

S/GWI Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues

Title: Women, Peace, and Security: Supporting Women's Networks to Prevent, Resolve, and Mitigate Conflict

CFDA Number:	19.801
Funding Opportunity Title:	Women, Peace, and Security: Supporting Women's Networks to Prevent, Resolve, and Mitigate Conflict
Announcement Type:	New; Open Competition; Cooperative Agreement
Number of Awards:	One or Multiple, depending on funds
Funding:	ESF \$3,000,000 (not to exceed)
Deadline for proposal submission:	11:59 PM EST May 7, 2020
Deadline for question submission:	11:59 PM EST March 27, 2020
Deadline to submit non-binding notice of intent to apply:	11:59 PM EST March 27, 2020
Federal Agency Contact:	S/GWI Programs Division, SGWIPROJECTPROPOSALS@STATE.GOV

Executive Summary:

The Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues (S/GWI) announces this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for a new agreement to advance U.S. foreign policy and national security priorities by supporting initiatives that make decision-making structures and processes in fragile, crisis, conflict-affected, or post-conflict contexts more inclusive and reflective of and responsive to the needs and perspectives of women and girls. Under this NOFO, S/GWI seeks proposals that will support the leadership of and collaboration with women's networks in conflict prevention, transformation, and peacebuilding efforts in crisis- and conflict-affected areas. Beneficiaries could include, but are not limited to, women from the following countries: the Western Hemisphere: Colombia, Venezuela; Africa: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan; Europe: Ukraine; the Middle East and North Africa: Iraq, Syria, Yemen; South and Central Asia: Afghanistan, Sri Lanka; East Asia and the Pacific: Burma, Indonesia, and the Philippines.¹ Priority will be given to proposals that include women from Sudan and areas affected by extremist organizations.

S/GWI works to ensure the integration of gender equality and the advancement of women and girls in the formulation and conduct of U.S. foreign policy. In doing so, S/GWI follows the *National Security Strategy (NSS)* mandate to champion the American value of

¹ Due to the determination made under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) for FY 2019, certain assistance may be subject to a restriction under the TVPA. Because the TVPA restriction applies only to assistance to governments, activities proposed for those countries should not include government beneficiaries.

empowering women and youth. Programs implemented under this NOFO will be a cornerstone of S/GWI's implementation of the *Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017*² (*WPS Act*), the *U.S. Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security*³ and the *Global Fragility Act of 2019*⁴.

S/GWI Goal:

To promote inclusive decision-making that responds to the comprehensive needs and perspectives of conflict-affected women and girls.

S/GWI Theory of Change:

If the local perspectives of conflict-affected women and girls are incorporated into decision-making, then conflict prevention, resolution, and mitigation will be more equitable, just, and sustainable.

S/GWI Objectives:

1. **Networks:** Support existing women's civil society networks to bring local expertise and needs into decision-making, including but not limited to ceasefire talks, peace negotiations and/or peace accord implementation, crisis mediation, political transitions, and/or policy development and implementation, to transform the inequalities, gendered and otherwise, that drive conflict.
2. **Collaboration:** Incentivize collaboration within and/or between existing women's civil society networks to implement joint initiatives, overcome divisions and strengthen their collective influence and capabilities.
3. **Learning and exchange:** Strengthen peer-to-peer learning, peer-led capacity building, and the cultivation of future generations of peacebuilders.

Focus:

All proposals must include a description of:

- 1) The problem the applicant seeks to address,
- 2) Implementation context, including any relevant details on the socio-political environment and the target beneficiaries of the project,
- 3) How the proposal relates to Women's Leadership and Women and Girls At Risk from Extremism and Conflict appropriation language referenced below.⁵

² WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY ACT OF 2017, Public Law 115-68, 115th Congress, 2017, which requires an interagency strategy that will be a part of S/GWI implementation.

³ https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/WPS_Strategy_10_October2019.pdf

⁴ <https://www.congress.gov/bills/116/congress/senate/bills/727>

⁵ Activities must align with funding described by section 7059(b) and (e) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2019 (Division F, P.L. 116-6) (Fiscal Year [FY] 2019 SFOAA)., Congress appropriated funds to support:

(b) WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP.

(b)... programs specifically designed to increase leadership opportunities for women in countries where women and girls suffer discrimination due to law, policy, or practice, by strengthening protections for women's political

Note: please see the language in the footnote, as it encompasses a range of circumstances beyond active conflict and violent extremism.

- 4) Which components of the *Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017*⁶ (WPS Act), *U.S. Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security, and the Global Fragility Act of 2019* will be addressed
- 5) An evidence-based model to address the identified problem,
- 6) The priority areas, countries, or geographic areas for the program, not including refugee or IDP camps,⁷ with a strategy for potentially scaling or replicating the program's best practices in consultation with S/GWI, should additional funds become available,
- 7) A localized, iterative approach that is demonstrably driven by the needs and perspectives of local partners and the communities they serve (please see the Inclusion section for additional details),
- 8) Implementation plan, including assumptions, key steps, and timeline, and a results framework/logic model (please see the MEL section for additional details).

Please note: Each of these descriptions must be demonstrably informed by a contextually-specific gender analysis (please see the sample Gender Analysis Questions in Appendix 9 for additional details).

Eligibility for this NOFO is limited to educational and research institutions and U.S. not-for-profit/non-governmental organizations (NGOs) subject to section 501 (c) (3) of the U.S. tax code, foreign educational and research institutions, and foreign not-for-profits/NGOs/social enterprises.

One or more grants may be issued as a cooperative agreement under this NOFO. The Recipient may work closely with S/GWI to design and implement targeted sub-grants to third-party organizations charged with programming the agreed-upon interventions.

status, expanding women's participation in political parties and elections, and increasing women's opportunities for leadership positions in the public and private sectors at the local, provincial, and national levels.

and

(e) WOMEN AND GIRLS AT RISK FROM EXTREMISM.

(1)... (A) empower women and girls to counter extremism;

(B) address the needs of women and girls adversely impacted by extremism and conflict;

(C) document crimes committed by extremists against women and girls, and support investigations and prosecutions of such crimes, as appropriate;

(D) increase the participation and influence of women in formal and informal political processes and institutions at the local level and within traditional governing structures;

(E) support reconciliation programs between impacted minority, religious, and ethnic groups and the broader community;

(F) develop and implement legal reforms and protections for women and girls at the national and local government levels; and

(G) create and sustain networks for women and girls to collectively safeguard their rights on a regional basis.

⁶ WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY ACT OF 2017, Public Law 115-68, 115th Congress, 2017, which requires an interagency strategy that will be a part of S/GWI implementation.

⁷ S/GWI funds are different from, but are intended to complement, other USG funds that working specifically with refugee camp populations.

Funding authority rests in the *Foreign Assistance Act of 1961*, as amended. Applicants must be familiar with U.S. federal regulations for grants and cooperative agreements in [2 CFR Part 200](#).

Please read the entire NOFO package before submitting an application, and follow the steps to submit before the deadline. Applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria and do not contain all of the required information will not be considered for review. 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. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received. It also reserves the right to fund more than one proposal. S/GWI also reserves the right to share applications with other USG offices or agencies who may have funding available.

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A. Funding Opportunity Description

i. Background:

Global instability and violent extremism threaten U.S. and global security. The U.S. *WPS Act of 2017*, further expanded upon by the *U.S. Strategy on WPS*, have identified women's leadership and participation as crucial to sustainable peace and security. Promoting women's meaningful inclusion and participation across efforts to prevent conflict and build peace is not simply a women's issue; it is a national security issue and vital for human progress.

Though women provide essential contributions to lasting solutions to conflict, terrorism, and crisis, their perspectives and leadership are often absent from places where decisions are made about their countries' and communities' future. In addition, violence against women and girls remain pervasive before, during, and after conflicts – which prolongs conflict and inhibits the meaningful participation of women in political and security processes. A growing body of evidence demonstrates that women are partners we cannot afford to ignore, as their participation leads to better outcomes not only for women, but also for entire societies.

S/GWI programs are flexible, civil society-focused, and global in reach. They incubate civil-society based solutions, inspiring and providing best practices to the Department to advance women's empowerment as a keystone of U.S. foreign policy. S/GWI does not fund large-scale programs or long-term development work, but instead engages in the short-term practical realization of U.S. foreign policy.

S/GWI seeks applicants whose work fosters women's leadership in preventing and mitigating conflict by making decision-making more reflective of and responsive to the needs and perspectives of conflict-affected women and girls.

S/GWI will analyze this program to inform other USG partnerships and to better integrate gender equality and empowering women and girls across the Department, thereby enhancing effectiveness and maximizing taxpayer investments in U.S. foreign policy.

ii. Strategic Policy Framework:

The *U.S. National Security Strategy*⁸ (NSS) states: "Societies that empower women to participate fully in civic and economic life are more prosperous and peaceful. We will support efforts to advance women's equality, protect the rights of women and girls, and promote women and youth empowerment programs." Under the *WPS Act of 2017*, the U.S. government demonstrated its commitment to "promoting the physical safety, economic security, and dignity of women and girls." Aligned with the *WPS Act of 2017*,

⁸ S/GWI implements the National Security Strategy and the *Department of State and USAID Joint Strategic Plan* by promoting security, prosperity and American influence.

the *Global Fragility Act of 2019* directs the U.S. government to address the long-term underlying causes of fragility and violence through participatory, locally-led programs. Exclusion and inequality, including gender inequality, are known drivers of conflict.

One of S/GWI's strategic goals is therefore to support women's participation and leadership in promoting peace, responding to conflict, and building a more secure future. Work under this NOFO will support this strategic framework by supporting women and girls to increase their leadership in decision-making on conflict prevention, mediation, resolution, and post-conflict peacebuilding.

iii. Policy Statement:

The end state of the *U.S. Strategy on WPS* is women's meaningful participation in "preventing, mediating, and resolving conflict and countering terrorism, in ways that promote stable and lasting peace, including in conflict-affected areas." Though this funding opportunity is broader than countering violent extremism, it also aligns with the strategic objective of the *U.S. Strategy to Support Women and Girls at Risk from Violent Extremism and Conflict* by supporting women's and girls', "resilience, safety, and protection, while engaging them as positive actors." Similarly, it responds to the corresponding appropriations language (see footnote 8) to "address the needs of women and girls adversely impacted by extremism and conflict," including by "increasing their participation and influence."

Guided by these strategies, S/GWI seeks proposals to expand women's leadership in preventing and mitigating conflict by making decision-making more reflective of, and responsive to, the needs and perspectives of affected women and girls.

Applicants should demonstrate how proposed interventions would support or complement these and/or other U.S. government strategies and programs, those of the proposed host country or countries, and ongoing women's empowerment efforts in the proposed country or countries and communities of implementation.

iv. NOFO Activity Framework

Theory of Change:

If the local perspectives of conflict-affected women and girls are incorporated into decision-making, then conflict prevention, resolution, and mitigation will be more equitable, just, and sustainable.

Goal:

To promote inclusive decision-making that responds to the comprehensive needs and perspectives of conflict-affected women and girls.

Objectives and Intended Results:

- 1) Objective 1: **Networks.** Support existing women's civil society networks to inject local expertise and needs into decision-making, including but not limited to ceasefire talks, peace negotiations, crisis mediation, political transitions, and/or policy, to transform the inequalities, gendered and otherwise, that drive conflict.
 - a. **Intended Result 1:** Women's civil society networks have relationships and trust with diverse communities of conflict-affected women and girls to legitimately amplify their needs and perspectives
 - b. **Intended Result 2:** Women's civil society networks have the technical knowledge, skills, and confidence to advance participatory solutions that transform the inequalities that drive conflict
 - c. **Intended Result 3:** Women's civil society networks safely influence decision-making, including but not limited to ceasefire talks, peace negotiations and/or peace accord implementation, crisis mediation, political transitions, and/or policy
- 2) Objective 2: **Collaboration.** Incentivize collaboration within and/or between existing women's civil society networks to implement joint initiatives, overcome divisions, and strengthen their collective influence and capabilities.
 - a. **Intended Result 4:** Women's civil society networks work together towards joint aims
- 3) Objective 3: **Learning and exchange.** Strengthen peer-to-peer learning, peer-led capacity building, and cultivation of future generations of peacebuilders
 - a. **Intended Result 5:** Women's civil society networks, young and old, learn and grow together

Objectives and Sample Supporting Activities:

S/GWI recognizes that change happens at different levels and through a combination of activities. Strong proposals will use tested, scalable activities to advance this goal and objectives. The following are intended only as an example of what types of activities could be submitted. S/GWI does not necessarily expect proposals to include these sample activities and welcomes others that may not be listed here. We suggest reviewing the Women's Leadership and Women and Girls at Risk from Extremism appropriations language for additional guidance⁹. All proposals should address each of the three objectives.

⁹ Activities must align with funding described by section 7059(b) and (e) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2019 (Division F, P.L. 116-6) (Fiscal Year [FY] 2019 SFOAA)., Congress appropriated funds to support:

(b) WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP.

(b)... programs specifically designed to increase leadership opportunities for women in countries where women and girls suffer discrimination due to law, policy, or practice, by strengthening protections for women's political status, expanding women's participation in political parties and elections, and increasing women's opportunities for leadership positions in the public and private sectors at the local, provincial, and national levels.

and

(e) WOMEN AND GIRLS AT RISK FROM EXTREMISM.

1. **Objective 1: Networks.** Support women's civil society networks to bring local expertise and needs into decision-making, including but not limited to ceasefire talks, peace negotiations and/or peace accord implementation, crisis mediation, political transitions, and/or policy, to transform the inequalities, gendered and otherwise, that drive conflict. Sample activities may include:
 - a. Women's networks conduct consultations with conflicted-affected women and girls to understand the different forms of violence that must be banned in a ceasefire, including conflict-related sexual violence and other types of violence that disproportionately affect women and girls
 - b. Through step-down trainings on coalition-building and strategic advocacy, a women's network helps other women mobilize their communities to participate in a constitution-reform process
 - c. Women's networks create a civil society forum to provide recommendations and support to women negotiators on all sides of a peace process
 - d. A women's network brings an international mediation team to different conflict-affected areas to listen to local women's and girls' priorities
 - e. Combining short videos, social media, and public screenings, women's networks bring the voices of rural women and girls into a national dialogue
 - f. A women's network organizes community-level discussions between women and senior law enforcement officials to help the latter understand the security challenges women and girls face in their daily lives, including threats related to gender-based violence
 - g. Women's networks collect testimony from and/or support conflict-affected women and girls to safely testify in a reconciliation or transitional justice process or determine alternative options for supporting victims of violence
 - h. Through radio and community theater, women's networks educate women and girls on how they can monitor implementation of a new peace agreement to ensure accountability of decision-makers on agreed provisions
 - i. Women's networks conduct a mapping exercise of existing networks to inform their activities under each of the three objectives
 - j. Women's networks from different conflict-affected areas train grassroots women on messaging community-based needs to policymaker audiences

(1)... (A) empower women and girls to counter extremism;
(B) address the needs of women and girls adversely impacted by extremism and conflict;
(C) document crimes committed by extremists against women and girls, and support investigations and prosecutions of such crimes, as appropriate;
(D) increase the participation and influence of women in formal and informal political processes and institutions at the local level and within traditional governing structures;
(E) support reconciliation programs between impacted minority, religious, and ethnic groups and the broader community;
(F) develop and implement legal reforms and protections for women and girls at the national and local government levels; and
(G) create and sustain networks for women and girls to collectively safeguard their rights on a regional basis.

2. **Objective 2: Collaboration.** Incentivize collaboration within and/or between existing women's civil society networks to overcome divisions and strengthen their collective influence and capabilities. Sample activities may include:
 - a. Organizational members of a women's coalition commit to co-designing and implementing a joint peace initiative with at least two other members
 - b. Women's networks from different backgrounds, areas, or regions, but with similar and/or adjacent expertise on peace and conflict, form a coalition to advocate for the development or implementation of a country's National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325
 - c. Members of a regional women's mediator network co-design a joint initiative to bring women's voices into different regional mediation processes
 - d. Women's networks from different sides of a religious conflict organize visits to the other's localities to cultivate empathy and build trust, then organize joint advocacy meetings with policymakers
 - e. A women's coalition organizes its members to partner with a lawyers' association to provide technical support to legislators on gender-responsive policymaking
 - f. Women's networks from different sides of a regional conflict form a cross-border coalition to track early warning indicators of violence, including gender-specific indicators
3. **Objective 3: Learning and exchange.** Strengthen peer-to-peer learning, peer-led capacity building, and cultivation of future generations of peacebuilders. Sample activities may include:
 - a. Women's networks from different conflict-affected areas establish a joint information-sharing platform to share lessons on peacebuilding
 - b. A women's network that works with tribal leaders on harmful gender norms provides technical assistance and small grants to smaller women's networks seeking to do the same in their communities
 - c. Organizational members of a women's coalition provide trainings to one another in their respective areas of expertise
 - d. Women's networks from different conflict-affected countries organize a series of "peace retreats" to build solidarity, exchange learning, and share skills
 - e. Women's networks from different sides of a conflict provide fellowships to members of women's organizations from another side of the conflict
 - f. A seasoned network of women peacebuilders from the global south establishes a partnership with a youth network in the global north to mentor future generations of women on WPS

Possible indicators, though not required, may include:

- **GNDR-6** Number of people reached by a USG-funded intervention providing GBV services (e.g. health, legal, psychosocial counseling, shelters, hotlines, other)
- **GNDR 10:** Number of local women participating in a substantive role or position in a peacebuilding process supported with USG assistance

- **YOUTH 4b** Number of females aged 10-18 who participate in civil society activities following social or leadership skills training or initiatives from USG-assisted programs
- **DR4.2-2b** Number of women's rights civil society organizations (CSOs) receiving USG assistance engaged in advocacy interventions
- **DR.4-1** Number of USG-supported activities designed to promote or strengthen the civic participation of women
- **GNDR 4.3-1b** Number of USG-assisted women's CSOs that participate in legislative proceedings and/or engage in advocacy with national legislature and its committee
- **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 (and name them)

v. Conceptual Program Context:

Research and international best practice have shown that when women leaders with linkages to broader women's groups meaningfully influence peace processes, the resulting agreements are more likely to last.¹⁰ According to several studies, civil society's inclusion in peace processes increases diverse representation, injects ground-level knowledge, and helps build local ownership of the resulting accords.¹¹

Where women's civil society groups have influenced these processes in the past, they expanded the number of peace accord provisions aimed at sociopolitical reform -- shown to be one of the strongest predictors for durable peace.¹² Women's networks can therefore serve as a critical vector for funneling the power transformative demands of women and other marginalized communities into decision-making, including but not limited to ceasefire talks, peace negotiations, crisis mediation, political transitions, and/or policy. This includes, but is not limited to, addressing the protection needs of women and girls after conflict. Despite this, women's civil society organizations are frequently underfunded,¹³ hampering their ability to build these relationships before the often better-funded peace negotiations begin, and sustain them into the often poorer-funded implementation phase. Ignoring these networks, expecting them to mobilize without resources, or limiting their funds to the formal timeline of an official peace process undermines the emergence of important constituencies for peace.

¹⁰ Jana Krause, Werner Krause & Piia Branfors (2018), "Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations and the Durability of Peace," *International Interactions*, 44:6, 985-1016

¹¹ See, for example, Thania Paffenholz (2015), "Civil society and Peacebuilding Project," Briefing Paper, Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding, Geneva: The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, and Anthony Wanis-St. John & Darren Kew (2008), "Civil Society and Peace Negotiations: Confronting Exclusion," *International Negotiation*, 13(1), 11-36

¹² Madhav Joshi & J. Michael Quinn (2015), "Is the Sum Greater than the Parts? The Terms of Intrastate Peace Agreements and the Commitment Problem Revisited," *Negotiation Journal*, 31(1):7-30

¹³ Radhika Coomaraswamy et al (2015), Financing of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda," in *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, and Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of UNSCR 1325*, UN Women: 369-391

Recognizing that many women's civil society networks already exist around the world, this mechanism will not seek to create new, externally-driven networks, but rather seeks to partner with existing ones. It will prioritize areas where women's networks are underfunded and that look likely to relapse into conflict, enter into a peace or political transition, or that are currently struggling to implement a peace accord. While proposals may focus on distinct stages of a conflict, political transition, or peace process, they should be designed to strengthen the broader ecosystem for women's safe participation. Relevant contexts may be, but are not limited to: the Western Hemisphere: Colombia, Venezuela; Africa: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan; Europe: Ukraine; the Middle East and North Africa: Iraq, Syria, Yemen; South and Central Asia: Afghanistan, Sri Lanka; East Asia and the Pacific: Burma, Indonesia, and the Philippines.¹⁴ Priority will be given to proposals that include women from Sudan and areas affected by extremist organizations. Funding for Syria may require additional approvals and vetting.

As a result of limited funding and opportunity, women's civil society groups are often pitted against one another in competition for resources and access.¹⁵ To minimize this competition and advance women's collective power, this program elevates collaboration between women's groups as one of its three objectives (Objective 2). It also seeks to facilitate exchanges within and/or among these networks to encourage peer-to-peer learning, peer-led capacity-building, and cultivation of future generations of peacebuilders (Objective 3).

As a donor, S/GWI's comparative advantage is its smaller, flexible, civil-society focused approach to global programs. Priority will therefore be given to applicants that can demonstrate the ability to manage small projects in several different regions at the same time, and to scale-up should additional funds become available. However, all applicants must co-design, implement, and learn from their program in equitable partnership with local and/or regional women's organizations and networks (see the "Inclusion," "Do No Harm," and "Local Engagement and Sustainability" sections for additional details.) S/GWI welcomes creative partnership structures, including with smaller NGOs with deep and local expertise in relevant subject matters, as appropriate.

vi. S/GWI Proposal Principles:

S/GWI seeks proposals from qualified organizations with demonstrated in-country experience in developing partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including the public and/or private sector and grassroots organizations. Applicants must demonstrate an ability to design, implement, monitor, evaluate, adapt, and learn in programming that

¹⁴ Due to the determination made under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) for FY 2019, certain assistance may be subject to a restriction under the TVPA. Because the TVPA restriction applies only to assistance to governments, activities proposed for those countries should not include government beneficiaries.

¹⁵ Erin Blankenship (2014), "Aid in Contested Spaces: Afghanistan," Oxfam America Research Backgrounder series, <http://www.oxfamamerica.org/publications/delivering-aid-in-contested-spaces-afghanistan>

coordinates with existing efforts by U.S. government, other donors, the host country, and local actors.

S/GWI leverages evidence-based analysis and learning from its programs to catalyze shifts in the Department's integration of gender equality across its policies and programs. As such, proposed programming locations should:

- 1) Be able to incubate solutions that can be shared and/or replicated elsewhere, if successful, and
- 2) Involve strong local participation in, and ownership over, a program's activities (this can be demonstrated through previous experience, letters of intent/support, or other evidence of local participation and leadership).

All proposals must include a description of:

- 1) The problem the applicant seeks to address,
- 2) Implementation context, including any relevant details on the socio-political environment and the target beneficiaries of the project,
- 3) How the proposal relates to Women's Leadership and WGAREC appropriation language (see footnote 6),
- 4) An evidence-based model to address the problem,
- 5) The priority areas, countries, or geographic areas for the program, not including refugee or IDP camps,¹⁶ with a strategy for potentially scaling or replicating the program's best practices in consultation with S/GWI, should additional funds become available,
- 6) A localized approach, demonstrably driven by the needs and perspectives of local partners and the communities they serve (please see the Inclusion section for additional details),
- 7) Implementation plan, including assumptions, key steps, and timeline, and a results framework/logic model (please see the MEL section for additional details).

Please note: Each of these descriptions must be demonstrably informed by a contextually-specific gender analysis (please see the sample Gender Analysis Questions in Appendix 9 for additional details).

Inclusion

In identifying specific beneficiary populations, proposals must demonstrate a commitment towards, and plan for, the support and inclusion of marginalized and/or vulnerable communities. Many women and girls are particularly vulnerable due to other characteristics including disability, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, geography, indigenous status, etc. The applicant's gender analysis should examine challenges and opportunities presented by engagement with women, girls, and

¹⁶ S/GWI funds are different from, but are intended to complement, other USG funds that working specifically with refugee camp populations.

other marginalized communities at-risk of exclusion and violence and how they will be addressed to realize meaningful inclusion.

S/GWI welcomes submissions irrespective of race, ethnicity, color, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or other status.

Gender Analysis

Proposals must include a gender analysis for each of the countries or geographic areas where they propose to program; demonstrate how all activities account for the different ways in which they might impact, and be impacted by men, women, boys, and girls; and demonstrate challenges and opportunities for narrowing existing gender inequalities. Proposals must also include a plan for: (1) regular updating of the gender analysis(-es) with local partners, and (2) making any necessary adjustments to the program design.

Risk Assessment, Do No Harm, Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

Proposals must include a risk assessment and a plan for monitoring and mitigating the risks identified.

Risks to project implementation may include a variety of political, environmental, and other factors. Examples include outbreak of violent conflict, elections that change government partners, cybersecurity / hacking, misuse of personally identifiable information (PII), and diversion of financial or non-financial support to prohibited parties (terrorist financing).

The assessment should also identify risks to staff, implementers, participants, beneficiaries, or their communities, in alignment with [Do No Harm principles](#). Besides political and environmental factors, risks may include online or in-person gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and assault, and other forms of potential physical, social, psychological, economic, and/or reputational backlash to beneficiaries as a result of their participation. They may also include unintended consequences of power shifts among individuals or communities, local competition and/or divisions over program funds and opportunities, and unintended crowding out of local civil society actors and/or “brain drain” of their or other organizations’ staff or members. Consider how resources or skills provided might be leveraged for abusive purposes, create grievances among non-recipients, or cause key actors to react in harmful ways.

The Applicant must submit copies of its organization-wide policies and procedures on Do No Harm and PSEA¹⁷, or explain whether the Applicant organization has plans to develop such policies. If not already explained in submitted policies and procedures, the Application should outline how the Applicant will work with any sub-grantees who do not yet have Do No Harm and PSEA policies and procedures to develop and/or apply them over the course of the program.

¹⁷ Please see <https://www.usaid.gov/PreventingSexualMisconduct/fact-sheets/usaid-policy-against-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse> for examples of related policies.

Proposals must include a plan for regular review and updates of risk assessment(s).

Local Engagement and Sustainability

Priority will be given to proposals that maximize the portion of funding, activities, and in-kind support dedicated to in-country women's networks and their activities.

Proposals should describe any plans to build the organizational and technical capacities of local partners. Applicants may submit signed Letters of Intent from organizations that will participate in the program. If submitted, these should address the willingness of partner organizations to participate in the program and their understanding of each party's unique role and responsibilities. In cases where an applicant (i.e., non-local) is not able to partner with a local network, organization, or institution, does not consider it feasible to do so, or does not consider it in the program's best interest, the applicant must clearly explain the rationale.

Beyond local partners, proposals must demonstrate a clear understanding of the role that local networks, organizations, and institutions are playing and can play in achieving the award's objectives. The proposal should include a participatory needs assessment, and explain how its implementers will engage with local actors throughout its lifecycle.

Strong proposals will also describe strategies to sustain the activities beyond S/GWI funding, or alternatively, how applicants will co-design a responsible exit strategy with local partners and in consultation with beneficiaries.

Psychosocial Assistance

A section in the proposal, budget, and budget narrative should contain information on appropriate resources and support for the psychosocial health of staff (i.e., activities can range from access to educational materials and training opportunities to counseling services to other contextually-relevant support).

- References: For reference to international guidance, please see the following: Core Humanitarian Standard Commitment 8.9 (<https://corehumanitarianstandard.org/files/files/CHS-Guidance-Notes-and-Indicators.pdf>); and IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings Action Sheet 4.4 (http://www.who.int/mental_health/emergencies/guidelines_iasc_mental_health_psychosocial_june_2007.pdf).

vii. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL):

All proposals must include a rigorous plan for monitoring, evaluation, and learning.

- A portion of the program should include compiling, analyzing, and disseminating program results and lessons learned.
- Applicants should outline a learning plan that demonstrates how the program will be monitored and how monitoring will be analyzed to adapt implementation to support effectiveness and avoid unintended consequences.

- Some form of independent evaluation must be included in proposals responding to this NOFO. Please elaborate on the type (quasi-experimental, developmental, outcome harvesting, process tracing, etc.). While the type of evaluation is flexible within Department of State guidance, it must be independent.

Logic/Results Framework

For the purposes of the application, please submit a notional logic model/results framework¹⁸ and performance monitoring plan (PMP). This must include a succinct Theory of Change and indicators at each of the following levels: objective, intermediate outcome, and output. In addition, use this section to describe why the applicant's approach to MEL is appropriate for this program. This may include the type of data you collect (qualitative and/or quantitative). It must include a timeline for data collection and analysis, and how this will inform midstream program management.

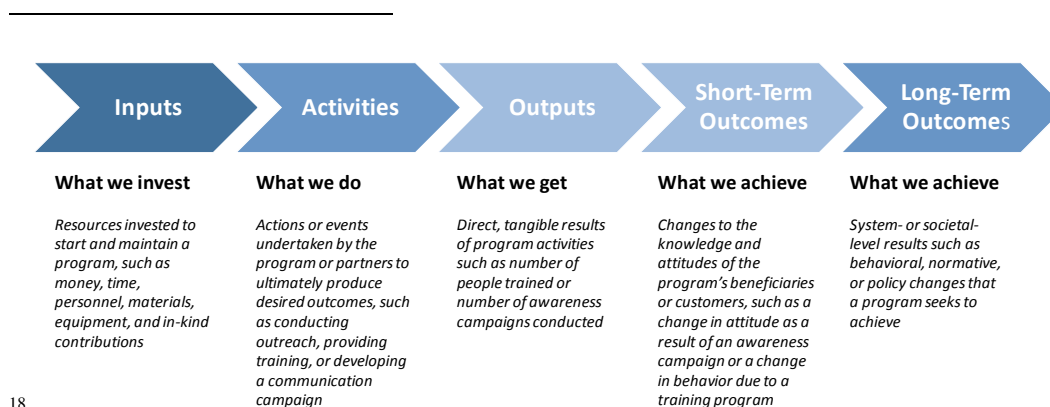
In Appendix 10 to the NOFO is a chart of U.S. Foreign Assistance (FA) indicators that S/GWI most commonly uses to tell the story of the programs it funds. In addition to designing their own indicators, applicants should select the most relevant indicators from this chart to integrate into their MEL plan, as appropriate.

Resources

Please describe the resources needed to implement your MEL plan and address these in your budget. If you wish to include additional, non-required MEL activities in the program budget, please specify what these are.

MEL Inclusivity

S/GWI strongly encourages applicants to consider whether their MEL plan utilizes human rights-based approaches, applies a gender equality lens, and includes the participation of sub-grantees and program participants. Within the MEL narrative, applicants should demonstrate their commitment to inclusive approaches and consider whether evaluation design, data collection, analysis, reporting and learning are conducted in an ethical, participatory, and responsible way.¹⁹ Applicants must make adequate provisions to protect the privacy of human subjects when collecting data from



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¹⁹ For best practices, see the [WHO Ethical and safety recommendations for researching, documenting and monitoring sexual violence in emergencies](#).

individuals. For instance, when collecting data from program participants, consider whether your organization will have the necessary informed consent forms, confidentiality agreements, and data security protocols.

viii. Demonstrating Organization Capacity:

Proposals will be evaluated on their ability to present a compelling proposal that demonstrates:

- Organizational capacity to manage the proposed budget amount, including any history that demonstrates their ability to be a strong financial steward of U.S. government resources. First-time USG grantees may need additional verification of their organizational capacity.
- Experience coordinating and collaborating with local partners and stakeholders in the countries or geographic areas of implementation.
- If sub-grants are proposed, demonstrated experience sub-granting to implementers, including strong established relationships with partners in the targeted countries of various sizes, and experience building others' organizational capacity.
- Successful implementation of activities that have achieved goals relevant to this NOFO, including but not limited to empowering women and girls, advancing women and girls' leadership in building peace and security, supporting women and girls affected by violent extremism and conflict, conflict prevention and transformation, and working towards gender equality.

B. Federal Award Information

i. Available Funding and Legislative Authority:

The source of this funding is Economic Support Funds. Please see Section E: "Funding Restrictions," below for more info.

ii. Summary of Award Information:

Type of Award:	Cooperative Agreement
Appropriated Fiscal Year of Funds:	FY2019
Approximate Total Funding Available:	Up to approximately \$3,000,000
Approximate Number of Awards:	1 or 2
Location of Project Activities	One or more countries or geographic areas proposed by applicant and agreed by S/GWI
Approximate Project Duration:	Up to five years
Cost-Sharing or Matching:	Not required
Anticipated Award Date:	June 30, 2020

Contingent on the availability of funds, approximately \$3,000,000 in Economic Support Funds for approximately one or two awards will be awarded through this announcement.

If selected to receive an award, an applicant will be awarded funds for up to five years, depending on the activities proposed. The estimated start date for this program is July 1, 2020. S/GWI reserves the right to award more or less than the estimated program funding, and reserves the right to award funding under this announcement for a period of up to two years after the announcement's close date. S/GWI also reserves the right to share applications with other USG offices who may have funding available.

This request for full applications **does not** constitute an award or commitment on the part of the U.S. government to make any awards, **nor does it commit the U.S. government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application.**

Incremental Funding and Non-Competing Continuation

Continuations beyond the initial budget period or funding amount will be contingent upon the availability of funds; grantee's progress in meeting grant requirements, including timely submission of required reports and compliance with all terms and conditions of the award; timely submission of a request for additional funding; and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the Department of State.

Pending successful implementation of this program and pending the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, S/GWI may add incremental funding and/or extend this grant for additional time, not to exceed a five (5) year total program period.

iii. Deadline:

Deadline for Applications:	May 7, 2020
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iv. Substantial Involvement:

S/GWI anticipates awarding one or more cooperative agreement(s) based on the needs and risk factors of the program. The Grants Officer will make the final determination of award mechanism. If a cooperative agreement is awarded, S/GWI expects to be substantially involved during its implementation. Examples of substantial involvement can include:

- i. Approval of the Recipient's annual work plans, including: planned activities for the following year and changes to any activity to be carried out under the agreement;
- ii. Approval of sub-award recipients, concurrence on the substantive provisions of the sub-awards, and coordination with other cooperating agencies;
- iii. Review of any notice of funding opportunities and selection of recipients;
- iv. Approval of the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning plan for the Recipient and sub-award recipients; and
- v. Other approvals that will be included in the award agreement.

C. Eligibility Information

i. Eligible Applicant:

S/GWI welcomes applications from educational and research institutions; U.S. not-for-profit/non-governmental organizations (NGOs) subject to section 501 (c) (3) of the U.S. tax code, and foreign not-for-profits/NGOs/social enterprises. If applicants determine that a consortium of expert organizations should implement the work, they must submit a list of their proposed partners, each of whom must also meet the eligibility criteria.

Applications that do not meet the eligibility by the time of an application deadline will not be reviewed. Applicants may submit only one proposal in response to this NOFO. If multiple proposals are received from the same applicant, all submissions will be declared ineligible and receive no further consideration in the review process.

The Department of State is committed to an anti-discrimination policy in all of its programs and activities and welcomes proposals irrespective of applicants' race, ethnicity, color, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.

Program activities must take place outside the United States.

ii. Cost Sharing or Matching:

Cost-sharing or matching is NOT an evaluation criteria of this NOFO.

When cost sharing is offered, all cost share or matching must be included in detail in the line item budget and noted in the budget narrative. It is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing that it elects to stipulate in its proposal and that is later included in an approved agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, recipients must maintain written records to support all costs that are claimed as their contribution, as well as costs to be paid by the federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with [2 CFR 200.306 – Cost Sharing and Matching](#).

iii. Other:

S/GWI is committed to an anti-discrimination policy in all of its programs and activities. S/GWI welcomes applications irrespective of an applicant's race, ethnicity, color, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or other status. S/GWI encourages applications that include work with the most at risk and vulnerable communities.

Only organizations with an active DUNS number, CAGE/NCAGE code, and a SAM.gov individual user account will be able to submit proposals for this competition, unless a waiver has been provided. For specific instructions, please see Section D, Part ii "Key Registrations."

Any applicant listed on the Excluded Parties List System in the System for Award Management (SAM)(www.sam.gov) 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 Excluded Parties List System in SAM can participate in any activities under an award. All organizations are strongly encouraged to review the Excluded Parties List System in SAM to ensure that no ineligible entity is included.

iv. Organization Criteria:

- Organizations should have existing, or demonstrate the capacity to develop, active partnerships with in-country entities and relevant stakeholders including women’s civil society networks, other civil society actors, the public sector, and the private sector, as relevant to the proposed program objectives.
- Applications must include strong partnerships with, and in some cases between, women’s civil society networks. However, one organization must be designated as the lead applicant and prime grantee for the proposed cooperative agreement.
- S/GWI reserves the right to request additional background information on applicants that do not have previous experience administering federal grant awards, and these applicants may be subject to limited funding on a pilot basis.
- The Department of State generally prohibits profit under its assistance awards to for-profit or commercial organizations. No funds will be paid as profit to any recipient. Profit is defined as any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs. The permissibility of costs incurred by commercial organizations is determined in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) at 48 CFR Part 30, Cost Accounting Standards, and Part 31 Contract Cost Principles and Procedures. Program income earned by the recipient must be deducted from the total project or program allowable cost in determining the net allowable costs on which the federal share of costs is based.

D. Application and Submission Information

i. Address to Request Application Package:

Please contact the S/GWI point of contact listed in section G if requesting reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities or for security reasons. Please note: reasonable accommodations do not include deadline extensions.

The applicant can find application forms, kits, or other materials needed to apply on SAMS Domestic under the Funding Opportunity entitled “Supporting Women’s Networks.”

ii. Key Registrations:

The U.S. Department of State requires that all applicants complete the following registrations:

- Register for a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>
- Obtain necessary codes: for non-U.S. organizations, an NCAGE code at <https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/scage/CageList.aspx>; if based in the U.S or pay employees within the U.S., an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code.
- Register for an individual account for your organization with the System for Award Management (SAM.gov): <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>
- Register for an individual account for your organization on SAMS Domestic: <https://mygrants.service-now.com/grants>. Please be advised that applicants will need to validate their email address once a request for an account has been submitted to SAMS Domestic. **Additionally, applicants will be required to log into SAMS Domestic using multi-factor authentication.**

Once the above steps are complete, you will be able to submit your application per the instructions in this proposal request and systems websites.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that it has an active registration in SAMS Domestic. Applicants are required to document that the application has been received in its entirety by SAMS Domestic. S/GWI bears no responsibility for disqualification that result from applicants not being registered before the due date, for system errors in SAMS Domestic, or other errors in the application process.

Organizations must maintain an 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 by the time S/GWI is ready to make an award, the applicant may be deemed unqualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

A complete proposal with attachments must be submitted via SAMS Domestic **and** emailed to SGWIProjectProposals@state.gov with “[Applicant Name] Supporting Women’s Networks” in the subject of the email.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the proposal has been submitted in its entirety to SAMS Domestic and sent via email. S/GWI bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

Should any safety or security concerns arise regarding registration within any of the above required systems, please contact S/GWI for assistance.

iii. Content and Form of Application Submission:

Please read the entire NOFO and follow the guidelines for proposal preparation below. Applicants must include the following in the proposal submission. Please see the enclosed proposal checklist and instructions to ensure a complete submission. **All submissions must be in English.**

1. Completed and signed **SF-424, SF-424A and SF424B and SF-LLL** forms. Applicants under consideration for an award that may engage in lobbying activities will be required to submit a Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (**SF-LLL**) form. The SF-424 documents collect basic information on the applicant, the proposed program, the funding amount requested, and information about the announcement to which it is applying;
2. **Proposal Narrative** (not to exceed 15 pages, single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font in Microsoft Word, at least one-inch margins), directions on completing a proposal narrative are included. Use of the S/GWI proposal narrative format is recommended but not required;
3. **Summary and Detailed Budget** in USD, in Excel, using the format shown in the included budget template;
4. **Detailed Budget Narrative** (not to exceed 6 pages and preferably as a Word Document) that includes an explanation for each line item in the spreadsheet, as well as the source and description of any cost share offered. Directions on completing a budget narrative are included. Use of the S/GWI budget narrative template is recommended but not required;
5. **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan** detailing program's short-term and long-term program goal(s), objective(s), activities, outputs and intended results; provide matching indicators and explain how impact and effectiveness will be monitored, evaluated, and used for learning and adaptation throughout the program. Directions on completing a MEL plan are included. Use of the S/GWI MEL plan template is recommended but not required;
6. **Implementation Timeline** (not to exceed one [1] page), indicating which month(s) your program activities are to be implemented. The timeline of the overall proposal should include activities, evaluation efforts, and program closeout. Use of the S/GWI timeline template is recommended but not required;
7. **Risk Assessment.** Risks are unavoidable – all programs inherently contain both internal and external risks. However, with proper identification and management, risks can be prepared for, minimized, or mitigated. The purpose of a risk analysis is to identify the internal and external risks associated with the proposed program in the application, rate the likelihood of the risks, rate the potential impact of the risks on the program, and identify actions that could help mitigate the risks. A risk analysis should not be considered a one-time exercise or a static document and is required to be updated at least annually. S/GWI defers to organizations to

- conduct adequate risk analysis and remediation for all of its operations and advises that risk analysis and remediation occur throughout the life of a program and should result in revisions to risk analysis documents and processes as necessary. Applicants should include all assumptions and external factors in the risk analysis, including and especially safety and security, as well as, technology. Applicants should rate the likelihood of a risk and potential impact of the risk as “High,” “Medium,” or “Low.” S/GWI’s SAMPLE Risk Assessment template is provided, but S/GWI also welcomes more detailed models;
8. **Gender Analysis**, identifying relevant gender gaps and opportunities and ways the work will address those gaps and opportunities. Proposals should demonstrate how addressing relevant gender gaps would enhance the program’s goals and objectives. This should be a standalone document rather than a section of the proposal narrative. The S/GWI SAMPLE Gender Analysis Questions are provided in Appendix 9 of this NOFO package, but S/GWI also welcomes more detailed models;
 9. **Attachments may be included**, (letters of commitment from the applicant institution and sub-award partners, CVs of key personnel, program experience, etc.) but should not be unreasonably lengthy; and will not count against page limitations;
 10. If your organization has a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (**NICRA**) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, include your latest NICRA as a PDF file;
 11. A PDF file copy of your organization’s most **recent financial audit**; and
 12. Number all pages, including budget and addenda.

iv. Additional Information Requested:

If successful, the applicant must submit after notification of intent to make a federal award, but prior to issuance of a federal award:

- Written responses and revised application documents addressing conditions and recommendations from the S/GWI Review Panel;
- Completion of the Department’s Financial Management Survey, if receiving S/GWI funding for the first time;
- Submission of required documents to register in the Payment Management System managed by the Department of Health and Human Services, if receiving S/GWI funding for the first time (unless an exemption is provided); and
- Other requested information or documents included in the notification of intent to make a federal award or subsequent communications prior to issuance of a federal award.

Designated Performance and Integrity System (currently FAPIIS)

The Department of State, 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 any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313).

The applicant has the option to review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.

The Department of State will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by the applicant as described in §200.205 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

v. Submission Dates and Times:

The application is due no later than **11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET), on May 7, 2020** on SAMS Domestic under the Funding Opportunity title “Supporting Women’s Networks to Prevent and Transform Conflict (Supporting Women’s Networks)” (Funding Opportunity number: SFOP0006548) and submitted in full by email to SGWIProposals@state.gov with “[Applicant Name] Supporting Women’s Networks” in the Subject of the email.

Applicants will receive a validation email from SAMS Domestic upon successful submission of an application. Additionally, you **must** save a screenshot of the checklist showing all documents submitted in case any document fails to upload successfully.

Late applications are neither reviewed nor considered unless the S/GWI point of contact listed in Section G of the proposal request is contacted prior to the deadline and is provided with evidence of system errors caused by SAMS Domestic that is outside of the applicants’ control and is the sole reason for late submission.

Applicants should not expect a notification upon S/GWI receiving their application.

Applications submitted in grants.gov will not be accepted; applications must be submitted in SAMS Domestic.

E. Funding Restrictions

This cooperative agreement will be funded from money appropriated under the “Economic Support Fund” (ESF) heading in the Department of State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Act, 2019 (Div. I, P.L. 112-74) (SFOAA). ESF is available for foreign assistance supporting economic or political stability. Under Section 531(e) of the Foreign Assistance Act, as amended (FAA), ESF may not be used for military or paramilitary purposes. Given restrictions under Section 660 of the FAA, assistance may be provided to police and law enforcement forces only under certain circumstances. Note that activities focused on security sector training will be subject to vetting to ensure compliance with Section 620M of the FAA (“[Leahy Vetting](#)”).

Of Note: Approximately \$2,000,000 of the funding available under this NOFO is earmarked for work to support Women and Girls at Risk from Extremism and Conflict (WGAREC) and approximately \$1,000,000 of the funding available under this NOFO is earmarked for work to support Women's Leadership. Activities must align with those earmarks; please see the appropriations language in Footnote 4.

Organizations should note that if the proposal is deemed successful and recommended for award, they will be required to adjust the budget submissions to include the breakdown of these earmarks in its proposed budget and a brief explanation of how the proposed activities align with earmark requirements, which will be confirmed with S/GWI and Grants Officer during award negotiations.

The recipient is reminded that funds provided under this agreement must be used in a manner fully consistent with U.S. law. The recipient agrees that none of the funds provided by this award shall be used to lobby for or against abortion. The recipient agrees that none of the funds provided by this 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.

Due to the determination made under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) for FY 2019, certain assistance may be subject to a restriction under the TVPA. Because the TVPA restriction applies only to assistance to governments, activities proposed for those countries should not include government beneficiaries.

Per 22 CFR 200.307 ((e) (1), (2) and (3) of this section please note the following guidance concerning use of Program Income:

- Program income earned during the project period shall be retained by the recipient and, in accordance with the terms and conditions of the award, shall be used in one or more of the ways listed in the following:
 - Added to funds committed to the project by the Department and recipient and used to further eligible project or program objectives.
 - Used to finance the non-federal share of the project or program.
 - Deducted from the total project or program allowable cost in determining the net allowable costs on which the federal share of costs is based.
- It is emphasized, however, that the above three alternatives are applicable only when the grantee is a non-profit entity. Any grant to a commercial firm must state that the first of the alternatives is not available for program income earned by the grantee. As explained by (GAO noted in its Principles of Federal Appropriations Law at 10-57, "This approach [option (1)] increases program size. Both OMB and GAO have expressed preference for the deduction method [option (3)] since it results in savings to the federal government and to grantees.")

The following activities and costs are not covered under this announcement:

- Construction is not an allowable activity under this award.
- 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 sole purposes of promoting religious beliefs cannot be included for funding.
- Military assistance of any kind, including weapons buy back or rewards programs.
- Purchase of firearms, ammunition, or removal of unexploded ordnance.
- Payments for any partner government, military or civilian government employee salary or pension.
- 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.
- Expenses incurred prior to the approval of a proposal or for unreasonable expenditures will not be reimbursed.

F. Application Review Information

i. Proposal Evaluation Process:

Proposal submissions in response to this announcement should include information addressing each of the evaluation criteria below. Each proposal will be evaluated and rated based on the criteria (see below), which are designed to assess the organizational capacity of the applicant and the merits of the proposed program. The criteria are closely related and evaluators will consider the criteria as a whole in judging the application. Panelists review each application individually against the evaluation criteria, not against competing proposals.

In most cases, the Department of State (DOS) Review Panel includes inter-agency representatives from S/GWI, the appropriate DOS regional bureau, relevant functional bureaus, and USAID Washington. S/GWI requests feedback on applications from the appropriate U.S. embassies and USAID missions for the panelists' consideration. In some cases, additional panelists may participate, including from other DOS bureaus or offices, U.S. government departments, agencies, or boards, representatives from partner governments, external experts and academics, or representatives from entities that are in partnership with S/GWI as donor partners. All panelists must confirm that they do not have any conflicts of interest in reviewing. At the end of discussion on an application, the panel votes on recommending the application for approval.

DOS Review Panels may provide conditions and recommendations on applications to enhance the proposed program, which must be addressed by the applicant before further consideration of the award. To ensure effective use of S/GWI funds, conditions or recommendations may include requests to increase, decrease, clarify, and/or justify costs and program activities.

ii. Evaluation Criteria:

1. *Organizational Capacity and Past Performance (30 / 100 points):*

- Applicant has sufficient depth of experience, capacity, and talent to implement the proposed program as described in this NOFO.
- Applicant has the ability to analyze and program effectively for women's leadership in preventing and transforming conflict by making decision-making more reflective and responsive.
- Applicant has the capacity to implement and monitor this program globally in partnership with local partners (women's networks / organizations), including as needs arise.
- Applicant maximizes collaboration with, and support of, local entities. For every collaboration proposed, the applicant describes (a) the rationale for the collaboration; (b) each partner's respective role; and (c) how the partnership will enhance the accomplishment of the program goals.
- Applicant has experience implementing relevant program in multiple countries and regions of the world.

2. *Program Strategy (30 / 100 points):*

The applicant must demonstrate that the program strategy and design are likely to achieve the proposed results and that proposed activities and timeframes are reasonable and feasible. Applicants will be judged on the following criteria:

- Application clearly demonstrates the inclusion and input of women's civil society networks and other proposed local partners, in terms of both needs and approaches for addressing those needs.
- Application details how program activities will be accomplished and an outline of potential positive impacts through the objectives and theory of change described in Section A of this NOFO.
- Application includes an initial landscape analysis of how the proposed activity complements existing efforts related to women's leadership in preventing and transforming conflict--including work supported by host government(s), the U.S. government, UN agencies, and other donors. The proposed program should fill a programmatic gap in the area, leverage existing platforms, and not duplicate other programs. At a minimum, the application must include an initial landscape analysis for the specific country(-ies) or geographic areas proposed in the application, and a plan and budget for doing further landscape analysis to inform program design post-award.

- The proposed program recognizes and supports existing work by women leaders. It promotes linkages across sectors and platforms, for example, connecting actors and mechanisms across social, political, and economic sectors.
 - Applicant proposes sufficient staffing, and staff / consultants / local partners with relevant experience and expertise.
 - Application includes appropriate resources and support for the psychosocial health of staff.
3. *Gender Analysis, Inclusion, Do No Harm (10 / 100 points):*
- Application includes a thoughtful gender analysis and reflects the gender analysis in the program design. It also includes a plan for the iterative use and adaptation of gender analysis through implementation to ensure it advances gender equality and women's empowerment as effectively as possible.
 - Application presents a thoughtful analysis of the needs affecting vulnerable populations; integrates these populations, as well as men and boys, in program design and implementation; the proposed program has undertaken and designed implementation based on a gender analysis; and shows concrete outputs and outcomes for program beneficiaries.
 - Application includes a plan for: a) conducting gender analysis for additional specific countries or geographic areas that may be added during implementation; b) an iterative, regular process with local partners/beneficiaries for review of progress in addressing gaps and opportunities identified in the gender analysis, and reflection of results and updates in subsequent implementation.
 - Staff / consultants / local partners have relevant expertise in gender, safeguarding / Do No Harm, gender-based violence, and conflict transformation.
 - Application includes the required information on Do No Harm and Safeguarding policies and how the applicant will work on related areas with partners.
4. *Performance Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (10 / 100 points):*
- The applicant clearly describes the results and benefits to be achieved.
 - The applicant identifies how key milestones and indicators, including one or more from S/GWI's menu of indicators, will measure program results.
 - The applicant identifies how it will adapt and modify the program based on ongoing analysis and informed management.
 - MEL plans include regular review and updating of the gender analysis throughout the life of the cooperative agreement.
 - Proposed outcomes are tangible and achievable within the grant program period.
5. *Sustainability Plan (10 / 100 points):*

- Proposals will be evaluated on the likelihood of sustainable results that will endure beyond the term of the program and/or their plans to co-design a responsible exit strategy with local partners, in consultation with beneficiaries.
- The application describes, through a work plan or other relevant documentation, substantive undertakings through measurable and achievable goals and activities.
- Proposals will be evaluated on the applicant's strategy for local institutionalization, sustainability and/or responsible exit, scalability, and reasonableness by demonstrating local ownership and multiplier effect (having impact beyond the direct beneficiaries of the grant).

6. *Budget (10 / 100 points):*

- Proposal maximizes the portion of funding, activities, and in-kind support dedicated to in-country women's networks and their activities.
- *Cost-effectiveness:* Provide a brief analysis in the budget narrative of why the proposed program is cost-effective. Applicants are encouraged to consider the relationship between their proposed funding amount requested and the impact that the program will have on direct and indirect beneficiaries. Any proposed program inputs should be procured at the least cost for the relevant level of quality.
- *Budget Appropriateness:* Program budget and budget narrative are aligned with the proposed activities and explain the line items and criteria as directed. Costs are reasonable, allowable, and allocable to the proposed activities.

G. Federal Award Administration Information

i. Award Notices:

The cooperative agreement shall be written, signed, and awarded by the Grants Officer and administered by both the Grants Officer and the Grants Officer Representative. 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 electronically through SAMS Domestic. Organizations whose applications will not be funded will also be notified in writing.

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. Furthermore, the Government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.

ii. Compliance with Applicable Federal Funding Regulations and DOS Terms and Conditions:

Prior to submitting an application, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications that will apply to this award to ensure they will be able to comply. Awards issued under this NOFO are subject to the following requirements: the [Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions](#) and [2 CFR 200](#) and [2 CFR 600](#) as applicable.

Payment of funds awarded under this Notice of Funding Opportunity will not be disbursed until the DOS has been assured that the Recipient's financial management system will provide effective control over and accountability for all federal funds in accordance with 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 600 as applicable.

iii. Reporting Requirements:

The Recipient, at a minimum, shall provide financial, progress, and final reports. Please note that all substantiating documentation supporting reporting and data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Department of State upon request. All reports must be written in English.

a. Financial Reports:

The Recipient is required to submit quarterly financial reports throughout the program period, using Form FFR SF-425, the Federal Financial Report form, as well as forms suggested by the Grants Officer Representative. Form FFR (SF-425) can be found on OMB's website here: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms/. Financial reports are due 30 days after the end of each fiscal year quarter.

b. Progress Reporting:

The grantee will be in frequent contact with S/GWI and the Grants Officer Representative (GOR) concerning award. The grantee is also required to submit quarterly program progress reports using forms suggested by the GOR. S/GWI will provide a detailed reporting format. The grantee may also be asked to report specifically on progress on addressing the gaps and opportunities identified in the gender analysis. Progress reports are due 30 days after the end of the quarterly reporting period.

Recipients must report *immediately* when a program faces unplanned delays in implementation, fails to meet program targets or milestones, or costs increase. Any changes or revisions to the approved budget require prior approval from the Grants Officer.

c. Final Report:

The final report will be due no later than ninety days after completion or termination of all award activities. The final report shall include: executive summary, successes, outcomes, how the program achieved objectives, the results of the independent evaluation (which must be included in proposals and budgets), and a final financial report. The grantee may also be asked to report specifically on progress on addressing the gaps and opportunities identified in the gender analysis.

iv. Agency Contact:

Any prospective applicant who has questions concerning the contents of this NOFO should email them to SGWIPProjectProposals@state.gov with the Subject “[Applicant Name] Proposal for Supporting Women’s Networks.” To maintain fairness and transparency in competition, S/GWI will not answer substantive NOFO questions except when posting questions and answers to the announcement page on grants.gov and SAMS Domestic.

All questions must be submitted via email to SGWIPProjectProposals@state.gov by 11:59 PM EST **March 27, 2020**. S/GWI will create a document of submitted questions with answers and post it on SAMS Domestic and Grants.gov. Substantive questions submitted after the deadline will not be addressed.

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

The intent to apply is a notification to S/GWI via email expressing the intent to submit a proposal under this announcement. The notification does not require any specific format or template. The intent to apply is optional and will not be binding.

For questions regarding creating an account with grants.gov, contact the grants.gov Contact Center. The Contact Center is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, excluding federal holidays.

Grants.gov Contact Center
(800) 518-4726
support@Grants.gov

For a list of federal holidays visit:
<https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/snow-dismissal-procedures/federal-holidays/>

For questions regarding creating an account or using [SAMS Domestic](#) to submit an application, contact the ILMS Help Desk. The Help Desk is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, excluding federal holidays. The ILMS Help Desk utilizes a user-facing ticketing interface that allows users to submit and monitor their SAMS Domestic tickets. The ILMS Self Service Portal can be accessed by going to <https://afsism.service-now.com/ilms/home>.

ILMS Help Desk
(888) 313-ILMS (4567)
[ILMS Self Service Portal](#)