



## **2017 International Human Rights Program Request for Proposals**

March 29, 2017

### **Introduction:**

The Arcus Foundation periodically issues requests for proposals (RFPs) to ensure its program portfolios remain responsive to new and emerging opportunities within the geographic and thematic scope of its strategy.

Presentation of this RFP in an open competition aims to attract new partners and ideas, in addition to soliciting proposals from existing partners, and enabling the collection and comparison of proposals at one time.

### **Purpose:**

The vision of the Arcus Foundation's International Human Rights Program is a viable, effective global movement, with integrated Global South leadership, for the protection of the human rights of LGBT<sup>1</sup> people (or people discriminated against based on actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity, also referred to as SOGI).

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit proposals from intermediary<sup>2</sup> organizations for country-level work in Asia-Pacific, Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and/or the Middle East that will contribute to legal/policy and/or socio-cultural changes.

Through this RFP, Arcus can provide grants for a maximum of two years, which can be renewed. The intended changes to be pursued under this RFP fall into three categories: short-term (less than 5 years), medium-term (5-10 years), and long-term (over 10 years).

Arcus intends to award 10 grants for a total of US\$3.5 million, seeking to contribute to several countries (to be proposed by applicants) for changes to be realized within the timeframes above. We encourage those intermediaries who apply as regrants to provide flexible, unrestricted support, and two-years of funding to their sub-grantees.

Arcus will support the following three goal areas at the country level:

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<sup>1</sup> Intersex-inclusion: while Arcus has not yet formally added the "I" to LGBT in program strategies, intersex-related issues can be included in proposals under this call.

<sup>2</sup> Intermediaries are organizations that redistribute Arcus and other funds in one or more countries. In the case of those organizations without an established record of regranteeing funds, applications will be accepted provided project partners are identified in the proposal, corresponding costs are reflected in the proposed project budget, and the fund recipients are based in more than one country (unless the applicant is an indigenous regrantee in the single country). Arcus seeks to cultivate indigenous regrantees who are part of and accountable to local communities, and who have relevant expertise to assess and support grantees' work at the local level.

1. Legal and policy changes for LGBT inclusion:<sup>3</sup> systemic changes for the protection of LGBT human rights, such as policies of government bodies or professional associations of, for example, lawyers, psychologists, or physicians. Examples: reduced discrimination and violence; legal gender recognition; challenges to laws that criminalize cross-dressing or consenting same-sex adult relations taking place in private; respect for the rights to privacy, free expression, and association; access to health, education, and other fundamental human rights.
2. Socio-cultural shifts: substantive change in opinions, attitudes, cultural values, and norms for the recognition of human diversity and combating LGBT discrimination. Examples: accurate information within the public sphere; respectful dialogue on SOGI issues, including with LGBT people, in public or private spaces.
3. Capacity strengthening of communities and organizations to advocate for the above two goal areas: improve skills, knowledge, and relationships of people with responsibilities in organizations and communities working towards concrete legal/policy and socio-cultural change.<sup>4</sup> Examples: forms of learning and exchange of experience related to concrete advocacy campaigns, communication strategies, appreciation for good institutional governance and good management, increases of organizational membership base, transparency and/or fundraising.

While Arcus considers these goal areas to be inter-related in the realization of human rights for LGBT people, we accept proposals addressing one, two, or all three areas. Applicants need to explain the inter-connections specific to their proposal and to articulate the desired impact and indicators for measuring their proposed work.<sup>5</sup> Given that such changes take a long time, please consider a measurable approach for the two-year grant timeframe.

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<sup>3</sup> Proposed strategies may include documentation, litigation, advocacy, and public education to advance new or existing initiatives, as well as challenges to the adoption of discriminatory policies. Emergency response for legal, political or social crises, and the protection of human rights defenders and refugees are not targeted by this RFP, but can be included in a larger strategy. Documentation and research are eligible, if applicants build into their proposals plans for follow-up on the findings and recommendations. Applications will not be considered for lobbying activities.

<sup>4</sup> Applicants should show how their sub-grantees or partners have determined and will direct the capacity strengthening they need.

<sup>5</sup> Specify whether the expected changes are at the individual, institutional, and / or societal levels or a combination of these. Arcus is more interested in the desired outcomes rather detailed descriptions of potential activities, and in grantees' influence on the causes, rather than on the effects of the identified issues.

**Priorities for this RFP:**

- a. Proposals based on self-determination: efforts led from within the society or community they seek to influence, managed by applicants with open consultation of and accountability towards local LGBT communities.
- b. Proposals which include funding for trans-led groups.
- c. Proposals which include LGBT alliances with other relevant movements for social justice, seeking to integrate SOGI-related advocacy in broader campaigns for the success and safety of SOGI-related activism.
- d. A majority of the budget to be distributed to sub-grantees or project partners, as opposed to being spent on applicant organization costs.

**Impact Evaluation:**

Arcus approaches evaluation through a learning lens, examining ways in which all of our work—grantmaking, convening, leveraging resources—not only helps advance our program strategies, but also enables us to adjust our strategies based on information and analysis. At the individual grant level, Arcus reviews written reports and consults with grantees to understand (a) the ways in which grantees carried out the funded activities in furtherance of the goals articulated in the original proposal; (b) what impact those activities had on achieving change, whether anticipated or unanticipated, and (c) what grantees learned during the grant period.<sup>6</sup>

As we move forward with this regranting initiative, we will be articulating some outcomes and indicators based on the proposals selected in this RFP, so we align with the realities of current policy, societal, and movement environments in the individual countries where we fund. Those measures will be shared with grantees, initially for comment, and ultimately for transparency regarding Arcus' evaluation approach.

**APPLICATION GUIDANCE****Intermediary Eligibility Criteria<sup>7</sup>:**

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<sup>6</sup> This information is aggregated across grants to assess progress against Arcus program strategies, which are framed in terms of goals, 5-year outcomes, and indicators and targets to measure progress against those outcomes. For example, if we are assessing whether policy change has occurred in 20% of the countries where our funds have been regranted (an indicator and target we set when the strategy was launched in 2013), we would use the information we collect to determine if we are on track or we need to adjust our strategy. In this case, we learned that one reason that policy had not advanced at the level we anticipated was because we were regranted primarily in places where policy change would only be possible in the long-term, i.e., in at least 10 years. Based on that analysis, we adjusted our approach to create a more balanced regranting portfolio.

<sup>7</sup> Arcus encourages proposals from LGBT and non-LGBT organizations that meet all these criteria. Also, see footnote 2 for definition of intermediary.

- a. Legal status: applicants need to be registered legal entities with a charitable purpose.
- b. Experience: applicants must have at least two years' experience in the proposed work; those not registered in the US who are applying as intermediaries for regranting are required to have five years of financial operations.
- c. Equal Employment Opportunity Policy: applicants must have a board-approved internal policy against employment-related discrimination which specifically includes sexual orientation and gender identity among the nondiscrimination categories.<sup>8</sup>
- d. Budget: Arcus will provide annually a maximum of one-third of the applicant's total LGBT-related expenditure during its prior fiscal year. For instance, if the applicant's LGBT-related expenditure in the past fiscal year was \$100,000, Arcus can consider a request of up to \$66,000 for a two-year grant (equivalent to \$33,000 per year).
- e. Institutional governance: applicants should have procedures to avoid actual and apparent conflicts of interest, and to ensure transparency about decision-making and fiduciary oversight.
- f. Current Arcus grantees may apply. However, Arcus is unable to award a grant through this initiative while also renewing an existing grant. Please check with program staff, before submitting a proposal.
- g. An organization may apply only once under this RFP, whether on its own or in partnership.

### Proposal Content:

Please ensure the following are part of your application:

1. Organization name, date and country of legal registration, contact person and email address.
2. End date of applicant organization's fiscal year.
3. Statement confirming that organization's Equal Employment Opportunity Policy explicitly includes sexual orientation and gender identity.
4. Organization's total amount of LGBT-related expenditure in the past fiscal year, including administrative expenses (total expenditure, in case of a LGBT organization).
5. Proposed total budget for the project.
6. Amount of project budget requested from Arcus.
7. Percentage of total project budget to be regranted or distributed to grantees or partners.
8. Start and end date of the proposed grant and the factors considered in proposing these dates.

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<sup>8</sup> Equal Employment Opportunity Policy (sample): "It is the policy of [org. name] to promote and ensure equal employment opportunity for all persons without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sex, age, **sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression**, partnership status, national origin, alienage, citizenship status, marital status, disability, height or weight, predisposing genetic characteristics, military status, arrest or conviction record, or status as a victim of domestic violence, or any other characteristics protected by law."

9. Description of experience (and that of a partner, where applicable) in the proposed work area, including human resources, number of years engaged in relevant work, and your most important achievements to date.
10. Description of institutional governance structure, including how decisions will be made for regranteeing or funding of project partners.
11. Proposal's relevance to RFP priorities of self-determination, funding of trans-led work, and support for alliances with other relevant movements for social justice (if applicable).
12. Country selection: complete the [attached country chart](#) for proposed countries and include information about the legal/policy, socio-cultural, and/or capacity strengthening changes to be supported. The chart can be adapted as necessary, provided all the required information is included.
13. Any other matters for consideration by Arcus.

**Languages:** While this RFP is available only in English, proposals are accepted in English, French, and Spanish. Applicants preselected based on a proposal submitted in French or Spanish will be assisted to draft a final application in English. The assessment will be on the merits of the proposals, regardless of language choice.

**Timeline:**

Grants approved as a result of the RFP process can start as early as October 1, 2017, and no later than January 1, 2019, and continue for a maximum of two years. We aim to work with the applicant's project timeline and ask that applicants base grant timelines on their existing regranteeing or project cycles.

RFP review process:

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| <b>March 29</b>   | RFP published.  |
| <b>May 15</b>   | Deadline for proposals.   |
| <b>June 7-9</b>   | Preselection based on proposals. All applicants will be notified regarding their submission. Preselected applicants will be invited to submit a full application and/or answer any questions. |
| <b>July 7 or 10</b>   | Arcus-sponsored meeting in NYC of preselected applicants.   |
| <b>August 2</b>   | Final deadline for full applications.   |
| <b>September 2017 to December 2018</b> Arcus Board grant decisions. |   |

**Questions about this RFP:** send any questions in writing to both Adrian Coman ([acoman@arcusfoundation.org](mailto:acoman@arcusfoundation.org)) and Erica Lim ([elim@arcusfoundation.org](mailto:elim@arcusfoundation.org)) by May 10. If you do not receive a response within two business days, please check that we have received your message.

## Country Chart

### Applicant:

Country	Results pursued, framed as legal-policy, socio-cultural, or capacity strengthening	What will you measure to evaluate progress towards desired results (one to three indicators per country)	Estimated no. of years for the proposed change (can be a range)*	Grantees (past or intended) or project partners and corresponding budget amounts in the two-year timeframe

\*Arcus is looking for a mixed portfolio of countries where change can occur in the short, medium or long term.

#### Notes:

When proposing countries, applicants should consider:

- capacity for due diligence, monitoring, and support of their grantees and partners.
- ability to collaborate with wider social-justice movements (e.g. human rights, women, faith) that can provide integration, protection, and support to SOGI groups or projects.
- ability to reach and influence political and social change agents, and to provide a political, moral, or another frame for action against discrimination.
- country's influence in regional and international affairs.
- intersections with faith and culture as change drivers.

Please submit the chart in pdf format and do not exceed one page per country.