



**ROBERT
CARR
FUND**
for civil society
networks

ROBERT CARR FUND FOR CIVIL SOCIETY NETWORKS

2018 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

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2018 RFP INTRODUCTION

The Robert Carr Fund for civil society networks is pleased to announce an open Request for Proposals (RFP) for 2019-2021.

Through this RFP, the Robert Carr Fund invites proposals from global and regional civil society networks addressing critical factors protecting the rights of inadequately served populations (ISPs)¹; scaling up access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support; and assuring that resources are mobilized and utilized appropriately to respond to the global HIV epidemic. The goal of the Fund is to contribute to improved health, inclusion and social wellbeing for inadequately served populations (ISPs). To reach this goal, the Robert Carr Fund provides core funding to strengthen the institutional and advocacy capacity of regional and global ISP and civil society networks and/or their consortia.

Global and regional networks and consortia of networks, which meet the definitions and criteria set by this RFP are invited to apply for a grant to support core funding and/or activity needs of the networks and/or consortia for up to three years (2019-2021). The deadline for submission of proposals is **August 13, 2018 at 12:00 (noon) CET**.

Before starting an application, please note the following criteria and requirements for applicants and proposals:

- The Robert Carr Fund funds global and/or regional **networks** and **consortia of such networks**. This means that an applicant needs to be a global or regional **network** or a network-led consortium of networks, in order to qualify for this RFP. Eligible networks demonstrate democratic governance structures, which are representative of their constituencies in terms of both geography and population. Networks are expected to function in an open and participatory manner, whose membership is to be open.
- The following entities **do not** qualify for application for this RFP:
 - NGOs that are not networks
 - National networks (working and having members in one country) or cross border/multi-country collaborations between two or more national networks or organizations
 - (Inter) governmental organizations or units
 - Aggregates of projects, individuals or professional associations
- For proposals to be reviewed:
 - Applications need to be received no later than: August 13, 2018 at 12:00 (noon) CET.
 - Applications need to be submitted in English, through the online 2018 Application Form. Attachments other than the supporting documents required (see below) will not be taken into consideration.
 - Proposals need to be accompanied by requested supporting documents listed in the check-list below.

¹ ISPs are groups or persons that face a higher HIV risk, mortality and/or morbidity when compared to the general population, and have, at the same time, less access to information and services. They include people living with HIV, gay men and other men who have sex with men, people who use drugs, prisoners, sex workers and transgender persons, but depending on the dynamic of the epidemic and the legal status of these populations may also include women and girls, youth, migrants, and people living in rural areas.

Supporting documents for individual network-applicants and lead organizations of consortium-applicants are:

- A. If applicable, a copy of a registration certificate or other proof of registration
- B. A copy of the articles of association or bylaws
- C. The most recent strategic plan (for at least one year) including budget
- D. The most recent annual narrative report
- E. The most recent audited accounts
- F. Minutes or notes from last meeting of the network members and your governance structures

Additional supporting documents for consortia

- G. A copy of the signed consortium's Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) (please see Annex 2 "[Lessons Learnt from Consortia Building and Management](#)" for guidance related to the MoU)
- H. If the lead is financially represented by another organization, a contract or an MoU between the consortium lead and the representing organization
- I. A copy of contracts to be signed between the consortium partners
- J. The most recent annual narrative reports of all consortium partners
- K. The most recent audited accounts of all consortium partners

If for some reason part of the requested documentation cannot be provided, the applicant needs to provide an explanation in the corresponding field in the application form.

In addition to the criteria above, please read carefully the section on Eligibility below as these criteria will be applied strictly. Applications, which do not satisfy the conditions set by the eligibility criteria for applicants and proposals will not be considered eligible for further assessment by the Robert Carr Fund.

Special attention is required for policies and procedures on Corruption, Fraud and Mismanagement (CFM) and whistleblowing as well as Integrity (please carefully review section 7 "Policies" of the RFP for further guidance):

- The applicants' CFM policies and procedures need to be aligned with the relevant policies of the Robert Carr Fund ("[Policy on Corruption, Fraud and Mismanagement](#)"). By submitting a proposal, applicants confirm that they have reviewed, understood and agree to comply with the CFM policy. Future grantees will be required to adhere to and incorporate this policy within their existing financial management frameworks.
- The Fund wishes to understand and support all grantees in affirming the rights of people who are employed by or otherwise engaged in networks and consortia. This includes respect and protection for non-discrimination, autonomy, and accommodation of diversity and disability, and includes attention to issues faced by women and ISPs in working environments, including gender bias or sexual harassment.

Only applications submitted through the official online form will be taken into consideration. Only one online form can be used per application. If you would like to work together on an application with more than one party, please share a login name and password; it is not possible to have multiple logins to access the same application. Drafts will be saved automatically, but you can always use the button "save draft" below the form to save at any time.

When you submit an application, you will receive an automated e-mail confirming receipt of your application. If you do not receive this e-mail, please check if you submitted the form and resubmit, if necessary. If you face technical problems filling out the application form, please contact secretariat@robertcarrfund.org

The deadline for submission of an application is August 13, 2018 at 12:00 (noon) CET. Applications received after this deadline will not be taken into consideration.

1. BACKGROUND, THEORY OF CHANGE AND RESULTS FRAMEWORK

The Robert Carr Fund for civil society networks

The Fund was named in honor of Dr. Robert Carr, to recognize his contributions to the global HIV response. Inspired by his commitment to vulnerable communities and protection of human rights, the Fund supports global and regional civil society networks addressing critical factors protecting the rights of inadequately served populations (ISPs); scaling up access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support; and assuring that resources are mobilized and utilized appropriately to respond to the global HIV epidemic.

Theory of Change

The Robert Carr Fund operates under a Theory of Change for which the ultimate goal is improved health, inclusion and social wellbeing for inadequately served populations (ISPs). To reach this goal, the Robert Carr Fund provides core funding to strengthen the institutional and advocacy capacity of regional and global ISP and civil society networks and/or their consortia.

The Robert Carr Fund believes that if these networks – through which ISPs can find legitimate representation for decisions that affect them – are stronger, people from inadequately served populations will have more influence over the human rights and HIV issues that affect them.

Sustained influence from ISPs with regards to HIV and human rights issues at global, regional and national levels will result in a more enabling and rights-affirming social, policy and legal environment for ISPs, along with more accessible and appropriate quality HIV services and programs, and the corresponding available resources to create better conditions for ISPs with regards to HIV.

If the human rights of ISPs are realized, and they have access to better HIV services, and there is appropriate resourcing to underpin the necessary services, it is believed that ISPs across the globe can have better health, inclusion and social wellbeing.

For more information about the Robert Carr Fund's Theory of Change and Results Framework, please refer to Figure 1 and Figure 2 of Annex 1 "[Overview of the Monitoring and Evaluation for Learning \(MEL\) Framework](#)".

2. ELIGIBILITY

Each application received by the RFP deadline will be screened by the Robert Carr Fund to ensure that it meets the defined eligibility criteria. Applications that do not meet these criteria will not be considered eligible for further review and will receive notification of this.

- **Inadequately served populations (ISP)**

The Robert Carr Fund invests in global, regional networks and their consortia, that address the health and social wellbeing and human rights of inadequately served populations (ISPs).

ISPs are groups or persons that face a higher HIV risk, mortality and/or morbidity when compared to the general population, and have, at the same time, less access to information and services. They include people living with HIV, gay men and other men who have sex with men, people who use drugs, prisoners, sex workers and transgender persons, but depending on the dynamic of the epidemic and the legal status of these populations may also include women and girls, youth, migrants, and people living in rural areas.

While international funding for HIV, as well as development aid in general, focuses on low-income countries, the Robert Carr Fund aims to fund a global portfolio of grants that recognizes the importance of not leaving people behind. Therefore, the Fund invests in networks and consortia addressing the needs of ISPs wherever they face a disproportionate burden of HIV and serious human rights violations, including their right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

- **ISP and civil society networks and consortia**

The Robert Carr Fund considers a **network** to be a membership of organizations and/or individuals that pool skills, experience, and resources, working towards common goals. A network creates venues for social action and is sustained through jointly developed governance structures, resources and regular communication. Eligible networks demonstrate democratic governance structures, which are representative of their constituencies in terms of both geography and population. Networks are expected to function in an open and participatory manner, whose membership is to be open.

The Robert Carr Fund considers a **consortium of networks** to be a network-led group of networks, where other types of agencies or organizations with specific expertise may join (e.g. a human rights/legal organization). The consortium works together in a coordinated partnership towards a common set of inter-related goals and objectives. The Robert Carr Fund encourages networks to work together in consortium to strengthen network and civil society capacity, inviting the stronger partners in the consortium to take up their roles to support nascent/low-capacity or emerging partners. Applicants considering applying as a consortium are strongly encouraged to carefully review sample guidance on key elements of strong performance of consortia (based on the analysis of previous consortia performance) or specific challenges, related to the consortia management – see Annex 2 [“Lessons Learnt from Consortia Building and Management”](#).

ISP and civil society networks play a crucial role in addressing barriers to access to services for inadequately served populations, and play a unique role in a larger, global response to HIV. By counterbalancing the juggernaut of global-level decision-making, guidance, and health systems investment, and maintaining accountability and responsiveness to the needs of local communities, networks achieve their aims by building institutional strength and increasing their capacity to advocate and influence. They then use that increased strength and capacity to bridge global decisions to local realities; to amplify the voices of community through accountability and representation mechanisms; to generate momentum for local, regional and global movements; and to unite actors and forces through issues-based coalitions to affect and bring about needed change. These modes of work, and contributions of networks and their consortia ultimately

lead to the desired outcomes and impact. For these reasons, networks and consortia of networks are the driving force behind the Fund's Theory of Change, and are what ultimately bring about better health, inclusion and social wellbeing for ISPs.

3. PARTICIPATION IN MULTIPLE APPLICATIONS

Each network or consortium can submit one proposal. No single organization or network will be permitted to play a leading role in more than one Robert Carr Fund-funded consortium.

However, networks may apply as participants in more than one consortium. If a global or regional network applies as part of two or more consortia, or both as part of a consortium and on its own, the rationale for doing so (e.g. drastically different sets of core needs or activities proposed under the two applications) must be clearly explained in both applications. Each applicant must demonstrate and guarantee that the same budget items are not applied for in separate applications. The network should also take into consideration the possibility that only one of the proposals in which it is involved might be funded.

4. FUNDING PRIORITIES FOR 2018 RFP

The Robert Carr Fund aspires to fund a portfolio of grants in 2019-2021 that would achieve the following results, as articulated in our results framework and Theory of Change:

- Institutionally stronger ISP and civil society networks and consortia
- Improved and sustainable advocacy capacity for ISP and civil society networks and consortia
- Increased influence of ISP and civil society networks and consortia to make changes with regards to HIV and human rights issues
- More enabling and rights-affirming social, policy and legal environment for ISPs
- More accessible, rights-based, quality HIV services and programs for ISPs
- Resources made available and spent properly to create better conditions for ISPs with regards to HIV and human rights
- Better health, inclusion and social wellbeing of the ISPs

The global HIV response is at a critical crossroads in finding solutions and capacities both to be resilient in the face of persisting challenges such as disabling legal environments (i.e. criminalization and closing civic space etc.), and to adapt and self-renew in order to cope with emerging challenges such as sustainability of the HIV response (e.g. identification of alternative sources or methods of funding and/or transition to domestic financing of HIV programs etc.). The Robert Carr Fund's contribution and role becomes more relevant in this precarious context, as civil society and ISP networks continue working systematically to dismantle the barriers to enabling environment and accessibility of quality services for ISPs, and promoting the diversification and mobilization of appropriate resources to sustain the HIV response.

The Robert Carr Fund prioritizes applications by networks and consortia of networks pursuing achievement of the outcomes and impact areas per the Fund's Theory of Change.

During the previous funding cycle, Robert Carr Fund grantees achieved significant progress and the Fund looks forward to continued achievements, which drive *better health, inclusion and social well-being for ISPs*. In order to make further contribution to the HIV/AIDS movement, the Fund has identified key lessons from the past funding cycles, which frame priorities for this RFP:

- Strategic need for practical solutions to address criminalization of ISPs, support ISP civic participation, and ensure rule of law, and in protecting and enhancing ISP health and justice;
- Strategic need for practical solutions to strengthen global and regional movements that influence HIV resource accountability/diversification/mobilization and solutions to sustain operations and programs of civil society and ISP networks thus directly effecting the sustainability of HIV sector and our movement as a whole.

Importantly, the analysis of the 2016-2018 portfolio of the Robert Carr Fund has revealed a number of strategic needs and opportunities related to our Theory of Change and intended geographic and population coverage, including:

- Limited presence and/or activities in Francophone Africa and the Middle East and North Africa;
- Limited presence and/or activities focused on prisoners and transgender persons;
- Limited engagement on and/or activities within HIV resource accountability/budget advocacy and resource mobilization and diversification outcome area.

The Robert Carr Fund encourages applicants to consider inclusion of innovative core investments and/or activities and/or collaborating partners linked to the areas of strategic needs and opportunities above into your application. Demonstrated capacity and/or relevant partnerships to address the priorities should be highlighted in your submission.

5. FLOORS & CEILINGS AND FUNDING CONDITIONS

Applicants may submit proposals for up to three years of funding. For the first year (2019), a work plan, budget and cash flow statement is required. The work plans, budgets, and liquidity prognoses for the other years will be required in subsequent years.

- Regional networks can apply for a minimum of \$100,000 and a maximum of \$350,000 per year, for three years maximum.
- Global networks can apply for a minimum of \$100,000 and a maximum of \$700,000 per year, for three years maximum.
- A consortium of networks can apply for a minimum of \$200,000 per consortium per year, for three years maximum. As the size of consortia may vary, it is less definitive what an absolute ceiling might be, but normally the Robert Carr Fund will not fund more than \$1 million per consortium per year (depending on number and size of partners and specific initiatives).

Actual funding amounts will be dependent on the availability of funds.

For some applicants, funding will be granted conditionally. Funding is contingent on fulfilment of all terms and conditions.

See Section 6 “Budget Considerations” below, and Section 5 “Budget” of the [Application Form](#) for the detailed budget guidance.

6. BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

Applicants can submit a proposal covering a maximum of a three-year period: 2019 - 2020 - 2021. Please treat your budget submission as “indicative” as revisions are likely at both the funding decision and the contracting phases.

The budget (in US Dollars) for up to three years may include both core funding and activity funding for your network/consortium – see Annex 3 [“Costs Eligible for Funding”](#).

The ISC will decide on the actual amount of funding that the applicant will receive. This decision will be based on the needs, the quality of the proposals and the size of the resources committed to the Robert Carr Fund by its funding partners.

At the time of the application a detailed budget is required for Year 1 only. Though detailed budgets for Years 2 and 3 are not required at the time of the application, you will need to estimate lump sum budgets for Years 2 and 3 respectively. The Robert Carr Fund requests that all applicants budget for the following items as a requirement while making your overall budget estimations:

- Participation in a ‘kick off’ meeting in Amsterdam tentatively scheduled to take place in Q1 2019. You are kindly requested to budget for travel, per diems, accommodation and all other incidental costs for a 3 day meeting in Amsterdam for a number of delegates representative across your network and/or consortium;
- Participation in the Robert Carr Fund’s annual collective impact reflection workshop (in early 2020 to reflect on the results of 2019 - - please plan for expenditures to be incurred in Q4 of 2019). You are kindly requested to budget for travel, accommodation, per diems and all other incidental costs for a 3 day meeting in Amsterdam each year of your requested grant. If you are applying as a consortia you need to budget for up to 3 participants to attend;
- Appropriate level of funding to ensure annual monitoring, evaluation for learning (MEL) processes of your network’s and/or your consortium’s progress and results (e.g. reflective quarterly results discussions; hiring of MEL consultants if your network has no MEL staff etc.);
- Appropriate level of funding to ensure proper financial management, accountability and risks management within your network and/or consortium (e.g. audits, financial health checks etc.);
- In case you are applying as a consortia, appropriate level of funding to manage your consortia (e.g. on-line and/or face-to-face meetings; bank transfer fees; IT/telecommunications etc.).

7. POLICIES

In accordance with the [Governance Charter](#) of the Robert Carr Fund, the International Steering Committee (ISC) oversees and Aidsfonds, as the Fund Management Agent (FMA), implements relevant policies of the Robert Carr Fund:

- 1) [Conflict of Interest Policy](#)
- 2) [Corruption, fraud and mismanagement Policy](#)
- 3) [Integrity Policy](#)

8. PROCESS FOR APPLICATION REVIEW

Each eligible application will first be reviewed by a set of two or three independent expert reviewers, who have expertise related to the topics, populations and geographic regions of the applicant networks and consortia. Applicants may suggest reviewers to the Robert Carr Fund in the application form. Reviewers are asked to inform the Secretariat of a potential conflict of interest.

Reviewers will anonymously provide scores and comments about:

- the strengths, experience, and capacity of the applicant network(s), as reflected in the Application Sections 2, 3, and 4; and
- the strengths of the proposed work towards the intended outcomes and impact areas identified in the Robert Carr Fund’s Theory of Change, as reflected in Application Section 4.
- the quality of the budget and proposed funding allocations.

The independent expert reviewers will be asked to review the applicants and proposals according to the following criteria:

<p><i>Review Criteria for <u>applicants</u>:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on and/or experience with inadequately served populations; • Focus on and/or experience with HIV and directly related issues; • Capacity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governance and accountability structures - (Financial) management and leadership - Capacity to implement the proposed activities - Capacity to monitor and evaluate for outcomes and to learn from previous performance and results; • If the applicant is a new and emerging network: the applicant is linked to an established global or regional networks; • If the applicant is a consortium: there is added value of the cooperative and (in balance with) the capacity of the consortium partners; • If the applicant is a consortium: the proposed lead organization has the capacity to perform the tasks, which are expected of a lead organization by the Robert Carr Fund.
<p><i>Review Criteria for <u>proposals</u>:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal meets the funding priorities as stated in this RFP; • Proposal includes meaningful participation and influence from ISP; • Contribution to strategic collaboration with and to the funding portfolio of the Robert Carr Fund; • Overall quality of the proposal; • Clarity of the proposal; • SMART formulation of objectives and results linked to core costs; • Clear articulation of how the Robert Carr Fund’s investment in the core/strategic costs of a network/consortia will translate into outcomes per the Fund’s Theory of Change; • Clear explanation on how core costs contribute to activities and help achieve these results; • Realistic planning; • Budget is realistic and proportional to what is intended to be accomplished; • If the proposal is submitted by a new/emerging network: clear articulation of which gaps in the global HIV and AIDS response a network aims to bridge.

Aggregate expert reviewer scores will be compiled to indicate average reviewer rating of both the “quality” of applying consortium or network and “quality” of the proposed work, and reviewer recommendations to fund or not fund.

Each applicant will then have an opportunity to provide responding rebuttal clarifications and responses to the expert reviews. The reviews and the rebuttal form will be made available to the applicants no later than two weeks before the deadline of submission of the rebuttal form.

In advance of the Program Advisory Panel (PAP) meeting in October 2018, PAP members will review each application, expert reviews, and applicant rebuttal responses, and will provide PAP member scores and comments about the strengths, experience, and capacity of the applicant network(s)/consortia and the strengths of the proposed work toward the intended outcomes and impact areas identified in the Theory of Change.

Aggregate PAP reviewer scores will be compiled to indicate average expert reviewer rating of both the “quality” of applying consortium or network and “quality” of the proposed work, along with PAP reviewer recommendations to fund or not fund.

At the PAP meeting, applications will then be reviewed competitively.

- For 2016-2018, the Robert Carr Fund funded a total of 18 consortia and networks, and is anticipating funding approximately 15-20 applications during 2019-2021. Therefore, the PAP will rank the applications based upon the aggregate reviewer scores and recommendations and select only the top 25-30 for in-depth discussion. There will also be the opportunity for a brief review of the de-selected list for any comments, feedback, or recommended exceptions.
- The PAP will then discuss the remaining proposals in depth, and develop a set of recommendations that:
 - Provide continuation funding for the highest quality renewal proposals;
 - Create a balanced portfolio of renewed grants and first-time grants, with appreciation for coverage of geographic regions, populations, and outcomes/impact areas prioritized by the Robert Carr Fund paying attention to innovative/practical solutions and strengths in described network priorities, leadership, partnerships and ways of working.

The PAP will provide the ISC with its recommendations for funding, providing:

- A ranking in relation to aggregate reviewer scores and recommendations;
- Recommended funding levels in relation to applicant requests, budgets, and previous funding levels (if applicable);
- A summary of un-funded needs, and recommended priorities for allocation of supplemental funding if such is raised by the Fund;
- A summary of the potential aggregate results to be achieved from the total funding portfolio;
- PAP recommendations for clarifications or conditions related to funded applicants;
- PAP recommendations related to the funding and review process, or other issues for consideration by the ISC or the Fund Secretariat.

The ISC will then discuss the PAP recommendations, ratify funding decisions, and authorize the Secretariat to proceed with funding notifications, communications, and awards. Funding decisions will tentatively be made public by 10 December 2018 via www.robertcarrfund.org

9. TIMELINE AND IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2018 RFP

The request for proposals is launched on June 18, 2018 and submission deadline is August 13, 2018. Proposals will be reviewed in September-October 2018, and a final decision on successful applicants will be announced publically by December 10, 2018.

18 June	Publication of RFP
1 August	Deadline for clarifying questions
August 13, 2018 at 12:00 (noon) CET	Deadline for submitting proposals
September 2018	Proposals reviewed by independent experts, anonymous review results shared with applicants for a rebuttal.
October 8, 2018 at 12:00 (noon) CET	Deadline for rebuttal by applicants
October-November 2018	Program Advisory Panel (PAP) review. Funding advice to the ISC by the PAP based on a rigorous review of applications, independent expert reviews and rebuttals
November 2018	ISC meeting and funding decision
November/December 2018	Funding decisions communicated to grantees
By 10 December 2018	Funding decision made public by the ISC
1 January 2019	Start of the funding