

MOLDOVA EFFECTIVE JUSTICE

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA) No.: 2004-RFA-001

Model Courts Initiative GRANTS PROGRAM

RFA TITLE:	Fostering an efficient, accessible, and transparent justice system
RFA ISSUE DATE:	June 18, 2021
DEADLINE FOR QUESTIONS:	June 30, 2021
EMAIL:	MCIGrants@chechiconsulting.com Submit all questions to this email address. No phone calls please
DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION:	No later than 6:00 PM Moldova Time on July 18, 2021. Submit electronically in PDF or Word format to: MCIGrants@chechiconsulting.com
GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS:	Nationwide/Regional/Local
EXPECTED INSTRUMENT:	Fixed-Amount Award (FAA)
GRANT AWARD SIZE:	FAAs with a minimum amount of \$5,000 and a maximum of \$75,000
GRANT AWARD DURATION:	Period of performance from 6 to 12 months

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ANNEX 1: Grant Application Template

ANNEX 2: Budget Template

ANNEX 3: Pre-award Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and other Statements of the Recipient

I. INTRODUCTION

Checchi & Company Consulting, Inc. (Checchi) is implementing the seven-year USAID-funded Effective Justice (EJ) Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity contract intended to foster an efficient, accessible, and transparent justice system that uniformly applies the rule of law. Grant funds will be awarded to qualified, registered civil society organizations (CSOs) in Moldova through this grants program to carry out projects in response to program needs. The program is authorized under the Foreign Assistance Act. To be eligible for award, the Applicant must provide all information as required in this Request for Applications (RFA) and meet eligibility standards in Section III of this RFA.

Subject to the availability of funds, awards will be made to responsible Applicant(s) whose application(s) best meet the scope of this RFA and the selection criteria contained herein. Checchi reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted and Applicants may only submit one application in response to this RFA.

For the purposes of this RFA the term "Grant" is synonymous with "Award"; "Grantee" is synonymous with "Recipient". Eligible organizations interested in submitting an application are encouraged to read this solicitation thoroughly to understand the type of program sought, application submission requirements and evaluation process.

Any questions concerning this RFA should be submitted in writing at MCIgrants@chechiconsulting.com no later than the deadline for questions indicated on the cover page. Responses to questions received prior to the deadline will be furnished to all potential Applicants.

The application must be submitted electronically at MCIgrants@chechiconsulting.com no later than the deadline for submission stated on the cover page.

Please note that the issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of Checchi to make an award nor does it commit Checchi to pay for any costs incurred in preparation or submission of an application. All preparation and submission costs are at the Applicant's expense. Checchi reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications received. It also is possible that an application recommended for funding does not result in an award. Reasons for this include, but are not limited to, insufficient availability of funding, insufficient capability to manage the proposed program, or for other reason(s) which may be provided to the Applicant.

II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A. Background

Effective Justice (EJ) is a seven-year Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity contract intended to foster an efficient, accessible, and transparent justice system that uniformly applies the rule of law, and it will be implemented via a series of Task Orders. The **Model Courts Initiative (MCI)** is the first Task Order and is a three-year effort to improve the performance of courts in delivering quality justice services and to improve the connection between courts, communities, and system users.

MCI works toward two objectives: (1) support two first instance courts through targeted assistance to improve functioning and services to gain Model Court status, and (2) provide supplementary national assistance in key areas necessary for changes to enhance improvements at the individual court level.

The purpose of the MCI Grants Program is to strengthen CSOs active in the justice sector so that they: (1) have ready capacities to advocate to improve laws, policies, and services; and (2) can participate directly in supporting the development of MCI initiatives in model courts and at the national level.

In May 2021, the first instance courts from Ungheni and Bălți were selected by the project and will be assisted for a period of three years to reach and sustain Model Court Status. This status refers to inclusive development and wide acceptance of standards for court performance, based in part on international standards such as the International Framework for Court Excellence (IFCE).

B. Grants Program Scope

Checchi invites registered non-governmental organizations to submit proposals in the following two broad areas:

1. **Improving delivery of quality justice services.**
2. **Strengthening connection between courts, communities, and system users.**

In the first area, **improving the delivery of quality justice services**, proposed activities shall be conducive to the achievement of the following results:

- Professionalism and management skills of justice professionals are improved.
- Court operations are timely, transparent, and properly resourced.
- Procedural and legal basis for judicial actions meet high performance standards.

Eligible activities include, but are not limited to: training and capacity support; policy papers and research; production of specialized analyses and policy proposals; advocacy to improve laws, policies and services; advocacy campaigns for specific policy reforms; monitoring case processing and outcomes, etc.

In the second area, **strengthening connection between courts, communities, and system users**, proposed activities shall be conducive to the achievement of the following results:

- Access of vulnerable groups to the courts increased.
- Capacity and procedures to deal with juveniles in contact with the law improved.
- Active citizen engagement and oversight of courts.

Eligible activities include, but are not limited to: advancing citizens' access to courts and legal information; increasing access to justice for vulnerable groups; enhancing communication between civil society and courts; local outreach and legal literacy events, etc.

Note: For the purpose of this call for applications, vulnerable groups as court users include: women, girls, ethnic minorities, juveniles in contact with the law, and people with disabilities.

The grants can be implemented at the national, regional and/or local levels. For grants with a regional or local coverage, we encourage proposed activities to be implemented in localities served by the first instance courts from Ungheni and/or Bălți.

The Applicant can budget up to 10% from total costs for organizational development. This includes trainings, development of policies and procedures, coaching and mentoring in areas where the organization needs improvement.

Allocation of organizational development costs can be made as follows:

- Based on the Applicant needs described by the organization in the application form.
- Based on the needs and priorities identified in the pre-award risk-assessment stage conducted by Checchi.

Checchi encourages proposals submitted in coalitions or partnerships with grassroots civil society organizations. The Applicant will have the primary responsibility for implementing the grant. No separate payments or funds will be allocated to co-applicants.

Under the purpose of this call, the following activities are ineligible:

- Expenses for activities other than those integral to the achievement of the objectives and results specified in the proposed grant.
- The creation of endowments.
- Activities that conflict with, or duplicate the activities of other U.S. Government-supported programs.
- Expenses for parties or celebrations.
- Activities for construction, renovation or purchase of construction equipment.
- Activities which are inconsistent with international standards of human rights or with democratic goals of racial and ethnic tolerance and harmony, or
- Activities not approved by USAID.

III. GRANT ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

The grants will be funded by USAID and administered and managed by Checchi. Grants will be issued in accordance with all applicable regulations, USAID guidance, and Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations.

See (<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303mab.pdf>)

Please note that the issuance of this RFA does not constitute a commitment on the part of Checchi to make an award. Checchi reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications received.

A. Estimate of Funds Available

It is anticipated that each grant award may range between **\$5,000 - \$75,000**. The final amount will be dependent upon grant activities and final negotiation. Under exceptional circumstances, a grant may be awarded that is outside this range. **Applicants may only submit one application under this RFA.**

B. Start Date and Period of Performance for Grants

The anticipated period of performance is from 6 to 12 months from date of award. The anticipated start date for this program is on or about September 1, 2021.

C. Type of Award

Checchi Consulting anticipates funding a Fixed-Amount Award for this program in accordance with ADS 303saj <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303saj.pdf>.

D. Purpose of the award

The principal purpose of the award is to transfer funds to the Recipient to accomplish an objective of the Effective Justice Program which is authorized by USAID IDIQ 72011721D00001/Task Order No. 72011721F00001.

The successful Recipient will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the program objectives and the efficient and effective administration of the award through the application of sound management practices. The Recipient will assume responsibility for administering grant funds in a manner consistent with underlying agreements, program objectives, and the terms and conditions of the grant award.

E. Eligible Applicants

In order to be eligible for a grant, the Applicant must be a non-governmental legally registered organization in Moldova.

In addition, Applicants:

- a) May only submit one application per prime organization under this RFA.
- b) Must include in their applications expected outcomes and results consistent with and linked to MCI's objectives, including an approach to gender integration before and during implementation.
- c) Must be registered as a non-governmental organization in the Republic of Moldova.

- d) Must operate a separate bank account for this grant under the name of the organization.
- e) Must have or be able to obtain a DUNS number and be registered in the System for Awards Management (SAM), see www.sam.gov
- f) Must display sound management in the form of financial, administrative, and technical policies and procedures and present a system of internal controls that safeguard assets; protect against fraud, waste, and abuse; and support the achievement of program goals and objectives. Checchi will assess this capability prior to awarding a grant.

F. Ineligible Applicants

- g) Organizations that are not legally registered in the Republic of Moldova.
- h) Organizations that do not obtain a positive risk assessment in accordance with ADS 303.3.9 and 2 CFR 200.205.
- i) Any entity whose name appears on the “List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Non-Procurement Programs”, the U.S. Treasury Department’s “Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) List”, the Excluded Parties List System on USAID’s System for Awards Management, or the United Nations Resolution 1267 list.
- j) Any Public International Organization, such as an organ of the United Nations, multilateral development bank, etc.
- k) Any government entities.
- l) Any state-owned institutions.
- m) Political parties, groupings, or institutions or their subsidiaries and affiliates.
- n) Organizations that advocate, promote, or espouse anti-democratic policies or illegal activities.
- o) Faith-based organizations that are not in compliance with ADS 303.3.6.4.m, which is in accordance with Executive Order 13279, Equal Protection for the Laws of Faith-based Community Organizations.
- p) Any entity affiliated with Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc., any of its officers, directors, or employees.
- q) Individuals.

Applications from individuals will not be accepted. The Recipient must be a legally responsible entity. Applicants should have established financial management, internal control systems, and policies and procedures. For Applicants submitting a joint proposal, the roles and responsibilities of each institution relative to each other and to Checchi must be made clear in the application, with respect to project implementation, financial management, and reporting. Checchi will utilize the Fixed Amount Award Entity Eligibility Checklist to determine whether the prospective Recipient has the necessary organization, experience, accounting and operational controls, and technical skills – or ability to obtain them – in order to achieve the objectives of the program and comply with the terms and conditions of the award.

G. Gender Consideration

Promoting gender equality and advancing the status of all women and girls around the world is vital to achieving program development objectives. As part of the design of any proposed activity, the Recipient will assess and identify gender issues which impact the participation of men and women equally in the participation of this program. Refer to USAID ADS 205 found at <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/205.pdf> for more information on integrating this policy into their approach.

H. Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) and System for Award Management (SAM)

All Applicants (unless the Applicant is exempt from those requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c) or has an exception approved by the Grant awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d) are required to:

1. Provide a valid DUNS number in its application. To obtain a DUNS number, please follow the link <https://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/>
2. Be registered in **SAM** at the time of the award. SAM is the primary registrant database for the U.S. Grant Government. SAM collects, validates, stores and disseminates data about the Grant government's trading partners in support of the contract award, grants and the electronic payment processes. To register please access <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>.
3. Maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Grant award or an application or plan under consideration by a Grant awarding agency.

Organizations are encouraged to register during the application period. Registration is free. The DUNS number can be obtained in up to two calendar days and registration in SAM can be activated in up to two weeks. If the organization encounter difficulties while registering in SAM, finalist grantees will be assisted by MCI Grants Team with registration prior to award.

Checchi may not make a Grant award to an Applicant until the Applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements and, if an Applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time Checchi is ready to make an award, Checchi may determine that the Applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another Applicant.

I. Pre-award Certifications, Assurances, Representations and other Statements of the Recipient

All grantees will be required to sign and comply with the content of the above certifications as part of the grant agreement (Annex 3). Complete copies of these Certifications, Assurances, Representations and Other Statements of the Recipient are contained in ADS 303.3.8:

1. Assurance of Compliance with Laws and Regulations Governing Nondiscrimination in Grant Assisted Programs (This assurance applies to Non-U.S. organizations, if any part of the program will be undertaken in the U.S.).
2. Certification Regarding Lobbying (22 CFR 227).
3. Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers for Covered Countries and Individuals (ADS 206, Prohibition of Assistance to Drug Traffickers).
4. Certification Regarding Support to Terrorists.
5. Certification Regarding Trafficking in Persons, Implementing Title XVII of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013, required prior to award (This certification is required for awards greater than \$500,000 performed outside of the U.S.).
6. Key Individual Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking, (ADS 206.3.10) when applicable.
7. Participant Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking (ADS 206.3.10) when applicable.
8. Representation by Organization Regarding a Delinquent Tax Liability or a Felony Criminal Conviction; and

9. Other Statements of Recipients.

J. Reporting Requirements

The fixed amount award will list deliverables/milestones for the program. In addition, the grantee will be required to submit the following reports.

a) Program Reporting

Reporting requirements are summarized below:

TYPE OF REPORT	DUE DATE <i>(Days refer to calendar days and quarter refers to the fiscal quarter, unless stated otherwise)</i>
Project Implementation Plan	Project Implementation Plan is due for approval 30 days after award
Quarterly Performance Report	Quarterly Performance Report is due 20 days after the end of each U.S. government fiscal quarter or 20 days after the end of reporting quarter mentioned in grant agreement
Project Completion Report	30 days after completion of award

b) Project Implementation Plans

The Recipient will submit a Project Implementation Plan for approval by Checchi within 30 days after award.

c) Quarterly Performance Reports

The Recipient will submit Quarterly Performance Reports that give insight into the progress of planned activities. The narrative report will include qualitative and quantitative information describing activities carried out and specific results achieved during the quarter. Reports may include annexes such as training reports, training agenda, photographs of training sessions and other related materials. Reporting periods will either coincide with USAID fiscal year quarters, with reports due no later than twenty (20) days after the end of each quarter (January 20, April 20, July 20, and Oct 20), or a personalized reporting frequency will be mentioned in the grant agreement. The reporting timeline depends on grant duration.

d) Project Completion Reports

The Project Completion Report is a detailed report which summarizes the accomplishments and impact in relation to the expected results. The final report shall be submitted no later than 30 days after the end-date of the grant.

K. Conflict of Interest

The Applicant must disclose any conflict of interest, including organizational conflicts of interest, in the award, administration, or monitoring of sub-awards, as stated in ADS 303 “Conflict of Interest (August 2018)”. The Grantee must propose an approach for resolving the conflict of interest to Checchi within 10 calendar days of the discovery of the conflict of interest. The Grants Manager will review all conflict of interest disclosures, both pre-award and post-award, and the

Applicant's or Recipient's proposed resolution. The Grants Manager must determine if the mitigation is adequate, in consultation with the COR. The Grants Manager must notify the Recipient within 30 days of receipt of the Recipient's notice that the disclosures and measures proposed to resolve the conflict of interest are adequate or inadequate, unless the Grants Manager advises the Recipient that a longer period is necessary. The contractor will have procedures in place to screen covered employees for potential personal conflicts of interest in accordance with FAR 52.203-16 Preventing Personal Conflicts of Interest (DEC 2011)

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

A. General Information

Applications must be submitted in the required format via email to MCIGrants@chechiconsulting.com no later than the date and time stated on the cover page of this RFA. Applications not received by the deadline will not be considered. All applications must fit within the program areas outlined in Section II, Program Description, of this RFA. Furthermore, the proposed program must have an estimated value and performance period that is within the parameters described in Section III, Grant Administration Information. Checchi may opt to exclude from further consideration any submission which is not within these parameters. Applications and all supporting material must be submitted in English.

Please note that the issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of Checchi to make an award. Checchi reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications received. It also is possible that an application recommended for funding does not result in an award. Reasons for this include, but are not limited to, insufficient availability of funding, insufficient capability to manage the proposed program, or for other reason(s) which will be provided to the Applicant.

Applicants shall submit the application in the Grant Application template format attached as Annex 1 to the RFA. Applications must be submitted to MCIGrants@chechiconsulting.com. Email submissions must include the following in the subject line: "Grant Application under 2004-RFA-001."

If multiple emails are required due to file size, please indicate in the subject line of the email the number of the email (e.g. "No. 1 of 2", etc.). For example, if your grant application is being sent in two emails, the first email should have a subject line which says: "Grant Application under 2004-RFA-001, Part 1 of 2."

Upon receiving the applications, the Applicant will be acknowledged of receipt within 48 hours of submission. If confirmation is not received, Applicants should e-mail Checchi to reconfirm receipt.

The Applicant will submit the following documents:

1. Annex 1: Grant Application Form
2. Annex 2: Budget Template
3. Annex 3: Certifications, Assurances, Representations and Other Statements of the Recipient
4. Confirmation of Registration (Certificate or Decision) or Extract from the State Register
5. The last financial report
6. Last audit report, if available
7. The last activity report, if available
8. CV of the organization, including the Organizational Chart or other document(s) which defines the roles and management responsibilities of the staff
9. CVs of the personnel proposed for project implementation.

B. Technical Application Format

Applicants shall submit the application in the Grant Application template format attached as

Annex 1 to the RFA. Technical applications must not exceed 20 single-spaced typed pages (not including the cover page or annexes), utilizing Times New Roman 12pt font, single spaced, typed on standard A4 sized paper and each page numbered consecutively. Applicants are advised that any pages exceeding the limit will not be considered for evaluation.

C. Budget Template

The proposed budget must be submitted electronically along with the technical application. The cost proposal templates can be found at Annex 2.

The proposed budget must include all direct costs associated with the implementation and completion of activities, as well as any indirect costs (if applicable) as detailed in the budget. These amounts are subject to revision depending on both reasonableness and the availability of funds. Cost sharing cannot be used with Fixed Amount Awards.

The proposed budget must provide cost estimates for the management of the program (including program monitoring, when applicable). Applicants will minimize their administrative and support costs for managing the program to maximize the funds available for program activities. All costs must be reasonable, allowable and allocable; budgets deemed unrealistic may result in the disqualification of an Applicant's proposal.

Applicants will provide the following:

- a. Proposed budget must be submitted in an Excel spreadsheet with all cells and formulas visible and unlocked that includes a summary budget and a detailed/itemized budget. Budgets should be proposed in USD and Moldovan Lei (MDL) but note that the award will be paid in local currency based on the exchange rate at the time of award.
- b. The detailed budget must include costs notes/budget narrative explaining all estimated costs. Please note that the budget narrative must not only express the calculation of the estimate and purpose but also the basis of estimate – the rationale used to determine the cost estimate was fair and reasonable.

D. Certifications, Assurances, Representations and Other Statements of the Recipient

Applicant will complete Annex 3 (Certifications, Assurances, Representations and Other Statements of the Recipient) and submit with their application.

All applications received by the deadline (as indicated on the cover letter) will be reviewed for responsiveness to the specifications outlined in this RFA and compliance with the application format. Applicants are expected to review, understand, and comply with all aspects of this RFA. Failure to do so may result in your application being determined as “non-responsive” and may forego further review.

The application must be signed by the organization's representative who will also serve as the primary point of contact for their submission, with the authority to negotiate and enter into an award with Checchi.

V. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Selecting Committee will evaluate the applications on the following evaluation criteria, listed in descending order of importance:

Area	Comments	Score
Technical Approach	Clarity and appropriateness of scope in the proposed technical approach with demonstrated understanding of the judiciary context, and how project objectives and approaches corresponds with Model Courts Initiative objectives. The proposed project is sustainable and produces an impact, potential risks and mitigations actions are defined.	45
Organizational Capacity	Institutional profile, background, expertise, experience with projects of similar size and scope in relevant technical area and regions, and operational and financial capacity. Checchi reserves the right to visit organizations for due diligence purposes.	25
Management Capacity and Personnel	The extent to which the management and staffing approach convincingly demonstrate achievement of the objectives and results described in the activity description including but not limited to (1) proposed personnel have the requisite skill set; (2) team composition/staffing plan appropriately supports the organizational structure of the program.	20
Gender Mainstreaming/inclusivity	Gender considerations are thoroughly integrated throughout the proposal. The organization staff is comprised of both genders.	10
Cost/Budget	The budget will not be scored but will be reviewed for reasonableness and appropriateness of costs. Clear budget alignment between level of effort, technical approach, and deliverables. Applications providing the overall best value will be more favorably considered for award. Value will be assessed in part by realistic proposals for numbers of districts considered with given budget.	0
Total Points		100