U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF COUNTERTERRORISM
Request for Statements of Interest and Capacity (RSOIC)

Funding Opportunity Title: Countering Terrorism Finance in South America
Funding Opportunity Number: SFOP0007929
Deadline for Applications: May 8, 2021
Assistance Listing Number: 19.701
Date for Q&A Session: April 16, 10:00 am ET
Deadline for Receipt of Questions: April 16, 10:00am ET

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Bureau of Counterterrorism (CT) of the U.S. Department of State announces a Request for Statements of Interest and Capacity (RSOIC) for organizations interested in implementing projects to build the capacity of governments and financial sector stakeholders in Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay to counter terrorism finance. The submission of a Statement of Interest and Capacity (SOIC) is the first step in a multi-phased, collaborative program development process. Upon review of eligible SOICs, CT will invite selected applicants to participate in a virtual co-creation workshop to further develop the proposed concepts through interactive and collaborative discussions with U.S. government officials, subject matter experts, and other potential implementing partners.

Background and Problem Statement:

The United States continues to conduct long-standing diplomatic engagement on Hizballah, to increase efforts to degrade and disrupt the financing of Hizballah throughout the Tri-Border Area (TBA) and globally. Latin American Hizballah supporters and sympathizers engage in both licit business practices, such as international trade, as well as related illicit activities, including the laundering of narcotics proceeds through trade-based money laundering paradigms. These supporters contribute an undetermined portion of their profits to Hizballah, which uses the funds to advance its terrorist agenda. Hizballah supporters and financiers have a long history of operating in the Western Hemisphere, particularly in the TBA.

This program will address CT's goal that terrorist organizations, including but not limited to Hizballah and other Iranian-sponsored terrorist groups, have reduced ability to operate, raise funds, or carry out terrorist attacks in the TBA and elsewhere in the region. While Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay have made concrete progress in recent years, significant gaps remain that terrorist groups are exploiting. To combat terrorist groups, partner countries must first strengthen AML/CFT legal frameworks including the ability to designate terrorist organizations, levy targeted financial sanctions, seize assets, and prosecute terrorists, their financiers, and their facilitation networks. In addition, to become effective, partner countries must dedicate resources and adopt policies, procedures, and practices that produce measurable outcomes consistent with their risk profiles.

The Challenge:

CT aims to equip partner countries with skills to proactively identify and address terrorist financing activities using the country's AML/CFT mutual evaluation under the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) AML/CFT standards and subsequent action plan, if any. Programming will promote appropriate domestic and international coordination among private sector and governmental institutions. Programming should help improve the effectiveness of partner countries' legal and regulatory frameworks where they do exist; and will equip countries with a range of tools to prevent the financing of terrorism, including by proactively designating and imposing sanctions on individuals and entities. Additionally, this programming should strengthen the capacity of AML/CFT competent authorities to raise awareness of terrorist financing risks, educate the private sector about its obligations under relevant laws and regulations, and share best practices for sanctions compliance with financial institutions (FIs), designated non-financial businesses and professions (DNFBPs), and non-profit organizations (NPOs).

The Process: RSOIC and Co-Creation

Through the RSOIC and Co-Creation workshop process, CT aims to bring together non-governmental organizations and the U.S. interagency to develop creative approaches to improve partner countries' capacities to proactively develop and effectively implement counterterrorism financing regimes consistent with international anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) standards. The intent of the co-creation process is to foster collaboration across organizations with different perspectives and experiences, to co-design, co-develop, pilot, and innovate practical and scalable solutions to complex problem sets. Due to the collaborative nature of the co-creation workshop, organizations submitting SOICs will need to feel comfortable discussing their proposed approach with other applicants.

Following the co-creation workshop, participants will be invited to submit full proposal applications through a future limited competition notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) process. Proposed concepts and future proposals should be complementary to existing AML/CFT programming undertaken in the illicit finance sphere.

Please follow all instructions below.

Priority Countries/Region: Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, with the possibility of additional neighboring countries

Program Objectives: Partner countries better develop and effectively implement counterterrorism financing regimes consistent with the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Standards and Recommendations to combat terrorist groups by strengthening legal frameworks to designate terrorist organizations, levy targeted financial sanctions, seize assets, and prosecute terrorists, their financiers, and their facilitation networks.

1. Partner countries increase the effectiveness of their anti-money laundering and counter terrorist financing regimes.

2. Partner countries have increased institutional capacity, necessary tools, and cooperate among relevant financial institutions, regulators, financial intelligence units, law enforcement agencies, and prosecutors to effectively counter terrorism financing.
3. Partner countries strengthen their targeted financial sanctions mechanisms, including designations, freezing of assets, and delistings.

The SOIC should keep in mind countries' obligations under various UNSCRs, including 1373 and 2462, as well as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Standards, including the use of domestic and international sanctions regimes.

Program Beneficiaries:

- Federal and Local governments (e.g., ministries of law or justice, relevant AML/CFT regulators, financial intelligence units, law enforcement agencies, and prosecutors) from Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay, with possibility of additional neighboring countries
- Private sector actors with AML/CFT obligations from Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay, with possibility of additional neighboring countries

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: 24 to 36 months
Number of awards anticipated: At least 1 award
Total available funding: Depends on the concepts received
Type of Funding: FY20 NADR/CTF and FY20 NADR/CTPF
Anticipated program start date: September 30, 2021

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Funding Instrument Type: Grant or Cooperative Agreement

Program Performance Period: Proposed programs should be completed in 36 months or less. Optional*:* The Department of State will entertain applications for continuation grants funded under these awards 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.

Q&A Session: CT will hold a virtual Question & Answer session to answer any questions from applicants on the RSOIC, its goals and objectives on Friday, April 16, 2021 at 10:00-11:00am ET. If you are interested in attending, please contact federal agency contact below to receive dial-in information.

C. ELIGILIBITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

   The following organizations are eligible to apply*:*

   - U.S. or foreign not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations

- U.S. or foreign public and private educational institutions
- Foreign Public International Organizations (PIOs) and Governmental institutions
- For-profit and Commercial firms, although it must be noted that U.S. Department of State generally prohibits profit under its assistance awards to for-profit or commercial organizations. (Profit is defined as any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs.)

NOTE: Organizations may form consortia and submit a combined SOIC. However, only one organization must be designated as the lead applicant. The lead applicant must meet the eligibility criteria listed above.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching:

Cost sharing is welcomed but not required.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements:
   - Have existing, or the capacity to develop, active partnerships with thematic or in-country partners, entities, and relevant stakeholders; and
   - Have demonstrable experience administering successful and preferably similar programs.

In order to apply, each applicant must be registered in www.SAM.gov before submitting its application and provide a valid DUNS number (Data Universal Numbering System/DUNS number from Dun & Bradstreet) in its application. Please see Section D.3 for information on how to obtain these registrations.

Applicants are only allowed to submit one application per organization. If more than one application is submitted from an organization, all proposals from that institution will be considered ineligible for funding.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

- Address to Request Application Package

Application forms required below are available at SAMS Domestic.
- 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 ineligible.

Content of Application
Please ensure:
- The concept note clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this RSOIC
- All documents are in English
- All pages are numbered
- All documents are formatted to 8 ½ x 11 paper, and

- All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.

The following documents are **required**:

1. **Concept Note (4 pages maximum):** The concept should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with it would understand exactly what the applicant wants to do. You may use your own format, but it must include all the items below.
   - **Introduction to the Organization applying**: A description of past and present operations showing ability to carry out the proposed project.
   - **Problem Statement:** Clear, concise and well-supported statement of the problem to be addressed and why the proposed project is needed
   - **Program Concept:** A description of *how* the organization proposes to help meet the challenge described above. What are the goals, objectives, theory of change, and illustrative activities of the proposed project?
   - **Key Personnel and/or Regional Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of potential partner organizations and sub-awardees. Demonstrate where the organization has active partnerships with thematic or in-country partners, entities, and relevant stakeholders.
2. **Attachments:**
   - Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

Required Registrations:
Any applicant listed on the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) in the System for Award Management (SAM) is not eligible to apply for an assistance award in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR, 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 235), "Debarment and Suspension." Additionally, no entity listed on the EPLS can participate in any activities under an award. All applicants are strongly encouraged to review the EPLS in SAM to ensure that no ineligible entity is included.

All organizations applying for grants must obtain these registrations. All are free of charge:

- Unique entity identifier from Dun & Bradstreet (DUNS number)
- NCAGE/CAGE code
- www.SAM.gov registration

Step 1: Apply for a DUNS number and an NCAGE number (these can be completed simultaneously)

DUNS application: Organizations must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet. If your organization does not have one already, you may obtain one by calling 1-866-705-5711 or visiting http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform

NCAGE application: Application page here:
https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/scage/CageList.aspx
Instructions for the NCAGE application process:

https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/Docs/US%20Instructions%20for%20NSPA%20NCAGE.pdf

For NCAGE help from within the U.S., call 1-888-227-2423
For NCAGE help from outside the U.S., call 1-269-961-7766
Email NCAGE@dlis.dla.mil for any problems in getting an NCAGE code.

Step 2: After receiving the NCAGE Code, proceed to register in SAM.gov by logging onto: https://www.sam.gov. SAM registration must be renewed annually.

- Submission Dates and Times

SOICs are due no later than 11:59 p.m. on 05/07/2021

- Other Submission Requirements

All application materials must be submitted electronically through www.Grants.gov or SAMS Domestic.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

Each SOIC will be evaluated and rated on the basis of the evaluation criteria outlined below. Criteria are listed in order of importance.

Quality and Feasibility of the Program Idea:

- The concept responds to the RSOIC and is appropriate in the context of the proposed country/region.
- The concept exhibits originality but is feasible.
- The concept includes a reasonable implementation timeline.
- The concept directly connects proposed activities with the desired outcomes (goals and objectives).

Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives:

- The concept provides a general plan of proposed project activities and includes a clear articulation of how these activities will contribute to or align with the overall project's goals and objectives.
- The concept addresses how the project will engage or obtain support from relevant stakeholders, including host government to obtain access and conduct programming.

Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants:

- The concept demonstrates an institutional record of previous successfully implemented projects in issues and regions outlined in this RSOIC.
- The concept articulates past performance and experience in working with relevant host governments, local organizations, and communities.

2. Review and Selection Process

CT will conduct a merit review of all eligible applications as outlined in this RSOIC. SOICs will be reviewed by an independent review panel consisting of qualified subject matter experts from other Department of State bureaus and offices, U.S. Embassies, or other U.S. Government agencies to be invited to participate in co-creation workshop.

The submission of a SOIC is the first step in a multi-phased, collaborative process. Applicants must first submit a SOIC, which is a concise concept note designed to clearly communicate a program idea and its objectives before the development of a full proposal application for this project.

CT will review SOICs and based on favorable evaluation by the panel, selected participants will receive an invitation from CT to participate in the virtual Co-Creation workshop, which will likely be held in **May 2021**. Please note that selected participants for the workshop are not guaranteed funding. The amount of resources made available under this RSOIC will depend on the concepts received and the availability of funds. CT reserves the right to fund any or none of the proposals submitted and discussed at the co-creation workshop.

The SOIC process is to allow applicants the opportunity to submit program ideas for CT to evaluate prior to a co-creation workshop and development of full proposal applications. The co-creation workshop is meant to develop some or all of their ideas into full proposal applications.

Following the co-creation workshop and the selection of participants whose ideas are ripe for potential implementation, recipients will be invited to submit applications via a limited competition notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) process in SAMS Domestic and write formal proposal applications with the end goal of signing at least one federal award by September 2021.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

Following the co-creation workshop and the selection of participants whose ideas are ripe for implementation, recipients will write formal proposal applications with the end goal of signing at least one federal award. The grant award will be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document and it will be provided to the recipient for review and signature by email. The recipient may only start incurring program expenses beginning on the start date shown on the grant award document signed by the Grants Officer.

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

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact: Miriam Wickman (*wickmanm@state.gov)*.

Questions and Answers or FAQ will be posted on SAMS Domestic. Interested applicants are also encouraged to attend the Question & Answer session on Friday, April 16, 2021 at 10:00-11:00am ET.