account for the different ways in which they might impact, and be impacted by men, women, boys, and girls⁵ of all backgrounds, and how this has been integrated into the program design in order to narrow existing gender inequities. S/GWI may approve the Recipient to do the initial gender analysis either before or during a project start-up / assessment phase.

The Recipient shall regularly monitor and reflect upon the gender and inclusion analysis together with local partners and propose in writing any significant adjustments to the program design for S/GWI concurrence. This process shall take place at the frequency set out in the Recipient's proposal, unless otherwise agreed with S/GWI in writing.

Within its Quarterly Progress Reports (QPRs) and its final evaluation(s), the Recipient will report specifically on progress towards addressing the gaps and opportunities identified in the gender and inclusion analysis.

II. Risk Assessments and Do No Harm

In line with Do No Harm principles, Recipient risk assessment and mitigation plans must address risk to project beneficiaries in addition to risks to staff and project implementation. These should explicitly address gender-related risks and mitigating actions, as identified in the gender analysis.

III. Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

The recipient will take all practical steps in accordance with their internal controls and existing policies and procedures to address the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA). In accordance with the internal control requirements in 2 CFR 200.303, which require the recipient to establish standards of conduct for its employees, the recipient must ensure that all its employees adhere to these standards of conduct in a manner that incorporates safeguarding against the sexual exploitation and abuse of

⁵ *This list is a starting point of people to include, but other communities or countries may have or prefer different titles or breakdowns, such as "youth," "children," "elders," "Kinnar," "fa'afafine" or many more groups/categories. This list is not meant to limit your analysis, but to be a helpful reminder to consult for the program context.*

beneficiaries, including but not limited to updating internal policies and procedures, as applicable and appropriate, and conducting appropriate monitoring of beneficiaries, as required by 2 CFR 200.329, which stipulates that the “non-Federal entity must monitor its activities under Federal awards to assure compliance with applicable Federal requirements.” If the recipient determines that the conduct of any recipient employee is not in accordance with this requirement, the recipient must address the situation in accordance with the recipient’s internal policies and procedures.

IV. Non-Discrimination

S/GWI policy requires that the recipient not discriminate against any beneficiaries in implementation of this award, such as, but not limited to, by withholding, adversely impacting, or denying equitable access to the benefits provided through this award on the basis of any factor not expressly stated in the award. This includes, for example, race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy), national origin, disability, age, genetic information, marital status, parental status, political affiliation, or veteran’s status. Nothing in this provision is intended to limit the ability of the recipient to target activities toward the assistance needs of certain populations as defined in the award.

V. Program Impact, Highlights, Success Stories

In quarterly reporting, the Recipient shall share success stories and/or highlights--or confirm that there were none for that quarter. Examples include program impact stories about (a) individual beneficiaries; (b) organizational, project, or program-level highlights; and (c) lessons learned and adapted to during implementation. The Recipient should indicate whether the information can be used in public communications by S/GWI and/or the broader U.S. Government. This may include, but is not limited to, use in remarks, social media, and website text. The privacy and safety of program beneficiaries is paramount; the Recipient shall ensure that appropriate permissions have been granted by those included in text and photos and that risks have been assessed and mitigated prior to including the information in quarterly reporting. The reporting should include high-resolution photos, photo credit information, and confirmation that appropriate permissions have been obtained from subjects/photographers for using the photos, where applicable.

VI. Program Evaluations

The Recipient is required to budget and arrange for independent program evaluation(s) in accordance with its approved proposal and any subsequent changes agreed with S/GWI in

writing. In the spirit of the Evidence Act,⁶ S/GWI ask that evaluation reports be written with the expectation that they will be made public and comply with Section 508 for accessibility.⁷ **S/GWI prioritizes the safety and security of partners, participants, and beneficiaries of its work.** The Recipient should therefore aim to limit the amount of sensitive, potentially sensitive, or personal identifiable information (PII) in evaluation narratives to allow this information to be easily redacted. Alternatively, this type of information can be placed in an annex that can be withheld from publication. In the event that this is not feasible or there is any concern for partners', participants', or beneficiaries' safety, an evaluation will not be made public. S/GWI will make this determination on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Recipient.

⁶ U.S. Congress, House, *An act to amend titles 5 and 44, United States Code, to require Federal evaluation activities, improve Federal data management, and for other purposes*, HR 4174, 115th Cong., introduced in House October 31, 2017, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/4174>

⁷ <https://www.section508.gov/>

ANNEX B: Relevant Statutory Language

Section 7059 of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2024 (Div. F, P.L. 11847)

(a) IN GENERAL.—

Funds appropriated by this Act shall be made available to promote the equality and empowerment of women and girls in United States Government diplomatic and development efforts by raising the status, increasing the economic participation and opportunities for political leadership, and protecting the rights of women and girls worldwide.

(c) GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE.—

(1) Of the funds appropriated under titles III and IV of this Act, not less than \$250,000,000 shall be made available to implement a multi-year strategy to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in countries where it is common in conflict and non-conflict settings.

(2) Funds appropriated under titles III and IV of this Act that are available to train foreign police, judicial, and military personnel, including for international peacekeeping operations, shall address, where appropriate, prevention and response to gender-based violence and trafficking in persons, and shall promote the integration of women into the police and other security forces.