

Request for Proposals: Heading Off Nuclear Catastrophe

Carnegie Corporation of New York and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation invite proposals for analytical work on reducing the risks posed by nuclear materials. We seek projects that will generate fresh thinking and new approaches that can be taken up by government and industry.

Despite progress through the Nuclear Security Summit, risks persist. There are enough fissile materials to fuel tens of thousands of weapons, and these global stocks are growing. With no further Summits scheduled, and no clear roadmap for future progress, the role of civil society becomes all the more important.

As the Corporation and MacArthur indicated in their [Civil Society Gift Basket](#), there are many impediments to progress and no simple solutions. How can secrecy and national security be balanced with transparency and accountability? How might access to the benefits of civilian nuclear technology be balanced with corresponding security considerations? How can we ensure that solutions take into account the constraints and incentives of existing stakeholders?

This call for proposals seeks innovative, solutions-oriented approaches to address these challenges. Successful projects will:

- Demonstrate new approaches to existing problems in nuclear material minimization and elimination, security, control, governance, and culture;
- Outline a research agenda, a plan for multi-stakeholder convening, or other collaborative effort that has direct relevance to a current policy issue;
- Contain ideas that can be adopted by governments, international organizations, or private industry;
- Include a strong dissemination plan to increase the salience and viability of the ideas;
- NOTE: This process will not consider direct implementation or training projects.

Top proposals will include some or all of the following characteristics:

- An interdisciplinary team that incorporates both technical and policy expertise;
- Inclusion of untapped expertise and new voices;
- Collaboration by experts representing more than one institution;
- Integration of early and/or mid-career experts;
- Demonstration of institutional buy-in and, when possible, funding from other sources.

Application Process

Please fill out one letter of inquiry (LOI) per project on the online portal:

www.nuclearrfp2016.fluidreview.com. Inquiries will be accepted only through the designated online portal. Any inquiry submitted to this portal will receive consideration from both Carnegie Corporation of New York and the MacArthur Foundation. Applicants will need to create a login and password for the site in order to access the application form. Applicants may save their work and return to edit within the

portal. For technical assistance please email support@fluidreview.com. Direct assistance will be available within 24 hours of each request.

The online application consists of two sections: Applicant Organization and LOI. The application questions for the LOI are listed below. Please take care to comply with the word limits for each section. All proposals must be written in English.

While projects of varying sizes will be considered, each request should be scaled to the amount required to carry out its corresponding work plan. Requests should not exceed \$500,000 over 2 years, and overhead costs will be limited to 15% of total direct costs. A detailed budget, full proposal, and work plan will be requested of applicants that are selected to proceed to the second round of assessment.

How to Apply

Please submit a succinct presentation of the statement of need and the proposed solution(s) you have identified; methodology, outreach plan, budget and timeline, and your organization's qualifications for pursuing the work. In total, LOI narratives addressing questions 2, 3, and 4 below should not exceed 900 words. Budget and timeline and organization description documents will be uploaded separately. Entries should address the following:

1. Proposed project title, duration, and amount requested
2. Project proposal and its statement of need: What is the need to be met by your research? Why is this significant? What do you intend to demonstrate or prove? Please offer concrete examples. *Limit 400 words*
3. Methodology: Briefly describe the project and include major activities and desired objectives. What is the path to policy influence? *Limit 250 words*
4. Outreach plan: Who are the target audiences for this work? Present the plan for reaching these audiences and driving a broader conversation on this issue. What outcomes do you expect for the project, both immediate and long-term? *Limit 250 words*
5. Budget and timeline (one page): What is the estimated overall cost of the project? On what specific activities will the money be spent? When will project activities take place? Are there other complementary sources of support (internal and external, current or potential)?
6. Organization description: Provide a very brief summary of your current programs and the qualifications of key staff.

Deadlines

The deadline for all letters of inquiry is October 24, 2016. Final decisions for LOIs will be communicated by email in mid-December, 2016. The deadline for full proposals will be mid-January, 2017. We expect final decisions on invited proposals to be made in June 2017.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Is it possible to return to my unfinished application?** Yes. For technical assistance please email support@fluidreview.com. Direct assistance will be available within 24 hours of each request.

2. **Who is eligible to apply under this RFP?** Most academic institutions, research centers, and think tanks are eligible to apply. Individuals are not eligible to apply unless they are affiliated with or sponsored by an institution.
3. **Can we apply if we are not a nonprofit organization?** You may apply, but funding is less likely as the funders award the majority of their grants to support public agencies, universities and public charities that are tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code or their equivalent.
4. **Can non-U.S. institutions apply for support?** Yes. Note that for an organization to receive indirect costs, it must demonstrate equivalency to a U.S. charitable 501(c)(3) organization.
5. **Can I apply if my institution is currently receiving funding from Carnegie Corporation of New York or the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation?** Yes, institutions that already receive support are eligible to apply for funds under this initiative. However, funding for this initiative is not intended to support or supplement already existing projects.
6. **Can an institution submit more than one application?** Yes, so long as the applications involve separate project teams. For example, a university might submit one application from its school of engineering and another application from its political science department. However, in such cases it would be worth investigating whether a joint, interdisciplinary application would be stronger.
7. **Can we submit a proposal that involves researchers from multiple institutions or universities?** Yes. In fact, we welcome proposals from multi-institution research teams. However, one entity will need to be the lead applicant and receive and administer the grant. Other contributors can be brought in as partners or consultants.

Questions Related to Scope

1. **Will the RFP also consider projects on radiological sources?** No, the risks posed by radiological sources are outside the scope of this RFP.
2. **The RFP requests projects that offer “new approaches to existing problems.” Can you elaborate on what you mean by this?** As the formal Summit process ends, we seek projects that take novel approaches to nuclear terrorism prevention. They could include, but are not limited to, creative ways to build upon existing ideas or initiatives; engaging new partners from diverse geographies and issue areas; and policy options that draw on lessons from other fields.
3. **Should proposals focus on public policy issues in the United States, or can they also seek progress in other countries or in multilateral settings?** The RFP is open to projects that focus on making progress in any relevant geographic or policy context.

4. **Why are direct implementation or training grants ineligible?** With limited resources, we seek projects that are unlikely to be funded by governments. Direct implementation and training projects, which are more likely to receive government support, are outside the scope of this RFP.
5. **You mention that proposals will be given special consideration if they demonstrate “institutional buy-in.” What do you mean by this?** We seek projects with support from their institution, either in the form of direct financial contributions or in-kind contributions such as administrative or research support, meeting space, and assistance with publications.

Questions related to the application process

1. **How will LOI’s be selected?** Proposals will be reviewed by a panel of external jurors with expertise in these topics, as well as through an internal review process.
2. **What happens if my LOI is selected?** You will be notified in December and invited to submit a full proposal for consideration by the Corporation and/or MacArthur.
3. **If I do not receive funding under this RFP, will there be another opportunity to apply?** No decision has been made yet about future opportunities on this particular topic.
4. **How should I structure the LOI?** Please complete the application through the link, which will guide you through the process.
5. **Can I submit additional materials in addition to the LOI and supporting documents?** No. We will notify you if we would like you to provide additional materials.
6. **Can I submit grants on this topic outside of the RFP?** At present, please submit proposals on this topic through the RFP process.
7. **Can I schedule a meeting with foundation staff to discuss projects and/or funding opportunities?** Due to the large number of requests we receive, we are unable to accommodate requests for meetings and cannot provide feedback via email.
8. **When and how will we be notified if our application has been declined or if the foundation will be requesting a formal proposal?** Organizations will receive an automated response confirming that their application has been received and are generally notified via email within four to six weeks if their application has been declined or if the foundation would like to request additional information about their funding request.

9. **Do the foundations provide feedback on proposals that are not selected for funding?** Due to the large number of requests we receive, we are unable to respond to requests for feedback. Our decision is focused on the substance of your proposed work, and how well it fits with our grantmaking programs, goals and funding strategies at the time.

10. Once a concept note is submitted, it will receive consideration from both Carnegie Corporation of New York and the MacArthur Foundation; these funders may choose to fund projects separately or jointly.