
**Questions to and Answers from the Office to Monitor and Combat
Trafficking in Persons (TIP Office) about its Program to End Modern Slavery
(PEMS) Funding Opportunity**

2020

ELIGIBILITY

Q. Who is eligible to apply for funding?

A. U.S.-based and foreign non-profits, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), for-profit organizations, public international organizations (PIOs), and institutions of higher education are eligible to apply for funding under this solicitation.

For-profit organizations are not permitted to generate profits from grant-funded activities without explicit TIP Office approval once an award has been granted.

The Department of State's Office of the Procurement Executive must provide additional approval for grants awarded to for-profit entities.

Foreign governments are not eligible to apply, although governments may be beneficiaries of funded programs, provided that funding does not pay salaries of government agency personnel and that such assistance is not limited by U.S. law or TIP Office policy.

Q. Are small businesses, as defined by the U.S. government, eligible to apply?

A. Yes, but as with other for-profit organizations, generally the TIP Office does not permit groups to generate profits from grant-funded activities. Proposed activities to do so will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Q. Are local municipal entities in the United States eligible to apply for this particular funding opportunity?

A. A municipal entity would not be eligible for consideration *unless* properly classified as an NGO, institution of higher education, or a for-profit organization.

Q. May organizations that currently receive funds from the TIP Office apply for additional funding under this solicitation?

A. Yes, but only to propose projects that address the requirements listed in the funding opportunity.

Q. May an organization receiving funding from the State Department or from another government agency, related or un-related to TIP, apply?

A. Yes. The eligibility requirements for applying to this funding opportunity do not restrict applicants based on other sources of funding from the United States government, including funding from other bureaus within the Department of State.

LOGISTICS

Q. How much funding does the TIP Office have for PEMS?

A. Section 7060(f)(2) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2019 (Div. F., P.L. 116-6) (FY 2019 SFOAA).appropriated \$25,000,000 for this purpose. The award ceiling is up to \$15 million per country. Applicants may submit one proposal.

Q. What are the expected funding dates?

A. The Office expects to award the PEMS funds to successful applicant(s) by September 30, 2020.

Q. Where can I find specifics regarding projects previously funded by the TIP Office?

A. Applicants are encouraged to look to our website

<https://www.state.gov/tip-office-project-descriptions/> for information on TIP Office-funded projects from prior years.

Q. Is there a limit to the number of proposals that can be submitted by a single applicant?

A. Applicants may submit one proposal for one country.

CONTENT

Q. Are organizations eligible to receive indirect funds?

A. Regarding indirect costs, organizations without a Negotiated Indirect Cost Recovery Agreement (NICRA) agreement may account for a maximum of ten percent of these expenses as indirect costs when submitting a budget; please note this 10% de minimus rate is in accordance with 2 CFR 200.414(f). Organizations with NICRA agreements may account for indirect costs as a lump sum for the relevant percentage of funding as permitted by the NICRA. For organizations that do not have a NICRA and elect not to use the de minimus rate, identified “overhead costs” must be charged as direct costs.

Q. If an applicant proposes a partnership with government, civil society, another NGO or a PIO, does the partnership agreement have to be finalized or in writing at the time of the application?

A. Proposed partnerships must be referenced in the proposals to ensure that they are considered in the review, but partnerships need not be formalized at the time the proposal is submitted.

Q. May an organization submit a letter of intent?

A. Please review the funding opportunity carefully to ensure that your application meets the requirements for a proposal, which may not be the same as a letter of intent. The funding opportunity provides a detailed description of what needs to be included in the proposal.

Q. Who should be listed as the authorized certifying official on the SF-424-B?

A. The “certifying official” is the person within your organization who can / will sign the grant award if an award is made. This could be the organization’s director, a project manager, or grants coordinator, for example. This is also the only point of contact who will receive information regarding the status of the application.

Q. Where are the SF-424, SF 424 A, and SF-424-B forms located?

A. These forms must be completed through the application portal on SAMS-Domestic.

Q. If my organization is chosen for funding, then through an open and competitive bidding process found that our “sister” entity was the best entity to partner with to provide shelter or other services, for victims of trafficking, would we be able to award funds from our organization to our “sister” organization?

A. Applicants selected for funding under this funding opportunity are strongly encouraged to develop an open and competitive process for awarding sub-awards to other organizations if needed to implement specific projects to end modern slavery. Requests for sole source sub-awards will be considered by the TIP Office on a case by case basis after a prime award is made. A successful applicant shall not provide any funding to any organization for which there is a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest. Such a conflict of interest would arise if, for example, an employee, officer, or agent, or any immediate family member, has a financial or other interest in or a tangible personal benefit from an organization considered for a sub-award.

Q. Please explain the ‘pre-identified research partner.’

Applicants must include in the application a pre-identified research partner/s responsible for producing a baseline and endline prevalence estimate, as well as justification of why this research partner was chosen. We encourage a letter of intent to administer such responsibilities be included in the application. An accompanying line item budget for the research partner **must** also be included in the application.

Q. Are applicants required to address the type of trafficking as stated in the NOFO in each country?

A. Applications addressing forms of trafficking other than what is explicitly stated in the NOFO will not be considered for review. Applications for countries other than Costa Rica and South Africa will not be considered.

Q. Is there any other limitation on the duration of the grant period other than "less than 60 months (5 yrs)"? Is there a preferred duration?

A. As stated in the NOFO, “Program duration in months should not to exceed 60 months (5 years).” No preferred duration has been provided in the NOFO.

Q: May an application from a prime applicant include an “implementing organization” as a partner (sub-award) in its application?

A. The prime applicant may have a partner organization, but there can only be one prime awardee designated. All mandatory terms and conditions for a successful applicant also apply to any sub-awards made.

Q. Where do I find the Certification of Training requirement?

A. Section 8 – Certification of Training Requirement for Victim Assistance Personnel

This is a requirement for programs that provide *assistance to trafficking victims*, per Section 107A(b)(1) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act. Applicants must submit an attachment that contains the following statement undersigned by an official authorized to submit the proposal:

The applicant hereby certifies that, to the extent practicable, persons or entities providing legal services, social services, health services, or other assistance have completed, or will complete, training in connection with trafficking in persons.

An authorized official is a supervisor that oversees and manages the staff working with victim assistance in the country and/or region.

Please note, the recipient of this award is responsible for ensuring the Certification of Training requirement for all sub-awards identified at a later date.

Q. Is the applicant allowed to have in-house (within the coalition) research capacities to conduct baseline and outcome evaluation, or must the research component be awarded in subsequent open-competitive solicitations to be administered by this successful applicant?

A. Yes; the applicant is permitted to have in-house research capacities to conduct baseline and outcome evaluations and this element does not need to be sub-contracted and/or sub-awarded to an outside entity.

Q. Does the TIP Office expect / require applicants to be registered in the countries in which they intend to implement via sub-awards?

A. Primary organizations are not required to be registered in the countries they plan to implement sub-awards. However, such registration is strongly encouraged.

Q. Other than the pre-identified research partner, may the lead applicant pre-define another sub-awardee in the design of the proposal stage, with their operational scope and budgets planned for every year of the Program?

A. While applicants may submit pre-identified partners in addition to a pre-identified research partner in their proposals, the TIP Office strongly encourages that such sub-awardees be chosen following an open and competitive process initiated by an applicant following receipt of a prime award. If applicants feel strongly about pre-identifying sub-awardees other than the research partner in their application, they should emphasize the unique capabilities of the entity that make it best suited to perform activities.

Q. May a proposal be submitted for under a \$15 million?

A. Yes. The award ceiling is up to \$15 million. Applicants should submit budgets that are best suited to address the request in the NOFO at or below \$15 million.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Q. How do I unlock my SAMS-Domestic account or change my SAMS-Domestic password?

A. Unfortunately, the TIP Office is unable to unlock SAMS-Domestic account or reset passwords. For assistance with SAMS-Domestic please contact the ILMS Support Desk at 1-888-313-4567 (toll free for international callers) or submit a ticket using the ILMS Self Service Portal. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Q. What does an application include?

A. To ensure fairness, all applicants will have an equal chance to describe their proposed project. Detailed information on formatting requirements and more can be found in the funding opportunity.

Q. We are experiencing difficulty requesting a DUNS number.

A. For information and assistance with DUNS numbers, please contact the Help Desk via phone at **866-705-5711** or via email at govt@dnb.com. In your message, provide your contact information and a brief description of the problems you are experiencing.

Q. May an organization apply to work in a country where the organization is not physically present?

A. Yes, an organization may propose to work in a country where they do not currently have a physical presence.

Q. If an organization proposes a partnership with another organization, do all parties need to obtain a DUNS number, or only the applicant?

A. For the purpose of filling out the SF 424s and submitting an application, the only DUNS number required is that of the applicant – the principle organization which is requesting funding. (Note: A valid DUNS is not required for submission of an application on SAMS Domestic; however, a valid UEI number is required for organizations selected for an award. Organizations should verify their UEI number or take the steps needed to obtain one as soon as possible.)

Organizations proposing partnership or sub-award agreements in their proposals are advised that their partners may obtain a valid DUNS number in anticipation of selection for funding, as this information may be required for sub-award agreements.

Q. May two organizations or more organizations jointly submit an application?

A. Yes; however, there must be a single, intended prime award recipient designated. .

Q. When are applications due?

A. Applications are due on June 29, 2020 by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT).

Q. What should I do if I encounter difficulty using the SAMS-Domestic website?

A. For assistance with SAMS-Domestic (<https://mygrants.service-now.com/grants>) please contact Customer Support by calling 1-(888)-313-4567 or by creating an account on the ILMS Self Service Portal (<https://afsitsm.service-now.com/ilms/home>).

COMPETITIVE REVIEW

Q. How does the TIP Office decide which proposal(s) to fund?

A. Following the submission deadline, all proposals will be screened to determine whether they meet the technical requirements stated in this announcement. As a reminder, the TIP Office will only consider proposals that meet the very specific requirements outlined in the funding opportunity. Following the technical review, a formal content review of each full proposal that passes the technical review will commence. An intra- and interagency panel will review proposals for funding consideration. The panel will consider each proposal's merit as well as applicable limitations on U.S. foreign assistance. Panel recommendations will be presented to the Ambassador-at-Large or Acting Director for the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons for consideration.

Q. Are applicants required to submit a hard copy original signature with their proposal via mail?

A. No, only an electronic signature is required. No applications or supplemental documents are required via mail - only the items listed in the instructions on the solicitation. Applicants who experience COVID-19 related issues that prevent them from submitting an application via SAMS must reach out to JTIP grants mailbox email (JTIPGrants@state.gov) before the deadline to work with staff on alternative submission solutions.

Q. When do you expect to notify applicants if they are requested to submit a full proposal?

A. We expect to notify successful applicants by August 1, 2020.

Persons with additional questions about the requirements of the funding opportunity may contact JTIPGrants@state.gov.