

**Access to Justice in Moldova Project**

Request for Applications (RFA)

GRANT PROGRAM “Strengthening Citizens’ Access to Justice”

Dear Applicant:

**Access to Justice in Moldova Project** (ATJ), implemented by Millennium DPI Partners, LLC (MDPI), is seeking Applications for the **Grants Program “Strengthening citizens’ access to justice”**. ATJ/MDPI is a federal award, funded by the U.S. Department of State through the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, Award Number: SLMAQM19GR2186.

Grants will be awarded and implemented in accordance with US Government regulations governing grants and MDPI’s internal grant management policies.

ATJ/MDPI employees may not ask for, and applicants are prohibited from offering, any money, fee, commission, credit, gift, gratuity, thing of value, or compensation to obtain or reward improper favorable treatment regarding this solicitation. Any improper request from a project employee should be reported to the Chief of Party.

Annexes included with this Request for Application:

**Annex A** – Application Form

**Annex B** – Budget

# SECTION I: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

1. **Background and the Scope of Access to Justice in Moldova Project**

**Access to Justice Project (hereinafter referred to as ATJ)** is a two-year project aiming to improve access to justice for Moldovans, especially the most vulnerable members of society who are marginalized and excluded. The program achieves this goal by implementing activities under the following two objectives:

Objective 1: The general public in Moldova has improved knowledge of the law and the available protections for fundamental freedoms; and

Objective 2: Legal aid centers are established, strengthened, and better equipped to provide legal aid to persons whose rights have been violated, including victims of discrimination and violence.

The project targets those areas of Moldova where awareness of rights is lowest and capacity to provide legal aid is weakest. The project seeks opportunities for promoting legislative changes and policy reforms to promote legal aid and strengthen legal aid providers.

1. **Grants Program objectives**

ATJ/MDPI invites qualified organizations to propose their unique methodologies and solutions to the following tasks:

1. ***Task 1.*** Implement an outstanding outreach campaign targeting vulnerable and disadvantaged groups’ rights. The aim of this campaign is to inform citizens about their rights and freedoms throughout Moldova using various distribution channels (TV, radio, online, print, direct interaction).

Illustrative outreach tools include, but are not limited to: TV & radio shows, films, street dramas, human interest stories, newsletters, blogs, and/or Facebook pages, “one stop shops” in different communities to provide vulnerable groups with information, street law seminars, easy-to-understand infographics, etc. It is expected that the winners will collaborate with other similar organizations to enlarge the coverage of campaign. It is expected that the winners will tailor their outreach tools for specific target groups.

1. ***Task 2.*** Support vulnerable groups (minorities, LGBT, youth, elderly, and women) throughout Moldova. The scope of this support is to provide legal aid services to remote localities to inform the public about fundamental rights and freedoms.

Illustrative support includes, but is not limited to: individual consultancy, street law seminars, easy-to-understand infographics, mobile offices, targeted assistance, etc. It is expected that the winners will collaborate with other legal aid service providers and supporting agencies to strengthen the whole legal aid service provision system.

To accomplish these two tasks, ATJ/MDPI developed two objectives that comprise the objectives of the Grant Program:

**Objective 1:** Knowledge of the law, available protections for fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression, freedom of religion and freedom of assembly, has been brought to the attention of Moldovan citizens.

**Objective 2:** Moldovan citizens whose rights have been violated, including victims of discrimination and violence receive legal support from legal aid service providers.

1. **Eligibility and qualification requirements**

**Under Task 1**: Applicants must be registered as Media organizations (NGOs or enterprises) or NGOs, formally constituted and compliant with all civil and fiscal regulations.

**Under Task 2**: Applicants must be registered as Moldovan NGOs (public associations, foundations, private institutions) formally constituted and compliant with all applicable civil and fiscal regulations.

**Under both tasks**:

* Applicants may only submit one application under this RFA;
* Applicants must be able to demonstrate successful past performance in implementation similar programs;
* Applicants must have established outreach capabilities with linkages to the beneficiary group(s) identified in the program description. This should be reflected by the incorporation of the beneficiary perspective in the application;
* Applicants 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. ATJ/MDPI will assess this capability prior to awarding a grant.

ATJ/MDPI encourages applications from ethnic-linguistic minorities, including Roma, and from LGBT organizations that meet the above eligibility criteria.

ATJ/MDPI encourages applications from organizations that support freedom of religion, freedom of assembly and freedom of expression that meet the above eligibility criteria.

**Ineligible organizations:**

* Organizations that are not legally registered;
* Government entities;
* Any state-owned institutions;
* Any public international organizations (PIOs);
* Political parties, groupings, or institutions or their subsidiaries and affiliates;
* Organizations that advocate, promote, or espouse anti-democratic policies or illegal activities;
* Faith-based organizations whose objectives are for discriminatory and religious purposes, and whose main objective for the grant is of a religious nature;
* Any entity whose name appears on the List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Non-procurement Programs (http://www.sam.gov);
* Any entity with a member that appears on the U.S. Department of Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) and Blocked Persons list.
* An organization that refuses to sign the required certifications.

# SECTION II: APPLICATION SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. **Type of grant and amount**

This Grants Program is conceptualized as a Fixed Amount Award (FAA) to be implemented and administered in accordance with the applicable donor regulations (2 CFR §200, 2 CFR §600/DOSAR, FAR).

ATJ/MDPI funding for any individual grant will not exceed $15,000 per year. A maximum amount per grant will not exceed $22,500 for 1.5 years. It is envisaged that ATJ will primarily make small grants between $5,000 and $10,000 for discrete short-term activities that directly support the objectives of the ATJ. All costs funded by the grant must be allowable, allocable and reasonable. Grant applications must be supported by a detailed and realistic budget as described in Annex 2.

It is expected to issue 7-10 FAAs for a maximum of one and half year period of performance. ATJ will not accept Applications the due date of which exceeds July 31, 2019.

1. **Application and submission information**

The applicant will submit an Application **(Annex 1)** and a Budget **(Annex 2)**. The applicant will submit the following documents:

* 1. Certificate of Registration
	2. Extract from the State Register
	3. The last financial report
	4. The last activity report
	5. References from three previous donors
	6. CV of the organization

Applications will be evaluated against the merit review criteria listed below. If the applicant successfully meets or exceeds the merit review criteria, they will be invited to negotiate the budget. Only those applicants, who meet or exceed the merit review criteria at the first stage, will be invited to negotiate budgets and sign Grant Agreement.

Application should be submitted in English language via email moldovaprogram@gmail.com. Applications must be submitted by **January 20, 2019**. Late or unresponsive applications will not be considered.

Please submit **all questions concerning this RFA** to the e-mail: moldovaprogram@gmail.com by December 22, 2019. Questions could be formulated in Romanian, Russian or English. Answers will be sent via email to applicants by December 30, 2019. ATJ/MDPI will assist applicants in understanding the application process at the request of applicants.

***The issuance of this Request for Application does not commit ATJ/MDPI to make an award to any prospective grantee responding to this solicitation. Prospective grantees will not be reimbursed for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. ATJ/MDPI reserves the right to reject any and all applications, or to make an award without further discussion or negotiations.***

1. **Merit review criteria**

An internal review panel comprised of the ATJ technical implementation staff will review all applications and clarify all issues. A Selection Commission will further evaluate all applications against the criteria below.

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| **Grant Proposal Scoring** |
| **Strategic Approach (30 points total)** |  |
| 1. Relevance to ATJ project objectives (10 points) |  |
| 2. Sustainability of activities (10 points) |  |
| 3. Anticipated impact on beneficiaries/public (10 points) |  |
| **Technical Approach (30 points total)** |  |
| 1. Goals clearly identified (10 points) |  |
| 2. Innovative approach (10 points) |  |
| 3. Knowledge of issues to be addressed (10 points) |  |
| **Organizational Capacity (20 points total)** |  |
| 1. Past performance in similar projects (5 points) |  |
| 2. Staff/expert skills (5 points) |  |
| 3. Financial capacity/systems (5 points) |  |
| 4. Experience in geographic region (5 points) |  |
| **SCORE TOTAL (80 points total)** |  |

# SECTION III: REPORTING AND MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

1. **Reporting requirements**

The FAA type of grant is based on milestones that mark the completion of a product, task, or deliverable that can be easily verified. Thus, depending on the project, the grantee will develop appropriate milestones and deliverables, to be reported according to the schedule.

The milestone table (*please see the Annex 1: Project Milestones and Deliverables, Section IIIb*) should include as a first milestone the development of an action plan, and for the last milestone, the development of a Final Narrative Report. However, depending on the project’s complexity, the grantee will include an Intermediate Narrative Report.

*Note: An individual milestone payment will not necessarily reflect the costs incurred by the grantee for that milestone, but the combined total of the milestone payments must reflect the total costs expected to be incurred for performance of the grant. In other words, the total cost of the grant must be reasonable; however, such amount may not be exactly allocated to milestones as milestone amounts must be determined to provide liquidity throughout the life of implementation. Allocation of payments based on milestones should enable the grantee to move forward with the activity and help obtain assets needed for the next milestone.*

1. **Monitoring and Evaluation**

FAA type of grant does not require a monitoring and evaluation plan. It is required, though, that the grantee will set indicators to be collected for each activity and report on them when submitting Narrative reports.

1. **Certifications required of prospective grantees**

All sub-awardees will sigh the Certification regarding Lobbying and other Certifications required by US Government.