

PGO FY2020 SOI-TSCTP/ESF/CVE

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
U.S. Embassy Nouakchott/Mauritania
Notice of Funding Opportunity: Statement of Interest**

Funding Opportunity Title: PGO Request for Statements of Interest

Funding Opportunity Number: PGO-MRT-FY2020-03

CFDA Number: 19.222

Total Amount Available: \$800,000

Key Dates:

1. Applications must be submitted by 6:00 PM GMT on July 15, 2021.
2. Questions must be submitted by 11:00 AM GMT on June 30, 2021.
3. Notification of project approval and award signing expected by September 2021.

Eligibility Category:

Non-profit/non-governmental organizations (NGOs) having a 501(c) (3) status with the IRS, and overseas-based non-profit/non-governmental organizations, Foreign Public Entities, U.S. and foreign educational institutions.

Contact Person: For questions on the application and technical content please contact Nouakchottgrants@state.gov

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

U.S. Embassy Nouakchott's Program and Grants Office (PGO) of the U.S. Department of State announces a Request for Statements of Interest (RSOI) from organizations interested in applying for funding for program proposals that improve collaboration and trust between citizens and civilian government officials, and support women as effective peace and security leaders.

When confronted with the rise of violent extremism, most notably in the early 2000s, the GIRM started a structural metamorphosis to adapt, contain, and deter this new menace which threatens its existence: the violent extremists do not recognize the authority of the state whom they perceive as sympathetic to foreigners. In 2010, the Mauritanian government designed a Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) strategy that combines the use of military and non-military approaches to control and eliminate the threat. Some analysts believe that Mauritania's success in preventing terrorist attacks on its soil since 2011 is due to its military posture, however, part of its success may be attributed to Mauritania's increased narrative of promotion of tolerance. There's little doubt that the GIRM is making progress but more remains to be done to reverse the trajectory imprinted by decades of extremist rhetoric and action.

It is important to continue to build the capacity of oulemas, fuqaha, imams, youth, and women – through the Ministry of Islamic Affairs (MOIA) – to improve the GIRM's ability to fight extremism and to spread a narrative of acceptance. This will lead to more youth trusting government's guidance, more Mahadras adopting official teaching curricular, more religious scholars trusting the government and disseminating its approach, including approach to peaceful

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resolution of grievances. These actions will result in decreasing extremist content in those spaces and reducing appeal for violence, especially to youth, as the only method of asserting positions. In this regard, the U.S. Embassy seeks to expand on successes and recommendations from prior programming to make measurable progress on CVE in Mauritania.

The below areas have been identified as priorities with room for expansion under this program:

1. Conflict mediation: Further help religious leaders to understand their roles within the national structure by providing them with resources and support and networking them with other ministry conflict mediators.
2. Evaluating risk factors for terrorism: The ministry has a proven approach for capturing and disseminating information on risk factors to inform and establish evidence-based policies.
3. Engaging productively with Mauritanian youth: The ministry has a clear policy and protocol on youth engagement, which could include more formalized structures to support it.

PGO invites organizations interested in potential funding to submit Statement of Interest (SOI) applications outlining program concepts that reflect these goals - **pending funding availability**. Please carefully follow all instructions below.

The submission of a SOI is the first step in a two-part process. Applicants must first submit a SOI, which is a concise, 1-3-page concept note designed to clearly communicate a program idea and its objectives before the development of a full proposal application. The purpose of the SOI process is to allow applicants the opportunity to submit program ideas for PGO to evaluate prior to requiring the development of full proposal applications. Upon review of eligible SOIs, PGO will invite selected applicants to expand their ideas into full proposal applications. Full proposals will go through a second merit review before final funding decision are made.

The request for Statement of Interest (SOI) will be posted on www.Grants.gov

Program Goal:

Improve the capacity of the MOIA to better design and implement pertinent CVE interventions involving youths, women, and religious leaders in target regions to counter violent extremism.

Program Objective:

- The MOIA adopts and uses a proven approach to evaluating risk factors for violent extremism for women and youth (separately) to inform the design of programming protocols for priority populations.
- The MOIA adopts policy and protocol to address the drivers for violent extremism among women in Mauritania, so that by 2023, MOIA will implement interventions within the identified target populations that lead to participants reporting satisfaction and confidence in the GIRM's ability to address the concerns of women.

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- The MOIA adopts a policy and protocol to address the drivers for violent extremism among youth in Mauritania, so that by 2023 MOIA will implement interventions within the identified target populations that lead to participants reporting satisfaction and confidence in the GIRM's ability to address the concerns of youth.

Participants and Audiences:

The target audiences should be religious leaders, youth, girls and women, government officers, civil society actors, community leaders.

Project performance:

In addition to any custom indicators to track individual project performance and effectiveness, the following performance Indicators must be included:

Performance indicators will be finalized once an implementing partner is selected.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: **24 months**

Number of awards anticipated: **1 award.**

Award amounts: **\$800,000**

Type of Funding: Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP)
Economic Support Funds (ESF)

Anticipated program start date: **September 30, 2021**

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative Agreement.

Program Performance Period: Proposed programs should be completed in 24 months.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants:

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

- Not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations
- U.S. and foreign educational institutions.
- Foreign Public Entities (FPE) for example: Public International Organizations and Governmental institutions)

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

N/A.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

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To be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a unique entity identifier (Data Universal Numbering System/DUNS number from Dun & Bradstreet), as well as a valid registration on www.SAM.gov. Please see Section E.4 for more information.

- Applicants are only allowed to submit one proposal per organization. If more than one proposal is submitted from an organization, all proposals from that institution will be considered ineligible for funding.)
- Applicants must be registered to operate in Mauritania.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Content and Form of Application Submission:

Please follow all instructions below carefully. SOIs that do not meet the requirements of this announcement or fail to comply with the stated requirements will be ineligible. Once the NOFO deadline has passed, Department of State staff may not discuss this competition with any applicant until the proposal review process has been completed.

Any prospective applicant who has questions concerning the contents of this NOFO should submit them by email to the point of contact listed on page 1. Please refer to the funding opportunity number. Any updates about this NOFO will also be posted on www.Grants.gov.

Content of SOI must include:

- A brief project description summarizing goals, objectives outcomes, performance indicators, beneficiaries, and proposed timeline.
- A clear statement of the applicant's organizational capacity to carry out the proposed activity and manage U.S. Government funds.
- Documents in English
- The anticipated total budget amount (in U.S. dollars)

2. Submission Dates and Times

SOIs are due no later than **July 15, 2021 at 6:00 P.M. GMT.**

3. Funding Restrictions:

Funding can be used only in Mauritania and for the purpose of this grant.

- 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.
 - Direct support or the appearance of direct support for any religious organization, to include repair or building of structures used for religious purposes.

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- Military assistance of any kind, including weapons buy-back or rewards programs.
- Purchase of firearms, ammunition, or removal of unexploded ordnances.
- Para-police (i.e., militias, neighborhood watch, security guards) and prison-related projects. This restriction includes no funding of any secondary need in a law-enforcement organization.
- 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 made prior to the approval of a proposal or unreasonable expenditures will not be reimbursed.
- Charitable or development activities:
 - Fund-raising campaigns;
 - Lobbying for specific legislation or projects;
 - Scientific research;
 - Projects intended primarily for the growth or institutional development of the organization;
 - Projects seeking funds for personal use;
 - Projects that require a participation fee.

4. Other Submission Requirements

All application materials must be submitted by email to Nouakchottgrants@state.gov

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

Each SOI will be evaluated and rated on the basis of the evaluation criteria outlined below.

Quality of Program Idea – 50 points: The SOI is responsive to program framework. The idea is communicated well and is feasible. SOI's that promote creative approaches to address program objectives are highly encouraged. The proposed timeline is reasonable.

Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants –35 points: The SOI should demonstrate the organization's expertise and previous experience in administering programs. If a local partner is identified SOI should briefly describe the partner's role and experience.

Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives – 15 points: The SOI should clearly articulate proposed program activities and expected results towards achieving program objectives and goal(s).

2. Review and Selection Process

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A Grants Review Committee will evaluate all eligible SOIs. All eligible SOIs will be reviewed against the criteria listed above. SOIs are reviewed individually against the criteria and not against competing SOIs.

3. Following the review, any successful SOI applicants will be contacted and instructed to submit full applications. A full application will include:

- **Mandatory application forms that must be completed and signed:**

*These forms are available electronically via Grants.gov.

- **SF-424** (Application for Federal Assistance – Organizations)
- **SF-424A** (Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs)
- **SF424B** (Assurances for Non-Construction programs) *The SF-424 B is required only for those applicants who have not registered in SAM.gov or recertified their registration in SAM.gov since February 2, 2019 and completed the online representations and certifications.*
- **SF-LLL forms** *The SF-LLL is required for applicants that may engage in lobbying activities.*

- **Summary Page:** Cover sheet stating the applicant's name and organization, proposal date, program title, program period proposed start and end date, and brief purpose of the program.

- **Table of Contents** that lists application contents and attachments.

- **Proposal Narrative (10 pages maximum).**

- **Summary Budget and Detailed Line-Item Budget:** The summary and detailed budgets must follow OMB approved budget categories (see SF-424A for budget categories). Costs must be in U.S. dollars.

- **Budget Narrative.**

- **Work Plan and Project Timeline.**

- **Letter(s) of Institutional Support**

- **Single Audit** or a letter from your Chief Financial Officer (or similar financial management officer) stating that no such audits have been conducted.

- **Letter of Disclosure** for proposed consultants/personnel (if applicable) of potential conflicts of interest, employment with a local/state/federal government.

- **CV or resume of key personnel.**

- **Official permission letters**, if required for program activities.

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4. 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.

Organizations are not required to have a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number –formally referred to as DUNS (Data Universal Numbering System) number- nor active SAM.gov registration to apply at this stage of the solicitation. However, if a SOI is accepted for a full proposal application, the organization must obtain a UEI and have an active SAM.gov registration before submitting its full proposal application. Therefore, we recommend starting the process of obtaining a SAM.gov registration as soon as possible. The process can take several weeks. Please note there is no cost associated with UEI or SAM.gov registration.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Terms and Conditions: Before submitting the SOI, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply if a full proposal application is requested and awarded, to ensure that they will be able to comply. These include:

2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 600, and the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions which are available at: <https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/>.

G. FEDERAL AWARDED AGENCY CONTACTS

G.1. Questions

All questions must be submitted via email to contact listed above by June 30th, 2021. The U.S. Embassy will periodically create a document of submitted questions with answers and upload it to the announcement page in Grants.gov. Prospective applicants are advised to review the announcement page in Grants.gov for any updates. Note that once the NOFO deadline has passed, U.S. Embassies staff may not discuss this completion with applicants until the review process has been completed.

If you have any questions about the SOI application process, please contact: Nouakchottgrants@state.gov