



CRDF Global
Request for Proposal Questions & Answers
Released January 9, 2026

The following questions and answers are provided in response to inquiries submitted regarding the Request for Proposals, "[Seeking Subject Matter Experts to contribute to a comprehensive analysis of available research security tools](#)".

These questions and answers are provided for informational purposes only and do not modify, amend, or supersede the terms of the Request for Proposals. In the event of any inconsistency between this Q&A and the RFP, the RFP shall govern. Responses reflect CRDF Global's interpretation of the RFP requirements as of the date of release. Respondents are responsible for monitoring the official procurement platform for updates or additional clarifications.

Questions and Answers:

Q: Is this solicitation for individuals or institutions (such as non-profits) to respond to?

A: Respondents can submit a proposal to this solicitation either as an individual or with any institution you are affiliated with. Either case is acceptable and will not affect the scoring of proposals.

Q: If you submit a proposal as an individual, can you add other individuals to the proposal to create your own team?

A: Responses should include as many or as few other team members as is necessary for the quality of your proposal. Any additional individuals who will contribute to the proposed work should be included in the proposal along with a description of how they will contribute, and their CVs should be included in the submission package.

Q: Based on the language in the RFP, it seems as if CRDF Global is looking to create a team of experts to contribute to this effort. Is this a correct interpretation? And if so, how will this be structured, will each member of the team do their own piece, or will there be a greater organizational structure to create the final products?

A: Yes, CRDF Global is looking to build a team of experts who can contribute to completing the inventory of tools, and a smaller number of experts to write the narrative landscape and gap analysis of available tools. We will achieve this by selecting the response to this RFP which details the best structured technical approach (based on the outlined scoring mechanism in the RFP) to building a comprehensive inventory of tools and writing a narrative landscape and gap analysis of said tools. Said respondent(s) with the best overall technical



approach will be considered team leads and their approach implemented. Responses that are not considered the best wholistic technical approach will still be considered in-part for technical ability to contribute to the program. Some proposals may be selected for limited portions of the scope, in coordination with the individual or organization who submitted the proposal.

Q: As some tools will be locked behind paywalls or subscription services, should getting access to them be considered in creating proposals or in cost-proposals?

A: CRDF is aware that some available tools may be proprietary and have monetary costs to access. This can be treated in one of two ways in your proposals: 1. Estimated costs for access can be added to your cost proposal as an “Other Direct Cost” so long as plans for access and use are written into your proposal; or 2. You can write into your proposal that access to paywall restricted or otherwise controlled tools will be made available in coordination with the CRDF Global project management team as necessary.

Q: How strongly should proposals stick to the proposed schedule of activities within the RFP?

A: The proposed schedule of activities is intended to serve as a guide for the desired timeline for completion of the scope. Your responses should explain the realism of your approach, and the expected timeline for completion of said technical approach. Proposals which extend the proposed schedule of activities will not be evaluated differently than those which meet the proposed schedule.

Q: Does CRDF Global have an anticipated cost cap or floor associated with this RFP?

A: No, CRDF Global does not have a cost cap or floor associated with this RFP. Costs will be scored as part of the total proposal package based on reasonableness, fairness, and alignment with the scope outlined in the RFP.

Q: Does CRDF Global anticipate any travel associated with the work proposed, and if so to where?

A: No, CRDF Global does not anticipate any travel required for completion of the scope outlined in the RFP. However, if there is a legitimate reason for travel to accomplish the scope of this RFP please include it in your proposal.

Q: While I understand that the results and the agreement itself may be subject to confidentiality, I would like to confirm whether the mere existence of the contract is also confidential. For example, would I be allowed to disclose that I have been engaged under this project?



A: It would depend on how you mean “to disclose” your participation, if selected. Typically, we like to keep our activities away from social and traditional media, unless it is an intentional component of the activity. However, you would absolutely be expected to disclose your involvement in the project on conflict-of-interest forms, funding disclosure forms, and other types of disclosures which are required for due diligence and institutional compliance. It would be poor practice to suggest otherwise.

Q: Contracting modality: May I be contracted as an individual, or only through a legal entity?

A: Respondents can submit a proposal to this solicitation either as an individual or with any institution you are affiliated with. Either case is acceptable and will not affect the scoring of proposals.

Q: Could you please confirm that there are no restrictions on making international payments?

A: As far as I am currently aware, international bank transfers will not be an issue, to countries that are not currently sanctioned by the United States. So long as the current status quo remains intact, I do not imagine a situation in which CRDF Global would be unable to make international payments to foreign banks. The contract will be signed in USD, and CRDF Global will make payments in USD. Your bank may charge fees associated with international wire transfers and/or currency conversion.

Q: What type of interviews does CRDF envision (e.g., in person, remote, structured interviews, tests)? Are we free to define the methodology, and are candidates to be contacted directly by us, or will DOS/CRDF facilitate contact?

A: The RFP suggests that interviews may be necessary to collect data on tools which are used by universities and research institutions to support research security goals; this is broadly defined. In-person or remote interviews are equally valid and are suggested as an activity to supplement data collection for the tool inventory, and for receiving end-user commentary on tool effectiveness and use-cases. Should your technical approach not require interviews, this will not affect scoring so long as the technical approach is well reasoned and sound. Respondents are encouraged to define the scope and methodology of interviews, in the mechanism that best supports your technical approach to the scope.