

VOLUNTARY TRUST FUND

Call for Project Proposals

For 2021 implementation

VTF BACKGROUND

Introduction

1. The objectives of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which entered into force on 24 December 2014, include the establishment of the highest possible common international standards for regulating or improving the regulation of the international trade in conventional arms, as well as the prevention and eradication of the illicit trade in conventional arms and the prevention of their diversion.
2. Article 16(3) of the ATT provides for the establishment of a Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF) to support national implementation of the Treaty and encourages all States Parties to contribute resources to the Fund.
3. The VTF was formally established in August 2016 by the Second Conference of States Parties to the ATT to operate under its approved Terms of Reference, as amended (ATT/VTF18/2018/SEC/251/ToR.Cons.Dr.v1.Rev1).
4. The VTF is financed through voluntary contributions by donor States, with contributions to the VTF opened throughout the year.
5. The VTF shall disburse funds to ATT implementation projects according to the provisions of its Terms of Reference and Administrative Rules. Where necessary, OECD DAC guidelines for development cooperation may also apply.

VTF Aim

6. The VTF aims to assist requesting States requiring international assistance to implement their Treaty obligations, including with respect to 'legal or legislative assistance, institutional capacity building, and technical, material and financial assistance'.

Administration

7. The VTF is administered by the ATT Secretariat assisted by the VTF Selection Committee consisting of 15 States Parties appointed by the Sixth Conference of States Parties, including States that have announced financial contributions to the Fund and ensuring diverse representation.

CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS

Applicable Timeline

8. Under this Call for Project Proposals the VTF will accept Grant Applications on Treaty implementation **from 30 November 2020 – 12 February 2021**.

Eligibility

9. The VTF Terms of Reference pronounce as follows on eligibility:

'Any State Party to the ATT requiring assistance in the implementation of the Treaty may submit a project proposal.

Signatory States and other States having shown clear and unambiguous political commitment to accede to the ATT requiring assistance to implement the Treaty may also submit project proposals.

Assistance projects required by requesting States may be implemented by or in conjunction with UN agencies, international or regional organisations, civil society organisations or other competent bodies. Applicant must be the beneficiary country /countries'

Focus

10. The VTF accepts Grant Applications for projects that support requesting States requiring international assistance to implement their Treaty obligations including *'legal or legislative assistance, institutional capacity building, and technical, material and financial assistance'*.

COVID-19 Considerations

11. COVID-19 is impacting most countries around the world, albeit to varying degrees. The restrictions on movement, meeting size, and travel that are being imposed by many countries in response to the outbreak may make it difficult to conduct certain activities, including in-person workshops, in the coming months and years. In addition, the duration of the COVID-19 outbreak and its impacts are unclear and cannot be predicted at this stage, making it difficult for applicants and project partners to know with any certainty whether things will be 'back to normal' by the time they

are implementing their proposed projects, or whether any ATT implementation activities they wish to undertake in the coming months and years will be subject to/impacted by COVID-19 restrictions.

12. In light of these developments, for the 2021 VTF cycle, **the VTF Selection Committee will only consider and approve projects where the activities contemplated can be implemented regardless of whether the COVID-19 pandemic continues**. In other words, any project proposal that includes activities that would not be possible if the pandemic continues, will not be considered/ will not be eligible. For example, projects that involve a workshop where representatives from other States in the region would be required to travel internationally to participate in the workshop, or where international experts or trainers would be required to travel internationally, will not be considered. Where a project involves one or more workshops, the applicant should contemplate that any participants, experts or trainers that are based/located overseas will take part in the workshop virtually, or through an online platform.

13. Additionally, where a project includes activities that involve groups of people meeting in person (such as workshops involving local participants only or inter-agency meetings or consultations), the applicant should ensure that e.g. the venue is large enough to allow adequate social distancing between participants; hand sanitizer is available; masks are provided etc., and these considerations should be clearly reflected in the project description and the project budget.

14. In short, applicants are expected to demonstrate the measures they will adopt to ensure their proposed project can be implemented regardless of whether or not the COVID-19 pandemic is still present.

Duration and Implementation Period

15. Unless agreed otherwise, all VTF projects shall have an implementation period of one year or less starting immediately after the signing of a Grant Agreement between the VTF and the grant recipient. Projects of longer duration and later commencement date shall also be considered.

VTF Budget Cap

16. States are encouraged to submit project proposals of any size and complexity but are asked to note that a budget cap of US\$100,000 applies to projects where only one State is benefitting.

Project's Co-funding

17. The VTF is open to co-funding of projects. However, VTF Grant Applicants are encouraged to secure a project funding partner prior to applying to VTF for project co-funding.

States' In-kind Contribution

18. States are requested to indicate their in-kind contribution (i.e. personnel, office space, etc.) to the project to offset certain budget line items.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Application Forms

19. All VTF Grant Applications must be submitted using the VTF prescribed forms, which can be downloaded from the ATT website at: <https://www.thearmstradetreaty.org/voluntary.html?tab=tab3> in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. All fields of the Grant Application Form (Annex 1) and the Detailed Budget Form (Annex 2) are mandatory and must be completed in full.

20. Applicants are encouraged to consult the Explanatory Notes for Completing the Grant Application Form and Explanatory Notes for Completing the Detailed Budget Form when preparing their applications. Applicants are also encouraged to consult other assistance and guidance material available on the ATT website.

21. Applications submitted in any form other than the VTF prescribed forms shall not be considered.

Submission of Grant Applications

22. All VTF Grant Applications must be submitted by mail to: trustfund@thearmstradetreaty.org. With the VTF Grant Application forms being in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish, **applications in Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish must be accompanied by an English translation.**

23. The deadline for submission of VTF Grant Applications is **12 February 2021** at 17h00 Geneva, Switzerland time.

Selection Process

24. The VTF project selection process shall be guided by the VTF Terms of Reference with particular reference to 'The General Principles for Implementation Assistance Projects under the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund' and the 'Guidance for the Selection Process'

([ATT/VTF18/2018/CHAIR/315/SCGuidance](#)) developed by the VTF Selection Committee. The said General Principles provide for both the eligibility criteria and the selection criteria.

25. **Phase One:** Received Grant Applications shall be pre-screened by the ATT Secretariat for compliance with the application requirements and/or eligibility criteria. The ATT Secretariat shall draft a shortlist of eligible projects, subject to approval by the VTF Selection Committee.

26. Along with short-listed projects, applications that fall short of the set eligibility criteria shall be accounted for fully, recorded and forwarded to the VTF Selection Committee for information.

27. To the extent possible the ATT Secretariat will endeavour to advise the VTF Selection Committee of any overlap/duplication with projects funded by UNSCAR or other entities.

28. **Phase Two:** the VTF Selection Committee shall consider the shortlisted project proposals by applying the set VTF Terms of Reference selection criteria and the 'Guidance for the Selection Process'. As required, shortlisted project proposals could be considered against OECD DAC guidelines for development cooperation, as well as any other conditionalities applied to donations.

29. The VTF Selection Committee shall decide on the list of project proposals to be funded by the available VTF budget for the 2021 project cycle.

Grant Agreement Preparation

30. Once a project has been approved, the ATT Secretariat shall enter into discussion with grant recipients with a view to setting up the project's control framework to facilitate each project's financial transfers, reporting, monitoring and evaluation.

31. On completion of the project control framework, a Grant Agreement shall be concluded between the VTF and each grant recipient.
