

## U.S. Department of State

### Request for Proposals

**Program Office:** Bureau of International Security and  
Nonproliferation, Office of Cooperative Threat  
Reduction (ISN/CTR)  
**CFDA** 19.033  
**Funding Opportunity Title:** Preventing the Transfer of Proliferation Sensitive  
Technology to Iran  
**Announcement Type:** Cooperative Agreement – Initial  
**Funding Opportunity Number:** SFOP0006246  
**Deadline for Applications:** January 31, 2020  
**Available Funding:** \$8,000,000

### ELIGIBILITY

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

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

#### Cost Sharing or Matching

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

#### Other Special Eligibility Criteria

Not Applicable.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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

### I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

## II. BACKGROUND AND PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The CTR sponsors foreign assistance activities funded by the Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining and Related Programs (NADR) account, and focuses on mitigating proliferation risk in states and regions, such as Eastern Europe, South and Southeast Asia, South America, the Middle East, and Africa.

CTR works to counter the Islamic Republic of Iran's acquisition of proliferation sensitive technology. CTR achieves this mission through capacity-building programs, open-source research, and other specialized efforts, all of which enable at-risk countries to detect and counter both the tangible and intangible flow of technology and financing that would support Iran's ballistic missile program, consistent with the requirements of United Nations Security Council resolution 2231. CTR does not support activities related to the training, engagement, or redirection of Iranian nationals or Iranian government or non-government agencies.

### FY20 Objectives

For FY20, CTR supports efforts that broadly fall into six categories:

**Maritime Security/Countering Illicit Shipping:** As sanctions continue to affect Iran's economy, the regime has sought alternative methods to transfer proliferation sensitive technology. As part of this effort, shipping companies such as the OFAC-designated Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL) vessels could be used to transport Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) materials. In order to counter Iran's malign maritime activity and disrupt trade and procurement networks that could be used to acquire sensitive ballistic missile-related technology, CTR seeks proposals that build the capability of the maritime sector as well as port authority officials to comply with their obligations under UNSCR 2231. In particular, CTR seeks to:

- Train port authorities to investigate and deny port access or inspect sanctioned vessels.
- Train the maritime industries on practical measures to avoid financial and sanctions risks associated with providing material support to designated entities.
- Target countries could include, but are not limited to: Kazakhstan, UAE, Kuwait, India, Singapore, Taiwan, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Turkey, Brazil, Kenya, Tanzania, Indonesia, and Bulgaria.

**Counter-Proliferation Financing:** Iran continues to leverage shell companies, foreign facilitators, informal financial systems, cryptocurrencies, and cross-border bulk cash smuggling to acquire proliferation sensitive technology, including technologies related to ballistic missile development. CTR seeks project proposals that will enhance the abilities of partner governments and the private sector to identify, report, and disrupt Iranian proliferation finance activities. Proposals should focus on:

- Train government entities such as financial intelligence units and others to identify Iranian-linked proliferation finance activity, improve public-private information sharing, and implement national counterproliferation finance controls.
- Provide guidance to help financial institutions, Designated Non-Financial Persons and Businesses, cryptocurrency exchanges, and other relevant private sector stakeholders conduct enhanced due diligence to identify entities and activities associated with Iran's ballistic missile program and report suspicious transactions.
- Target jurisdictions include, but are not limited to: UAE, Turkey, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, Bangladesh, Belarus, Egypt, Taiwan authorities, Ethiopia, Singapore, India, Kenya, Seychelles, , and Ukraine.

**Enhanced Due-Diligence for Proliferation Sensitive Technology and Materials:** Iran seeks to import sensitive technology, including material that could be used in the production of ballistic missile systems. To counter these efforts, CTR will fund capacity-building projects that assist partner countries to implement measures to enforce restrictions in UNSCR 2231 or other relevant resolutions. Activities should focus on:

- Public-private sector cooperation and communication, Know-Your-Customer (KYC), suspicious transaction reporting, and characteristics of sanction evasion techniques that Iran could employ to acquire proliferation sensitive technology.
- Ideal participants would include enterprises and regulators that oversee transactions with dual-use materials and research.
- Target countries include, but are not limited to: Ukraine, Belarus, India, North Macedonia, Serbia, Slovenia, Singapore, and Turkey

**Prevent the Cyber-Enabled Theft of Proliferation Sensitive Technology by Iran:** To evade international sanctions on its acquisition of proliferation sensitive technology, Iran uses cyber-activities to acquire data on the development of key weapons systems and launder money. To address this threat, CTR seeks proposals that will

- Train suppliers of key technologies to enhance their systems to protect their proliferation sensitive data.
- Build the capacity of national authorities to adopt cybersecurity best-practices at financial institutions.
- While CTR expects to deploy these trainings globally, the initial focus of this line of effort will be countries in Eastern Europe (proliferation sensitive technology) and the Gulf States (money laundering).

**Enforcing Sanctions Against Illicit Commercial Aviation Activity:** As Iran seeks to evade international and U.S. sanctions related to its acquisition of proliferation sensitive technology, it may use Iranian commercial aviation companies, such as the OFAC designated Mahan Air, as a method of transferring proliferation-sensitive technology in violation of international sanctions. To counter these activities, CTR will support capacity-building projects that strengthen partner countries' ability to recognize and prevent Iranian commercial aviation exploitation. Projects should focus on:

- Training partners to notify service providers including aviation insurers, inspectors, international routers, freight forwarders, cargo storage agents, fueling technicians, and maintenance providers; and enhance their understanding of relevant U.S. and international sanctions.
- Target jurisdictions include, but are not limited to: Armenia, India, Malaysia, Kazakhstan, Turkey, Serbia, UAE, Taiwan authorities, and Thailand

**Using Commercially Available Data to Halt Iran Sanctions Evasion Activities/Open Source Efforts:** Iran operates a vast and diverse network of procurement routes, maritime vessels, individuals, and financial institutions to continue their sanctions-evading behavior. To disrupt Iran's efforts at transporting proliferation sensitive technology, CTR seeks to use commercially available data to provide actionable information that foreign partners can use to counter the transfer of proliferation sensitive technology. This effort is global and does not target any specific country.

In addition to these six categories, CTR is willing to consider innovative activities that address emerging and unanticipated proliferation threats, particularly efforts that involve the import or export of proliferation sensitive technology and other systems.

### **FY20 Approach**

**Tailored Engagement Strategies:** ISN/CTR sponsors projects that respond to each partner country's needs, capabilities, infrastructure, and existing legal and regulatory structures, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach. We will sponsor trainings that are based on an understanding of technical and human capacity in each partner country, take cultural considerations into account, and build upon past experience.

**Impactful and Measurable Engagements:** Although complex nonproliferation objectives demand persistent engagement with partner countries, discrete projects should individually advance progress toward a particular objective. Proposals should describe the end-state the project aims to achieve, along with specific, measurable, and realistic benchmarks by which to gauge progress toward that end-state. Compelling project proposals will establish milestones to be met during the training period, and describe observable progress in the adoption, implementation, or enhancement of nonproliferation or sanctions enforcement and compliance best practices.

**Multi-Implementer Teams:** ISN/CTR encourages the use of multi-implementer teams when collaboration will take advantage of each implementer's unique capabilities and expertise. Our implementers collaborate and share information as requested by ISN/CTR and may design and propose joint projects for joint implementation. In such cases, each collaborating organization must have distinct lines of effort for which it is clearly responsible, but there must also be a single point of contact in the lead organization accountable to ISN/CTR for the totality of project implementation and who can respond to ISN/CTR requests.

**Sustainability:** ISN/CTR programming builds on previous international and domestic efforts to institutionalize nonproliferation and sanctions enforcement practices. Proposals

should plainly state how the project will guarantee lasting procedural change, rather than a general increase in threat awareness. Compelling project proposals will describe how the outcome(s) of the project will endure in the absence of additional funding

### III. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

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

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

### IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

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

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

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

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

All applicants must register with Grants.gov prior to submitting an application.

**Registering with Grants.gov is a one-time process; however, it could take as long as two weeks to have the registration validated and confirmed. Please begin the registration process immediately to ensure that the process is completed well in advance of the deadline for applications.** Until that process is complete, you will not be issued a user password for Grants.gov, which is required for application submission. There are four steps that you must complete before you are able to register: (1) Obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet (if your organization does not have one already) by calling 1-866-705-5711; (2) Register with

Central Contractor Registry (CCR); (3) Register yourself as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR); and (4) Be authorized as an AOR by your organization. For more information, go to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Please note that your CCR registration must be annually renewed. Failure to renew your CCR registration may prohibit submission of an application through Grants.gov.

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

The completed submission must consist of the following four parts:

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

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

**Section 2 – Consolidated Project List**

This outlines the individual project proposals within your overall proposal submission

**Section 3 – Project Proposal(s):**

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

**Section 4 - Budget:**

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

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

Applicants must adhere to the requirements of the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR), including Fly America Act requirements, when proposing and conducting travel. For further information and current foreign per diem rates, please visit:

[https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per\\_diem.asp](https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp)

## V. AWARD SELECTION CRITERIA

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

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

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

and probability of loss, misuse, or unauthorized access to, or modification of information) on all covered information systems, and to rapidly report cyber incidents directly to the grantor.

## VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

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

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

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

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

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

- Using a template provided by ISN/CTR, the Recipient shall submit quarterly progress reports to the designated Grants Officer Representative (GOR) detailing:
  - Assistance activities conducted during the reporting period;
  - Milestones and successes achieved to date;
  - Key assistance activities remaining to be implemented with a projected timetable;
  - Details of any problems encountered with proposed solutions; and
  - Any other pertinent information requested by ISN/CTR.
- The Recipient shall provide the GOR with copies of all materials developed under this cooperative agreement.

- In addition to regular quarterly reports, the Recipient shall furnish the GOR with ad hoc reports as requested from time to time.

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

## **VII. DISCLAIMER**

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