

**Request
for
proposals
2021**

**ROBERT
CARR
FUND** For civil
society
networks

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1.

Introduction

The Robert Carr Fund for civil society networks is pleased to announce an open Request for Proposals (RFP) 2021 for funding period 2022–2024.

Through this RFP, the Robert Carr Fund invites global and regional civil society networks and consortia of networks led by, and/or devoted to serving inadequately served populations to apply for a grant to support their core funding and activity needs for a three-year period (2022–2024).

Inadequately served populations (ISPs) are groups or persons that face a higher HIV risk, mortality and/or morbidity compared to the general population, and, at the same time, facing systematic human rights violations and barriers to information and services. ISPs include people living with HIV, gay men, bisexuals and other men who have sex with men, people who use drugs, people in prisons or other closed settings, sex workers, and transgender persons. Depending on the dynamic of the HIV epidemic and the legal status of these populations, ISPs may also include women and girls, youth, migrants and people living in rural areas.

Mission Statement

The Robert Carr Fund invests in global and regional civil society networks to sustain and expand the role of inadequately served populations in the HIV response, **with a commitment to prioritize ISP-led networks for funding** to uphold rights, remove barriers to accessing services, and to contribute to sustainable financial investment in communities and programming.

The RCF is unique amongst funding mechanisms in both its explicit mandate to provide core funding to networks and in its belief that the continued survival, growth and success of civil society is vital to a successful HIV response. It stands alone in its record of pooling funding from a range of funding partners to assure that regional and global networks survive and thrive, and has played a vital role since the fund's inception

in assuring that inadequately served populations are meaningfully represented in the global HIV response by democratically-governed networks.

During the 2022 –2024 funding cycle, the Robert Carr Fund aims to further the aims and objectives of the [Fund’s Strategic Plan 2020–2024](#) and to amplify the mission and vision of the Fund, while responding to the unique challenges and opportunities of this time.

The Robert Carr Fund recognizes that programming to strengthen social enablers, human rights and gender equality, as well as responses led by communities of ISPs, are complex, and require longer-term investments. Therefore, the Fund intends, in this funding cycle, to support continuity, so that well-performing existing partners can build on their achievements. The Fund will continue to be supportive of the role of **core, long-standing community-led networks** and provide **core funding** to support these networks in their efforts to realize their full potential. At the same time, the Fund wishes to encourage applications from new, emerging networks, especially those which represent populations and regions which are currently under-served in the fund portfolio.

In the 2022–2024 funding cycle, the Robert Carr Fund also wishes to encourage applications which demonstrate two **strategic approaches** which are in line with the [Fund’s Strategic Plan 2020–2024](#):

- i. promoting a culture of **learning** within networks and/or consortia; and
- ii. promoting **partnerships** in order to amplify impact; this means both forming consortia for the purpose of this application, as well as broader alliances and coalitions between organizations, networks and institutions.

Using the approaches, the Fund aims to focus on three **strategic priorities** in the 2022–2024 funding cycle, which will serve as trail markers for achievement of the Fund’s Theory of Change. These are:

- i. Strengthening **movement leadership**, supporting the continuity and succession of leadership in the HIV movement;
- ii. Building organizational **financial health and resilience**, as well as the sustainability of the HIV response;
- iii. Support for **innovative and creative** ideas which respond to the changing context.

2.

Application submission

Applications can only be submitted through the Aidsfonds grant platform: www.aidsfonds.grantplatform.com.

The RFP 2021 application via the grant platform will go live **10 May 2021 at 12:00 (noon) CEST**.

Submission of proposals through other communication platforms will not be taken into consideration for review.

Only one application can be used per proposal. If you would like to work together on an application with more than one party, please share a login name and password; it is not possible to have multiple logins to access the same application.

When an application is submitted, you will receive an automated e-mail confirming receipt of your application. If you do not receive this e-mail, please check your junk mail or check in the Aidsfonds grant platform that submission was successful. If not, please resubmit. If you continue to face technical problems, please contact grants@robertcarrfund.org

For proposals to be reviewed:

- Only applications submitted through the Aidsfonds grant platform will be considered.
- Applications have to fulfill the eligibility criteria for this Request for Proposal (see 3. Eligibility)
- Applications need to be submitted in **English**.
- Applications need to be accompanied by supporting documents as listed in the check-list (see 10. Supporting Documents Requirements), or information should be provided as to why certain documents are not available.
- Applications received after the deadline for submission will not be taken into consideration and deemed not-eligible

Deadline for submission of an application is 11 July 2021 at 12:00 (noon) CET.
The online application via the Aidsfonds grant platform closes at this time.

3.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the 2022–2024 grant, applicants must:

- Address the health, social inclusion and wellbeing of inadequately served populations (ISPs);
- Be a civil society network¹ and/or a consortium of civil society networks;
- Operate regionally and/or globally;
- Be from the civil society sector; and
- Be led by ISPs.

Note: Networks/consortia which are not led by ISPs are also eligible. RCF recognizes that in some contexts some ISP groups experience greater challenges to ISP leadership e.g. prisoners, migrants and children. However, where ISP leadership exists, these networks will be prioritized. Furthermore, non-ISP led networks are also eligible but must demonstrate meaningful engagement of ISPs in the work of the organization.

Definitions and further explanations of key concepts are provided in

4. Definitions and Further Explanations of Key Terms.

- Further, only proposals submitted with a work plan and budget in the **RCF Budget Form Template** will be considered as eligible. This template is available on the Robert Carr Fund website, [Request for Proposals](#) at launch 1 April 2021, and to download within the online application when opened 10 May 2021 via the [Aidsfonds grant platform](#).

The following entities **are not eligible for funding** under this RFP:

- Non-governmental organizations that are not networks
- National networks (working and having members in one country)
- Cross border/multi-country collaborations between national networks or organizations
- Governmental or inter-governmental organizations or units
- Aggregates of projects, individuals or professional associations

The eligibility criteria will be strictly applied.

¹ The Robert Carr Fund defines “civil society networks” as regional and global networks led by and/or devoted to serving the needs of inadequately served populations in the HIV response.

As the Robert Carr Fund recognizes the challenges which some ISP organizations and networks experience with becoming formally registered, the Fund will accept applications led by unregistered networks. However, applications led by unregistered organizations should be supported by a fiscal host, i.e. an organization which will enter into the project agreement with Aidsfonds, and bear ultimate responsibility for financial management and reporting to the Fund. Please note that a fiscal host is not considered to be the 'applicant' but is accountable under a project agreement if the applicant is successful in their proposal.

4.

Definitions and further explanations of key terms

Inadequately served populations (ISPs)

The Robert Carr Fund (RCF) defines the term “inadequately served populations” (ISP) as populations facing a high HIV risk, mortality and/or morbidity compared to the general population, and, at the same time, facing systematic human rights violations and barriers to information and services. As people with direct experience of key health-related needs and barriers to health services, ISPs are central to efforts to improve human rights environments, improve HIV service accessibility, and improve efficiency and effectiveness of national and international funding for health and human rights. ISPs include people living with HIV; gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men; people who use drugs; people in prisons or other closed settings; sex workers, and transgender persons. Depending on the dynamic of the HIV epidemic and the legal status of these populations, ISPs may also include women and girls, youth, migrants and people living in rural areas.

While the Fund uses a standard definition for ISPs, it recognizes that there is tremendous diversity of identity and experience even within these groups. Other factors, including gender, race and ethnicity, social and/or economic status and ability/disability status including mental health, can significantly influence rights and access to care even within the same ISP.

Moreover, simultaneous identification with more than one ISP can compound and complicate how a person interacts with peers and the broader environment.

Inadequately served population leadership

The Robert Carr Fund prioritizes the funding of networks which are led by ISPs².

ISP-led networks are defined as:

...entities for which the majority of governance, leadership, staff, spokespeople, membership and volunteers, reflect and represent the experiences, perspectives, and voices of their constituencies, and who have transparent mechanisms of accountability to their constituencies. ISP-led networks are self-determining and autonomous, and not influenced by government, commercial, or donor agendas. Not all organizations which provide services for ISPs are ISP-led.

Notwithstanding its commitment to prioritizing ISP-led networks in this Request for Proposals, networks which are not led by ISPs are also eligible. The Robert Carr Fund recognizes that there are regions where the ability of other ISPs to meet, organize and register organizations may be constrained by legal, political or other barriers. Furthermore, non-ISP led networks are also eligible but must demonstrate meaningful engagement of ISPs in the work of the organization.

In addition, some ISPs encounter greater barriers than others to organizing, and to establishing and leading organizations and networks. Examples of these populations include prisoners, migrants and young people.

In contexts where there are barriers which prevent a network from being ISP-led, or where networks are not ISP-led, applicants are encouraged to explain how their approach to working with ISPs is rights-based, how they meaningfully include ISPs in governance and decision-making processes, and how they support the development of ISP leadership within their network and/or provide support for nascent autonomous ISP-led organizations or networks.

Networks

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 platforms for social action and is sustained through jointly developed governance structures, resources and regular communication.

² Robert Carr Fund's definition of ISP-leadership is guided by the work of the UNAIDS Multi-stakeholder Task Team on Community-Led AIDS Responses. See: https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/Report_Task_Team_Community_led_AIDS_Responses_EN.pdf

Consortia

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). The consortium works together in a coordinated partnership towards a common set of inter-related goals and objectives.

Applicants considering applying as a consortium are strongly encouraged to carefully review sample guidance on key elements of strong performance of consortia (based on the analysis of previous consortia performance) or specific challenges, related to the consortia management – see Annex 2 “Lessons Learnt from Consortia Building and Management”.

Global

In order for a grantee to claim global geographical coverage, it must: (1) conduct activities directed at a global body/institution (e.g. the Global Fund Board/World Health Organization/UNAIDS PCB etc.) or global process (e.g. UNGASS on Drugs/High Level Meeting on AIDS etc.); AND/OR (2) conduct a sequence of activities over the course of one year in at least 3 regions.

Regional

In order for a grantee to claim geographical presence or coverage in a region, it must: (1) conduct activities directed at a regional body (e.g. African Union or European Union etc. or a regional process (e.g. Global Fund multi-country dialogue or a regional consultation or a campaign targeting at least 3 countries in that region etc.); AND/OR (2) conduct a sequence of activities over the course of one year in at least 3 countries in the region; AND/OR (3) have active national network members operational in at least 3 countries in the region.

Civil society networks

The Robert Carr Fund holds civil society and communities at the center of its vision and mission. Recognizing the wide range of actors which can be included in a definition of civil society and communities, for its purposes the Fund defines “civil society networks” as regional and global networks led by and/or devoted to serving the needs of inadequately served populations in the HIV response.

5.

Strategic plan 2020–2024, theory of change and results framework

Our Strategic Plan 2020–2024

In 2020, the Robert Carr Fund developed its Strategic Plan 2020–2024. The Strategic Plan builds on and amplifies the original mission and vision of the Fund, and preserves the fundamentals of how the Fund operates – while responding to the unique challenges and opportunities of this time. While the Fund will continue its pooled funding approach and participatory grant-making functions, its commitment to financing regional and global networks, and the encouragement of grantees to work in consortia, it will also boldly engage in an evolving health landscape to improve the health, social inclusion and wellbeing of ISPs and contribute to the global commitment to “leave no one behind”.

Overall, in the 2022–2024 funding cycle, in accordance with the Robert Carr Strategic Plan 2020–2024, the Fund will continue to:

- Support rights-based approaches in the HIV response, focused on **inadequately served populations**
- **Support communities** to do their work, develop sound financial and organizational systems, and pursue sustainability
- Support both **long-standing community-led networks**, as well as **emergent networks**
- Support networks at **global** and **regional** levels
- Be **people-centered** and **participatory** in its grant-making
- Encourage consortia to facilitate **partnerships and collaboration**
- Strive for **balance** in its funding portfolio

For further reading, please see the Fund’s [Strategic Plan 2020–2024](#).

Governance and management of the Robert Carr Fund

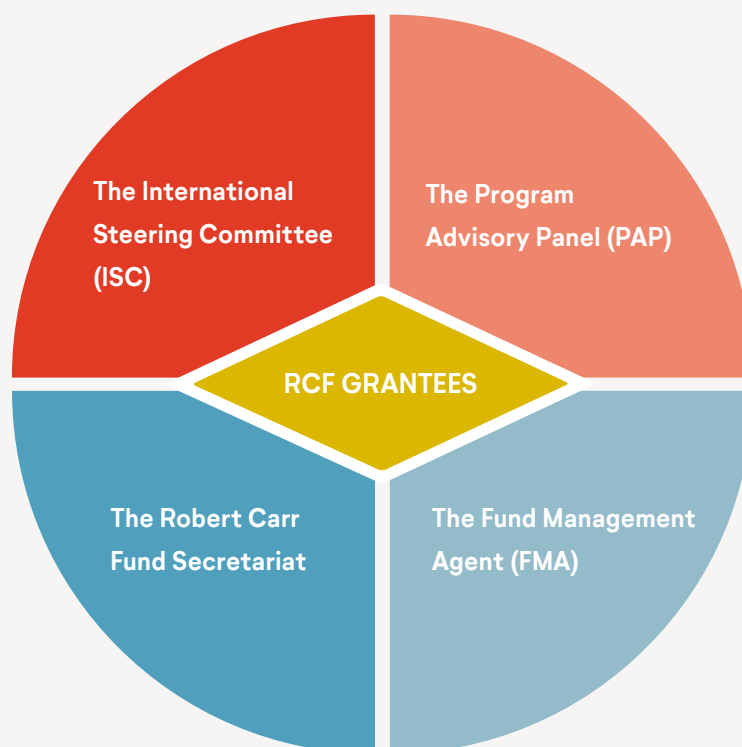
The Robert Carr Fund is governed by the following bodies:

- [The International Steering Committee \(ISC\)](#), which is the overall and final decision-making body
- [The Program Advisory Panel \(PAP\)](#), which plays an advisory role to the ISC in funding processes and decisions

Management of the Robert Carr Fund is by:

- [The Robert Carr Fund Secretariat](#), responsible for the implementation of the work of the Fund
- [The Fund Management Agent \(FMA\)](#), provides administrative, contractual and financial management support

Figure 1: Robert Carr Fund Governance Structure



Our Theory of Change

The Robert Carr Fund operates under a Theory of Change for which the ultimate goal is 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.

- The Robert Carr Fund believes that if these networks are stronger, people from inadequately served populations will have more influence over the human rights and HIV issues that affect them.
- Sustained influence from ISPs with regards to HIV and human rights issues at global, regional and national levels will result in a more enabling and rights-affirming social, policy and legal environment for ISPs, along with more accessible and appropriate quality HIV services and programs, and the corresponding available resources to create better conditions for ISPs with regards to HIV.
- If the human rights of ISPs are realized, and they have access to better HIV services, and there is appropriate resourcing to underpin the necessary services, it is believed that ISPs across the globe can have better health, social inclusion and wellbeing.

For more on the RCF Theory of Change, see *Annex 1. Overview of the Monitoring and Evaluation for Learning (MEL) Framework*.

6.

Funding priorities for 2021 RFP

In this RFP, the Robert Carr Fund encourages applications which focus on the following priorities:

- A. Continued prioritization of applications which aim to achieve the **outcomes** in the Fund's **Theory of Change**;
- B. Applications which integrate the two strategic approaches of **learning** and **partnerships**;
- C. Applications which address one or more of the strategic priorities of:
 - i: **movement building**; and/or
 - ii: **financial health and resilience**; and/or
 - iii: **innovation and creativity**;
- D. Applications which address previously underserved populations and/or regions in the Robert Carr Fund grant portfolio; and
- E. A balance between **continuity** of the current grant portfolio, and support for **emerging networks**, especially those from previously under-represented populations or networks.

A. Continued prioritization of applications aligned with the Robert Carr Fund Theory of Change

The Robert Carr Fund continues to prioritize applications by networks and consortia of networks pursuing achievement of the outcomes and impact areas per the Fund's Theory of Change. Therefore, the Fund aims to continue funding a portfolio of grants in 2022–2024 aligned with our Theory of Change, and which aim to achieve the following results and outcomes:

Result Area 1: Network strength and influence.

- Networks have improved basic organizational status.
- Networks show increased fiscal capacity and sustainability.
- Networks are more representative of their constituencies and more democratically governed
- Networks show increased influence and capacity to unite and mobilize movements.

Result Area 2: Human rights

- Networks contribute to an improved human rights environment for at least one ISP.

Result Area 3: Access to services

- Networks contribute to increased access to services and programs.
- Networks contribute to increased quality of services and programs.

Result Area 4: Resource accountability

- Networks contribute to increased and sustainable financing of HIV response including ISP programs.
-

B. Strategic Approaches

The Robert Carr Fund has been built on two strategic approaches, and would like to see these approaches continue to be supported in 2022–2024:

Learning

By promoting a culture of learning and creating space for deeper, more resilient links within the collective, the Fund encourages networks to use reflections on their work to inform their current and future plans.

Partnerships

The Fund will nurture the links between individuals and institutions that increase and improve partnerships that benefit ISPs. By continuing to encourage the consortium model and by investing in learning between and within networks and consortia, the Fund will support partnerships as a core way of realizing this strategic plan.

C. Strategic Priorities

The Robert Carr Strategic Plan 2020–2024 endorsed three strategic priorities, and the Fund would like to see a focus on *at least one of these priorities* in applications:

Movement Leadership

To ensure a stronger, continuous, community-led and rights-based response to HIV, the Fund through its grant-making aims to support the continuity and succession of leadership in the HIV movement. The aim includes ensuring that youth (aged 18–30) and new leaders are productively linked to veteran leaders, creating a multi-generational

approach and ensuring both individual organizations and the movement at large are not hindered by transitions. In pursuing this strategic priority, the Fund acknowledges that there is a need to continue adding and refreshing leadership from under-represented subgroups and individuals; this includes ensuring adequate representations of women in positions of leadership.

Financial health and resilience

The Fund wishes to invest in global and regional networks to build their own organizational and financial health and resilience, and influence the sustainability of the HIV response. The Fund encourages ISP networks to explore and activate new revenue generation opportunities, and strategically advocate for their needs within the overall financial landscape for health and HIV responses.

Innovation and creativity

The Fund will promote innovation and creativity to respond to environmental changes and challenges that affect ISP communities. Through its grant-making, the Fund will invest in strategic, forward-looking ideas that enable networks to consolidate the lessons they have learned and evolve more effective approaches to meeting the needs of ISPs.

While innovation and creativity will be promoted, this priority is not mutually exclusive with support for effective, long-utilized approaches or under-resourced areas of work. The Fund uses the term “innovation” in the sense of networks being agile, flexible and responsive. The Fund would like to see evidence that networks are evolving, growing, responding to the changing context, and trying new ways of working. Community-led and civil society networks are typically inherently innovative and creative; indeed, COVID-19 has highlighted the ingenuity of civil society networks and how rapidly they are able to adapt.

D. Addressing underserved populations and/or regions

The Robert Carr Fund welcomes applications which seek to address previously underserved ISP groups and/or regions.

These include:

- **Prisoners, Migrants, Transgender people, and Youth (aged 18–30) who are ISP**
- **Networks and/or consortia led by People Living With HIV**
- **Networks and/or consortia from the Middle East and North Africa, West Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean**

While seeking to address the above, the Fund will also consider other factors in its efforts to achieve a balanced funding portfolio. These include the burden of HIV amongst different inadequately served populations and across different regions, the level of investment and funding gaps across different inadequately served populations and regions, as well as the relative population sizes in different regions. Therefore, an *equitably* balanced portfolio does not equate with *equal* allocations for all regions and populations³.

E. Balancing continuity with support for emerging networks, especially those from previously under-represented populations or networks

The Robert Carr Fund recognizes that programs to address the structural barriers to quality HIV services for ISPs, and to address the social enablers of the HIV response, including human rights, and to strengthen community-led responses, are complex. These programs rarely yield results in the short-term, thus requiring a longer-term investment. Therefore, the Fund is dedicated to **continuity** in its funding portfolio. At the same time, however, the Fund wishes to support emerging networks, especially those representing populations or regions which are currently under-represented in the funding portfolio.

In line with the strategic plan of the RCF the fund will seek to provide opportunities for new voices and partnerships, and intends to do so in two ways

- Firstly, the Fund encourages emerging and as-yet unproven networks to apply for a grant, especially those networks which represent populations and/or regions highlighted above, as well as networks led from the Global South, and which are able to outline plans to develop into fully functioning networks. However, the Robert Carr Fund has to balance its goal of supporting emerging networks with managing the range of risks and additional administrative support associated with doing so. Therefore, in this funding cycle, the Fund plans to provide a limited number of smaller grants (2-3) for networks which have been in existence for under two years.

Where new and emerging networks are unable to demonstrate a track record, or to provide all required supporting documents to meet the criteria for applicants, they should provide an explanation in the relevant section on the online application

³ For example, Aidsfonds (2020) Fast-track or Off track? <https://aidsfonds.org/resource/fast-track-or-off-track-how-insufficient-funding-for-key-populations-jeopardises-ending-aids-by-2030>

portal. Emerging networks are encouraged to include, in their applications, activities which will contribute to organizational strengthening of network members.

- Secondly, more established networks and consortia are encouraged to include in this application activities which contribute towards supporting and/or establishing emerging networks. Such applications should demonstrate how the capacity of emerging networks will be developed through such activities, with a focus on the progressive strengthening of ISP leadership in networks.

The Fund recognizes that many civil society networks are already involved in a range of expansion and capacity-strengthening activities, including, but not limited to: establishing new regional networks, or thematic networks within an ISP group; small grants programs; sub-granting; mentoring and coaching; hosting and nesting relationships, leadership academies; the development of online courses etc., and networks are encouraged to explore these and other innovative capacity-strengthening activities in their applications.

7.

Participation in multiple applications

Each network or consortium may submit one proposal.

No single organization or network may lead more than one Robert Carr Fund–funded consortium.

However, networks may apply as participants in two consortia. If a global or regional network applies as part of two 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.

8.

Floors, ceilings and funding conditions

Applicants may submit proposals for three years of funding. For the first year (2022), a work plan, budget and cash flow statement is required. This is to be submitted using the RCF Budget Form Template as available on the [RCF Website](#).

- **Emerging regional and/or global networks** which have been in existence for less than two years can apply for a minimum of USD 50,000 and a maximum of USD 150,000 per year, for three years.
- **Regional networks** which have been in existence for more than two years can apply for a minimum of USD 100,000 and a maximum of USD 350,000 per year, for three years.
- **Global networks** which have been in existence for more than two years can apply for a minimum of USD 100,000 and a maximum of USD 700,000 per year, for three years.
- **A consortium of networks** can apply for a minimum of USD 100,000 and a maximum of USD 1,000,000 per year, for three years.

Actual funding amounts are subject to pending donor commitments, and on the number of successful applications and therefore any amount awarded may be less than which the applicant applied for. Applicants should take this adjustment of awarded amount into consideration when applying and have a clear plan on how to address any shortfall in resources.

For some applicants, funding will be granted conditionally with actions on organizational capacity to be adequately addressed in year one of funding, in order to secure funding for year two and three. Conditional grants and action plans are mutually developed between grantee and RCF Secretariat

Funding is contingent on fulfillment of all Terms and Conditions as annexed to the Project Agreement when a grant is awarded (see 11. Policies for more information on Terms and Conditions).

9.

Budget considerations

Applicants should submit a proposal covering a three-year period: 2022 – 2023 – 2024.

Please treat your budget submission as “indicative” as revisions are likely at both the funding decision and the contracting phases.

The budget (in US Dollars) can include both core funding and activity funding for your network/consortium (See Annex 3 “Costs Eligible for Funding”)

At the time of the application a detailed work plan and budget is required for year 1 only. Though detailed work plan and budgets for years 2 and 3 are not required at the time of the application, you will need to estimate lump sum budgets for years 2 and 3 respectively. The Robert Carr Fund requests that all applicants budget for the following items as a requirement while making your overall budget estimations:

- Appropriate level of funding to ensure annual monitoring, evaluation for learning (MEL) processes of your network’s and/or your consortium’s progress and results (e.g. reflective quarterly results discussions; contribution to MEL staff, or hiring of MEL consultants if your network has no MEL staff etc.);
- Appropriate level of funding to ensure proper financial management, accountability and risks management within your network and/or consortium (e.g. audits, contribution to finance staff, financial health checks etc.);
- In case you are applying as a consortium, appropriate level of funding to manage your consortium (e.g. on-line and/or face-to-face meetings; bank transfer fees; IT/ telecommunications etc.);
- Provisionally, applicants should budget for a RCF 2022-2024 ‘kick off’ meeting to be held in Amsterdam and tentatively scheduled to take place in Q1 2022. You are kindly requested to budget for travel, per diems, accommodation and all other incidental costs for a 3 day meeting in Amsterdam for a number of delegates representative across your network and/or consortium. However, dependent on the status of the COVID-19 pandemic at that time, the meeting may occur online instead.

The ISC will decide on the actual amount of funding that successful applicants will receive. This decision will be based on the needs, the quality of the proposals and the size of the resources committed to the Robert Carr Fund by its funding partners.

10.

Supporting documentation requirements

The supporting documents requirements are dependent on the manner that the applicant organization is apply:

1. **Registered organization**, and **not** in partnership with a fiscal host
2. **Registered Organization**, and in partnership with a fiscal host
3. **Non-registered organization**, and in partnership with a fiscal host

Please note, proposals from non-registered organizations who are applying not in partnership with a fiscal host will be considered. However, if a grant is awarded only registered entities can formally sign project agreements with Aidsfonds for grant implementation and as such non-registered organizations will have to use the partnership of a fiscal host to do so.

Registered Organization (applicant) (and not in partnership with a fiscal host)

Required documents of applicant to be provided **at application** to support proposal:

- a. Certificate of registration
- b. Organizational By-laws / Constitution
- c. Strategic Plan (including financial plan for the duration of the strategy)
- d. Fundraising Strategy
- e. Annual Organizational Report including Financial Report from the last 2 year
- f. Signed Organizational Audited financial statement from the last 2 years, including audit protocol and Auditor's Management letter
- g. Overview of funding received and managed from (international) donors of last 2 years of applicant

If applying as a consortium, required documents to be provided at application to support proposal:

h. Signed Memorandum of Understanding between lead and consortium partners

Requested documents of registered organization to be provided **at application** to support due diligence of proposals awarded grants:

i. Integrity Policy in addressing potential Corruption, Fraud and Mismanagement

j. Financial Manual, including procurement policy

k. Human Resource Manual

l. Signed minutes of last board meeting

m. One-pager detailing:

- Governance structure;
- Board members and their qualifications;
- Organizational Chart;

An explanation can and should be provided for any **required** or **requested** documents that are not available at time of application.

Any clarifications on omissions or updates to documents may be requested of the applicant as part of the rebuttal of the review process. Successful proposals awarded a grant may be requested for updates to documents or provide further documents to support contracting.

Registered and non-registered organization (applicant) in partnership with a Fiscal Host

Requested documents of (non-) registered organization to be provided (if available) **at application** to support proposal:

a. Certificate of registration

b. Organizational By-laws / Constitution

c. Strategic Plan (including financial plan for the duration of the strategy)

d. Fundraising Strategy

e. Annual Organizational Report including Financial Report from the last 2 year

f. Signed Organizational Audited financial statement from the last 2 years, including audit protocol and Auditor's Management letter

g. Overview of funding received and managed from (international) donors of last 2 years of applicant

If applying as a consortium, required documents to be provided **at application** to support proposal:

h. Memorandum of Understanding between lead and consortium partners

Requested documents of (non-) registered organization to be provided (if available) **at application** to support due diligence of proposals awarded grants:

i. Integrity Policy in addressing potential Corruption, Fraud and Mismanagement

j. Financial Manual, including procurement policy

k. Human Resources Manual

l. Signed minutes of last board meeting

m. One-pager detailing:

- Governance structure;
- Board members and their qualifications;
- Organizational Chart;

Required documents to be provided by **Fiscal Host** in addition to (non-) registered organization documents at application in support to due diligence of proposals awarded grants:

a. Certificate of registration of fiscal host

b. Organizational By-laws / Constitution of fiscal host

c. Annual Organizational Report including Financial Report from the last 2 years of fiscal host

d. Signed Organizational Audited financial statement from the last 2 years, including audit protocol of fiscal host

e. Integrity Policy in addressing potential Corruption, Fraud and Mismanagement of fiscal host

f. Memorandum of Understanding between applicant organization and fiscal host

g. Overview of funding received and managed from (international) donors of last 2 years

An explanation can and should be provided for any **required** or **requested** documents that are not available at time of application.

Any clarifications on omissions or updates to documents may be requested of the applicant as part of the rebuttal of the review process. Successful proposals awarded a grant may be requested for updates to documents or provide further documents to support contracting.

11.

Policies

In accordance with the Governance Charter of the Robert Carr Fund, the International Steering Committee (ISC) oversees and Aidsfonds, as the Fund Management Agent (FMA), implements relevant policies of the Robert Carr Fund:

1. [Conflict of Interest Policy](#)
2. [Grant Application Regulations](#)
3. [Complaints Handling Procedure](#)
4. [Appeal procedure](#)
5. [Terms and Conditions Grants 2019v2.2](#)
6. [Policy on integrity breaches: corruption including sexual harassment, fraud and mismanagement](#)

12.

Process for application review

A. Administrative screening

Each application will be checked for completeness and applicant eligibility. Applicants will be notified if their application cannot be reviewed because of incompleteness or applicant ineligibility. The RCF does accommodate clarification of minor errors or omissions during the rebuttal phase (12c) of review.

B. Independent expert review

Eligible applications will be reviewed by a set of two or three independent expert reviewers. Independent expert reviewers will anonymously provide feedback and questions of clarification to the applicant to support the strengthening of the applicant's proposal.

Review criteria for proposals:

- i. How well does the application articulate how it will achieve the **outcomes** identified in the Fund's **Theory of Change** and where can the application be strengthened?
- ii. How well does the application articulate how it will integrate the two strategic approaches of **learning** and **partnerships**, and where can the application be strengthened?
- iii. How well does the application articulate how it will address the strategic priorities of
 - i: **movement building**, and/or
 - ii: **financial health and resilience**; and/or
 - iii: **innovation and creativity**, and where can the application be strengthened?
- iv. To what extent does the application address previously underserved populations and/or regions in the Robert Carr Fund grant portfolio, and where can the application be strengthened?

C. Rebuttal by applicant

As in previous RFPs, in response to independent external reviews, eligible applicants will have the opportunity to provide further information in the form of a rebuttal to support and strengthen their proposal. Any clarifications on omissions or updates to required documents may be requested as part of the rebuttal. The independent external reviews and the rebuttal form will be made available to the applicant no later than two weeks before the deadline of submission of the rebuttal.

D. Program Advisory Panel (PAP) review

Prior to the PAP review meeting, PAP members will review each application, using the same review criteria as those used in the independent expert review (see 12b above), and to include:

- i. If the applicant is an established network and/or consortium, to what extent are capacity-building activities for new or emergent networks addressed in the application?

OR

If the applicant is an emerging network, to what extent does the applicant provide a clear plan to build its governance and program management capacity during the grant?

- ii. Based on the quality of the proposal, AND the track record of the network and/or consortium, what are the strengths and/or weaknesses of the applicant in the following areas:
 - a. Governance and accountability structures
 - b. Financial management
 - c. Capacity to implement the proposed activities
 - d. Capacity to monitor and evaluate for outcomes and to learn from previous performance and results?
- iii. What are the potential risks associated with this application, and how might these risks be mitigated?

During the PAP review meeting, both the independent expert reviews and rebuttal responses, and the PAP members' reviews will be discussed for each application. Based on these discussions, PAP members will provide 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.

E. International Steering Committee (ISC) funding decision

The ISC consider the funding advice and recommendations of the PAP, and make the final funding decision. Based on this decision, the Fund Management Agent (FMA) and the Secretariat will then be authorized to proceed with the grant award notifications, due diligence and contracting of successful applicants

Funding decisions will be made public tentatively by 1 December 2021 via www.robertcarrfund.org

13.

Timeline and important dates for 2021 RFP

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS 2021 – TIMELINE	
1 April 2021	Publication of RFP.
April – May	Global and regional webinars focusing on Request for Proposals 2021, including the opportunity for potential applicants to pose questions
April – June	Publication of Q&As Received
10 May 2021	Online application portal launched for proposal submission
11 July 2021, 12noon CEST	Deadline for proposal submission via online application portal
Eligibility and Review Process	
July	Administrative screening of applications received Non-eligible applicants informed
July – September	Independent External Review of eligible proposals Clarifying questions and ways to strengthen proposal shared with applicants and to be addressed in rebuttal
Mid-September	Deadline for rebuttal by applicant
September – November	Program Advisory Panel (PAP) review. Funding advice to the International Steering Committee (ISC) by the PAP, based on applications, rebuttals and comparative analysis of all the reviews
November	ISC meeting and funding decision
1 December 2021	Funding decision made public.
December – January 2022	Due diligence and contracting in line with the ISC funding decision of successful applicants When contracting is completed, the first tranche will be disbursed
1 January 2022	Contract and implementation start date
31 December 2024	Contract and implementation end date

ANNEX 1

Overview of the Monitoring and Evaluation for Learning (MEL) Framework

The Robert Carr Fund provides core funding to strengthen the institutional and advocacy capacity of regional and global networks and consortia that work with Inadequately Served Populations (ISPs)¹. It believes that if these networks – through which ISPs can find legitimate representation for decisions that affect them – are stronger, it will enable ISP groups to have more influence over important issues related to human rights and HIV.

Sustained influence from ISPs with regards to HIV and human rights issues at global, regional and national levels will result in a more enabling and rights-affirming social, policy and legal environment for ISPs, along with more accessible and appropriate quality HIV services and programs, and the corresponding available resources to create better conditions for ISPs with regards to HIV.

If the human rights of ISPs are realized, and they have access to better HIV services, and there is appropriate resourcing to underpin the necessary services, it is believed that ISPs across the globe can have better health, social inclusion and wellbeing.

¹ 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 (and other people in closed settings); sex workers; and transgender and intersex people, but depending on the dynamic of the epidemic and the legal status of these populations may also include women and girls; youth; migrants; people living in rural areas, and other populations.

Figure 1. Theory of Change



Based on its unique role as a funding mechanism for regional and global networks, and based on the grantees' unique contributions to movement-building and influencing the access of ISPs to health, justice and resources, the Robert Carr Fund requires a tailored approach to measuring its own results and the progress, results and lessons learnt of its grantees.

The Learning Cycle

Of particular importance is the ability to reflect on and use information to continually improve both the way the Fund functions and supports the grantees in their strengthening to achieve their objectives. For this reason, the Fund has chosen to take a monitoring and evaluation for learning (MEL) approach, in which monitoring and evaluation processes are integrated with a continuous learning process. Learning is actively encouraged by the Robert Carr Fund, through regular collective impact reflections and promotion of cross-grantee exchange and collaboration.

Successful applicants who become the Fund's grantees, will be recommended to use the scales by which the indicators are measured to discuss and contextualize their achievement and needs on at least an annual basis, with the option to do so as frequently as quarterly throughout the year, to inform planning and reporting processes.

Monitoring Both Environment and Outcomes

The Robert Carr Fund's grantees operate in complex and challenging environments which are often not supportive of their efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of ISPs. These environments can critically impact their ability to achieve outcomes, and it is important for the Fund and its funding partners to understand and monitor grantee experiences in these environments. Therefore, alongside the quantitative monitoring of grantee outcome indicators (OI), the MEL process calls for grantees to reflect on changes to a set of environmental indicators (EI).

Monitoring of environmental indicators focuses on elements that may be beyond grantee control or influence, but which strongly influence grantee activities and are critical to determining success. Keeping track of the baseline and changes in grantee environmental indicators allows the Fund to better contextualize program outcomes, and to conduct deeper learning and evaluative work during reflection processes. On a more practical level, the information collected as part of the indicators below will feed directly into the grantee annual reporting template, allowing for an easy and more standardized context section to be included in each grantee's report.

Monitoring outcome indicators, on the other hand, focuses on the results of grantee activities, and corresponds to more traditional programmatic monitoring. This allows for the quantification of results sought after by many funding partners, and also provides grantees with a framework for self-reflection and learning.

Ultimately, the nexus of the environment and grantee outcomes is where the Robert Carr Fund's added value lies: the final step of the grantee reporting process each year will be to evaluate these two parallel elements together and describe how Robert Carr Fund's funding uniquely allows grantees to respond to and influence the environment in which civil society networks function to contribute to the HIV response at global, regional and national levels.

Applicants who are accepted and go on to become the Fund's grantees, will use the Environmental and Outcome Indicator Reporting Tool during the grant implementation, which contains indicators as described below and detailed guidance on how to report against these indicators. It should be noted that within the Tool, each indicator allows grantees to provide evidence to support the outcome or change they are claiming, and also provide space for noting any exceptional context or lessons learned which should be taken into account.

The Robert Carr Fund aspires to fund a portfolio of grants that would achieve the results, as articulated in its results framework (See figure 3).

- **Network strength and influence:** Networks use the Fund's flexible support to organize, build and sustain international coalitions; to build open participatory and democratic governance and strong management; to support leaders through training and employment; to develop and implement strategic plans; to generate evidence about health and human rights; to raise additional funding for civil society and communities; and to adapt to new and changing needs and opportunities. The Robert Carr Fund believes that by strengthening networks and their capacity to influence, ISPs are better able to communicate and collaborate across regions, populations and thematic priorities, and to gain greater involvement in and influence on programs and policies that affect their human rights and health.
 - Indicators that measure this result include:
 - *Number of networks that have improved basic organizational status (e.g. registration, full time staff).*
 - *Number of networks that show increased fiscal capacity and sustainability.*
 - *Number of networks that are more representative of their constituencies and more democratically governed.*
 - *Number of networks that show increased influence and capacity to unite and mobilize movements.*

- **Human rights:** Networks use Robert Carr Fund investments to protect and promote the human rights of ISP in the HIV response by developing and implementing advocacy strategies, launching and carrying out campaigns, documenting human rights violations, and engaging in strategic litigation. The RCF believes that when networks undertake this work, ISPs gain sustained, meaningful involvement and influence that leads to more protective, affirming and supportive human rights environments.
 - Indicators that measure this result include:
 - *Number of networks that contribute to an improved human rights environment for at least one ISP.*

- **Access to services:** Networks use Robert Carr Fund investments to advocate for HIV-related services for ISPs that are rights-based; available, adequate, accessible, appropriate, affordable and acceptable; and that intended beneficiary populations are aware of and demand. The RCF believes that when networks undertake this work, ISPs gain sustained, meaningful involvement and influence that makes HIV and health services and programs more available, accessible, appropriate and affordable.
 - Indicators that measure this result include:
 - *Number of networks that contribute to increased access to services and programs.*
 - *Number of networks that contribute to increased quality of programs and services.*

- **Resource accountability:** Networks use Robert Carr Fund investments to advocate for accountability of governments to fulfill their commitments for sufficient, equitable and effective resources for health and human rights. This includes work to monitor national budgets for health, to advocate for increased national and international funding, to promote effective and efficient resource allocations and utilization, and to hold governments accountable for their financial commitments. The RCF believes that when networks undertake this work, ISPs gain sustained, meaningful involvement and influence which leads to national and international funding being mobilized, allocated and utilized to improve the health, inclusion and wellbeing for ISPs.
 - Indicators that measure this result include:
 - *Number of networks that contribute to increased and sustainable financing of the HIV response, including ISP programs.*
 - *Number of networks that contribute to improved HIV-related fiscal accountability.*

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The RCF believes that, ultimately, when and where the human rights of ISPs are realized, and they have access to better HIV services, and there is appropriate resourcing to underpin the necessary services, ISPs have better health, inclusion and wellbeing.

Progress and results within each of the outcome areas is measured by sets of linked environmental and outcome indicators as described in Figure 3 below:

- **ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS**

The Environmental Indicators are designed to help all grantees to assess measurable change in their operating environment, in order to (1) support learning by providing a framework for the impact reflection process; (2) track changes from year to year; and (3) systematically account for the context where they operate on an annual basis.

Changes in each Environmental Indicator are measured using a scale, as shown below:

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING SCALE				
Major Progress	Minor Progress	No Change	Minor Regress	Major Regress

- **OUTCOME INDICATORS**

The Outcome Indicators are designed to help all grantees to assess measurable change in outcomes resulting from their activities, in order to (1) support learning by providing a framework for the impact reflection process; (2) track changes from year to year; and (3) systematically account for their cumulative results/ progress/regress that they influence.

OUTCOMES		ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS	OUTCOME INDICATORS			
Networks strength and influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutionally stronger ISP and civil society networks and consortia 	EI 1: The legal and policy framework allows for freedom of association for ISP/ civil society networks, including their right to establish/register and operate as non-profit/ non-governmental entities without discrimination.	OI 1a: Number of networks with strengthened organizational status.			
			Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4
			Network has a newly acquired fiscal agent (<2 years)	Network has a stable relationship (>2 years) and long-term agreement with a fiscal agent	Network is in the process of registering	Network is registered
			OI 1b: Number of networks with strengthened core staff structure.			
			Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4
			Network has volunteers to carry out a defined scope of work and has no paid staff members	Network has one paid staff member and volunteers to carry out a defined scope of work	Network has more than one paid staff member and may have volunteers to carry out a defined scope of work	Network has had a core team of full-time paid staff to carry out scope of work for at least 2 years
			OI 2a: Number of networks showing strengthened fiscal capacity and accountability.			
			Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4
			Network has a fiscal agent which manages its accounting	Network has its own accounting system and at least a part-time staff member devoted to finance	Network has at least one paid dedicated finance staff member to manage accounting AND Network Board of Directors has financial oversight	Network conducts its own regular organizational and project audits
			OI 2b: Number of networks showing strengthened financial sustainability.			
Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4			
Network has at least one source of funding	Network has more than one source of funding	No single donor accounts for more than 30% of network's funding AND Network has a costed strategic plan or a resource mobilization strategy in place	Network has secured funding to implement its strategic plan for at least two more years			

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OUTCOMES		ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS	OUTCOME INDICATORS			
Networks strength and influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutionally stronger ISP and civil society networks and consortia 	EI 1: The legal and policy framework allows for freedom of association for ISP/ civil society networks, including their right to establish/register and operate as non-profit/non-governmental entities without discrimination.	OI 3: Number of networks more representative of their constituencies and more democratically governed			
			Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4
			<p>Network has a process in place to democratically elect a governance body (e.g. Board of Directors) from among the network members</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The network has open membership, whose members participate in governance elections in line with its membership statute.</p>	<p>Board leadership regularly rotates and adheres to principles of diversity in selecting new leadership</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network members actively participate in the governance elections of the network (at least 30% of members vote in elections)</p>	<p>Board of Directors actively engages in governance of the network and is accountable to its constituents from among the members of the network</p>	<p>At least 50% of Board is comprised of ISPs</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Board is representative of all geographic and population diversity of its constituents</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network members actively participate in the governance elections of the network (at least 45% of members vote in elections)</p>

OUTCOMES		ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS	OUTCOME INDICATORS			
Networks strength and influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutionally stronger ISP and civil society networks and consortia 	EI 2: ISP/civil society networks experience freedom of expression without harassment by government and other influential entities.	OI 4: Number of networks showing strengthened influence and capacity to unite and mobilize movements			
			Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4
			<p>Network has developed a formal or informal advocacy strategy in consultation with its membership (of network or consortium)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network has established relations with new allies and partners</p>	<p>Network has played a significant role in at least one joint advocacy campaign with other partners</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network engages in cross-sector partnership or working relationships with government agencies, UN agencies, bi-lateral or multi-lateral donors</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network has expanded its active membership base by at least 20%</p>	<p>Network is active in an issue-based coalition beyond its target ISP or beyond HIV-related issue</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network holds formal membership in a coordination council or board delegation on a key topic for its constituent ISP(s)</p>	<p>Network plays a formal and regular representative role in steering HIV and/or health policy for target ISP at national/regional or global levels</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network has initiated and leads issue-based coalition(s)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network has demonstrated ability to collaborate with other advocates to bring issues to a global agenda and affect change</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network plays a leadership role in a coordination council or board delegation on a key topic for its constituent ISP(s)</p>

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OUTCOMES		ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS	OUTCOME INDICATORS			
Networks' influence on access of inadequately served populations to justice, health and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More enabling and rights-affirming social, policy and legal environment for ISPs 	EI 3: ISP rights are protected by policy and/or legislation, which is enforced and allows for effective redress of violations.	OI 5: Number of networks contributing to an improved human rights environment for at least one ISP			
			Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4
			<p>Network has generated credible evidence on which an advocacy strategy/campaign can be based</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network has gained increased understanding of government or UN or funding agency mechanisms to be targeted for advocacy</p>	<p>Network has developed an advocacy strategy or campaign to advocate for improvements in the rights of ISPs</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network has gained access to or representation in a UN or state body to apply influence</p>	<p>Network has implemented campaign to promote human rights</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network has supported strategic litigation</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network has utilized a UN or parliamentary hearing process to apply influence</p>	<p>Campaign or strategic litigation results in legal or policy change</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Campaign or litigation results in improved practice under existing law or policy</p>

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OUTCOMES		ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS	OUTCOME INDICATORS			
<p>Networks' influence on access of inadequately served populations to justice, health and resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More accessible, rights-based, quality HIV services and programs for ISPs 	<p>EI 4: ISP experience full access to rights-based, quality HIV services.</p>	<p>OI 6: Number of networks contributing to increased <u>access</u> to HIV services and programs.</p>			
			Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4
			<p>Network has generated credible evidence on which an advocacy campaign or educational activities can be based</p>	<p>Network has developed an advocacy strategy or campaign to advocate for improvements in the health outcomes of ISPs</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network has gained access to or representation in a multi-lateral donor's or state's program</p>	<p>Network has implemented campaign or other educational activities to influence accessibility of services</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network has implemented campaign or other educational activities to increase ISP awareness of and demand for services</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network has utilized a UN process or participated in a national program planning or review or development process to affect changes on access to services</p>	<p>ISP services report increase in new clients</p> <p>OR</p> <p>ISP services report increased retention of clients/reduced loss-to-follow-up</p>
			<p>OI 7: Number of networks contributing to increased <u>quality</u> of HIV programs and services.</p>			
			Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4
			<p>Network has generated credible evidence on which an advocacy campaign or educational activities can be based</p>	<p>Campaign or other educational activities implemented to improve quality of services for ISPs</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network has gained access to or representation in a multi-lateral donor's or state's program planning or review process</p>	<p>Desired changes made in structure, function or delivery of services for ISPs</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network has utilized a UN process or participated in a national program planning, review or development process to affect changes on quality of services</p>	<p>Better quality of programs and services reported by ISPs</p>

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OUTCOMES		ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS	OUTCOME INDICATORS			
Networks' influence on access of inadequately served populations to justice, health and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources made available and spent properly to create better conditions for ISPs with regards to HIV and human rights 	<p>EI 5: The funding environment allows for sufficient allocation of resources for HIV prevention, testing, care, and treatment.</p>	<p>OI 8: Number of networks contributing to increased and sustainable financing of HIV response including ISP programs.</p>			
			<p>Category 1</p> <p>Network has undertaken budget monitoring and analysis to develop advocacy plans</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network has developed advocacy plans to push for increased financing, based on international or regional commitments, or existing budget analyses</p>	<p>Category 2</p> <p>Network has implemented a campaign or other advocacy activities to push for increased sustainable financing</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network has gained access to or representation in a multi-lateral donor's or state's budgeting process</p>	<p>Category 3</p> <p>Campaign or other advocacy activities contributed to an increase in financial commitments made (e.g. budget allocations) to HIV response and ISP programming</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network has taken part in a donor or national budget review or development process</p>	<p>Category 4</p> <p>Increased financial commitments delivered to HIV response, particularly funding of ISP-related programs</p>
		<p>EI 6: The funding environment allows for sufficient allocation of resources for advocacy and other supportive enabling environment programming for ISPs.</p>	<p>OI 9: Number of networks contributing to improved HIV-related fiscal accountability.</p>			
			<p>Category 1</p> <p>Network has staff trained on budget and expenditure monitoring and accountability</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network has established a working partnership with budget monitoring groups or coalitions</p>	<p>Category 2</p> <p>Network conducts monitoring and analysis of donors or states expenditure against their commitments</p>	<p>Category 3</p> <p>Network develops asks and conducts advocacy as a result of budget or expenditure monitoring and accountability</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Network engages with the budget processes of donors or states to influence spending</p>	<p>Category 4</p> <p>A change in budgeting or expenditure is made as a result of advocacy</p>
Impact:		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better health, social inclusion and wellbeing for ISPs 				

Lessons Learnt from Consortia Building and Management, and Guidance on Consortium Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

An assessment of the Robert Carr Fund consortium model, conducted in early 2018, examined the performance of and experience with this model over the period of 2015–2017. The assessment focused on identifying lessons learned, highlighting both successes and challenges.

The following is a summary of key lessons learned, which should be instructive to applicants in forming or planning for strengthening of their existing consortia.

This is not a list of requirements to apply for funding as a consortium.

The following should, instead, be seen as guidance on how to build and/or manage a consortium. That said, a Memorandum of Understanding between consortium members is one of the required supporting documents for an application submitted on behalf of a consortium. The understanding is that a single consortium may not be able to achieve all of the elements outlined below at any given time, but all consortia should seek to build on and expand on these practices where opportunities are present.

How can consortia be structured to support their work?

- **A well-composed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between consortium members is a requirement for all consortia – please review a more detailed guidance on the scope of the MoU at the end of this document.** The MoU should be a living document, which outlines rules and processes, and which is **regularly discussed and updated by members**. Consortia that have MoUs with contingency plans in place tend to be better prepared to handle any disputes.
- Consortia operating and communicating effectively are usually led by a lead organization with a **clear Terms of Reference (ToR)** for its role and responsibilities. The ToR should be discussed by and agreed upon by members.
- **Consortium-related decision-making processes** must be clear to all members, particularly who has the authority to make what levels of decisions. This is particularly important for budget-related issues, where regular revisions may be necessary to address emerging opportunities and challenges.
- In order for the lead organization to perform its functions optimally, it must be **adequately resourced**. These resources are used to support an organization with **clear and shared vision**, having **systems** (e.g. bookkeeping and accounting etc.) and **staff (full or part-time or outsourced) with technical skills** on governance, finances and monitoring & evaluation & learning, and a **designated focal point, experienced person tasked with building capacity** of and communication with emerging leaders within the consortium.
- Depending on the focus of a consortium, consortium members' budgets need to reflect both **specific individual (i.e. organization/s) and collective (i.e. consortium as a whole) core needs and/or activities**, to successfully enable consortium to reach capacity strengthening and/or advocacy goals.
- 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.

What binds a consortium together?

- Consortia should be built on **trust and common values** between members. They articulate a longer-term impact that they wish to achieve together (beyond the duration of a single grant).
- Beyond shared values, consortia may find it helpful to have an explicit shared **strategy** in place, which defines priorities, campaigns/advocacy plans, research and documentation plans, etc. A joint **work plan**, guided by the strategy and including at least one joint strategic activity, is a feature demonstrated by consortia, who cooperate effectively.
- A sense of **identity** as a consortium is key. This can be built through a deliberate movement-building process and/or a joint learning/reflective process on goals and/or activities, and identification of both consortium's **added value** and how to communicate that to an outside audience.
- **Proactive** partnering and **collaborative** membership in consortia often leads to members working together – and sometimes reaching beyond the consortium to other strategic partners – on specific issues. These relationships come from proactive strategizing, and are built upon the trust of and shared strategies and/or identity described above.

How can a consortia maintain connectivity?

- Consortia who have **mapped the strengths and weaknesses** of their members, and developed **capacity plans** to actively share knowledge and strengths with newer, emerging members, show strength. They may also have a plan in place to **nurture and develop individual leaders**, especially new or young individuals, through mentorship or professional development opportunities.
- Consortia whose members meet **face-to-face** and engage in **joint learning/reflective processes** report greater ease of work. Consortium rules, processes and systems are assessed annually during these meetings, and adjustments are made, specifically to encourage joint ownership of the consortia. Jointly mapping any gaps or overlaps in efforts, and making plans to address those together can also be helpful.

- Communication between consortia members should not be limited to formal meetings only. Members could benefit greatly from talking to each other and **working together regularly**. Discussions do not necessarily need to be led by the lead organization; there are self-driven links between individual members, as well. In some cases, **working groups** exist to discuss specialized content, and may involve actors outside of the consortium, as well. Effective **communication tools** are in place, utilizing new technologies as appropriate.
- Members should also undertake discussion on how the consortium and/or its initiatives can be **further resourced**, as it strengthens collaborations beyond a single grant. Active planning for **fundraising** allows the consortium to grow with a joint sense of ownership.

How can a consortia achieve and communicate results?

- Consortia that **systematically and actively utilize consistent monitoring, evaluation and learning approaches (e.g. Robert Carr Fund’s MEL tools)** for reporting and showcasing results in capacity strengthening and/or advocacy tend to be better placed to articulate and substantiate the added value of networks and consortia. Their members understand and can effectively report using MEL tools to report on **interim outcomes** which bring them closer to their long term impact goals.
- Consortia that constantly work on developing stronger capacity in **storytelling** and **communicating their value** to others outside of the consortium, including donors, usually communicate more effectively.

Guidance for developing a Consortium Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

Consortia applying for Robert Carr Fund’s funding are expected to submit a consortium MoU, signed by each consortium partner, submitted together with the application.

A consortium MoU must contain the following items:

- A description of the added value of the consortium and a description of the roles of the different partners.
- A description of a system of decision-making, internal accountability and a way of working together. Issues which must be addressed are: internal transparency, quality assurance, knowledge sharing and applicability of policies. A consortium must be able to deal with decision-making on extra funding opportunities.

ANNEX 2

Part of a governance structure may be the formation of a committee of representatives of all consortia partners. It is possible to request a budget for meetings.

- A description of how budget decisions will be made including around decision making around final funding awards, budget changes and protocols around underspend/overspend within the consortium.
- Special attention is required for policies and procedures on Corruption, Fraud and Mismanagement and whistleblowing as well as Integrity policies. The rules and procedures need to be aligned with the Aidsfonds grant regulations.

ANNEX 3

Costs Eligible for Funding

The main principle of the Robert Carr Fund is to provide core funding. Applicants must describe clearly how requested funding will contribute to achieving the outcomes defined in its Theory of Change of the Robert Carr Fund, as given in figure 1 of Annex 1: “Overview of the Monitoring and Evaluation for Learning (MEL) Framework”.

Different types of costs that may be covered are core costs and activity costs. These are as described in the table on the next page:

Table 1. Cost Categories Guide

CORE COSTS	ACTIVITY COSTS
<p>CORE COSTS are costs, which are critical for the functioning of your organization and/or the consortium and are not solely attributable to any specific activity.</p> <p>Core costs are sub-divided into the following sub-categories and typically include eligible expenses outlined below (but not limited to)</p>	<p>ACTIVITY COSTS are costs for the resources needed to implement activities including both programmatic and organizational/consortium activities.</p> <p>Activity costs include eligible expenses outlined below (but not limited to):</p>
<p>I. Human resources costs</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff salaries (gross i.e. including taxes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracted services (e.g. facilitation, translation, writing, editing, policy development, conducting training, research, M&E, design for communications, online dissemination, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff's health insurance 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and Board members' professional development/ training/team-building 	
<p>II. Finance and Accounting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel costs for either staff, consultants or participants (e.g. meetings, trainings, workshops, field visits, monitoring, etc.) including travel fare, accommodation, per diem and visas.
<p>Bank fees (including the consortium costs, e.g. transfer of sub-grants and small grants)</p>	
<p>Audits (project and/or organizational, including costs related to consortium)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue hire for events (rent, catering, equipment/ multimedia, etc.)
<p>Accounting services and system maintenance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small grants/sub-grants for programmatic activity implementation to achieve outcomes.
<p>Legal advice fees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISP service delivery expenses (e.g. commodity purchases, distribution costs, capacity building, etc.).
<p>Taxes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printed materials and publications (e.g. design, layout, printings, etc.).
<p>III. Office and telecommunications/IT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online content development (e.g. website development, content creation, maintenance, publications, etc.).
<p>Office rent and utilities</p>	
<p>Equipment (computers, phones etc.)</p>	
<p>Office supplies</p>	
<p>Telecommunications (phone lines, internet, post/ mailing etc.)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web based services (Zoom, MailChimp, Doodle, etc.) 	
<p>Furniture (desks, chairs etc.)</p>	
<p>IT services, software</p>	
<p>Organizational website development and/or maintenance</p>	
<p>Organizational listservs and mailing lists development/ maintenance</p>	

Funding what's possible

**ROBERT
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