**Call for Research Concepts**

**Deadline: July 16, 2022**

**Applied Policy Research on Safe Migration in Central Asia and Trafficking in Person (TIP) in Central Asia**

**I. About the John D. Rockefeller 3rd Scholars Program**

The John D. Rockefeller 3rd Scholars Program (JDR3) was established by Winrock International in 2004 to build the capacity and leadership skills of scholars in emerging countries.

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.

In 2021 SMICA decided to join JDR3 initiative with focus on the analyses of migration and TIP issues in the Central Asia. SMICA goals are to:

* Build the capacity and leadership skills of the Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan researches to solve pressing development problems through innovative, multidisciplinary collaboration, and
* Foster problem-focused, multidisciplinary research that will result in actionable plans and policies in the area of migration or CTIP.

Research results are intended to assist decision makers in making informed policy and implementation decisions.

The JDR3 program provides policy research grants to teams of mid-career professionals in the social sciences and strengthens their capacity for research and policy engagement. JDR3 Program is designed to build a cadre of experienced, qualified researchers and support them to conduct research on human trafficking in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. The goal of each JDR3 research team is to support government agencies and policymakers by expanding the knowledge base on human trafficking. The research also aims to contribute to SMICA’s activities focused on learning and adapting.

The JDR3 Program will award one USD 25,000 grant to each winning research team. The winning research teams are expected to work full-time, or nearly full-time, on the research project for approximately 6 months. The Program will award planning grants of up to $1,000 each to the top three concepts to aide with developing the full research proposals

**II. Research topics and questions**

The JDR3 Program is seeking research concepts on the following three research topics, with associated research questions in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Applicants may submit a concept for only one topic.

**● Topic 1: Awareness of potential and labor migrants about the problem of human trafficking**

- What are the main challenges of flighting against human trafficking in CA?

- What are the legal bases that can support the survivors of human trafficking in CA countries?

- What are the main factors of causing labor migration into human trafficking in CA?

**● Topic 2: Access of migrant children to public services in destination countries (focused on Central Asian Countries: Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan)**

- What are the main available public services for migrant children?

- What kind of challenges do migrants face in order to obtain the public services for their children in destination country?

- What are the main legal support that are available for migrants to obtain public services for their children?

**● Topic 3: Bringing TIP cases to court in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan**

- What are the survivors’ experiences with the process of obtaining justice in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan?

- What are the legal barriers to survivors to accessing justice in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan?

- What policy changes are required to improve victims’ access to justice in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan?

**III. Research outcomes**

The expected outcomes of each research grant are:

- Key policy makers will receive guidance on strengthening the effectiveness of TIP policy, regulations, plans, and implementation at the republican, provincial and local levels. Key policy makers include the [Ministry of Labor, Social Security and Migration, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, OHCHR](https://reliefweb.int/report/kyrgyzstan/ministry-labor-social-security-and-migration-and-wfp-launch-social-contract-pilot)

- The research results and recommendations will contribute toward the SMICA Project’s learning and adapting agenda, helping to drive evidence-based program design and delivery of robust CTIP interventions, and expanding the evidence based on what works and what doesn’t in countering TIP and improving service delivery to TIP survivors and at-risk populations. Furthermore, it will also contribute to evidence-based advocacy and CTIP programming within and beyond SMICA project.

**IV. Involvement of policy makers**

Research teams will be expected to involve key policy makers in their research. For example:

* Involve policy makers in the development of the research proposal (e.g., refining research questions and/or methodology)
* Conduct stakeholder workshops during and after the research to inform and update policy makers who will ultimately make use of the findings.
* Frequent consultations and sharing with Research Advisory Committee (RAC).

**V. Grant competition process**

The grant competition process includes two phases:

*Phase 1*

* Applicants choose one research topic and submit a 5-page concept
* Research Advisory Committee evaluates concepts and selects three winning concepts

*Phase 2*

* Research teams participate in a two-day (or two and half day) training on policy engagement and planning
* Each research team develops and submits a full research proposal
* Research Advisory Committee evaluates and selects three winning research team

In Phase 2, the total research grant amount awarded to the winning team on each topic will vary depending on the research scope selected for funding. A group of expert advisors (Research Advisory Committee) will support the selected research team on research scope, methodology, and subject matters.  SMICA Project will own the data and final research products and may adapt and/or disseminate them.

**VI. Eligibility**

Concepts will be accepted from mid-career researchers under age 45 who reside in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Individuals or teams of up to four researchers may apply. Applicants must have a bachelors degree or master’s degree in law, social science, research, or another relevant field. Research experience and knowledge of migration, human trafficking, the law and justice system, foreign labor, and/or migration are preferred. Concepts notes or research applications can be submitted in Russian or English languages.

Women and individuals from minority groups are encouraged to apply. The JDR3 Program encourages applicants to form an inclusive research team.

Applicants may only apply to one research topic.

**VII. Research concept evaluation criteria**

Research concepts that meet the eligibility requirements will be reviewed by an independent evaluation committee made up of local experts. Concepts will be evaluated using the following criteria:

* Demonstrated understanding of appropriate research methods
* Involvement of key policy makers
* Qualifications of principal researchers
* Proposed research team members are encouraged to include women and/or individuals from a minority group. Preference will be given to teams with Principal Researchers who are women and/or members of a minority group.