

U.S. Department of State

Request for Proposals

Program Office: Bureau of International Security and
Nonproliferation, Office of Cooperative Threat
Reduction (ISN/CTR)
CFDA 19.033
Funding Opportunity Title: Global Nuclear Threat Reduction Activities
Announcement Type: Cooperative Agreement – Initial
Funding Opportunity Number: SFOP006242
Deadline for Applications: January 31, 2020
Available funding: \$2,000,000

ELIGIBILITY

The following organizations are eligible to apply (both domestic and international):

- *Not-for-profit organizations*
- *Public and private educational institutions*
- *For-profit organizations*
- *Public International Organizations*

Cost Sharing or Matching

This program does not require cost sharing, however proposals which demonstrate cost sharing will be welcomed.

Other Special Eligibility Criteria

Not Applicable.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For assistance with the requirements of this solicitation, please contact: ISN-CTR-CPFY20@state.gov

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of State's Office of Cooperative Threat Reduction (ISN/CTR) is pleased to announce an open competition for assistance awards through this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). ISN/CTR invites non-profit/non-governmental organizations, international organizations, educational institutions, and for-profit organizations to submit proposals for projects that will advance the mission of the Department's Partnership for Nuclear Threat Reduction (PNTR). ISN/CTR prefers projects that cost less than \$250,000 including overhead, though awards may involve multiple projects that cumulatively exceed \$250,000.

II. BACKGROUND AND PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Office of Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR), part of the Department's Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation (ISN), sponsors foreign assistance activities funded by the Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining and Related Programs (NADR) account, and focuses on mitigating proliferation risk in states and regions where the terrorist threat is on the rise, such as Eastern Europe, South Asia, South America, the Middle East, and Africa.

ISN/CTR administers the Partnership for Nuclear Threat Reduction (PNTR) which works to strengthen global norms against nuclear proliferation, and prevent states and terrorist groups from diverting, acquiring, or proliferating nuclear material, technology, or expertise that could be used to attack the United States. PNTR has two primary lines of effort:

1. **PNTR works to counter security vulnerabilities posed by Chinese and Russian sales of civilian nuclear energy technology.** Russia and China seek to expand their malign influence through strategically targeted training, assistance and sales of civilian reactor technology to states in South and Southeast Asia, Latin America, and Africa. These exports weaken the U.S. ability to uphold and strengthen global safety, security and nonproliferation norms at the facility and national level, and in international fora, such as the IAEA.
2. **PNTR works to strengthen nuclear security practices and to mitigate threats from radicalized or coerced personnel at sensitive nuclear facilities.** All known cases of theft involving nuclear material have been led or abetted by insiders. To address this threat, PNTR enables government and facility authorities to more effectively prevent radicalized, disgruntled, or coerced insiders from diverting nuclear material, technology, and expertise.

Objectives

PNTR collaborates with nuclear scientists, technicians, and engineers, security personnel, institutional trainers, and both regulatory and technical organization decision-makers to ensure nuclear energy infrastructure is developed consistent with the highest international standards for nuclear safety, security and nonproliferation and reinforce global norms against nuclear proliferation, terrorism and use of civilian nuclear technologies to support military programs. PNTR projects broadly fall into one of three categories:

- **Promoting Nuclear Energy Safety and Security by Design:** Engaging high-level atomic energy and regulatory officials in partner countries to illustrate and counter threats to their sovereignty, safety, and security from nuclear energy cooperation with Russia or China. Projects may engage foreign partners through study tours, trainings, and roundtables on the safety, security, sovereignty, liability, financial, and reputational risks associated with Russian and Chinese reactors.
- **Insider Threat Mitigation:** Activities to develop and implement trustworthiness programs and related regulatory guidance (i.e. human reliability program, fitness-

- for-duty, etc.) at a facility, organizational, or national level and/or mitigate the risk of an insider threat.
- **Countering Violent Extremism in the Nuclear Sector:** Activities that identify threats or mitigate risks from radicalized or coerced personnel to sabotage or divert nuclear material, technology, or expertise. Training aims may range from raising awareness of radicalization indicators and behavioral observation techniques that can mitigate these risks, to host institution adaptation and implementation of human reliability programs.

Funding Priorities

While global in scope, PNTR directs its efforts towards individual countries to maximize its programmatic impact.

PNTR is primarily interested in engaging partner countries' government operators and regulators and technical organization decision makers. Audiences for these activities may include:

- **Government Operators, Regulators, and Security Personnel:** PNTR engages operators, regulators, and security personnel to implement trustworthiness programs and programs that ensure the highest standards for nuclear safety, security and nonproliferation and avoid the malign influence associated with Chinese and Russian nuclear energy cooperation and reactor sales.
- **Technical Organization Decision Makers:** To ensure the sustainability and success of PNTR engagement with operators, regulators, and security personnel, PNTR engages relevant decision makers and nuclear industry officials.

Other Considerations:

- **Leveraging Technical and Other Expertise:** PNTR incorporates relevant experts from U.S. and international technical organizations in its training activities. PNTR seeks to incorporate lessons learned and best practices from the nuclear industry.
- **Tailored Engagement Strategies:** PNTR sponsors projects that are relevant to each partner country's needs, capabilities, infrastructure, and regulatory environment. Rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all approach, PNTR trainings are based on an understanding of technical and human capacity in each partner country, take cultural considerations into account, and build upon past PNTR or other expert trainings.
- **Utilizing Innovative Technology:** To sustain developments made during in-country trainings and to provide consistent, regular support throughout project implementation, PNTR encourages the use of online training modules and virtual communication for capacity building.
- **Concrete Impact:** PNTR seeks to move beyond awareness-raising and toward actual adoption, implementation, and sustainment of best practices. To accomplish this, PNTR is open to a variety of approaches, including leveraging private sector capabilities.

PNTR believes that engagement with our partners on nuclear security and sovereignty is an ongoing endeavor. To this end, ISN/CTR will evaluate each proposal, and each project during implementation, based on the strength of its ongoing engagement activities and established milestones, seeking work that will continue throughout the period of the project and utilize in-country activities where necessary to ensure the effectiveness of the ongoing training effort.

III. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The following organizations are eligible to apply (both domestic and international):

- *Not-for-profit organizations*
- *Public and private educational institutions*
- *For-profit organizations*
- *Public International Organizations*

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Award Period: 12 months, though longer periods of performance will be considered on a case-by-case basis. ISN/CTR will permit an additional 3 months for project close out.

Award Amount: Multiple awards will be granted, with the maximum amount per award determined by the number of discrete projects funded. ISN/CTR prefers projects that cost less than \$250,000, though awards may involve multiple projects that cumulatively exceed \$250,000. CTR will prioritize proposals that efficiently meet programmatic goals at the lowest technically acceptable cost.

Application Submission Process: Applicants should submit project proposals electronically using Grants.gov. Thorough instructions on the Grants.gov application process are available at <http://www.grants.gov>. For questions relating to Grants.gov, please call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726.

Application Deadline: All applications must be submitted on or before January 31, 2020, 11:59 p.m. eastern time. Applications submitted after 11:59 p.m. will be ineligible for consideration. **Begin the application process early**, as this will allow time to address any technical difficulties that may arise in advance of the deadline. There will be no exceptions to this application deadline.

All applicants must register with Grants.gov prior to submitting an application. **Registering with Grants.gov is a one-time process; however, it could take as long as two weeks to have the registration validated and confirmed. Please begin the registration process immediately to ensure that the process is completed well in advance of the deadline for applications.** Until that process is complete, you will not be issued a user password for Grants.gov, which is required for application submission. There are four steps that you must complete before you are able to register: (1) Obtain a

Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet (if your organization does not have one already) by calling 1-866-705-5711; (2) Register with Central Contractor Registry (CCR); (3) Register yourself as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR); and (4) Be authorized as an AOR by your organization. For more information, go to www.grants.gov. Please note that your CCR registration must be annually renewed. Failure to renew your CCR registration may prohibit submission of an application through Grants.gov.

Application Content: Applicants must follow the NOFO instructions and conditions contained herein and supply all information required. **Failure to furnish all information or comply with stated requirements will result in disqualification from the competition.** Applicants must set forth full, accurate, and complete information as required by this RFP. The penalty for making false statements in proposals to the U.S. government is prescribed on 18 U.S.C.1001.

The completed submission must consist of the following four parts:

Section 1 - Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424):

This form can be found on-line at: <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>

Section 2 – Consolidated Project List

This outlines the individual project proposals within your overall proposal submission

Section 3 – Project Proposal(s):

Using the provided template, the applicant must provide a completed project proposal. The proposal form must be completed in its entirety, include a gap analysis statement and clearly specify, the targeted objective, audience, and the proposed scope. The proposal must also identify deliverables and timeline. Applicants must specify a point of contact for each project that is proposed.

Section 4 - Budget:

Also using the provided project proposal template, applicants must provide a budget for each project. The budget must identify the total amount of funding requested, with a breakdown of amounts to be spent in the following budget categories:

- Personnel and fringe benefits;
- Travel;
- Equipment and supplies;
- Contractual services;
- Construction;
- Other direct costs; and
- Indirect costs.

Applicants must adhere to the requirements of the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR), including Fly America Act requirements, when proposing and conducting travel. For

further information and current foreign per diem rates, please visit:
https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp

V. AWARD SELECTION CRITERIA

Applicants should note that the following criteria serve as a standard against which all project proposals will be evaluated and identify significant considerations that should be addressed in all proposals. ISN/CTR will award a cooperative agreement to the applicant(s) whose offer represents the best overall value to the government from both a technical and cost perspective.

ISN/CTR will evaluate proposals against the stated criteria. Criteria are listed in descending order of importance.

- **Proposed Activity or Activities:** Applications should be responsive to the program framework and policy objectives identified in the solicitation, appropriate in the country/regional context, and should clearly describe what they propose to do and how they will do it. The proposed project(s) must directly relate to meeting the specified objectives and applicants should include specific information on how these objectives will address the identified gap, and advance ISN/CTR's mission. ISN/CTR will evaluate the project proposal in terms of how well it addresses the issues identified in the gap analysis, relevance and feasibility of the proposed activities, the timeline for completion, and the extent to which the impact of the project will continue beyond the conclusion of the period of performance.
- **Organizational Capability:** Applicants must demonstrate how their resources, capabilities, and experience will enable them to achieve the stated goals and objectives in an international technical context. The proposal(s) must identify all key partners and organizations that will be involved in implementation of this project.
- **Budget:** Proposed costs will be evaluated for realism, fiscal control practices, and efficiency. ISN/CTR must be able to determine that proposed costs are reasonable, allowable, and allocable to the proposed project activities. ISN/CTR will evaluate the budget to determine if the overall costs are realistic for the work to be performed, if the costs reflect the applicant's understanding of the allowable cost principles established by OMB Circulars A-122 and/or A-21, and if the costs are consistent with the program narrative.
- **Past Performance:** In reviewing proposals, ISN/CTR will evaluate the organization's past performance on other federal and non-federal grants and cooperative agreements. This will include a review of whether objectives for past awards were met; whether the organization complied with the terms of conditions

of past awards, including reporting and financial management requirements; and the timeliness of project implementation.

- **Cyber Security:** Recipients and subcontractors are required to provide adequate security – (e.g. protective measures that are commensurate with the consequences and probability of loss, misuse, or unauthorized access to, or modification of information) on all covered information systems, and to rapidly report cyber incidents directly to the grantor.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Award Notices: The cooperative agreement shall be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The Grants Officer is the government official delegated the authority by the U.S. Department of State Procurement Executive to write, award, and administer grants and cooperative agreements. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document and it will be provided to the Recipient through either mail or facsimile transmission. Organizations whose applications will not be funded will also be notified in writing.

Anticipated Time to Award: Applicants should expect to be notified of the *recommended* concepts within 90 days after the submission deadline. Following this initial notification, **selected applicants will be expected to submit a full application within 30 days.** ISN/CTR staff will provide information at the point of notification about the requirements for the full application, which may include revisions to the activities. The full applications will not be subject to further competition, but must incorporate any suggested changes made by ISN/CTR.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government, nor does it commit the Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the Government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.

Project Implementation Meeting: The Recipient will have a pre-project implementation meeting with ISN/CTR within 30 days after the cooperative agreement is awarded and before any work is performed for the award.

Reporting Requirements: As a cooperative agreement, reporting and deliverable requirements for this project exceed those of typical grants administered by ISN/CTR. Applicants should pay special attention to these enhanced reporting and deliverable requirements. Specifically:

- Using a template provided by ISN/CTR, the Recipient shall submit quarterly progress reports to the designated Grants Officer Representative (GOR) detailing:
 - Assistance activities conducted during the reporting period;
 - Milestones and successes achieved to date;

- Key assistance activities remaining to be implemented with a projected timetable;
 - Details of any problems encountered with proposed solutions; and
 - Any other pertinent information requested by ISN/CTR.
- The Recipient shall provide the GOR with copies of all materials developed under this cooperative agreement.
- In addition to regular quarterly reports, the Recipient shall furnish the GOR with ad hoc reports as requested from time to time.

In addition to the above, the Recipient shall submit quarterly financial reports throughout the project period. Financial reports are due 30 days after the reporting period. Final programmatic and financial reports are due 90 days after the close of the project period

VII. DISCLAIMER

If a proposal is selected for funding, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with the award. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the total discretion of the Department of State.