

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)**

**“Independent Media Small Grants Program”**

**Publication Date:** October 11, 2018

**1.0 Summary Data**

- 1.1 Funder (Prime Funder):** Int’l Media Development Organization (USDOS)
- 1.2 Funder Project Name:** Independent Media Small Grants Program
- 1.3 Announcement Type:** Initial
- 1.4 RFA Number:** RFA-003/October/2018
- 1.5 CFDA Number:** 19.345
- 1.6 Application Submission Deadline:** October 21, 2018 5:00 PST

**2.0 Program Overview**

**2.1 Project Goal:**

The project’s goal is to **protect and expand the space for small, independent media entities to report with transparency and objectivity.**

**Objective 1:** Expand the voice of small independent media by providing grants to increase the quantity and quality of content on governance, accountability and rights issues reaching local audiences.

**Objective 2:** Increase small media entities’ organizational capacities and journalistic skills to objectively report on governance and rights issues securely.

Proposed **major activities** include:

- Awarding grants to 8 small media entities to produce quality content on regional FM radio and TV, press and web-based news services.

**2.2 Project Description:**

Project will provide small grant funding to support independent media entities to

- 1) increase the quality and quantity of reporting on topics such as
  - i. Human rights
  - ii. Democratic processes
  - iii. The rule of law
  - iv. Government accountability

2) build the organizational capacity of these media entities in journalistic skills and digital security. This financial and technical assistance will support an expanding space for independent, objective journalism and reduce the propensity of media to self-censor. Funder will leverage their deep experience and knowledge of Pakistan to support media entities that cover the areas, which suffer from lack of media access writ large.

**2.3 Scope of Activities:**

Funder is seeking sub recipients to perform activities in support of its project in Pakistan.

Under the set work plan for maximum six months of the agreement period, each entity will produce six stories within three months (every quarter) focusing on each of the following subjects:

- |                                     |                                   |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>1. Human rights</b>              | <b>(03 Story x Quarter1) = 03</b> |
| <b>2. Democratic processes</b>      | <b>(03 Story x Quarter1) =03</b>  |
| <b>3. The Rule of law</b>           | <b>(03 Story x Quarter2) =03</b>  |
| <b>4. Government accountability</b> | <b>(03 Story x Quarter2) =03</b>  |

<b>Total</b>	<u><u><b>12 Stories</b></u></u>
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The stories, must be telecast, broadcast, published or uploaded online, depending on whichever medium the stories are produced for within the specified period of one quarter.

Funder grant agreement does not put any bar on the minimum or maximum length or duration of the story produced, as long as the story meets the following objectives and core values.

The selected grantee will work with designated mentor to produce a journalistically balanced story. This will involve the entire process from story selection, to researching, human angling, script drafting, interviewing and production of final product.

**Impact:** The story must have a clearly defined objective. Why is the story being done and what impact is it likely to have? Stories without any purpose should be discouraged.

**Neutrality:** The story must have viewpoints from all the stakeholders who have been covered in order to ensure balance. A story that lays blame on one or more than one sides, and does not include their opinions will clearly be considered below standard.

**Authenticity:** The reporter must be able to support his/her story with unimpeachable documentary proof. Stories based on hearsay and speculation will not be acceptable. Proper research and documentary evidence are a pre-requisite.

**Public interest:** Any story produced by the entity must be directly or in-directly linked to public interest. In other words, the story must seek to bring a change that benefits common citizens of Pakistan.

**People's Voice:** Last but not the least, any story done under the project **MUST** include people's voice. If it's a TV package or radio story, at least two sound-bites or *actualities* of ordinary people be included, and if it is a print of web story, at least two genuine quotes of the public are to be included

**Note:** While responding to the Request for Application (RFA) the potential grantees are expected to submit M&E plan and work plan of 12 story ideas under the provided template. Also, submit summary of at least two story ideas spread over one paragraph each relating to any two of the above-mentioned topics. (These are mandatory requirements).

*Construction activities will not be considered for award.*

### 3.0 Subaward Information

#### 3.1 Subaward Amount:

Under this RFA, funder anticipates awarding 8 subgrants, of a maximum of \$11,000 each.

#### 3.2 Subaward Duration:

Funder anticipates subgrants awarded under this RFA to have a performance period not to exceed 06 months.

#### 3.3 Eligibility Information:

Applicants must meet the following criteria in order to be considered eligible for a Subaward resulting from this RFA:

- Be a local, independent and registered media organization operating in Pakistan (except web based organizations).
- Be in good standing in performance and reporting under any previous sub grants, from this funder or any other organization, where applicable.

- Be able and willing to demonstrate the organization's commitment to continuing proposed activities after the subgrant (please provide sustainability plan).
- Not be listed with active exclusions on the UN Security Designation List, Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List, System for Award Management (SAM), or funder List of Debarred Sub recipients.
- Be able to demonstrate successful past performance in implementation of local media programs related to Project.
- Maintain bank account in the organization's name or for web based organization account on individual name.
- Maintain accounting records and have an annual audit and tax deduction.
- Be able to develop and follow Monitoring & Evaluation plans.

### 3.4 Evaluation Criteria:

Applications will be reviewed and evaluated by a technical committee on a range of selection criteria. Each application will receive a score, with a maximum potential score of 100 points. Applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

#### **Quality of Program Idea: 35 points**

The quality of the application regarding the feasibility of the proposed technical approach (i.e., the proposed technical approach can reasonably be expected to produce the intended outcomes); appropriateness of the proposed methodology; innovativeness; and the work plan for achieving project objectives to offer significant impacts. The technical approach must directly contribute to the achievement of the small grants program's expected results and performance under the activity, and must be measurable under one or more of the project indicators. Proposed mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation with objectively measurable indicators will also be considered.

#### **Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives: 15 points**

Applicant must describe a realistic plan organized on a quarterly basis, and should explain how the organization will carry out the project activities within the grant period (maximum 6 months).

#### **Program Monitoring and Evaluation: 20 points**

Applicant should propose mechanisms and procedures for monitoring of grant operations to ensure activities will take place as planned and will remain directed towards stated objectives. This should include the appropriate corrective action to be undertaken if required. Applicant must explain a range of methodology to assess the success of the project. As part of the M&E plan, applicants must submit a work plan stating how the grant activities will be carried out in terms of their timing & duration and who will be the local person responsible for each activity.

#### **Cost Effectiveness: 30 points**

The degree to which budgeting is clear and reasonable and reflects the best use of organizational and grant resources

Subaward shall be made to the respondent whose application is responsive to the RFA and is most advantageous to the project, all factors considered.

### 3.5 Additional Considerations:

#### **3.5.1 Cost Principles:**

Proposal budgets will be reviewed in accordance with, and selected subrecipients' costs will be subject to, the cost principles that apply to them to assure reasonableness, allocability, and allowability:

1. Not-for-Profit organizations:
  - [2CFR200](#) Subpart E, Cost Principles
2. For-Profit organizations:
  - [48CFR31.2 Federal Acquisition Regulations](#) (FAR) and [48CFR731.2](#)

**3.5.2 Subgrant Administration:**

The following regulations and provisions, at a minimum, will apply to subawards issued as a result of this RFA.

- [2CFR200](#) and [2CFR600](#) Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards
- [US Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions](#)

**3.5.3 Reporting**

Subgrants awarded as a result of this RFA may include programmatic and financial reporting requirements. Narrative and financial reports would be submitted on a quarterly basis, i.e., one report in (Quarter 1) and a final report in (Quarter 2).

**4.0 Application Information**

**4.1 Application Content Requirements:**

Application(s) must meet the following requirements:

1. Contact Information includes a contact name, title, address, telephone, fax, and e-mail of the contact person who will be responsible for communications between funder and applicant.
2. This applies to all aspects of the grant, from initial application, to negotiation, award, and close out.
3. The agent must have full authority and responsibility to act on behalf of the applicant. The agent should be someone who will be directly involved with the grant activity.
4. Include a completed subgrant Application Template, Attachment 1 hereto.
5. Include a Detailed Budget, using the Subgrants Detailed Budget Template.

**4.2 Application Submission Requirements:**

Applications must be submitted through email address at [smpakistanrfa@gmail.com](mailto:smpakistanrfa@gmail.com)

The documents constituting the application must be included as attachments. The email must list and describe the documents to be included as parts of the application. If more than one email is required to transmit the application, each email must be identified as part of a multi-part submission. (E.g. "Email 1 of 3").

Any portion of the application containing confidential or proprietary information should be clearly marked within the application itself either by highlighting or italics. The email must describe specifically how these sections are identified.

Each organization should apply for one grant that will cover the four following subjects;

1. Human rights
2. Democratic processes
3. The rule of law
4. Government accountability

The email subject line should mention the main title of the grant (i.e. Application for 'grant main title of the grant'). The produced story will be published/run on below mentioned media resources (Please specify one).

- Regional FM radio station
- Electronic Media (TV)
- Newspaper ( Press)
- Web-based news services

Only one grant (maximum value of USD 11,000) will be issued to the successful organization with the length of grant period not to exceed 06 months.

- References – List three donors, partner organizations, or community leaders, if any, that can provide references for your organization’s ability to successfully carry out the financial, administrative, and technical requirements of the grant activity.
- Please submit a work plan with a clear timeline showing how the applicant will achieve the outcomes and outputs described in your technical narrative.
- Please provide a detailed budget that supports all of the costs necessary to implement the activities, and achieve the outcomes and outputs.

**5.0 Award Notification and Responses:**

NOTICE OF SELECTION OF THE APPLICATION IS NOT TO BE CONSTRUED AS A CONTRACT OR SUBGRANT AWARD. Once the selection is confirmed, a final subgrant agreement will be negotiated and signed with the successful respondent, subject to prime funder approval, environmental clearances, and successful vetting of eligibility.

**6.0 Inquiries:**

All questions concerning this solicitation should be addressed at [smpakistanrfa@gmail.com](mailto:smpakistanrfa@gmail.com)

**7.0 Attachments:**

1. Subgrant Application Template
2. Subgrant Detailed Budget Template
3. MonitoringEvaluationFramework

End of RFA