

The Fund to End Violence Against Children

2019 Open Call

Technology solutions to make digital spaces safe for children

Frequently Asked Questions

Prior to completing your Expression of Interest, please review this FAQ carefully. Questions or clarifications during the application period can be submitted [here](#). Answers to all questions submitted will be shared publicly.

1. What is the **End Violence Fund**?

In July 2016, the United Nations Secretary-General launched the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children (End Violence), and a Fund to invest in solutions on the ground. The Fund is a key vehicle for change, solutions and learning on what works to end violence against children. So far \$32 million have been invested in 37 projects in more than 27 countries to combat online violence against children, including projects that work at regional and global levels. See the [End Violence Fund website](#) for more information.

Both the Global Partnership and the Fund are financially and administratively hosted by UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund).

OPEN CALL - KEY FACTS

2. What is the **primary focus** of the 2019 Open Call?

The 2019 Open Call focuses on leveraging existing and new technologies to prevent and combat online child sexual exploitation and abuse (online CSEA), and particularly:

- (1) Detect, remove and report images, videos** with sexual content involving children and adolescents (*often referred to as child sexual abuse material, or CSAM*)
- (2) Block adults' access to children on digital platforms** intended to sexually abuse them (*usually referred to as online sexual grooming or solicitation*)
- (3) Stop live-streaming of child sexual abuse** performed in front of a camera (*usually referred to as live-streaming of CSEA*)
- (4) Prevent online sexual abuse of children before it happens**, including prevention and solutions that directly target online child sexual offenders and adults with a sexual interest in children



3. What are the **funding modalities** for this Open Call?

The 2019 Open Call includes two funding modalities:

- **Funding Modality A: ~US\$ 12 million via an open Call for Proposals for not-for-profit organisations** (such as CSOs, academic institutions, research institutes, think tanks, United Nations agencies and funds, and multilateral, intergovernmental, and international organisations) to utilize existing technology in new ways, and/or scale, adapt and localize well-working technology tools and solutions to new contexts and/or countries; and,
- **Funding Modality B: US\$ 1 million via a Request for Proposals for equity-free seed investments for private companies** to develop and test new technological solutions.

4. What is the **geographical focus** of the Open Call?

This Open Call is global. Please note that most of the available funds (~US\$10 million) aim to support solutions which will benefit [countries eligible for ODA support](#). The remaining funds (~US\$3 million) are not subject to this restriction and can support work in non-ODA countries.

ELIGIBILITY AND KEY REQUIREMENTS

5. What are the basic **eligibility criteria**?

Below are the four mandatory requirements you need to meet to be eligible for this Open Call. Only entities that fulfill these mandatory requirements will be considered eligible:

- legally registered** entity, either as nonprofit or private company
- the tech solution addresses one or more of the **four objectives** of the 2019 Open Call
- Your organisation has a **safeguarding policy** in place (with associated procedures, including data privacy) or is willing to develop a policy *
- the proposed solution responds to a **clear need/gap**, does not duplicate existing tools, and builds upon and/or interacts with existing solutions
- at minimum, an **existing prototype** of the open source solution with promising results from initial pilots

** The Partnership is committed to supporting organisations to improve their safeguarding capacity and practice. As part of this, we ask all grantees to complete the Grantee self-assessment, which can be found on the materials sidebar. While this is not required as part of your expression of interest, please note all shortlisted organisations and companies will be expected to complete this as part of the proposal.*

6. What **types of organisations** are eligible to submit an Expression of Interest, and if selected, submit a full proposal?

- **Funding Modality A:** Only registered not-for-profit organisations such as civil society organisations, academic organisations, research institutes, think tanks, and international



organisations are eligible to apply for this Funding Modality (A). The Fund welcomes applications from national organisations in the country of focus. Organisations that are not eligible for this Funding Modality (A) include for-profit research companies, private sector companies, or a Governmental Unit or Division unless they partner with an eligible organisation that serves as the grantee.

- **Funding Modality B:** Only legally registered private sector companies.

7. What do you mean under **working prototype? Should the whole solution be ready at the moment of application?**

You are eligible to apply when you have an active prototype. We consider an active prototype one that works and has generated some initial data to confirm this. You can expand or improve the prototype on the basis of data generated during the project period.

8. Can current **End Violence Fund grantees apply for this Open Call?**

Yes. The Fund welcomes applications from current grantee organisations if their projects align with the objectives of the funding round and they have the technical, financial, and human resource capacity to meet the requirements of this Open Call.

9. Can my organisation develop a **joint application in partnership with another organisation?**

Yes. Joint applications with not-for-profit organisations that form part of a consortium are encouraged. The application should identify a primary applicant that meets the eligibility criteria as specified and is willing and able to sign a Grant Confirmation Letter (Modality A) or an Institutional Corporate Contract (Modality B) with UNICEF.

For the Modality B, the private company can partner with an NGO, but the company should be the entity submitting the REOI. The companies submitting the REOI are asked to list partners and advisors and it is possible to list an NGO as partner. UNICEF will issue Institutional Corporate Contracts to the successful applicants and it is the company that bears all the contractual responsibilities vis-à-vis UNICEF.

10. Can an organisation submit **multiple Expressions of Interest?**

Yes, as long as the eligibility criteria are met for each proposal.

11. Can I submit my application in a **language other than English?**

No. If applicant organisations would like to write the proposals in a local language, the Fund would be pleased to receive the English translation of such proposals. However, applicants should keep in mind the due date for all applications and ensure that the English translation is as accurate as possible.

12. What is the **duration of the supported initiatives?**



The Fund will support initiatives that last for a maximum of 24 months.

13. What the maximum budget my organisation can apply for?

The grants awarded with **Modality A** for project grants will have a budget maximum of US\$ 750,000. For **Modality B**, equity-free seed investments, the maximum allocation amount is \$250,000. Organisations selected to submit a full proposal will be asked to submit a comprehensive budget using a form provided by the Fund.

14. Is there a maximum number of people I can have on the team?

No.

15. Can applicants outsource the technical expertise in my project?

Yes, but if the core team does not have the necessary technical expertise, the organization should explain in their Expression of Interest in the relevant questions what type of technical expertise their partners or advisors are able to provide.

APPLICATION STEPS AND PROCESS

16. How does the application process work?

The Fund will use a **two-stage application process**:

- (1) Applicants are expected to **submit an Expression of Interest** using this online [form](#) starting from 5 September 2019. We encourage you to submit your application when ready as we will be reviewing on an ongoing basis. However, the last day for submissions of Expressions of Interest is **6 December 2019**. The Fund may invite experts in the specific technology areas that the proposal focuses on to technically review based on the selection criteria.
- (2) The Fund will approach successful applicants to invite them to submit a **full proposal**. Due to the high number of applications, the Fund will only be able to respond to successful applicants.

17. What are the different STEPS in the application process?

STEP 1: Check that your organisation/company and project meet the eligibility criteria

Check the eligibility criteria:

- your organisation is **legally registered**
- the proposed solution addresses one or more of the **four objectives** of the 2019 Funding Round



- your organisation has a **safeguarding policy** and procedures in place (including data privacy) or is willing to develop a policy and procedures
- the proposed solution responds to a **clear need/gap**, does not duplicate existing tools, and builds upon and/or interacts with existing solutions
- at minimum, you have an existing **prototype** with promising results from initial pilots

STEP 2: Read the [Request for Expressions of Interest document \(REOI\)](#)

Please read the full Request for Expression of Interest document to understand the submission process and learn more about kinds of projects that qualify and how the scoring will be done. It will help you focus on what's important.

STEP 3: Any questions?

Carefully review these Frequently Asked Questions. You can also [submit questions](#) that you may have through the form provided on the site.

STEP 4: Submit your [Expression of Interest](#)

All submissions must be made in English. To support your preparation, please note that the submission form asks for a link to a 2-minute pitch video.

18. What are the **scoring criteria**?

The Fund will review the Expressions of Interest based on an objective assessment of the following criteria:

1. Relevance of solution for tackling online CSEA, problem-solution fit
2. Novelty of solution and robustness of prototype
3. Suitability of the team to implement the project
4. Alignment between budget ask and project goals

DUE DILLIGENCE AND CONTRACTUAL DETAILS

19. What is a **due diligence** assessment?

End Violence Fund is administratively hosted by UNICEF. As Fund Custodian and Administrator, UNICEF is the entity that sends out money to grant recipients of the End Violence Fund.

Modality A: Prior to receiving a grant from the Fund via UNICEF, UNICEF will conduct a due diligence assessment by ensuring that all grantees selected under Modality A (see above) are reviewed with respect to their (i) core values screening and (ii) fiscal management capacity assessment. The core values and integrity assessment are to ensure alignment with UNICEF's core



values, whilst the financial management capacity assessment determines eligibility for funding in terms of institutional, managerial, financial and technical expertise.

Modality B: For the successful applicants under Modality B (private companies) UNICEF will issue Institutional Corporate Contracts. The participating entity – a private company- needs to be a legal entity, meaning a registered company in order for UNICEF to have a contractual relationship with them. The companies that are selected for funding will need to [register as a vendor/supplier with UNICEF](#) and comply with relevant conditions.

20. If my private company is selected for funding, what is the **company's legal status vis-à-vis End Violence Fund and UNICEF as its host?**

End Violence Fund will, via UNICEF, issue Institutional Corporate Contracts to the successful applicants. The participating entity – a private company – needs to be a legal entity, meaning registered company in order for UNICEF to have a contractual relationship with them. The companies that are selected for funding will [need to register as a vendor/supplier with UNICEF](#).

21. If my company receives funding from End Violence Fund and signs an Institutional Corporate Contract with UNICEF, does UNICEF **own the product or idea?**

No. The company will be requested to open source the IP of your product or idea. The company will be the open source license holder. We will consider occasional exceptions from the open-source rule as justified by the nature and/or sensitivity of the proposed solution.

22. What is a child **safeguarding policy?**

End Violence defines child safeguarding as: The responsibility that organisations have to make sure their staff, operations, and programmes do no harm to children and that they do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse.

Safeguarding also includes the responsibility to ensure that any concerns over a child's welfare receive an appropriate response and action is taken in a timely manner. Where concerns relate to harm or abuse from staff, associates, programmes and operations (internal incidents), grantees are expected to deal with this immediately and ensure a full investigation of any concerns. Where incidents relate to harm or abuse outside of the organisation (external incidents), grantees are expected to, as a minimum, refer the case to appropriate agencies or other support to ensure appropriate follow up interventions.

The Partnership is committed to supporting organisations to improve their safeguarding capacity and practice. As part of this, we ask all grantees to complete the Grantee Self-assessment, which can be found on the materials sidebar. While this is not required as part of your expression of interest, please note all shortlisted organisations and companies will be expected to complete this as part of the proposal.

The End Violence Fund allows grantee recipients to include a budget line for safeguarding and protection. This can include (but is not limited to) costs for capacity building, policy development,



a proportion of costs for specialist personnel, as well as costs associated with managing safeguarding/protection concerns.

23. Are there any **restrictions for what the funds invested are used for?**

The invested funds should be used for what the grantee has specified in its proposal and accompanying budget. The Fund, at its discretion, may conduct an audit during or after the implementation of the project.

24. What are the **monitoring and evaluation requirements for successful applicants?**

The Fund Secretariat will actively monitor the progress of all supported projects during the period of the grant, and periodic evaluation of progress. Specifically, all grantees will be required to:

- Report on project progress during six-monthly and annual reporting periods using the Fund's Monitoring and Evaluation template, which will be provided to organisations invited to submit a Full Proposal based on their Expression of Interest;
- Establish and report on key milestones according to qualitative and quantitative indicators defined at the start of the project;
- Submit a risk and risk mitigation matrix at the start of the project, and identify challenges encountered and steps taken to address them throughout the project;

Attend ad hoc webinars, bilateral (online) meetings or other discussions relevant to the project, including field visits by End Violence Secretariat team members.

GENERAL INFO AND DEFINITIONS

25. What should technology solutions **aim to achieve?**

The technology solutions should aim to achieve the four objectives of this Open Call (see above). Interested applicants should submit an Expression of Interest to use technologies to respond to one or more gaps, challenges and shortfalls that are hampering the implementation of preventive and response strategies to online violence against children. For example, use technologies to achieve one or more of the following in no particular order:

Strengthen technology mechanisms to disrupt the production, distribution and access to photos, videos and life-streaming with sexual content or acts involving children

Use technology to enable sustainable **cross-sector and cross-border lines of collaboration** between key players, including the ICT sector, media and tech community.

Use technology to facilitate and scale up early identification of **child victims**, law enforcement efforts, and access to quality services for child victims, offenders and potential offenders.

Use technology to increase **self-protection and digital resilience of children**, as well as enable children to be creative participants and contribute to keeping themselves and their friends safe online.



Use technology to **equip professionals and care givers** with the required knowledge and skills to reduce the risks of online harm to children and support victims.

Use technology to collect quality and comparable **data and evidence** on the perpetrators, child victims and forms of online violence and abuse.¹

Strengthen filters and child-centred standards of practice for digital environments to prevent children from becoming victims of online violence and abuse, including solicitation, sexual coercion and extortion.

Use technology to develop and implement **deterrents and prevention strategies** specifically targeting perpetrators and adults with sexual interest in children and adolescents.

26. What types of technologies will the End Violence Fund support?

The Fund is interested in receiving Expressions of Interest from not-for-profit organisations (Funding Modality A) and companies (Funding Modality B) that apply technologies in new ways, and/or scale, adapt and localize well-working technology tools and solutions to new contexts and/or countries. Below are some examples of how technologies can be used to prevent and respond to online violence against children. However, the funding is not limited to the below technologies. If your organisation is aligned with the 2019 Open Call selection criteria, we would like to hear about your technology solutions.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be used to detect, classify and refer known CSAM, as well as detect conversations and behavior that may indicate (new) CSAM is shared, and AI powered services (e.g. chatbots) for child victims, and possibly offenders and adults with sexual interest in children.

Extended Reality (ER)² technologies could provide new and immersive ways to enhance learning experiences, expand our understanding of complex systems and possibly improve services for offenders, potential offenders and child victims of online CSEA.

Blockchain could be used to establish a chain of custody for digital evidence related to online CSEA, as well as offer a platform for decentralized management, validation and storing of CSAM hashes.

Chatbots, online helplines and hotlines with instant messaging can be used to establish or strengthen anonymous reporting mechanisms

¹ This should consider the (i) age, gender, disability, literacy, geographical location and socio-economic status of the child victim and perpetrator and/or the adults with sexual interest in children; (ii) links with other types of violence against children; (iii) socio-economic, technological and cultural drivers that underpin online harmful practices and protective factors; and, (iv) the types of digital tools and platform used to abuse the child or disseminate the child abuse material.

² ER groups together Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR) and Mixed Reality (MR).



Data Science³ includes the use of advanced analytics techniques such as text analytics, machine learning, predictive analytics, data mining, and natural language processing to gain new insights from previously untapped data sources independently or together with existing data. For example, machine learning, lexicon-based algorithms and text analysis of chat room conversations could be used to detect online child sexual grooming and other types of abuse, and natural language processing (NLP) chatbots can be used to alert site administrators of the suspected abuse and/or grooming, and/or to pre-empt children if online grooming is suspected and offer real-time support via redirecting the child to appropriate services.

27. What is **online child sexual exploitation and abuse**?

Unless otherwise indicated, the definitions provided below are from the [Luxembourg Terminology Guidelines](#) for the protection of children from sexual abuse and exploitation (2016).

Online child sexual exploitation and abuse (CSEA) refers both to the sexual abuse of children that is “facilitated by information, communication and technology (ICT) and to sexual abuse of children that is committed elsewhere and then repeated by sharing it online through, for instance, images and videos.”⁴

Child sexual abuse material (CSAM) is used to describe a subset of “child sexual abuse material” where there is abuse or a concentration on the anal or genital region of the child. Both terms refer to material that depicts and/or that documents acts that are sexually abusive and/or exploitative to a child.

Livestreaming of child sexual abuse of a child in real time occurs when a child is forced to appear in front of a webcam to engage in sexual behaviour or to be subjected to sexual abuse. These acts are then live streamed over the Internet to a paying customer (the offender) who uses and/or requests a particular type of abuse to be perpetrated over the webcam in real-time.⁵

Online sexual grooming refers to the process of establishing and building a relationship with a child through the use of the Internet or other digital technologies to facilitate either online or offline sexual contact with that child.

Sexual extortion of children, also called “sextortion”, is the blackmailing of a child with the help of images of that child in order to extort sexual favors, money, or other benefits from her/him under the threat of sharing the material beyond the consent of the depicted child.

³ Compiling and analyzing large data collections where they are scarce, allowing the visualization of large amounts of data in intuitive ways, or creating new machine learning models and frameworks for using data more effectively.

⁴ For more information on the definition of online CSEA and its many types, please refer to the *Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse*, adopted by the Interagency Working Group in Luxembourg, 28 January 2016 (<http://luxemburgguidelines.org>).

⁵ ECPAT International Factsheet (2016).



28. How does the End Violence Fund define a ‘child’?

The Fund refers to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which defines a "child" as a person below the age of 18, unless the relevant laws recognize an earlier age of maturity. On some issues, States are obliged to provide for minimum ages, such as the age for admission into employment and completion of compulsory education; but in other cases the Convention is unequivocal in prohibiting life imprisonment without possibility of release or capital punishment for those under 18 years of age.

29. Is it possible to **contact someone at the Fund about this Open Call before applying?**

Questions or clarifications during the application period can be submitted [here](#). Answers to all questions submitted will be shared publicly.