

9 May 2021

Excellency,

UN Women is pleased to announce that it launched the second programming round of the Elsie Initiative Fund for Uniformed Women in Peace Operations on 28 April 2021. In March 2019, UN Women in partnership with the Government of Canada, launched the Elsie Initiative Fund with the aim of accelerating progress towards achieving the United Nations gender targets in line with Security Council resolutions and the [UN Department of Peace Operation's Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy 2018 - 2028](#), to increase the meaningful participation of women serving in uniformed roles in peace operations.

I, alongside my co-chair of the Steering Committee for the Fund, Ms. Gwyn Kutz from the Government of Canada, am very pleased to draw your attention to the attached [Call for Letters of Interest](#) (LOI) in both English and French, which invites both Troop and Police Contributing Countries (primary recipients) and UN organizations (secondary recipients) to apply to the Fund. The Fund will consider proposals for three different types of activities:

- Barrier assessments to identify the main factors impeding the deployment of uniformed women peacekeepers to United Nations missions;
- Projects aimed at increasing the meaningful participation of uniformed women peacekeepers in United Nations missions;
- A premium for the deployment of gender-strong units that include substantial representation of women overall and in positions of authority, have provided gender-equity training to all unit members, and has adequate material to ensure parity of deployment conditions for women and men peacekeepers.

Consideration can also be given to funding a combination of these activities for Troop and Police Contributing Countries.

The barrier assessment is mandatory, as the barrier assessment outcomes and recommendations are required to form the basis for proposed activities for which funding is being requested.

Proposals for activities by Official Development Assistance (ODA)-eligible UN Troop and Police Contributing Countries ([link](#)) will be given priority consideration for funding. The Fund may also support projects submitted by participating UN organizations that will implement and test innovations aimed at enhancing the meaningful participation of uniformed women deployed in United Nations peace operations.

LOIs are due to the Fund Secretariat by the **31<sup>st</sup> of July 2021** and must be signed by a Minister or Chief of Defense, Minister of Interior or Police Commissioner, or equivalent. Further details are available in the Call for LOI Form and Application Guidelines. Additional resources will be provided including a video tutorial and a list of Frequently Asked Questions.

Two Technical Briefings are organized on a presentation of the Fund and how to apply in the Second Programming Round on:

- Tuesday 18 May 09:00 EDT – 10:30 EDT, in English
- Thursday 27 May 10:00 EDT – 11:30EDT, in French.

All communications regarding the Fund including the submission of LOIs should be sent to: [elsie.mptf@unwomen.org](mailto:elsie.mptf@unwomen.org).

The Elsie Initiative Fund also continues to seek donors interested in supporting the sustainable deployment and the full, equal and meaningful participation of trained and eligible uniformed women to UN peace operations through a financial contribution to the Fund.

For further details on activities of the Fund and potential contributions, please visit the website: <https://elsiefund.org>.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Åsa Regnér', is centered on the page.

Åsa Regnér  
Assistant-Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director  
Normative Support, UN System Coordination and Programme Results



## **The Elsie Initiative Fund for Uniformed Women in Peace Operations (EIF) Call for Letters of Interest – Second Programming Round**

This Call for Letters of Interest (LOI) for the Elsie Initiative Fund (EIF) Second Programming Round should be read in conjunction with the EIF's Terms of Reference ([link](#)), and the Application Guidelines for the Elsie Initiative Fund Second Programming Round ([link](#)). Where these two documents differ, particularly in the case of the Second Programming Round, the Application Guidelines will take precedence.

### **Application Guidelines for the Elsie Initiative Fund Second Programming Round** *(Annex A)*

The Application Guidelines include detailed information on the Application Criteria, Process, Review and Notification, and an LOI Checklist. Eligibility criteria for all proposals as well as additional eligibility criteria for National Governments and Participating United Nations Organizations (PUNOs) is included below. The Application Guidelines are to be read together with the LOI Template.

### **The Elsie Initiative Fund Letter of Interest (LOI) Form 2021** *(Annex B)*

All LOIs must be completed electronically using the LOI form located on the EIF's website ([link](#)) in either English or French, and submitted to the EIF Secretariat. Handwritten applications cannot be accepted. The LOI form provides applicants with the relevant information required by the EIF Secretariat to assess their application.

Further resources will also be provided in a video tutorial and a list of Frequently-Asked-Questions on the [Elsie Initiative Fund website](#).

### **Fund Recipients**

Primary recipients of the EIF are troop- and police-contributing countries (T/PCCs). UN organizations that wish to increase the meaningful participation of uniformed women in peace operations may also access the EIF.

### **Eligibility Criteria – all Proposals**

All proposals must contribute to at least one of the four outcomes in the EIF's Results Framework:

1. Expanded country-specific knowledge of barriers to deployment of uniformed women peacekeepers to UN missions.
2. Increased meaningful deployment of uniformed women peacekeepers to UN missions.
3. Increased pool of uniformed women eligible to deploy as UN peacekeepers.
4. Improved working conditions for uniformed women peacekeepers in UN missions.

## Additional Eligibility Criteria for National Governments

National Governments must also meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. Is a United Nations T/PCC, or has serious intentions to become one that is demonstrated in the LOI;
2. Demonstrates high-level commitment through the LOI being signed by a Minister or Chief of Defense, Minister of Interior or Police Commissioner, or equivalent;
3. Agrees to complete, or has recently completed, a credible barrier assessment, such as using the suggested criteria in Appendix I of the EIF Terms of Reference or the methodology created by the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF);
4. Commits to allow the EIF Secretariat to use data from that assessment to compile an anonymized overview report; and
5. Meets the requirements of the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP) and the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) assessment and remains eligible for United Nations support after the consideration of a risk assessment and the application of any necessary mitigating measures. These mandatory processes will be conducted by the EIF Secretariat after receipt of a detailed proposal, and during Step 4 of the Programming Cycle. They are not necessary for the submission of a LOI. However, T/PCCs should consider the requirements of those processes and be prepared to actively support and enable them.

National governments are required to report in accordance with the UN Sustainable Development Group (SDG) reporting categories. Further guidance will be provided for projects that are approved for the development of a detailed proposal.

## Participating UN Organizations (PUNO)

The EIF may support projects submitted by PUNOs designed to implement and test innovations aimed at enhancing the meaningful participation of uniformed women deployed in United Nations peace operations. It is understood that these projects would not ordinarily be financed from available budgets, and subsequent scaling of these projects would be undertaken within other resources.

As a guideline, the allocation of funds to UN-led projects should not normally exceed 20% of total available funds.

Applicants are encouraged to contact the EIF Secretariat if additional guidance is required.

## Contact Details

All communications regarding the EIF, including the submission of LOIs should be sent by email to: [elsie.mptf@unwomen.org](mailto:elsie.mptf@unwomen.org).

## Annexes:

- A. Application Guidelines for the Elsie Initiative Fund Second Programming Round ([EN](#)) ([FR](#))
- B. The Elsie Initiative Fund Letter of Interest (LOI) Form 2021 ([EN](#)) ([FR](#))