



Announcement

Human Trafficking Research Initiative – Request for Expressions of Interest November 21, 2024

IPA's [Human Trafficking Research Initiative \(HTRI\)](#) has launched its third Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI) for full [randomized controlled trials \(RCTs\)](#) and other rigorous impact evaluations to assess the impact of counter-trafficking programs. Proposals are due by **11:59 pm US Pacific time on January 10, 2025**.

HTRI is an eight-year project funded by the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (the TIP Office)'s Program to End Modern Slavery (PEMS) at the U.S. Department of State and is guided by the academic leadership of Dr. Cecilia Hyunjung Mo and Dr. Guy Grossman. HTRI was established in 2020 to support practitioners, policymakers, and researchers in strengthening the evidence base on effective interventions to reduce trafficking and protect victims.

HTRI invites proposals to evaluate counter-trafficking interventions focused on the "Prosecution" pillar of the 4P's framework: Prevention, Protection, Prosecution, and Partnership. The "Prosecution" pillar encompasses the entire justice system pipeline, including identification, referrals, investigations, prosecutions, adjudication, and legal aid. Proposals should align with the Prosecution section of [HTRI's Research and Learning Agenda \(RLA\)](#), which identifies key research gaps across the 4P's. Applicants are required to review the RLA and address one or more priority research questions listed under the Prosecution section or specify other relevant research questions related to prosecution not explicitly articulated in the RLA.

HTRI encourages innovative and evidence-based approaches to advancing knowledge in this critical area of counter-trafficking work. This initiative is focused on bringing increased rigor and use of applied quantitative research methods to the field of human trafficking research. Given the range of challenges applicants may face in designing and conducting randomized controlled trials (RCTs) in the prosecution sector, applications including the use of quasi-experimental designs (e.g. difference-in-difference, regression discontinuity, etc.) alongside RCT designs will be considered for funding. **Research that is exclusively qualitative or descriptive will NOT be considered for funding under HTRI.** Applicants can request funding for pilot research, full funding for RCTs or quasi-experimental research, partial funding for RCTs, or funding for new arms of existing RCTs.

All EOIs must be submitted through IPA's online portal located [here](#) by **11:59 pm US Pacific time on January 10, 2025**. EOIs will be reviewed by a rotating group of academic researchers and policymakers and will be assessed against the evaluation criteria noted in the HTRI EOI Application Guidelines. Successful EOIs will be invited by the selection committee to submit a full proposal.

A **Question & Answer session** for this EOI will be held at **9:00 am ET on December 10**. If your team is interested in attending the session, please register [here](#). A recording of the session will be posted [here](#) afterwards for those unable to attend the live session.



All research grants must focus on one or both forms of trafficking in persons as defined by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (as amended):

- Sex Trafficking – when a trafficker uses force, fraud, or coercion to compel a person to engage in a commercial sex act or when a trafficker causes a child who has not attained 18 years of age to engage in a commercial sex act.
- Forced Labor – when a trafficker recruits, harbors, transports, provides, or obtains a person for labor or services by using force, fraud, or coercion.

To learn more about the HTRI Competitive Fund, please read our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document. If you need additional assistance, please get in touch by emailing [the HTRI team](#).