

**WINROCK INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
(WINROCK)****REQUEST FOR APPLICATION (RFA)**

Project Name:	Safe Migration in Central Asia
Request for Application (RFA) No:	01
Date RFA Issued:	January 25, 2021
Due Date and Time for Questions:	February 5, 2021
Due Date and Time for Response to Questions:	February 11, 2021
RFA Closing Date:	February 25, 2021
Estimated Award Date:	April 26, 2021

SECTION 1: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

1.1 PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The Safe Migration in Central Asia (SMICA) is a five-year project implemented by Winrock International in Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. SMICA uses evidence-based practices and cross-border connections to strengthen the mutual accountability and effectiveness of governments, NGOs, and the private sector to prevent trafficking-in-persons (TIP), protect survivors, and promote safe migration. Building on previous USAID programs in the region, SMICA raises awareness and promotes behavior changes among migrants to safeguard their rights, while connecting them to support and services and highlighting their contributions to host communities. The project also promotes policy reform and government capacity strengthening to assist at-risk groups and trafficking survivors.

SMICA works with local and international organizations, governments, and civil society to connect country approaches with regional strategies strengthening bilateral and multi-country efforts to promote rights-based migration and counter TIP; reduce the vulnerability of at-risk populations to all forms of trafficking-in-persons; and expand and improve identification and assistance to trafficked persons. The three main objectives of SMICA include:

1. Strengthened bilateral and multi-country actions to promote rights-based migration and counter trafficking in persons.
2. Reduced vulnerability of at-risk populations to all forms of trafficking-in-persons
3. Expanded and improved identification and assistance to trafficked persons.

SMICA's approach to combating TIP is through empowering survivors, working with local groups, community leaders, and governments to improve data and policies, influencing social norms that increase trafficking risks, and establishing systems and services that protect at-risk groups. The project will also focus on cross-cutting themes that ensure sustainability through collaborative implementation with government, civil society, and the private sector and their ownership of activities, focus on engaging youth. Our approach will adapt to changing environments and evolving priorities, leverage other programs to achieve the greatest impact, and use robust monitoring, evaluation, and learning processes and tools to continuously gauge progress and results.

SMICA activities in Uzbekistan include: a regional focus to improve bilateral and multilateral coordination among Central Asian countries; support prevention and protection efforts, such as ensuring international standards for rehabilitation and reintegration services; and increase awareness and provide information for migrants. TIP victim identification is a challenge and more statistical data is needed to be collected, analyzed, and published by the government entities to ensure data-driven solutions.

Given the large number of migrants from Uzbekistan in Kazakhstan, it is important to strengthen bilateral collaboration both between the governments of the two countries and CSOs regarding labor migration to address the needs of those migrants. SMICA will help to ensure safe migration channels, ethical employment practices, and increase knowledge on rights.

SMICA will also implement innovative approaches by addressing migration and TIP issues through private sector engagement: working with critical sectors such as travel and transportation and engaging with employment agencies and others who can promote successful practices to combat TIP. This unique type of programming will promote sustainability and enhance safe migration channels.

The recent development of the COVID-19 situation has created new challenges and risks for migrants and increased even more their need for assistance and access to social and psychological support services. Also, the situation with COVID-19 is increasing the flow of returning migrants, who face difficulties with finding decent employment and/or income generation opportunities in their home country. These needs of migrants and their families are both immediate and longer-term and SMICA plans to respond by protecting rights of vulnerable migrants, raising awareness on TIP risks and potential for exploitation, and by providing alternative employment skills and job referrals for migrants who have lost their livelihoods.

Winrock International has 25 years of global experience implementing counter-trafficking-in-persons, child labor, economic empowerment and civic engagement programs. Since 1992, Winrock's programs in Central Asia promoted agricultural development, improved natural resource management, and addressed issues of human trafficking. Winrock's approach to CTIP empowers survivors; works with local groups, community leaders, governments and the private sector to improve data and policies, combat social norms that increase trafficking risks, and establish systems and services that protect at-risk groups and assist survivors.

1.2 GRANT OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF WORK

Activities should support at-risk populations to improve their knowledge and skills about safe migration and TIP, protect their rights, and find safe employment. Activities with private sector engagement should help vulnerable people to improve their ability to find safe employment and protect their rights.

Direct support activities for migrants and their families, as well as victims of human trafficking may include livelihood support, counseling or legal services, and information about how to stay safe during COVID-19 situation.

Activities should also contribute to reducing of vulnerabilities of returning migrants and families of migrants left behind, who suffer from loss of remittances due to COVID-19.

Priority regions of Uzbekistan: Non-prioritized, the application can include activities in any region of Uzbekistan. One NGO can submit only one application, that will cover one or more regions of Uzbekistan, however, number of regions covered do not affect evaluation process.

Under this RFA, the SMICA project in Uzbekistan is seeking interested applicants who can support **one or more** of the following objectives:

Objective 1.

Reducing vulnerability of at-risk populations and migrants to all forms of trafficking in persons (TIP) through timely provision of correct information on emerging risks of TIP (including recruitment through Internet), fraudulent acts towards migrants, safe migration opportunities, local job opportunities, and COVID-19 related restrictions in destination countries and protections measures.

Proposed activities for Objective 1

1. Conduct awareness raising campaigns about legal rights of migrants, protection measures against all forms of exploitation, COVID-19 government restrictions in destination countries, risks of fraud, jobs opportunities in Uzbekistan, safe migration opportunities, financial and medical support opportunities for at-risk populations (low-skilled and unemployed youth, unsuccessful current and returnee migrants in search of jobs, returnee migrants with 're-entry ban' or status, deported migrants, single mothers with limited employment opportunities, families of migrants highly dependent on remittances), including through utilization of ICT tools (social media, messengers, YouTube, diaspora networks and others), design and launch of innovative CTIP-training and awareness raising models, multi-media projects and installations. Engage with bloggers, community leaders, social media leaders and influencers in reaching out youth to increase their awareness on TIP and safe migration.
2. Establish cooperation with private sector service providers for labor migrants (may include private employment agencies, transportation companies and/or intermediaries), to collaborate in raising awareness of potential and current migrants on risks of TIP, safe migration, migrants' rights and available support services for vulnerable migrants and survivors.
3. Conduct mapping and establish cooperation with diaspora-based organizations, diaspora communities and community leaders in major destination countries to collaborate in raising awareness of migrants on risks of TIP, migrants' rights and

available support services for vulnerable migrants and TIP survivors, including during COVID-19.

4. Develop and implement youth-oriented and sustainable TIP and safe migration awareness raising and training activities, including designing, piloting and implementing peer-to-peer learning models, regular TIP-sessions and safe migration courses in schools, organization of summer camps for youth activists, and other activities. Engage with journalists through trainings and facilitation of further knowledge dissemination.
5. Develop, produce and disseminate CTIP awareness raising materials for at-risk population and migrants (can be video materials, board-games, infographics, brochures, flyers, pamphlets and/or billboards); promote reach-out through ICT communication channels, diaspora channels, state border-cross points, international airports and train stations, and, through international transportation (buses and trains).

Expected results for Objective 1

- ✓ At-risk populations are better informed about safe migration channels and dangers of TIP.
- ✓ Reduced vulnerabilities of migrants and families of migrants, affected by COVID-19.
- ✓ Based on increased knowledge, at-risk populations are able to protect themselves from the dangers of unsafe migration and TIP.

Objective 2.

Enhancement and improvement of access to identification and support services for trafficked persons, vulnerable migrants, families of migrants, and migrants affected by COVID-19.

Proposed activities for Objective 2

1. Conduct needs assessment for victims of trafficking and suspected victims of trafficking to identify urgent, short-term and long-term needs (shelter, transport, psychosocial, legal, medical and others). Develop rehabilitation and reintegration care plan, coordinate services. Identify capacity needs, provide trainings, and support for survivors on livelihood activities, income-generating and employment opportunities. Assess market for job placement opportunities and make linkages with private sector for employment opportunities. Provide technical support,

monitoring, consultations and support private sector and target populations to improve working skills and sustain employment.

2. Identify the most vulnerable returning female and male migrants, including those, returning due to COVID-19 spread, as well as abandoned wives of migrants and provide support with skills-development, employment, job placement and economic opportunities. Focus on areas where need is urgent such as sewing to make personal protective equipment, medical assistance.
3. Partner with local adult training centers to develop and deliver curriculum/modules on life skills, financial skills, business start-up, and job training for skills that are in demand; followed by provision of small grants (particularly for women) to start a new business.
4. Provide free legal and psychological support for migrants, including through tele-consultations and support from local bar associations (particularly for stranded and recently returned migrants). Legal advice on obtaining state-funded services, including from the specialized Fund on support and protection of the rights and interest of labor migrants.
5. Help CSOs and/or diaspora networks in destination countries to develop channels for return, assistance, family support of migrants (particularly for stranded migrants or recent returnees).

Expected results for Objective 2

- ✓ Improved identification, referral and support to trafficked persons, vulnerable migrants, families of migrants, and migrants affected by COVID-19.

Objective 3.

Strengthening the capacity of state authorities, CSOs, private sector and community leaders in protection of migrants' rights and provision of support services to labor migrants and trafficking survivors.

Proposed activities for Objective 3

1. Conduct trainings for state authorities, CSOs, community leaders on provision of services to potential and existing migrants, victim identification, as well as upholding labor rights of migrants in Uzbekistan and destination countries. Collaborate with relevant state institutions, responsible for trainings.

2. Conduct ToTs, train and mentor youth leaders and NGOs on good practices for upholding migrants' rights, promoting safe migration and countering human trafficking. Ensure access for interested trainers and CSOs to educational materials on CTIP through available online platforms.
3. Facilitate learning and exchange workshops. The learning and exchange workshops should be directed to improve coordination between service-providers and national referral mechanism, support implementation of action plans of local divisions of CTIP Commissions, promote migrant friendly administrative procedures, and promote the need to collect comprehensive data and evidence around TIP and CTIP.

Expected results for Objective 3

- ✓ Labor migrants and trafficking survivors have improved access to information on safe migration, TIP risks and rights of migrants from state authorities, CSOs, private sector and community leaders.
- ✓ Labor migrants and trafficking survivors have improved identification, referral, rehabilitation and/or reintegration support services from state authorities, CSOs, private sector and community leaders.

SECTION 2: AWARD INFORMATION

2.1 ESTIMATED AMOUNT OF AWARD

The total amount awarded will depend on the activities proposed, number of districts covered, time frame proposed and estimated actual cost of implementation of the grant. Applicants are encouraged to propose realistic budgets based on actual costs of salaries, fringe and/or benefit structure, travel, procurement, and other operating expenses. A budget template is included as Annex B to be used for this purpose. Applicants can support **one or more** of the stated objectives.

Grant period and amount per application can be one of the followings:

- For the period from 8 to 24 months, not exceeding 50,000 USD;
- For the period between 8-12 months with a budget not exceeding 25,000 USD;
- Less than 7 months is acceptable only for a rapid and emergency response activities, related to COVID-19 interventions, with a budget not exceeding 15,000 USD.

The final amount awarded per application will depend on agreed partner activities and capacity of applicant organization. Upon decision of the Winrock evaluation panel, Winrock can contact applicant organizations with a request to reduce or enhance suggested activities and budget.

2.2 ANTICIPATED START DATE AND DURATION OF GRANTS

Contingent on USAID approval, the anticipated start day of performance for this subgrant is the second half of April 2021. The applicants can design a project with duration not less than 6 months and not exceeding 24 months.

2.4. TYPE OF AWARDS TO BE ISSUED

Winrock will determine the appropriate award mechanism, in consultation with the applicant during the negotiation process. The type of award will be based on the pre-award assessment of the applicant, nature of the award activity, and estimated total cost of the award.

SECTION 3: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

3.1 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

This solicitation is open to all organizations including non-profit and for-profit non-US organizations. To be minimally eligible for funding, applicants must comply with the following conditions:

- Be legally registered or otherwise authorized to operate in the applicant's country or countries of operation.
- Agree to be subject to a pre-award capacity assessment carried out by Winrock staff to determine that the applicant has sound management in the form of financial, administrative and technical policies and procedures.
- Be able to demonstrate successful past performance in TIP program development, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation-preferably at sub-national level. Past performance should be in at least one of the following areas: raising awareness of TIP; provision of direct assistance to vulnerable migrants and victims of TIP; building the capacity of government or local stakeholders.
- Demonstrate capacity and be willing to enter a contractual arrangement with Winrock International to work together towards fulfilling the objectives of the SMICA project.

Applications can be submitted by individual organizations only, applications from consortiums will not be accepted.

SECTION 4: INSTRUCTION TO APPLICANTS AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

4.1. TECHNICAL APPLICATION

Applicants will develop their applications based on their understanding of the project's needs, their prior institutional experience, and their proposed technical approach which should be realistic and demonstrate ability to achieve impact. In all cases, applicants shall clearly explain the rationale for the proposed activities.

Submissions must clearly state the objectives and the expected results of the activity within the life of the funding period and define an implementation plan with a proposed time frame and budget. On-going monitoring and reporting of the funded activities will be the responsibility of the applicant. An Application Form template is provided as an attachment to this RFA.

4.2. COST APPLICATION

Cost applications shall be submitted separately from the technical application. Applicants shall submit a summary and detailed budget in Microsoft Excel with budget notes identifying how the applicant would allocate any funds received during the term of the potential agreement or contract. The budget narrative should explain and justify the need for the costs proposed in the budget. The narrative should help the reviewer understand why an item of cost is necessary and how it will be used to support the activity for which it will be incurred. The budget narrative should demonstrate the relationship between the proposed activities and the budget. Just as the technical application should reflect the applicant's understanding of the objectives and the proposed approach to achieve those objectives, the budget and the accompanying narrative should be realistic and show a similar understanding of the financial requirements of the proposed activities.

Applicants should include into the project budget bank transaction fees and other service fees, required for utilization of international grant, in line with national legislation. Production of a project roll-up or banner for project branding purposes should also be included into the budget.

4.3. SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

All questions and other communications regarding this RFA should be submitted in writing to SMICAGrants@winrock.org. Written responses to questions will be made available to all applicants.

Applications must be submitted in English or Russian using Times New Roman, font size 11, single-spaced. The page limit does not include Annexes and CVs of proposed staff included as part of the application.

Applications (including a technical description, estimated budget and supporting documentation) must be submitted electronically via email to SMICAGrants@winrock.org and should reference (RFA 01_Uzbekistan). Applications must be submitted no later than the time and date indicated on the cover page.

Incomplete or late applications will be marked as such and will be ineligible for review or award; however, Winrock reserves the right to accept and include incomplete or late applications in the review and award process when it is considered within the best interest of Winrock to do so. Applications that are submitted late or incomplete run the risk of **not** being considered for review.

Applications may be withdrawn by written notice via email received at any time before an award is made. Applications may be withdrawn in person by an organization or its authorized representative if the representative's identity is made known and the representative signs a receipt for the application before award is made.

A complete submission, at a minimum, will include the following:

- A copy of the applicant's valid legal registration.
- A completed and signed technical application.
- CVs for project personnel (expected to be involved in the suggested project).
- A completed and signed budget application.

Receipt time for electronic submissions is when the application is received by Winrock's Internet Server. Hand delivery and hardcopy paper submissions of the application will not be accepted after the stated time on the cover page. Please do not send files in ZIP format.

SECTION 5: APPLICATION EVALUATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

5.1. MERIT REVIEW

The criteria presented below have been tailored to the requirements of this RFA. A total of 100 points are possible for all components of the application. The relative importance of each criterion is indicated by approximate weight by points.

In evaluating the applications, Winrock will examine overall merit and feasibility, as well as specific criteria relevant to each component as elaborated below. Awards will be made to the overall highest scores to the responsible applicant(s). Applicants should note that these criteria: (1) serve as the standard against which all applications will be evaluated, and (2) serve to identify the significant matters which applicants should address in their applications.

Merit Review Criteria	Points
1. Technical Approach: relevance of the action	Total: 30 points
1.1. How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of current Request for Applications?	10
1.2. How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	10
1.3. Does the proposal contain specific added-value elements, such as innovative approaches, engagement with private sector, usage of ICT tools, engagement of bloggers?	10
2. Technical Approach: design of the action	Total: 30 points
2.1. How coherent is the overall design of the action? In particular, does it reflect the analysis of the problems involved, take into account external factors and relevant stakeholders?	10
2.2. Is the action feasible and consistent in relation to the objectives and expected results? Are the objectives specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timebound (i.e. SMART)?	10
2.3. Does the approach incorporate multiple strategic methodologies (citizen engagement, use of media, interaction with government, etc.)?	10
3. Organizational Capacity	Total: 25 points
3.1. Do the applicant have previous or on-going experience in implementing similar activities?	10
3.2. What results have been achieved in previous projects, what were the quantitative, qualitative and impact-level results?	5

3.3. Do the applicant participate in national and/or regional working groups/commissions on CTIP, and/or participate in design and implementation of CTIP action plans?	5
3.4. Is the staff capacity of the applicant appropriate for implementation of the suggested activities?	5
4. Budgeting	Total: 15 points
4.1. Is the budget complete and clear, has sufficient details, and corresponds to project activities, amounts are reasonable and appropriate, budget notes clearly justify the needs for costs.	15
Overall Rating	100

5.2. REVIEW PROCESS

Grant applications will be reviewed and evaluated by an evaluation panel using the merit review criteria indicated above.

Cost applications will not be scored but will be reviewed and evaluated for reasonableness and effectiveness based on the scope of activities being proposed.

It is anticipated that awards will be made within 8-10 weeks after the submission deadline, as stated on the cover page of this RFA. Final negotiations and award will be managed by Winrock.

All grants are subject to USAID approval.

SECTION 6: OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS

6.1. DISCLAIMERS

- The issuance of this solicitation does not commit Winrock to make an award to any prospective grantee responding to this solicitation. Prospective grantees will not be reimbursed for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Winrock reserves the right to reject any and all applications, or to make an award without further discussion or negotiation.
- All costs funded under the grant must be allowable, allocable and reasonable.

6.2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Applicants must provide disclosure of any past, present or future relationships with any parties associated with the issuance, review or management of this RFA and anticipated

grant. Failure to provide full and open disclosure may result in Winrock having to re-evaluate selection of a potential applicant.

6.3. OTHER CONDITIONS

- Applicants must agree and be willing to sign and submit required certifications before a grant is issued.
- Applicants must agree and be willing to ensure branding requirements of Winrock and USAID during implementation of project-funded activities.
- For those selected for a grant award, Winrock will conduct a pre-award risk assessment.
- Issuance of grant agreements will be subject to applicable prior written approval by Winrock funder, as needed.
- Applicants may only submit one application per prime organization under this RFA.
- Individuals are not eligible to receive funding under this solicitation.
- Applications must remain valid for at least 180 days.
- Application forms should be signed by an authorized agent of the applicant's organization.
- Applicants that submit applications that meet or exceed the evaluation criteria will be notified of next steps in the application process.

Additionally, the following items cannot be purchased under the potential resultant grants:

- Any purchases or activities deemed unnecessary to accomplish grant purposes as determined by Winrock, including any grantee headquarters expenses that are not directly linked to the implementation of the proposed activities
- Private ceremonies, parties, celebrations or "representation" expenses
- Previous obligations and/or bad debts
- Expenses related to overtly religious purposes
- Expenses intended to influence the outcome of elections or other political processes
- Fines and/or penalties
- Creation of endowments
- Alcoholic beverages
- Real property (land, including land improvements, and structures thereto)

The following items are also ineligible or restricted under USAID-funded grants:

- Prohibited goods under USAID eligibility rules, including military equipment, surveillance equipment, commodities and services for support of police or other law enforcement activities, abortion equipment and services, luxury goods, and gambling equipment, and weather modification equipment

- Restricted goods under USAID eligibility rules, such as agricultural commodities, motor vehicles, including motorcycles, pharmaceuticals, pesticides, used equipment, contraceptive products, USG-owned excess property or fertilizer
- Goods and services whose source and nationality are other than Geographic Code 937 and 110.
- Construction or infrastructure activities of any kind.

The award will be provided in a form of bank transaction, to bank accounts of award winner applicants. The winner applicants will bear sole responsibility for ensuring acceptance and utilization of an international grant, in line with national legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan and its according requirements.

SECTION 7: ANNEXES

- Annex A – Application Form
- Annex B – Detail Budget Template