

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues (S/GWI) Request for Statements of Interest:

WPS Technical Support (WPS TechS)

Statement of Interest (SOI) Deadline:	April 7, 2023 11:59 PM EST
Federal Agency Contact:	SGWIPROjectProposals@state.gov
Date Opened:	February 17, 2023
Questions Deadline:	March 10, 2023 11:59 PM EST
Funding Mechanism Type:	Cooperative Agreement
Estimated Number of Awards:	1-2
Estimated Funding Amount:	\$500,000
Cost Sharing:	Not required
Length of Project Period:	Up to 3 years
Fiscal Year of Funding:	FY 2022
Type of Funding	Economic Support Fund
CFDA Number	19.801
Anticipated Award Date:	August 2023
Estimated Program Start Date:	No later than September 30, 2023

1. Funding Opportunity Synopsis

S/GWI announces a Request for Statements of Interest (RSOI) outlining concepts and capacity to design, implement, manage, and evaluate a project that will provide technical expert support for local, national, or global communities and/or physical Centers of Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Excellence.

S/GWI is seeking statements of interest to advance the theory of change that:

If WPS leaders, from grassroots to governments, and civil society organizations advancing WPS around the world have platforms, opportunities, access, and support for sharing technical expertise, supportive networks, and problem solving, **then** they can then foster a growing, sustainable, and technically expert network to expand the integration of WPS across global approaches to conflict, peacebuilding, security, counter violent extremism/counter terrorism, and other relevant areas identified as needing WPS integration support.

Note: S/GWI strongly encourages applicants to immediately access [SAMS Domestic](#), the required system for submission, in order to obtain a username and password. For further instructions, please see Section IV below.

The submission of the Statement of Interest (SOI) is the first step in a two-step process. Applicants must first submit a SOI consisting of a concise, three-page concept note that clearly communicates a program idea and its objectives. This is not a full proposal. The purpose of the SOI process is to allow applicants to submit program ideas for evaluation prior to requiring the development of a full proposal application. Upon a merit review of eligible SOIs, selected applicants will be invited to expand on their program idea(s) by submitting a full proposal application. Full proposals will go through a second merit review before final funding decisions are made.

Each **prime** applicant may submit up to **two** SOIs. There is no limit to the number of SOIs on which an applicant may serve as a **sub**-awardee. Upon review of eligible SOIs, S/GWI will invite selected applicants to expand their ideas into full proposal applications. In the event that a prime applicant has submitted two SOIs and both are deemed competitive, the applicant will be asked to submit a full proposal for the more competitive of the two.

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Priority Regions and Countries: Applicants must propose work equal to the planned funding amount (\$500,000) to provide support to local, national, or global communities and/or WPS Centers of Excellence. S/GWI recommends applicant proposals include support for multiple, global existing or nascent communities/centers/hubs that advance WPS leadership by civil society. In the SOI, applicants should highlight civil society partnerships, including academia, and WPS leaders who would be interested in providing and utilizing WPS technical support from and for non-donor countries. Final selection of centers, hubs, communities, region(s), and/or countries that may be supported via this cooperative agreement will be confirmed in consultation between the successful applicant and S/GWI, and subsequently coordinated with the United Nations (UN) WPS Focal Points Network and UN Women. Regional or country selections may be subject to additional approvals and/or vetting.

The final recipient will work with S/GWI on supporting agreed upon Potential Priority Locations for WPS, Centers, Communities, or Hubs of Excellence/Expertise that may request WPS technical support to be provided under this mechanism, including some centers that may already exist.

Other locations may be considered as requested by the UN WPS Focal Points Network in partnership with UN Women, or civil society, through consultation and approval with S/GWI.

S/GWI does not, as a general matter, use foreign assistance resources to fund programs to benefit developed countries. Developed countries are considered to be those in the high-income

category as defined¹ by the World Bank using the GNI per capita (Atlas method).² The World Bank's list of countries by GNI can be found on their website.³

Applicants to this RSOI should be aware of, complement, build on, and not overlap with existing in-country, regional, and global programming.

Cost Sharing or Matching: *optional*

Eligible Applicants:

Organizations submitting SOIs must meet the following criteria:

- Be a U.S.- or foreign-based non-profit and non-governmental organization (NGO); or
- Be a private, public, or state institution of higher education; and
- Have existing, or the capacity to develop, active and **equitable** partnerships with in-country partners, entities, and relevant stakeholders, including NGOs and private sector actors; and
- Have demonstrable experience administering successful and preferably similar programs in size, scope, and focus. S/GWI reserves the right to request additional background information on organizations that do not have previous experience administering federal awards. These applicants may be subject to limited funding on a pilot basis.

Public International Organizations (PIOs) are not eligible to apply as prime applicants under this RSOI, though they may partner on a proposal as a sub-awardee.

S/GWI maintains an anti-discrimination policy in all its programs and activities. S/GWI welcomes SOI submissions irrespective of race, ethnicity, heritage, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or other status. S/GWI is dedicated to promoting human rights, fundamental freedoms, and equality for all and seeks partners that will strive to inclusively implement these democratic values.

S/GWI works to ensure the integration of gender equality and the advancement of women and girls in U.S. foreign policy. S/GWI programs are flexible, civil society-focused, and global in reach. They are designed to incubate locally informed and implemented civil society-based solutions, inspiring and providing promising practices to advance women's equality and empowerment as a keystone of U.S. foreign policy. Learning from this program will inform other U.S. policy, programs, and partnerships.

Required Registrations:

All prime organizations, whether based in the United States or in another country, must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and an active registration with the SAM.gov **before submitting an application**. S/GWI may **not** review applications from or make awards to applicants that

¹ <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519>

² <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519>

³ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.CD>

have not completed all applicable UEI and SAM.gov requirements. A UEI is one of the data elements mandated by Public Law 109-282, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), for all Federal awards.

Note: As of April 2022, a DUNS number is no longer required for federal assistance applications.

The 2 CFR 200 requires that sub-grantees obtain a UEI number. Please note the UEI for sub-grantees is not required at the time of application but will be required before the award is processed and/or directed to a sub-grantee.

Note: The process of obtaining or renewing a SAM.gov registration may take anywhere from 4-8 weeks. Please begin your registration as early as possible.

Organizations **based in the United States** or that pay employees within the United States will need an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code, and a UEI number prior to registering in SAM.gov.

Organizations **based outside of the United States** and that do not pay employees within the United States do not need an EIN from the IRS, but do need a UEI number prior to registering in SAM.gov. **Please note that as of December 2022, organizations based outside of the United States that do not intend to apply for U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) awards are no longer required to have a NATO CAGE (NCAGE) code to apply for non-DoD foreign assistance funding opportunities.** If an applicant organization is mid-registration and wishes to remove an NCAGE code from their SAM.gov registration, the applicant should [submit a help desk ticket](#) (“incident”) with the Federal Service Desk (FSD) online at www.fsd.gov to seek guidance on how to do so.

Organizations based outside of the United States and that DO NOT plan to do business with the DoD should follow the below instructions:

Step 1: Proceed to SAM.gov to obtain a UEI and complete the SAM.gov registration process. SAM.gov registration must be renewed annually.

Organizations based outside of the United States and that DO plan to do business with the DoD should follow the below instructions:

Step 1: Apply for an NCAGE code by following the instructions on the NSPA NATO website linked below:

- NCAGE Homepage: <https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/sc/CageList.aspx>
- NCAGE Code Request Tool (NCRT):
<https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/Codification/CageTool/home>

For NCAGE help from within the United States, call +1 (888) 227-2423.

For NCAGE help from outside the United States, call +1 (269) 961-7766.

Or, email NCAGE@dlis.dla.mil for any problems in applying for an NCAGE code.

Step 2: After receiving an NCAGE code, proceed to SAM.gov to obtain a UEI and complete the SAM.gov registration process. SAM.gov registration must be renewed annually.

All prime organizations must also continue to maintain 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 at the time of application, the applicant may be deemed technically ineligible to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

Please refer to 2 CFR 25.200 for additional information.

Note: SAM.gov is not the same as SAMS Domestic. It is free of charge to register in both systems, but the registration processes are different.

Information is included on the SAM.gov website to help international registrations, including “Quick Start Guide for International Registrations” and “Helpful Hints.” Navigate to www.SAM.gov, click “HELP” in the top navigation bar, then click “Explore” and “New to SAM.gov?” for general information. Please note, guidance on SAM.gov and the guidance on GSA’s website about requirement for registering in SAM.gov is subject to change and is currently being updated. Applicants should review the website for the most up-to-date guidance.

The attached “AQM Guidance for NCAGE-SAM.gov for Grant Applicants as of Dec. 2022” is a compilation of resources gathered by the Department’s Office of Acquisitions Management (AQM). Any content shown from SAM.gov is not owned by the Department of State. This guidance and instruction are to the best of our knowledge based at the time of posting this solicitation. **Where guidance in these attachments differs from the SAM.gov website, SAM.gov prevails and the applicant is encouraged to seek and document responses provided by the SAM.gov help desk.**

II. Requested Objectives for Statements of Interest

Background Information:

Women are consistently underrepresented in peace and security leadership and decision-making including in peacebuilding, political transitions, efforts to counter violent extremism, humanitarian contexts, and more; this lack of inclusion limits the scope and effectiveness of peace and security efforts. Supporting women’s meaningful participation, leadership, and

protection in order to promote peace and respond to conflict, builds a more secure and equitable global community. Globally, S/GWI promotes women in building peace and security, including through safe access to decision- and policymaking, by advancing women's meaningful participation and leadership in conflict prevention and response, political/civic participation, peacebuilding, political transitions, WPS protection/safety, and countering violent extremism. S/GWI strives to strengthen WPS relationships and communities, the bodies of evidence on WPS, and best practices to amplify the importance of women's leadership and meaningful participation in conflict prevention and response, meaningful political/civic participation, peacebuilding, political transitions, protection/safety, and countering terrorism and violent extremism.

WPS leaders around the world work tirelessly to advance equitable, inclusive shifts in how power, conflict, and participation are realized in peace and security processes and systems. The WPS Focal Points Network,⁴ created in 2016, is strengthening the implementation of the WPS agenda. Donors and leaders, such as UN Women,⁵ continue to provide support and link together leaders in the WPS movement, from the grassroots to leaders of nations and ambassadors around the world. Several countries have now been more formally establishing WPS Centers of Excellence (WPS-Centers),⁶ while others have expressed interest in doing so, often in connection to the WPS Focal Point Network. The WPS-Centers and WPS Focal Points Network encompass policy advocacy, diplomatic engagement, and programming. Within the scope of funding available for this RSOI, S/GWI aims to support WPS civil society, including academia, and grassroots organizers in sharing technical expertise and striving for inclusive recognition, participation, and connection with the WPS Centers and/or other WPS communities.

WPS Centers could be government, civil society, and/or local WPS leader-led, and would be designed to coordinate specific regional WPS needs related to engagement, education, training, and collaboration through shared strategic and diplomatic best practices to advance the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325.

Even as the influence and scope of WPS work has grown since UNSCR 1325 was created, local, national, and regional WPS leaders need support as they provide technical assistance to others looking to advance WPS and ensure that WPS is formally integrated across political participation, peace, and security efforts around the world. Additionally, highlighting and coordinating existing efforts on training, leadership, organizations, data gathering and analysis, and networks is crucial to the success of WPS now and for years to come.

This new funding opportunity for a grant under this RSOI will support mutual technical assistance between and among WPS leaders and advocacy for civil society integration of WPS across peace and security work. This will require global, flexible implementation with the ability to provide tailored technical assistance support provided by and for WPS leaders, and

⁴ <https://wpsfocalpointsnetwork.org/>

⁵ <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security>

⁶ See for example: <https://namibia.un.org/en/99480-namibia-launches-international-women-peace-centre> and <https://arabstates.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2021/06/sheikha-fatima-bint-mubarak-women-peace-and-security-centre-of-excellence-launched>, amongst others.

engagement, in close consultation with S/GWI, with global, national, regional, and international networks of WPS champions.

Policy Statement:

The project resulting from this RSOI should support or complement S/GWI's implementation of the National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality,⁷ as well as the U.S. Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017,⁸ the 2019 U.S. Strategy on WPS,⁹ and the 2020 Department of State Plan to Implement the U.S. Strategy on WPS¹⁰. These strategies have identified crucial components of women's leadership and meaningful participation for the U.S. approach to peace and security, including for conflict prevention and response, meaningful political and civic participation, peacebuilding, political transitions, WPS protection/safety, and countering violent extremism. S/GWI programs also support human rights and inclusive democracy around the world by furthering gender equity and equality.

UN Women and the WPS Focal Points Network will collaborate over the coming year to engage with countries interested in developing and/or advancing their WPS Centers or other potential hubs or communities advancing WPS. The S/GWI project will complement the efforts of UN Women and the WPS Focal Points Network by meaningfully engaging, positioning, and leveraging civil society through the WPS Centers.

Inclusive Programming Approach:

S/GWI is committed to inclusion, diversity, equity, equality, and respect for human rights. S/GWI projects are expected to foster and/or address:

- **Inclusive Environments:** projects foster involvement, respect, and connection in which the richness of diverse ideas, backgrounds, and perspectives are valued for all individuals.
- **Social Inclusion:** projects foster how individuals and groups take part in society – enhancing the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity.
- **Intersectional** nature of power and identity: projects consider and account for intersecting aspects of identity (sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, sex characteristics, class, religion, race, ethnicity, age, disability, nationality, etc.) interact with overlapping systems of discrimination and the need to address the impact these have on systemic access.

⁷ NGS: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/National-Strategy-on-Gender-Equity-and-Equality.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.congress.gov/115/plaws/publ68/PLAW-115publ68.pdf>

⁹ https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/WPS_Strategy_10_October2019.pdf

¹⁰ <https://www.state.gov/the-department-of-states-plan-to-implement-the-u-s-strategy-on-women-peace-and-security/>

RSOI Results Framework:

Theory of Change:

If WPS leaders, from grassroots to governments, and civil society organizations advancing WPS around the world have platforms, opportunities, access, and support for sharing technical expertise, supportive networks, and problem solving, **then** they can then foster a growing, sustainable, and technically expert network to expand the integration of WPS across global approaches to conflict, peacebuilding, security, counter violent extremism/counter terrorism, and other relevant areas identified as needing WPS integration support.

Goal:

To support the global community of WPS leaders (globally, regionally, nationally, and locally) by providing technical expertise, support, and cross-country/regional best practices and lessons learned for government, civil society, and community actors globally; and foster a sustainable community advancing the WPS movement.

Objective:

- **Support access to new, existing, and future collaboration for WPS leaders and civil society to share learning, participate meaningfully, and expand WPS technical expertise:** As requested by S/GWI, support inclusive participation in virtual, in-person, or written exchanges of technical expertise, lessons learned, best practices, and support across locations for supporting WPS Centers and/or communities/hubs. Ideally this advocacy and exchange of expertise will be in coordination with existing communities, hubs, or centers of WPS leaders focused on sharing capacity and best practices with each other.
 - S/GWI expects to coordinate with UN Women and the WPS Focal Points Network, potentially partnering with WPS Centers, and other WPS coordinating networks to provide strategic support.
 - This could, following consultation with S/GWI, UN Women, and the WPS Focal Points Network include integrating WPS expertise into peace or security focused centers or communities focused that have not explicitly included WPS or want to enhance WPS integration.

Illustrative activities may include:

- **Establish a network/roster of WPS civil society experts who can lead training in various peace and security issues** so that when a Center/community would like to implement training with a particular peace and security focus, this network/roster can be tapped to bring in WPS civil society experts to lead relevant training.
- **Support Access and Advocacy by Civil Society to enhance WPS implementation** to reinforce support for local leaders creating local solutions to implementing WPS, as well as the best practice of grounding WPS work in community experiences and a survivor-centered approach. Activities may support access to peace and security forums or centers for grassroots and civil society leaders to share their WPS expertise.

- **Provide Examples, Research, and Tools explaining how GBV and the WPS Protection Pillar can be strengthened.** Amplify technical leadership by WPS leaders on how to prevent, mitigate, and respond to the disproportionate risks of GBV, including gender-based online harassment and abuse, faced by women in peace and security decision-making and processes, women human rights defenders, and women in politics.
- **Create and lead WPS learning communities of practice.** These communities would bring WPS-Centers participants together with various WPS civil society leaders and academia to and provide space for WPS expertise to be elevated and integrated into local, national, and regional WPS Efforts. Such communities would provide deeper learning through ongoing engagement, informal and formal exchanges, and applied learning opportunities.
- **Develop self-guided training and supporting materials for WPS-Center participants.** Such activity would cover relevant WPS issues and be pre-recorded and developed so that users can complete the training at their own pace and location.

Intended Results:

Possible intended results may include:

- WPS leaders and academia provide mutual technical expertise across national, regional, and global locations.
- WPS leaders effectively advocate for WPS integration across political participation, peace, and security lines of international, national, and local efforts.
- WPS civil society and grassroots organizations, and localized strategies, methods, and solutions are identified – and integrated into the efforts of WPS-Centers to address the unique peacebuilding contexts their participants are navigating.
- WPS communities, WPS networks, WPS advocates and practitioners, and WPS-Centers lead and solidify and leverage their organization, structures, and relationships.
- Project provides effective technical support to amplify the leadership of grassroots, national, and global WPS experts and organizations across local, national, or global communities and/or WPS Centers/hubs.

Indicators:

Indicators for inclusion in a monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) plan at the later full proposal stage should include at least some of the following as relevant:

- GNDR-8: Number of persons trained with USG assistance to advance outcomes consistent with gender equality or female empowerment through their roles in public or private sector institutions or organizations
- GNDR-9: Number of training and capacity building activities conducted with USG assistance that are designed to promote the participation of women or the integration of gender perspectives in security sector institutions or activities.
- GNDR-10: Number of local women participating in a substantive role or position in a peacebuilding process supported with USG assistance.
- DR.4.2-2b: 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
- DR.3.1-2a: Number of women's rights groups trained in conflict mediation/resolution skills or consensus-building techniques with U.S. Government assistance

Applicants may also propose other indicators relevant to the proposed activities for consideration. S/GWI eventually expects **at least one outcome indicator for each objective** in the final MEL plan to reflect the overarching logic model for the proposal, but respects that those will be finalized during the start-up stages of an award.

SOI Requirements:

Applicants should propose staffing structures that provide adequate oversight and central management but maximize appropriate and local expertise and leadership (rather than defaulting to in-house experts). S/GWI welcomes creative partnership structures, such as collaboration with smaller NGOs, academic institutions, or technical experts that can serve as short-term consultants to complement existing local leadership and expertise. **Support for the establishment of new in-country offices is not envisioned under this RSOI.**

While landscape assessments; gender and inclusion analyses; monitoring, learning, and evaluation (MEL) plans; risk assessment and mitigation plans including safeguards to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA); provision of psychosocial support for staff and beneficiaries; and sustainability plans are **not** required as part of the SOI, all organizations that are invited to submit a full proposal **will** be required to submit this information at that time. Full proposals, once solicited, should also seek to minimize the harmful effects of local competition for resources in their program designs. Please review this RSOI in full – including all annexes – to inform your SOI design and ensure your requested budget amount sufficiently covers these award requirements.

Applicants are advised that an award may be conditioned upon vetting to evaluate the risk that funds may benefit terrorists or their supporters.

Substantial Involvement:

Applicants submitting SOIs should be aware that if their application results in an award, S/GWI will be involved in the program and management performance of the grant in the form of a cooperative agreement, which allows S/GWI consultation and technical collaboration rights on specified project activities. Examples of substantial involvement can include:

- a) Approval of Recipient annual work plan, including planned activities for the following year and changes to any activity to be carried out under the agreement;
- b) Collaboration in identifying/developing/approving additional countries/projects for implementation in consultation with U.S. embassies, as appropriate;
- c) Collaboration on identifying/approving additional international partner organizations who may work in coordination with S/GWI and recipient.

- d) Approval of sub-award recipients, concurrence on the substantive provisions of the sub-awards, and coordination with other cooperating agencies;
- e) Review of any notice of funding opportunities and selection of recipients;
- f) Approval of the MEL plan for the Recipient and sub-award recipients;
- g) Approval of Terms of Reference (TOR) for program evaluations;
- h) Approval of hiring/opportunity announcements and selection/assignment of technical experts in areas such as gender, climate, including but not limited to key personnel;
- i) Collaboration in assessing progress and identifying issues that might affect the success of the program; and
- j) Other approvals that will be included in the award agreement.

Program Performance Period: The Department of State will entertain applications for continuation grants funded under these awards beyond the initial budget period on a non-competitive basis subject to availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the program, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the U.S. Department of State.

III. 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, 2022 (Div. G, P.L. 117-103) (SFOAA). ESF is available for foreign assistance programs supporting economic or political stability. Under section 531(e) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (FAA), ESF may not be used for military or paramilitary purposes. Given restrictions under section 660 of the FAA, assistance may be provided to law enforcement forces only under certain circumstances. Activities that involve assistance to law enforcement will be subject to vetting to ensure compliance with section 620M of the FAA (“[Leahy Vetting](#)”).

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.

All beneficiaries and country locations must be approved in advance by S/GWI.

The following activities and costs **will not** be entertained under this announcement in SOIs or in subsequent proposals submitted by applicants to S/GWI:

- Construction
- 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.
- 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.
- Initiatives directed towards a permanent diaspora community as ultimate beneficiaries.
- Projects that have a predominant academic or basic research focus.
- Social welfare projects that purely provide service-delivery or humanitarian assistance.
- Costs incurred to complete activities begun with other funds.
- Medical and psychological research or clinical studies using human subjects.
- Projects exclusively of a commercial or profit-making nature.
- Cultural presentations, cultural research, cultural clubs, or festivals, etc. unless they have a specific programmatic purpose.
- Entertainment costs (e.g., receptions, social activities, ceremonies, guided tours) unless they have a specific programmatic purpose.

IV. Submission Instructions and Technical Eligibility

Required Documents:

Complete SOI submissions **must** include the following:

1. Completed and signed SF-424 and SF424B and SF-LLL, as directed on SAMS Domestic; and,
2. Program Statement (not to exceed three [3] pages in Microsoft Word, Times New Roman, no smaller than 12-point font) that includes:
 - a. A table listing:
 - i. Name of the organization;
 - ii. The target countries/regions;
 - iii. The total amount of funding requested from S/GWI, total amount of cost-share (if any; cost share is NOT required), and total program amount (S/GWI funds + cost-share); and,
 - iv. Program length;
 - b. A synopsis of the project, including a brief statement on how the program will have a demonstrated impact and engage relevant stakeholders. The synopsis must address how the applicant will conduct gender and inclusion analysis and MEL as well as foster sustainability. The SOI should identify local partners as appropriate;
 - c. A concise breakdown explicitly identifying the project's objectives and the activities and expected results that contribute to each objective; and,
 - d. A brief description that demonstrates relevant organizational and staff expertise and capacity to implement the program and manage a U.S. government award.
3. Ability to support potential WPS-Center locations and civil society technical experts (not to exceed one [1] page)
 - a. To explain ability to support technical assistance to multiple potential WPS-Center locations and broader WPS communities of excellence

- b. To include a description of civil society or academic interest in engaging in mutual technical support

Applicant Questions:

Questions must be submitted by the Questions Deadline to SGWIPROjectProposals@state.gov using the email subject line, “WPS TechS: [Applicant Organization Name] Questions.” To maintain fairness and transparency in competition, S/GWI will compile any substantive questions received along with the responses and post them in a document on grants.gov and SAMS Domestic. Substantive questions will not be fielded outside of this process or after the deadline.

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

V. Application Review and Selection Process

The Grants Officer will determine technical eligibility for all SOI submissions. All technically eligible SOIs will then be reviewed against the same five criteria by an S/GWI Review Panel: Organizational Capacity and Past Performance; Program Strategy; Gender Analysis, Inclusion and Do No Harm; Performance Monitoring, Learning, and Evaluation; and Sustainability.

Additionally, the Panel will evaluate how the SOI meets the solicitation request, U.S. foreign policy goals, and S/GWI’s overall priority needs. Panelists review each SOI individually against the evaluation criteria, not against competing SOIs. To ensure all SOIs receive a balanced evaluation, the S/GWI Review Panel will review each document up to the specified page limit and no further. All Panelists must sign non-disclosure agreements and conflict of interest agreements.

S/GWI Review Panels generally include representatives from S/GWI as well as other State Department offices. Once a SOI is approved, selected applicants will be invited to submit full proposal applications based on their SOIs. Unless directed otherwise by the applicant organization, S/GWI may also refer SOIs for possible consideration for other U.S. government related funding opportunities.

The Panel may provide conditions and/or recommendations on SOIs to enhance the proposed program, which must be addressed by the organization in the full proposal application. To ensure effective use of limited S/GWI funds, conditions and recommendations may include requests to increase, decrease, clarify, and/or justify costs and program activities.

S/GWI reserves the right to make a final determination regarding all funding matters, pending funding availability.

Review Criteria:

The following criteria are listed in no particular order of importance:

1. Organizational Capacity and Past Performance (25/100 points):

- Applicant demonstrates an institutional record of successful relevant programs in areas such as:
 - Supporting technical leadership by civil society related to WPS, coordinating with multiple donor bodies (including but not limited to S/GWI, UN Women, and the WPS Focal Points Network) while ensuring that civil society leaders have the lead whenever possible, and supporting advocacy for advancing WPS, gender equity and equality, and decolonization of peacebuilding,

2. Program Strategy (25/100 points):

- Applicant proposes evidence-based approaches to addressing the objectives of the RSOI.
- Applicant demonstrates concrete approaches for equitable partnership with a range of existing women and/or girl-led or –serving civil society organizations to further their impact.
- Application complements / builds on / does not overlap with existing in-country efforts.
- Applicant proposes staffing structures that leverage appropriate internal and external expertise but maximize support and funding for local leadership.

3. Gender and Inclusion Analysis, Do No Harm (20/100 points):

- Applicant demonstrates plans and capacity for effectively applying a gender and inclusion analysis to program design and implementation.
- Applicant describes sound approaches to inclusion, including but not limited to ethnic and religious minorities, individuals with disabilities, and other historically marginalized groups.
- Applicant demonstrates application of Do No Harm and conflict sensitivity principles.

4. Performance Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) (15/100 points):

- Applicant clearly describes the results to be achieved and demonstrates capacity to measure progress towards those results in a way that reflects local perspectives.
- Proposed outcomes are tangible and achievable within the grant program period.

5. Sustainability (15/100 points):

- Applicant articulates an approach to building local partner capacity to continue their work once funding from this program ends.

Technical Eligibility:

S/GWI reserves the right to award more or less than the funds requested, including estimated individual award floor and ceiling amounts, under such circumstances as it may deem to be in the best interest of the U.S. government.

Technically eligible SOIs are those which:

1. Arrive electronically via SAMS Domestic (see below) by the deadline, under this announcement.
2. Are in English.
3. Heed all instructions and do not violate any of the guidelines stated in this solicitation

For all SOI documents please ensure:

1. All pages are numbered;
2. All documents are formatted to 8 ½ x 11 paper; and,
3. All documents are single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, with 1-inch margins. Captions and footnotes may be 10-point Times New Roman font. Font sizes in charts and tables can be reformatted to fit within one page width.

SAMS Domestic automatically logs the date and time a submission is made, and the Department of State will use this information to determine whether it has been submitted on time. Late submissions are neither reviewed nor considered unless SGWIPProjectProposals@state.gov is contacted prior to the deadline and is provided with a screenshot or other evidence of a system error caused by SAMS Domestic (<https://mygrants.servicenowservices.com>) that is outside of the applicant's control and is the sole reason for a late submission. Applicants should not expect a notification from S/GWI upon receiving their SOI(s). It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all material submitted in the SOI package is complete, accurate, and current.

Submission:

All application submissions must be made electronically via SAMS Domestic (<https://mygrants.servicenowservices.com>). S/GWI will **not** accept SOIs submitted via grants.gov, email, fax, the postal system, delivery companies, or couriers.

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 by SAMS Domestic or Grants.gov in its entirety. S/GWI bears no responsibility for disqualification that result from applicants not being registered before the due date, for system errors in either SAMS Domestic or Grants.gov, or other errors in the application process. Additionally, S/GWI strongly encourages applicants to save a screen shot of the checklist showing all documents submitted in case any document fails to upload successfully.

Faxed, couriered, or emailed documents will **not** be accepted. Reasonable accommodations may, in appropriate circumstances, be provided to applicants with disabilities or for security reasons. Applicants must follow all formatting instructions in the applicable NOFO and these instructions.

S/GWI encourages organizations to **submit applications during normal business hours** (Monday – Friday, 9:00AM - 5:00PM Eastern Standard Time [EST]). If an applicant

experiences technical difficulties and has contacted the appropriate helpdesk but is not receiving timely assistance (e.g., if you have not received a response within 48 hours of contacting the helpdesk), you may contact the S/GWI point of contact listed on page 1 of this RSOI. The point of contact may assist in contacting the appropriate helpdesk.

Note: The Grants Officer will determine technical eligibility of all applications.

SAMS Domestic Applications:

Applicants using SAMS Domestic for the first time should complete their “New Organization Registration.” To register with SAMS Domestic, click “Login to <https://mygrants.servicenowservices.com>” and follow the “create an account” link.

Organizations must remember to save a screen shot of the checklist showing all documents submitted in case any document fails to upload successfully.

SAMS Domestic Help Desk:

For assistance with SAMS Domestic accounts and technical issues related to the system, please contact the ILMS help desk by phone at +1 (888) 313-4567 (toll charges apply for international callers) or through the Self Service online portal that can be accessed from <https://afsitsm.service-now.com/ilms/home>. Customer support is available 24/7.

VI. Additional Information

S/GWI will not consider SOIs that reflect any type of support for any member, affiliate, or representative of a designated terrorist organization.

S/GWI may ask successful applicant(s) to incorporate coordination of an implementer and stakeholder meeting into the Scope of Work of the final project. S/GWI will discuss this possibility with particular applicant(s) during the proposal negotiation phase.

Organizations should be aware that S/GWI understands that some information contained in SOIs may be considered sensitive or proprietary and will make appropriate efforts to protect such information. However, organizations are advised that S/GWI cannot guarantee that such information will not be disclosed, including pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or other similar statutes.

The applicant/recipient of the award and any sub-recipient under the award must comply with all applicable terms and conditions, in addition to the assurance and certifications made part of the Notice of Award. 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/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/U.S.-Department-of-State-Standard-Terms-and-Conditions-10-21-2020.pdf>.

Organizations should be aware that if ultimately selected for an award, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards set forth in 2 CFR Chapter 200 (Sub-Chapters A through F) shall apply to all non-Federal entities, except for assistance awards to Individuals and Foreign Public Entities. Please note that as of December 26, 2014, 2 CFR 200 (Sub-Chapters A through E) now applies to foreign organizations.

In addition, applicants/recipients of the award and any sub-recipient under the award must comply with the S/GWI-specific award provisions included in Annex A.

The information in this solicitation including its Annexes is binding and may not be modified by any S/GWI representative. **Explanatory information provided by S/GWI that contradicts this language will not be binding.** Issuance of the solicitation and negotiation of SOIs or applications does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government. S/GWI reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program evaluation requirements.

This solicitation will appear on www.grants.gov and SAMS Domestic (<https://mygrants.servicenowservices.com>) although **SOI submissions will only be accepted through SAMS Domestic.**

ANNEX A: Bureau-Specific Award Provisions

I. Gender Analysis

Prior to implementing activities, the Recipient must document a gender analysis in consultation with local partners for each of the countries or geographic areas where they propose to program. The gender analysis must demonstrate how activities account for the different ways in which they might impact, and be impacted by men, women, boys, and girls¹ of all backgrounds how this has been integrated into the program design in order to narrow existing gender inequities. S/GWI may approve the Recipient to do the initial gender analysis either before or during a project start-up / assessment phase.

The Recipient shall regularly monitor and reflect upon the gender analysis together with local partners and propose in writing any significant adjustments to the program design for S/GWI concurrence. This process shall take place at the frequency set out in the Recipient's proposal, unless otherwise agreed with S/GWI in writing.

Within its Quarterly Progress Reports (QPRs) and its final evaluation(s), the Recipient will report specifically on progress towards addressing the gaps and opportunities identified in the gender analysis.

II. Risk Assessments and Do No Harm

In line with Do No Harm principles, Recipient risk assessment and mitigation plans must address risk to project beneficiaries in addition to risks to staff and project implementation. These should explicitly address gender-related risks and mitigating actions, as identified in the gender analysis.

I. Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

The recipient will take all practical steps in accordance with their internal controls and existing policies and procedures to address the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA). In accordance with the internal control requirements in 2 CFR 200.303, which require the recipient to establish standards of conduct for its employees, the recipient must ensure that all its employees adhere to these standards of conduct in a manner that incorporates safeguarding against the sexual exploitation and abuse of beneficiaries, including but not limited to updating internal policies and procedures, as applicable and appropriate, and conducting appropriate monitoring of beneficiaries, as required by 2 CFR 200.329, which stipulates that the "non-Federal entity must monitor its activities under Federal awards to assure compliance with applicable Federal requirements." If the recipient determines that the conduct of any recipient employee is not in accordance with this requirement, the recipient must address the situation in accordance with the recipient's internal policies and procedures.

¹ This list is a starting point of people to include, but other communities or countries may have or prefer different titles or breakdowns, such as "youth," "children," "elders," "Kinnar," "fa'afafine" or many more groups/categories. This list is not meant to limit your analysis, but to be a helpful reminder to consult for the program context.

II. Non-Discrimination

S/GWI policy requires that the recipient not discriminate against any beneficiaries in implementation of this award, such as, but not limited to, by withholding, adversely impacting, or denying equitable access to the benefits provided through this award on the basis of any factor not expressly stated in the award. This includes, for example, race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy), national origin, disability, age, genetic information, marital status, parental status, political affiliation, or veteran's status. Nothing in this provision is intended to limit the ability of the recipient to target activities toward the assistance needs of certain populations as defined in the award.

III. Program Impact, Highlights, Success Stories

In quarterly reporting, the Recipient shall share success stories and/or highlights--or confirm that there were none for that quarter. Examples include program impact stories about (a) individual beneficiaries; (b) organizational, project, or program-level highlights; and (c) lessons learned and adapted to during implementation. The Recipient should indicate whether the information can be used in public communications by S/GWI and/or the broader U.S. Government. This may include, but is not limited to, use in remarks, social media, and website text. The privacy and safety of program beneficiaries is paramount; the Recipient shall ensure that appropriate permissions have been granted by those included in text and photos and that risks have been assessed and mitigated prior to including the information in quarterly reporting. The reporting should include high-resolution photos, photo credit information, and confirmation that appropriate permissions have been obtained from subjects/photographers for using the photos, where applicable.

IV. Program Evaluations

The Recipient is required to budget and arrange for independent program evaluations in accordance with its approved proposal and any subsequent changes agreed with S/GWI in writing. In the spirit of the Evidence Act,² S/GWI ask that evaluation reports be written with the expectation that they will be made public. **S/GWI prioritizes the safety and security of partners, participants, and beneficiaries of its work.** The Recipient should therefore aim to limit the amount of sensitive, potentially sensitive, or personal identifying information (PII) in evaluation narratives to allow this information to be easily redacted. Alternatively, this type of information can be placed in an annex that can be withheld from publication. In the event that this is not feasible or there is any concern for partners', participants', or beneficiaries' safety, an evaluation will not be made public. S/GWI will make this determination on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Recipient.

² <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/4174>