

Explainer - Letter of Interest (LOI) – 4th Programming Round

Instructions to complete the LOI

Please read these instructions together with the EIF Call for Letters of Interest – Fourth Programming Round.

This LOI form is designed to collect the information the EIF Secretariat needs to assess your application. It contains **five parts** and **two annexes**.

- Only enter information in the white boxes.
- Follow the word count limits shown in red throughout the LOI.

The LOI Form includes:

- **Part One:** Applicant Details
- **Part Two:** Project Summary
- **Part Three:** Barrier Assessment Details
- **Part Four:** Project Details
- **Part Five:** Project Outputs and Budget
- **Annex A:** Security Institution Personnel Data
- **Annex B:** Deployment Planning for United Nations Peace Operations

Who reviews the LOI?

Each LOI is reviewed by the EIF Secretariat, alongside a panel of experts from the military and police, as well as gender, academic, and Women, Peace and Security (WPS) fields.

- Please complete **all parts** of the LOI.
- Make sure your project and activities are described clearly and logically.
- Respect the **word limits**.

Important Submission Guidelines:

The LOI **must be completed electronically**. Handwritten submissions will not be accepted.

The LOI must be **signed by the relevant authority**, such as:

- Minister of Defence or Chief of Defence
- Minister of Interior or Police Commissioner
- Or another authorised official

You may only submit **per country** and **per programming round**:

- **One LOI for the military**, and
- **One LOI for the police**.

If your country has **more than one security institution** that deploys military or police personnel (e.g. gendarmerie, national guard, road security force), please combine them into **one proposal** under either 'military' or 'police'.

Key References

- A. Elsie Initiative Fund Website: <https://elsiefund.org/>
- B. Elsie Initiative Fund for Uniformed Women in Peace Operations Terms of Reference (TOR): <https://elsiefund.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/EIF-TOR-2019-2028-FINAL-V3.pdf>
- C. EIF Monitoring and Evaluation Framework 1.0: <https://elsiefund.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/221021-EIF-MEF-V1.0.pdf>
- D. DCAF – the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance website: <https://www.dcaf.ch/elsie-initiative>
- E. DCAF Measuring Opportunities for Women in Peace Operations (MOWIP) Toolbox: <https://www.dcaf.ch/mowip>

How to submit the LOI:

Please email **two copies** of the completed LOI to elsie.mptf@unwomen.org by **31 January 2026**:

1. **Signed Version (PDF):** A file with **electronic signatures** from the Authorised Signatory, Fund Recipient, and any implementing partners. If you cannot add electronic signatures, send a **scanned copy** with hand-written signatures.
2. **Unsigned Version (Word):** The **original LOI form**, completed but **without signatures** (Microsoft Word or another editable file format is acceptable).

NOTE: Throughout this explainer and the LOI form, references to a *barrier assessment* refer to one that meets the **minimum standards** outlined in **Appendix 1 of the EIF Terms of Reference (TOR)**, or one that uses the **DCAF Measuring Opportunities for Women in Peace Operations (MOWIP)** methodology.

These standards define what the EIF considers a **credible barrier assessment** — one that provides reliable, institution-specific evidence to inform project design and measure progress.

Part One: Applicant Details

All sections in **Part One** must be completed for every application — whether you are applying for **Flexible Project Funding**, a **Barrier Assessment**, or a **Gender Strong Unit (GSU) Premium**.

FUND RECIPIENT. The EIF fund recipient can be either a **National Government**, which also serves as the implementing entity, or a **Participating UN organisation (PUNO)**, which includes United Nations Agencies, Funds, Programs (AFPs), or United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. For more details on definitions, see the EIF Operations Manual – Section 1.

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER/S. You must include the name and contact details of the **project focal point** for each **implementing partner** involved in the project. For further information about Implementing Partners, please refer to the EIF Operations Manual – Section 1.6.

FUNDING MODALITY. Please indicate which **funding modality** (or modalities) you are applying for and the **amount requested** for each one. Below is a brief explanation of each modality.

a) Barrier Assessment.

You may apply for funding to carry out a barrier assessment **if your institution has not already conducted one**. A barrier assessment is **mandatory** when applying for Flexible Project Funding, as it is used to inform project design and measure results.

➡ See **Appendix A** of the EIF Terms of Reference (TOR) for the minimum standards required.

b) Flexible Project Funding.

You can only apply for Flexible Project Funding **if a barrier assessment has already been completed**. This funding supports projects that directly address the barriers identified in that assessment.

c) Gender Strong Unit (GSU) premium.

The GSU Premium is paid **after** a verified GSU has been deployed (normally for 12 months).

A GSU is a military contingent or a Formed Police Unit (FPU) that:

- includes a **high percentage of women** in operationally meaningful roles;
- Includes women in **leadership, command, and technical positions**; and
- Ensures that women are fully integrated throughout all stages of **pre-deployment training and deployment**.

To qualify as a GSU, the unit must exceed the DPO [Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy \(UGPS\)](#) 2018-2028, targets by at least five percentage points. These targets are listed in Table 1 below.

Applicants requesting a GSU premium are strongly encouraged to conduct a barrier assessment.

Funding to support the barrier assessment is available through the EIF.

Table 1.

UN UGPS 2018-2028 Targets	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Troop Contingents on UN Missions						
Female Targets	10.00%	11.00%	12.00%	13.00%	14.00%	15.00%
UGPS 2018-2028 Target + 5% points	15.00%	16.00%	17.00%	18.00%	19.00%	20.00%
Formed Police Units (FPU)						
Female Targets	13.00%	14.00%	15.00%	17.00%	19.00%	20.00%
UGPS 2018-2028 Target + 5% points	18.00%	19.00%	20.00%	21.00%	22.00%	23.00%

- ➡ The **GSU Calculator** on the [EIF website](#) can help estimate the premium amount.
- ➡ For more details on GSU eligibility, please consult the EIF Terms of Reference and Operations Manual.

FUNDING MODALITIES AND BUDGET REQUESTED An LOI can request funding for **one or more** of the following modalities:

- Barrier Assessment only
- Flexible Project Funding — only if a completed, barrier assessment is included
- Flexible Project Funding and GSU Premium — must be supported by a completed, barrier assessment
- Barrier Assessment and GSU Premium
- GSU Premium only—it is strongly recommended to also request funding for a barrier assessment if one has not already been conducted.

In this section, please include:

- The amount requested for each funding modality
- The total amount requested across all selected modalities

a) Barrier Assessment

The cost depends on the size of the country, its security institutions (e.g. gendarmerie, military, or police), and whether a research partner is involved.

If your institution uses the DCAF MOWIP (Measuring Opportunities for Women in Peace Operations) methodology:

- The estimated cost is USD 180,000–250,000 for one security institution.
- You do not need to submit a detailed budget at the LOI stage.
- Simply include an indicative amount based on the range above.

➡ For more information on the DCAF MOWIP methodology and available tools, visit: <https://www.dcaf.ch/mowip>.

b) Flexible Project Funding

- You may request between USD 100,000 and USD 1,500,000.

c) GSU Premium

- This is separate from the Flexible Project Funding amount.
- It is calculated based on the size of the deployed unit.

➡ Use the GSU Calculator on the EIF website to estimate the reimbursement amount: <https://elsiefund.org/funding-types/>

PROJECT DURATION

- All project activities must be planned, implemented, and completed within a maximum of two years.
- Barrier Assessments are expected to take up to 12 months.
- The maximum period for requesting a GSU premium is three years.

COMPLIANCE WITH UN DUE DILIGENCE REQUIREMENTS

To receive EIF funding, the Ministry or security institution must agree to participate in **two UN due diligence processes**. Funds **cannot be transferred** until both assessments are successfully completed and, where necessary, **any required risk mitigation measures** are in place.

a) Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) Micro-Assessment¹

The HACT ([policy](#)) is a United Nations system-wide policy used to assess the financial and operational capacity of government and NGO partners.

- The EIF Secretariat will hire an international consultant to conduct this assessment.
- The micro-assessment reviews your organisation's financial management systems, including accounting, procurement, reporting, and internal controls.
- It determines the risk rating, cash transfer modality, and any assurance activities required.

¹ Elsie Initiative Fund Secretariat, *EIF Operations Manual*, Section 8.8 – Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT).

b) Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP) Risk Assessment²

The HRDDP ([policy](#) and [guidance note](#)) is a United Nations system-wide policy primarily aimed at ensuring that any United Nations support provided to non-United Nations security forces, is consistent with the United Nations purposes and principles and its responsibility to respect, promote and encourage respect for international humanitarian law, international human rights law, and international refugee law.

- The EIF Secretariat will hire an international consultant to assess the **human rights risks** of providing support to your institution.
- The purpose is to ensure EIF funding **will not be used for any activities that violate human rights**, and that your institution's procedures are **human rights compliant**.

AUTHORISED SIGNATORY: To be eligible for consideration, the LOI must be signed by a senior official:

- Minister of Defence or Chief of Defence
- Minister of Interior or Police Commissioner
- Or an equivalent authority

! The EIF **cannot process your application** without this signature.

Part Two: Project Summary

This section must be completed in full for all funding modality applications.

Provide a short summary of your proposed project, including its objectives, key activities, partnerships, and how it aligns with EIF goals.

Part Three: Barrier Assessment Section

This section must also be **completed in full for all funding modality applications**.

To be eligible for **Flexible Project Funding**, T/PCCs must have completed a **barrier assessment** using:

- The **minimum criteria** outlined in **Appendix 1 of the EIF Terms of Reference (TOR)**, or
- The **DCAF MOWIP (Measuring Opportunities for Women in Peace Operations)** methodology.

Please follow the instructions below based on your situation:

- If you have **already completed** a barrier assessment and are applying for **Flexible Project Funding**, complete **only the “YES” section** in full.
- If you are applying for **funding to conduct** a barrier assessment, complete **only the “NO” section** in full.

Part Four: Project Details

This section must also be **completed in full for all funding modality applications**.

You must provide information about your proposed project and how it will be implemented. This includes objectives, approach, risks, and how the project will be managed.

- For each funding modality you are requesting, refer to the prompt questions provided to guide your response.

² Elsie Initiative Fund Secretariat, *EIF Operations Manual*, Section 8.7 – Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP).

Part Five: Project Outputs and Budget

This section must be completed as relevant for all funding modality applications.

Start by reviewing the EIF Results Framework and identify which of the four EIF Outcomes your project and activities will contribute to.

- All projects must contribute to at least one EIF Outcome.

a) For Barrier Assessment–Only Requests:

Barrier assessments contribute directly to **EIF Outcome 1**: “Increased country-specific knowledge of barriers to deployment of uniformed women peacekeepers to UN peace operations.”

If you are requesting funding for a barrier assessment only, complete Part Five using the example provided to help guide your response.

EIF Outcome 1: Increased country-specific knowledge of barriers to deployment of uniformed women peacekeepers to UN peace operations			
Output	Activity	Description	Estimated budget
e.g. Barrier assessment is commissioned or undertaken by T/PCC.	e.g. A baseline assessment is scheduled.	e.g., The [security institution] will conduct a barrier assessment to identify and map out barriers that prevent uniformed women from deploying to and being employed with UN peacekeeping operations. The assessment will use the *** methodology.	

b) For Flexible Project Funding requests.

If you are applying for **Flexible Project Funding**, you must complete this section **based on the findings of your barrier assessment report**.

The barrier assessment should have identified several **key issue areas** and **barriers** that limit the participation of uniformed women in UN peace operations, based on your country and security institution’s context.

For any project activities contributing to **EIF Outcomes 2, 3, or 4**, you must complete the following sections:

- i. **Barrier:** Identify and prioritise the specific barrier(s) your project will address. Choose barriers that are clearly linked to the results of your barrier assessment and relevant to EIF Outcomes 2, 3, or 4.
- ii. **Output:** List the expected **deliverables** of your activities. An output is the **final product or result** of an activity — for example:
 - Number of officers trained
 - A developed training curriculum
 - A published gender policy or barrier assessment report
- iii. **Activity:** Describe the specific actions you will take to achieve the output and address the barrier, for example:
 - A national recruitment campaign
 - Construction of a childcare facility
 - Development of a gender policy
 - Delivery of a leadership training programme.

- iv. **Description:** Give more details about each activity. Include frequency, duration, target audience, or scale. For example:
 - “Design and run a recruitment campaign twice per year for two years”
 - “Deliver a 3-day gender sensitisation workshop for senior officers, twice per year for two years”
- v. **Budget:** Provide an estimated cost for each activity. Use realistic figures and consider local context.

! Ineligible Costs: The EIF will not fund the following:

- Vehicles of any type
- Salaries or wages for government, military, or police personnel who are already salaried
- Any type of lethal or non-lethal weapons or ammunition

 Additional details on ineligible costs are listed in **Section 7.3.7 of the EIF Operations Manual**.

Annex A: Security Institution Personnel Data

Completion of **Annex A** is required for all funding applications from military or police institutions (and when partnering with a UN agency), and for UN Peacekeeping Operation. UN Agencies, Funds, or Programmes (AFPs) should complete it only if relevant.

This annex helps establish a baseline of gender-disaggregated data that will be used to measure progress over the life of the project.

- Please provide the number and/or percentage of women in your security institution for the year 2026.
- If the total number of women cannot be shared for security reasons, you may provide percentages only.
- At the end of the project, the EIF will request updated data to assess what progress has been made.

This information helps substantiate your project’s objectives and demonstrate how it contributes to increasing the meaningful participation of uniformed women in your organisation.

Annex B: United Nations Peace Operations Deployment Planning and Targets (Number and %) of Women

Completion of **Annex B** is mandatory for all funding requests modality applications for the applying security institution (military or police) only. It is not required for UN Peacekeeping Operations or UN AFPs.

This annex provides an overview of your institution’s current and planned deployment of uniformed personnel to United Nations peace operations. It helps the EIF assess how your project supports greater participation of women in peacekeeping.

What to include:

- The number and percentage of women currently deployed in each of the following categories:
 - Military Observers (MO)
 - Staff Officers (SO)
 - Troops
 - Individual Police Officers (IPO)
 - Formed Police Units (FPU)
- Your institution’s deployment targets for the next three years (by year and category).

DPO Guidance - Deployment Planning for United Nations Peace Operations

Please note the following important guidance from the United Nations Department of Peace Operations (DPO):

The Office of Military Affairs and the Police Division within DPO are the entities responsible for the selection and deployment of personnel from Troop- and Police-Contributing Countries (T/PCCs) to United Nations peace operations.

Applicants to the EIF must ensure that deployment projections are:

- Realistic,
- In line with current authorisations, and
- Aligned with DPO planning processes.

 If your institution intends to increase personnel deployments in any category, we strongly recommend that you consult with DPO directly before submitting your LOI.

The following factors will determine whether an EIF-funded project can achieve the outcome, as set out in the Terms of Reference of the Elsie Fund, of “increased meaningful deployment of uniformed women peacekeepers to United Nations missions”:

- A T/PCC’s ability to deploy trained female and male personnel with the required skillsets in the timeframe stipulated in the project proposal and to address challenges related to performance and sustainability when it increases the number of Formed Police Units and/or military contingents it is deploying.
- DPO’s processes, criteria, and available infrastructure for deployment of military and police personnel, including but not limited to:
 - actual and future needs for police and military personnel, taking into consideration any United Nations field missions projected to close or downsize.
 - the obligation to ensure geographical representation of Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) and Police Contributing Countries (PCCs) in the military and police components of United Nations field missions.
 - the obligation to respect the pledges made by TCCs and PCCs in the framework of the United Nations Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System (PCRS).
 - the availability in the United Nations field mission(s) of the requisite logistics, welfare, and medical facilities for women.

In addition to the above, any provision of training or other assistance by DPO to TCCs and PCCs that is outlined in a project proposal will be contingent upon the availability of relevant DPO personnel and financial resources unless the EIF or other partners can mobilize requisite resources—in a timely manner—to enable the planning for and creation of additional capacities to address the scale and scope of activities envisaged in the project proposal(s).