



**ROBERT  
CARR  
FUND**  
for civil society  
networks

# **ROBERT CARR FUND: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS – 2018 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**PART I - 10 JULY 2018**

# A. ELIGIBILITY & FUNDING PRIORITIES

## 1. Eligibility

### 1.1 Would our organization be eligible for funding?

The Robert Carr Fund cannot assess the eligibility of an organization or application before the submission date. Please read the [eligibility criteria](#) and this Q&A carefully, to assess the eligibility of your organization or application.

## 2. Inadequately served populations (ISP)

### 2.1 Can we motivate to include children as an ISP together with Young people? Children are not a stated as ISP in the RfP and we are worried that expanding to include this would compromise our application.

*As stated in [RFP](#):* 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.

*As stated in [RFP Background](#):* The Robert Carr Fund seeks to fund networks through which ISPs can find legitimate representation for decisions that affect them. , The proposal should describe how an inadequately served population faces a disproportionate burden of HIV and serious human rights violations. Furthermore, questions 2E-2H of the Application require information on, how the interests and priorities of that population are represented in the applicant's governance, staffing, and decision-making.

### 2.2 What does the Robert Carr Fund consider as youth as an ISP? Are youth only 15-25 years of age?

The RCF follows the definitions of the United Nations, which defines 'youth', as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years.

### 2.3 Is this grant available to NGO's who deal with ISP/PLHIV?

*As stated in [RFP](#):* 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. NGOs that are **not networks** do not qualify for application for this RFP.

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.

## 3. Networks

### 3.1 What constitutes a regional network?

The definition of a network is described in the [RFP](#). A regional scope of a network should be evident from its governance charter and membership statutes as well as in the network's governance structure (e.g. via representation of sub-regional members etc.). A regional network's strategic documents such as organizational strategy or strategic plans should indicate sustained presence and coverage of a region with efforts to implement the network's mission in a region.

For a regional network to claim regional presence and coverage the definition from the [Application section 4C](#) can be used as our guiding principle. Ultimately it is the Program Advisory Panel of the RCF, who review application and determine the eligibility of applicants, in accordance with the definitions and guidance provided in the RFP and the Application.

### **3.2 Would a regional network of National Networks be eligible under this call?**

*As stated in the introduction of the [RFP](#): National networks (working and having members in one country) or cross border/multi-country collaborations between two or more national networks or organizations **do not qualify** for application for this RFP. Please review our answer to the previous question 1.5.*

### **3.3 I am hoping to clarify eligibility regarding whether our research consortium qualifies as a "regional network". I represent a research collaboration between University of Minnesota in USA, Makerere Univ in Uganda, and Univ of Maseno in Kenya, and a Community-based organization in Western Kenya. Our collaboration supports community-based research and programming to address HIV/AIDS at the community-level among underserved rural communities in the Lake Victoria Region. The University of Minnesota Center for Global Health would serve as the lead organization for our network.**

The definition of a network is described in the [RFP](#). The Robert Carr Fund seeks to fund networks through which ISPs can find legitimate representation for decisions that affect them, and applicants should describe how the intended beneficiary ISP and the interests and priorities of that population are represented in the applicant network's governance, staffing, and decision-making.

### **3.4 I want to know whom you classify as a consortium.**

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).

### **3.5 While reading through the Robert Carr Fund 2018 RFP, I notice the reference to civil society networks in the eligibility criteria. Our association acts as the national body for the hospice movement in our country, but also has membership of numerous community based organizations working in the public health sector with disadvantaged populations and population groups. Please forgive my question, but I am uncertain whether this model qualifies under your "civil society networks". Please can you assist me with more clarity on this?**

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.

Also please note that the Robert Carr Fund seeks to fund networks through which ISPs can find legitimate representation for decisions that affect them, and applicants should describe how the intended beneficiary ISP and the interests and priorities of that population are represented in the applicant network's governance, staffing, and decision-making.

#### **4. Formal status of networks**

##### **4.1 We would like to know whether the network that applies needs to be legally registered as NGO to receive the funds? Or can a member NGO apply on behalf of the network?**

The [RFP](#) does not exclude networks that are not registered. Networks that are not registered as legal entities must have a fiscal management agent or a host and supply answers to questions 1D, 1F-1H of the Application form relating to the formal status of networks. Applications will be subjected to competitive review based on the criteria stated in the RfP.

##### **4.2 Can I have two fiscal sponsors, especially where one cannot fit enough in terms of funds that can be held by one?**

The Fund Management Agent of the Robert Carr Fund will only enter into a contract with one organization/fiscal agent per grant for the duration of the whole grant.

#### **5. Geographical presence**

##### **5.1 Is this RFP open to organizations/networks all over the world?**

*As stated in the [RFP](#) under point 2 Eligibility:* 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.

##### **5.2 Is an organization registered outside of the US eligible to apply?**

*As stated in the [RFP](#) under point 2 Eligibility:* Yes, 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.

##### **5.3 Does the RCNF RFP 2018 exclude certain countries?**

The RFP does not exclude certain countries. *As stated in the [RFP](#) under point 2 Eligibility:* 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.

## 6. Participation in Multiple Applications

### 6.1 Is it possible for a network to participate in multiple consortia not as a lead but as a grantee?

As stated in the [RFP](#) under point 3: 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.

### 6.2 One option for Consortia highlighted at the recent Amsterdam meeting was for co-leads or rotating leads. Does this mean that all co-leads or rotating leads could not be the lead in a different Consortium? If this is the case, it would make the idea of co- or rotating leads, much more difficult in practice.

As stated in [Annex 2: Lessons Learnt from Consortia Building and Management, and Guidance on Consortium Memorandum of Understanding \(MoU\) of the RFP](#):

Flexibility in the lead role can be beneficial to a consortium. Some consortia practice rotation of consortium-leadership, allowing different member organizations to fill the lead role over time. This, and other arrangements can assure accountability and responsiveness within the consortium. The rotation of the consortium leadership implies a rotation of certain leadership functions e.g. those related to coordination, and does not imply either a rotation of contractual agreement with Aidsfonds as the Fund Management Agent of the Robert Carr Fund or a rotation of disbursements to different members of the consortium.

## 7. Consortium constellation

### 7.1 Can we expand the consortium partners/lose one/gain one or more? If we expand and/or change the consortium will we be understood as a NEW or EXISTING consortium? Can reshape and refresh be understood as continuation? If we do a name change and/or include a by-line to our current name, will this result in being understood as a NEW or EXISTING consortium?

Existing, new and restructured consortia can submit a proposal. The Robert Carr Fund is seeking to fund a balanced portfolio of renewed grants and first-time grants, with appreciation for strengths, experience, and capacity of the described networks and consortia, and also for innovations in described network priorities, leadership, partnerships and ways of working. In the application form applicants can explain their track record, how it aligns with RCF's Theory of Change and how the application builds on the past.

The RFP does include review criteria for new and emerging networks:

- clear articulation of which gaps in the global HIV and AIDS response a network aims to bridge.
- the applicant is linked to an established global or regional network.

Consortia that will include new members and/or lose members from the previous round of funding will need to explain the rationale for the changes. Applicants are encouraged to conclude for themselves if the changes in the consortia membership constitute a continuation and/or a new scope of work, expressed in the proposal.

In case a change of organizational name stands for/indicates a change in mission, vision, strategy and scope of work of a network, it may be viewed as NEW.

**7.2 If a network is currently funded by RCNF in a Consortium but doesn't fulfill the criteria outlined in the RFP (e.g. national or trans-border networks are not eligible) are they automatically ineligible to be a part of a Consortium, or can there be special cases?**

The Robert Carr Fund cannot assess the eligibility of an organization or application before the submission date. Please read the [eligibility criteria](#) and this Q&A carefully, to assess the eligibility of your organization or application.

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).

**7.3 The RFP states among those who do not qualify: "National networks (working and having members in one country) or cross border/multicountry collaborations between two or more national networks or organizations" Does it mean that national networks can also not qualify as participants of a consortium? National networks cannot be funded through this mechanism?**

*As stated in the introduction of the [RFP](#): National networks (working and having members in one country) or cross border/multi-country collaborations between two or more national networks or organizations **do not qualify** for application for this RFP.*

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). National networks can join a consortia only by invitation from a regional and/or global network or their consortia, who will need to justify its membership in a consortia based on the unique expertise and/or added-value to the scope of proposed work and contribution to the outcomes of the RCF results framework of the applicant- consortium. A consortium cannot consist solely of national networks.

## **8. Funding Priorities for 2018 RFP**

**8.1 Will you fund a project that will positively affect vulnerable populations' rights, access to care and health without directly involving them? E.g., will you consider a project that will involve training sessions for police to reduce HIV stigma (but either without HIV-affected populations due to negative implications of status disclosure?)**

The Robert Carr Fund does not fund projects. *As stated in the [RFP](#): The Robert Carr Fund funds global and regional civil society networks addressing critical factors protecting the rights of inadequately served populations (ISPs)<sup>1</sup>; 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.*

*As stated in the RFP under point 4: 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 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.

## **8.2 Based on the operations and key populations our fund is working with (1. commercial sex workers and 2. People who inject drugs), what preference that RCF would most likely to give between those 2?**

As stated in [section 8 Process for Application Review](#), the Robert Carr Fund will seek to fund a balanced portfolio with appreciation for coverage of geographic regions, populations, and outcomes/impact areas prioritized by the Robert Carr Fund.

## **9. Floors & Ceilings and Funding Conditions**

### **9.1 What are the minimum and maximum amounts that each organization can apply for (per year, per 2 years, per 3 years)?**

As stated in the [RFP](#) under point 5:

- 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.

## **10. Budget considerations**

### **10.1 Based on the core and activity budgets, will food (per diem, coffee-breaks) be included for training sessions and trainers/contractors? Will office equipment (projector, printer, scanner etc.) be considered in a core budget?**

This specific information can be found in [annex 3: costs eligible for funding](#).

### **10.2 Is Core funding appropriate for non-networks (e.g. human rights / legal orgs) within Consortia, or is core funding only appropriate for regional or global ISP Networks within the Consortium?**

As stated in the [RFP](#) Introduction, the Robert Carr Fund provides core funding to strengthen the institutional and advocacy capacity of networks and/or their consortia. Therefore any core costs should contribute to capacity of networks and/or consortia, as well as to addressing expressed core needs and achievement of intended results.

## **11. Monitoring and Accountability**

### **11.1 Any tips on the preferred method of monitoring & evaluation are welcome!**

Please carefully review Section 1 “Background, Theory of Change and Results Framework” of the [RFP](#) and [Annex 1: Overview of the Monitoring and Evaluation for Learning \(MEL\) Framework](#), describing the Fund’s Monitoring, Evaluation for Learning (MEL) Framework.

### **11.2 Please give more information on the Theory of Change (ToC) and to what extent should our applications align with the ToC?**

Please carefully review Section 1 “Background, Theory of Change and Results Framework” of the [RFP](#) and [Annex 1: Overview of the Monitoring and Evaluation for Learning \(MEL\) Framework](#), describing the Fund’s Monitoring, Evaluation for Learning (MEL) Framework.

In Section 4 of the application form, all applicants must express their needs, propose scopes of work and describe expected results for a required set of outcome indicators OI 1, OI 2, OI 3, OI 4 and provide inputs for the respective environmental indicators EI 1, EI 2, describing the environment in which your network or consortium operates.

Applicants are invited to also select a minimum of two indicators (or as many as applicable) from a set of optional Outcome Indicators i.e. OI 5-9 and respective Environmental Indicators EI 3-EI 6 based on Theory of Change Outcome Areas.

# B. APPLICATION PROCESS QUESTIONS

## 12. Online application form

### 12.1 I can't access the online application page?

If you are not able to access [the online application page](#), this could be due to your browser. Wizehive (the application software) recommends to use the current and previous version of any of these browsers:

- o Chrome
- o Safari
- o Firefox

The application form can also be accessed from Internet Explorer, but experiences may vary. For the best results, it is recommended to use one of the internet browsers listed above.

### 12.2 I can't log in to the online application system?

Please see the below step by step instructions for logging in:

#### 1. Go to the online application page

Click on the following link to access the online application:

<https://app.wizehive.com/appform/login/RCNF2018>

The above link will take you to the login page.

#### 2. Create a Login

When you visit the online application page for the first time, you will need to create a username and password. You can do this by entering this information in the 'signup' section of the login page, as shown below:

The screenshot shows a web page for the Robert Carr Fund 2018 online application. The page is divided into two main sections: LOGIN and SIGNUP. The LOGIN section has fields for Email and Password, a Login button, and a 'Forgot Password?' link. The SIGNUP section, which is highlighted with a red box, has fields for Email, Password, and Confirm Password, and a Signup button. Below the SIGNUP section is the Wizehive logo. At the bottom of the page is the Robert Carr Fund logo, which features a globe with a red ribbon, and the text 'ROBERT CARR FUND for civil society networks'. The page also includes a welcome message and instructions for users.

! Please make sure that you use a valid email address as the address you fill out here will also be used by the RCNF secretariat in all further communications with you. !

When you have filled out your email and password, press 'signup' and you will be taken to the first page of the online application form.

### 3. Login

After you pressed 'signup', you now have an account and are able to log in and log out with this email address and password. Next time you visit the online application page you can go straight to login instead of signup.

## 13. Word limitations

### 13.1 How best can we submit additional information in case we are limited by the number of words per question

Applicants should keep to the word limit, but do have the chance to add supporting documents like applicants' annual report and strategic plan. The rebuttal process will give you the opportunity to respond to the reviewer reports.

## 14. Supporting Documentation

### 14.1 If the lead is a recently registered Network (but part of a currently funded Consortium) and does not have all required supporting documentation (e.g. audited accounts because they won't be done until Q1 2019) how do we address this?

*As stated in the [RFP](#) under introduction:* 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.

*As stated in the [application form](#) under point 7 'supporting documentation:* In the application form, under point 7 'supporting documentation, there is room (200 words) to explain why certain documents cannot be attached.

### 14.2 We are a new network with less than a year in operation, is it possible that instead of the annual report narrative and audited financial statements of our new network, we send in the details of the fiscal sponsor?

Yes, that is fine. Please also provide an explanation in the corresponding field in the application form why part of the requested documentation cannot be provided.

## C. REVIEW PROCESS

### 15. Process for application review

#### 15.1 Please let us know how you review the applications, when you notify the successful recipients and if you provide a feedback for those who have not passed the review.

A detailed description of the process for application review can be found on page 14 and 15 (point 8 – process for application review of [the RFP 2018](#)).

### 16. Suggested Independent Reviewers

#### 16.1 How are the reviewers selected and how are they determined as independent and unbiased?

The RCF Secretariat will select the reviewers from an existing database which includes experienced reviewers from past RCF reviews and additional reviewers suggested by applicants and members of the Program Advisory Panel. The Secretariat will assign reviewers to proposals based on the reviewers' expertise related to the topics, populations and geographic regions of the applicant networks and consortia. Reviewers are asked to inform the Secretariat of a potential conflict of interest and will not be assigned to proposals in case of a potential conflict of interest.

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.