**Chemical Security Improvement Grants (CSIG)**

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

1. **CSIG Application Process and Content**
2. **What is a CSIG?**

CSIGs are one-time awards ranging from $2,000 to $30,000 each. CSIG awards are aimed at improving the security of industrial and academic chemical facilities to prevent the accidental or intentional misuse of chemicals through purchasing equipment to secure stored or handled chemicals.

1. **How do I apply for a CSIG?**

* Visit [www.crdfglobal.org](http://www.crdfglobal.org) under the *Current Funding Opportunities* section.
* Complete the application and send it, along with all supporting documentation, to [csig@crdfglobal.org](mailto:csig@crdfglobal.org).

1. **What is the application deadline for a CSIG?**

Applications are being accepted on an ongoing basis. Applicants are encouraged to send in applications sooner, as there are a limited number of funding opportunities, and applications will be considered in the order in which they have been submitted.

1. **What is considered a complete application?\***

A complete application includes the following:

1. A completed CSIG application form;
2. Host institution approval letter;
3. A completed CSIG budget form; and,
4. Curriculum vitae (CV) or resume **and** passport or national ID of all individuals who will be compensated under the project.

**\* Please note that your application will not be reviewed until all required documents are submitted.**

1. **Should the project focus on chemical safety, chemical security, or both?**

Each application will be evaluated on its contribution to chemical security and how it will enhance the chemical security of your institution and community. Applications focusing on chemical safety components will not be considered for funding. The project’s contribution to chemical security will be the primary consideration. To this end, it may be helpful to include photos and/or descriptions of your current laboratories or operations to highlight how your proposed CSIG will strengthen chemical security at your organization.

1. **What is the difference between chemical safety and chemical security?**

**Chemical Security** refers to reducing the risk for hazardous or toxic chemicals to be stolen or misused to harm people (i.e., reducing theft or misuse of combustibles, compressed gases, flammables, or unstable chemicals, etc.). Chemicals listed on the [OPCW schedules I, II, and III](https://www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention/annexes/annex-on-chemicals/) are of particular interest for this grant competition.

**Chemical Safety** refers to protecting individuals from health hazards associated with the use of chemicals. For example, protecting laboratory personnel by utilizing personal protective equipment (goggles, proper ventilation, gloves, etc.).

1. **What are examples of recently-funded CSIGs?**

To share a broad example of the possibilities for CSIGs to improve chemical security, below is a list of only some of the recently approved CSIGs:

* Installation of a series of closed-circuit televisions to help with monitoring sensitive areas of a chemical lab;
* Procurement of specialized storage cabinets for chemicals of concern;
* Procurement and installation of a secure door and locks installed at the entry point to a chemical storage facility; and,
* Creation of standard operating procedures and trainings on how to use the newly procured security systems.

1. **Can applicants request funding for items not mentioned in the CSIG application?**

We welcome your creative ideas for proposals aimed at improving chemical security at your institution.

1. **What should be the length of my CSIG project?**

The general length of a CSIG project is as follows:

* 6-8 weeks: Grantee obtains vendor price quotations for approved equipment and CRDF Global processes grant paperwork;
* 8-12 weeks: Grantee procures equipment – including purchase, delivery, and installation; and
* 4 weeks: Grantee ensures equipment is tested, put into use, and creates the final report.

Please note that this is an estimated timeline and project length may vary depending on the scope of the project.

1. **Can I request more than $30,000 in funding?**

Funding for any individual CSIG will not exceed $30,000. CRDF Global will only consider proposals exceeding $30,000 on a case-by-case basis. CRDF Global also reserves the right to remove budgetary entries at its discretion to achieve a budget that is in line with the CSIG granting mechanism.

1. **How will my proposal be evaluated?**

CSIG proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Chemical security relevance and impact;
2. Clarity, accuracy, and detail of project proposal; and,
3. Sustainability of proposed chemical security improvements, and/or local support for the project. This can be demonstrated through in-kind cost share as well as through a detailed plan to maintain the project’s impact (i.e. equipment maintenance) over an extended period of time.
4. **In which language may I submit an application?**

You may submit a CSIG application in the language of your choice. Please note that for languages other than English or Arabic, additional time may be required during the review process for translation.

1. **CSIG Application Review Process**
2. **How long does the entire application process take?**

* Upon the closing of the application period, your application is considered and reviewed. It may take 6-8 weeks to receive a final funding decision. During this period, CRDF Global staff may ask for additional information or clarification on parts of your grant proposal.
* If your CSIG proposal is approved, it may take up to another 6-8 weeks to complete the grant paperwork.

\*Please estimate that it will take **at least two months** before you may begin conducting your project if approved. This process can be expedited by submitting a complete and accurate application as well as by responding to CRDF Global emails and submitting all required documentation as soon as possible.

1. **Why was my application not approved for funding? Can I re-apply for a CSIG? What can I do to make my application more competitive?**

Unfortunately, there are limited funds available for this grant and we cannot support all applications, making this a competitive process.

The following suggestions will make your proposal more competitive:

1. Emphasizing the **chemical security relevance** of your project. The project’s contribution to enhancing chemical security at your institution and within your community will be the primary consideration of your application. While completing your proposal, please keep in mind the difference between chemical security and chemical safety as outlined above.
2. Clearly outlining the sustainability and feasibility of your project. Do you have institutional support? How will this project be maintained over a sustained period of time and have a lasting impact on the chemical security of your institution?
3. Submit a complete and coherent proposal that has clearly answered all questions/sections and provide all requested documentation.
4. **Grant Implementation**

**Equipment Requests and Purchases**

1. **Can I begin to incur costs as soon as CRDF Global informs me that my application was approved?**

No, applicants should not incur any costs without a formal CRDF Global grant agreement. After the Grantee signs a formal grant agreement a CRDF Global representative will notify you that you are authorized to begin incurring costs.

1. **How do I purchase chemical security equipment and supplies?**

There are two ways that Grantees can obtain equipment and supplies:

* 1. CRDF Global prefers to procure equipment and supplies on behalf of the Grantee from in-country and foreign vendors, meaning that CRDF Global will send payment directly to the vendors Grantee has found and qualified.
  2. With prior approval from CRDF Global, the Grantee can purchase equipment and supplies directly from the vendor and receive a reimbursement for the associated costs.

1. **How does the direct CRDF Global procurement process work?**

* Grantees should first contact the vendor to discuss the technical specifications of their order and obtain a quotation, pro-forma invoice or invoice from the vendor company (consistent with competitive vendor selection guidelines – see question # 4 below). Grantees should then submit the request along with the selected quotation to CRDF Global.
* If any one vendor will be supplying a good or service that costs over $5000 USD, then the Grantee should seek three quotes total, then select the best vendor in terms of value, and finally prepare a justification for their selection.
* CRDF Global representatives will review the purchase request and upon approval contact the vendor company to negotiate the terms of a formal Purchase Order including payment arrangements, delivery dates, etc.
* Grantees are not authorized to negotiate contractual or payment terms with vendors or instruct a vendor to ship an item without CRDF Global approval. Only a duly authorized CRDF Global Grant Representative may negotiate binding contract terms with selected vendors.

1. **How long does it take to process a direct procurement request?**

CRDF Global places orders with the vendor within 2-4 weeks of the grantee sending the request. Once CRDF Global makes the order, the time that the vendor takes to deliver depends on the lead time required by the vendor to produce/collect/deliver the requested items. CRDF Global, the Grantee and the vendor will be in communication with one another on timelines of delivery. If equipment is being imported into the country, additional time will need to be factored in for export compliance review, shipment, and customs clearance.

1. **What are the rules relating to competitive vendor selection?**

* For all purchases with an aggregate cost of $5000 or more, competitive bidding is mandatory. Grantees must solicit bids from a minimum of three suppliers and submit these bids to CRDF Global. Grantees should select the bid that provides the best value for the project funds. Generally, this means the lowest cost offer that also sufficiently meets the technical requirements.
* CRDF Global reserves the right to review the Grantee's selection and select an alternative vendor.

1. **What if I am unable to identify three potential suppliers?**

Grantees are required to make best efforts to identify a minimum of three potential suppliers. If only two potential suppliers can be identified, then two bids are sufficient support for documenting compliance with the competitive vendor selection guidelines. If only one source can be identified, the Grantee must provide a separate written "Sole Source Justification" describing the process used to identify the potential supplier and providing the justification why only a single source could be identified.

Acceptable sole source justifications include:

* Only one supplier responded to the request for a quotation;
* Only one supplier is able to meet the technical specifications; and
* The requested goods/services are unique and there are no other known suppliers,

**Cost Sharing**

1. **I am planning to combine funds from my CSIG project with funds from another source to purchase a large piece of equipment. Do CRDF Global rules apply?**

Yes. If CRDF Global funds are to be used in the transaction, in whole or in part, CRDF Global rules will apply.

**Reporting Requirements**

1. **Will I be required to submit any reports to CRDF Global?**

The Grantee will be required to submit financial documentation and reports as well as narrative reports with photos that document project progress and impact. The number of reports to be submitted will be dependent on the length of the project. Upon CSIG approval, CRDF Global will provide the Grantee with templates for the financial and narrative reports.

**Inquiries**

1. **To whom should I address any additional questions I have regarding CSIG?**

Please send any questions you have regarding CSIG to [csig@crdfglobal.org](mailto:csig@crdfglobal.org) and the CRDF Global team will address them as soon as possible.