

U.S. Department of State

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Program Office: Bureau of International Security and
Nonproliferation, Office of Cooperative Threat
Reduction (ISN/CTR)
Funding Opportunity Title: Chemical Weapons Response Activities
Announcement Type: Cooperative Agreement – Initial
Funding Opportunity Number: SFOP0005246
Deadline for Applications: July 30, 2018
CFDA 19.033

ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility is limited to not-for-profit organizations subject to 501 (c) (3) of the tax code, educational institutions, public international organizations, and for-profit companies. The Department encourages organizations that have not previously received international program funding from the U.S. Government to apply under this announcement.

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

- A) For questions relating to Grants.gov, please call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726.
- B) For assistance with the requirements of this solicitation, please contact:

Ryan Taugher, Acting Deputy Director
Office of Cooperative Threat Reduction
U.S. Department of State
Email: TaugherRC@state.gov (*Preferred method of communication*)
Phone: (202) 647-1362

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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 Office of Cooperative Threat Reduction. ISN/CTR expects to have approximately \$2,000,000 available to award multiple grants and cooperative agreements in this field. ISN/CTR prefers projects that cost less than \$500,000 including overhead, though awards may involve multiple projects that cumulatively exceed \$500,000.

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 frontline states and regions where terrorist threats are on the rise, such as in the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

ISN/CTR administers activities to bolster the detection, attribution, preparedness, and response capabilities of emergency first responders and medical personnel in countries susceptible to chemical weapons use. To accomplish this mission, CTR sponsors efforts to identify and address deficiencies within international non-government organizations, civilian first responder forces, and front-line medical staff detecting, and providing medical services to casualties of, chemical weapons attacks. CTR focuses its resources in countries where proliferant states, non-state actors and returning foreign fighters have demonstrated an ability and/or interest in using chemical weapons, and seeks to instill sustainable chemical weapons response capabilities with civilian entities responsible for identifying and responding to incidents involving chemical weapons use.

Stakeholders include:

- International and local non-government medical organizations;
- Local law enforcement entities and security forces;
- Emergency medical personnel responsible for treating casualties of chemical weapons use;
- Civilian first responders.

In Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18), CTR will fund activities that align with and support one or more of the following goals.

CTR Goals:

Bolster sample collection, reporting, and documentation capabilities to support attribution of, and accountability for, chemical weapons use.

Funded activities will emphasize:

- Training and equipping a range of stakeholders (medical personnel, first responders, other civilians) to collect environmental and biomedical samples confirming the use of chemical weapons;
- Establishing mechanisms and transmission routes enabling partner organizations to transport samples for diagnostic testing that would support confirmation of chemical weapons use;
- Identifying non-traditional technological solutions for capturing and sharing chemical incident data in support of attribution efforts.

Strengthen the ability of front-line entities to respond to chemical weapons incidents.

Funded activities will emphasize:

- Building the capacity of first responders in challenging environments to quickly identify the release of chemical agents in the field and potential signs and symptoms of poisoning to support the provision of medical care;
- Capabilities to procure, license, and ship specialized chemical weapons protective, detection, and decontamination equipment to austere and remote locations;
- Training and equipping various formal and informal first responder entities that are responsible for chemical attack prevention and response with personal protection and decontamination capabilities;
- Mass casualty decontamination equipment and training for civilian response teams; and/or
- Coordination and interaction among partner first responder entities, emergency medical personnel and technical personnel to expedite the delivery of medical services to victims of chemical weapons use.

Teach medical personnel to conduct differential diagnosis of symptoms associated with chemical weapons use and provide targeted medical care.

Funded activities will emphasize:

- Training and equipping medical personnel in front-line clinics that are responsible for treating victims of chemical weapons attacks with relevant personal protective and decontamination capabilities;
- Building the capacity of medical personnel to detect chemical threats and identify symptoms of poisoning to inform the provision of medical care;
- Coordination with medical first responder entities and technical staff to expedite the handover of chemical weapons attacks victims and delivery of medical services; and/or
- Procurement, shipment, and provision of medical countermeasures, including antidotes and associated training, for the treatment of victims suffering from exposure to nerve agents such as sarin as well as toxic industrial chemicals.

FY18 Proposal Considerations:

Sustainability is paramount to CTR's long-term strategy for each project funded. CTR prioritizes proposals that demonstrate the implementer's subject matter expertise relevant

to the chemical security needs of our partners. **All proposals must make a clear and compelling case for how they will address a chemical threat, how they will support partner-specific political, technical, and/or logistical realities, and how to support one or more CTR goals.**

CTR will view the following attributes favorably in the FY18 proposal process:

- Threat response capabilities clearly evidenced by data-driven analysis and targeted approaches to current threat information;
- Effective mechanisms for long-term sustainment post-engagement, including but not limited to tangible products, tools, and online learning platforms;
- Proposals that emphasize train-the-trainer methodologies and build indigenous capacity within a partner organization;
- Proposals tailored to fit local technical capacities as well as threat environment;
- Leveraging existing relationships to expand CTR's reach with partner organizations and ability to work in difficult environments;
- Financial and/or in-kind cost-sharing, including but not limited to subject matter expertise, facilities, equipment, technology, or other forms of cost-sharing;
- Proposals that leverage multiple implementers together to deliver innovative, technical, and/or logistical solutions; and
- Virtual or web-based activities and low-cost equipping solutions for difficult operating environments.

CTR Milestones:

CTR engagement is focused on building specific and enduring institutional capabilities. As chemical threats evolve and partner organizations' capabilities advance, CTR programming will adjust accordingly. CTR engagements target four primary milestones for high threat environments:

1. **Life Preservation** – CTR assists partner organizations in high-threat environments to protect personnel and civilians from chemical weapons attacks, treat victims of nerve agent and other toxic chemical poisoning, and expeditiously warn others at risk of being attacked with chemical weapons.
2. **Documentation and Attribution** – CTR builds the capacity of partners to collect evidence of chemical weapons use by proliferant states and non-state actor groups for use in international documentation, attribution, and accountability efforts.
3. **Formalization of Core Principles** – CTR works toward recognition and internalization of chemical response best practices throughout a stakeholder community and supports the adaptation of tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) to local contexts.
4. **Self-Sustaining Application** – Establishes and continuously applies vulnerability assessments and commitment to a “plan, do, check, act” cycle of continuous improvement within respective partner organizations.

In addition, CTR utilizes metrics and evaluation tools to assess program outputs, outcomes, long-term effectiveness, and sustainability. Timely and detailed after action

reporting allows for fine-tuning or course correction if CTR priorities and milestones are not being achieved. The use of these tools assures that activities directly support CTR's mission and priorities and complement overarching goals and objectives of the program.

III. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

ISN/CTR welcomes applications from not-for-profit organizations subject to 501 (c) (3) of the tax code, educational institutions, public international organizations, and for-profit companies. Direct funding for both U.S. and non-U.S. institutions is available under this announcement.

Applicants are not required to include funding from other donors. However, applications that include additional in-kind and/or cash contributions from non-U.S. Government sources will be more competitive, since cost-sharing demonstrates a strong commitment to the planned activities and will be considered to show great cost effectiveness.

All potential applicants should be knowledgeable of existing programs in the proposed countries/regions, including those funded by USG, in order to avoid duplication of effort.

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 provide an additional 3 months for project close out.

Award Amount: Approximately \$2 million will be available for this grant program during the current fiscal year. Multiple awards may be granted, with the maximum amount per award determined by the number of discrete projects funded. ISN/CTR prefers projects that cost less than \$500,000, though awards may involve multiple projects that cumulatively exceed \$500,000. 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. For questions about this solicitation, contact:

Ryan Taugher, Acting Deputy Director
Office of Cooperative Threat Reduction
U.S. Department of State
Email: TaugherRC@state.gov (*Preferred method of communication*)
Phone: (202) 647-1362

Application Deadline: All applications must be submitted on or before July 30, 2018, 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 NOFO. 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 three 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 – Project Proposal(s):

Using the provided template, the applicant must provide a completed project proposal. The proposal form must be completed in its entirety and clearly specify the proposed scope, deliverables, and timeline. Applicants must specify a point of contact for each project that is proposed.

Section 3 - 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: http://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=184&menu_id=78b

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 and organizational 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 advance ISN/CTR's mission. ISN/CTR will evaluate the project proposal in terms of how well it addresses the issues at hand, 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.

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.