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Request for Proposal

Trans fat elimination policy advocacy

**Proposal Due Date:
May 7, 2021**

5:00PM Eastern Daylight Time

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1. Purpose and Scope of this Request for Proposal (RFP)

Resolve to Save Lives, an Initiative of Vital Strategies, is looking to fund up to 5 organizations to identify and implement effective and rapid advocacy activities with key policy makers and/or influencers to accelerate best-practice trans fat elimination policies in countries.

2. RFP Objectives

Resolve to Save Lives/Vital Strategies will partner with civil society organizations, academic organizations, quasi-governmental bodies, or advocacy organizations in countries to identify and implement effective advocacy activities to advance best-practice trans fat elimination policies¹.

3. Vital Strategies/Resolve to Save Lives Organizational Background

Vital Strategies is an international public health organization headquartered in New York City. Resolve to Save Lives is an initiative housed at Vital Strategies, and has as one of its goals improved nutrition, including artificial trans fat elimination. Vital Strategies does not accept gifts or funds from industries related to tobacco, sugary drinks or alcoholic drinks. We engage with stakeholders who share our values and partners who endorse and encourage the highest ethical work practices and standards.

4. Project Overview Background

Artificial trans fat is a man-made compound still used in some countries as a substitute for butter or lard in fried food, deep-fried food, baked goods, and spreads. It clogs arteries and leads to heart attacks. Globally, artificial trans fat was estimated to cause 540,000 deaths every year².

The World Health Organization called for the global elimination of artificial trans fat by 2023 with the REPLACE initiative. Countries are responding to this call to action, and the number of countries passing and implementing best-practice policies is growing. As of April 2021, mandatory trans fat limits or bans on partially hydrogenated oil (PHO) will be in effect for 3.2 billion people in 58 countries. 40 of these countries have best-practice policies in effect³.

But most people in the world are still not covered by any mandatory trans fat limits. Currently, less than 20% of people in the world are covered by best-practice policies, and 0% of people living in low- and middle- income countries are protected. While there has been good progress since the launch of REPLACE in 2018, there is still a long way to go to meet the 2023 target for global elimination.

¹ Policy is defined as legislation, regulation, decree, order or another legal binding trans fat restriction.

² Wang, Qianyi, et al. "Impact of nonoptimal intakes of saturated, polyunsaturated, and trans fat on global burdens of coronary heart disease." *Journal of the American Heart Association* 5.1 (2016): e002891.

³ World Health Organization. TFA Country Score Card (<https://extranet.who.int/nutrition/gina/en/scorecard/TFA>); UN DESA (2019). World population prospects 2019. (<https://population.un.org/wpp/Download/Standard/Population/>)

The COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated the importance of non-communicable disease (NCD) prevention and care. People living with NCDs, and particularly cardiovascular disease, are especially at risk of severe disease and death from COVID-19. As a result, the urgent need for policy measures to protect cardiovascular health is more apparent than ever. Trans fat elimination is a straightforward nutrition policy that will prevent heart attacks, save hundreds of thousands lives, protect all people, reduce health inequalities, and reduce strain on already overtaxed health systems.

There are two best-practice policy models, and either fully protects people from artificial trans fat:

- Mandatory national restrictions that limit artificial trans fat to 2% of total fat content in all foods; or
- Mandatory national bans on the production or use of PHOs in all foods.

Many stakeholders, including civil society, quasi-governmental organizations, academia, and advocacy organizations, play an important role in advancing policy changes and industry actions that are needed to eliminate artificial trans fat from the food supply. Acting now to eliminate artificial trans fat has many benefits to countries. Trans fat elimination is:

- Life-saving: Global trans fat elimination will save an estimated 17.5 million lives over the next 25 years and prevent avoidable suffering⁴.
- Cost effective: Eliminating trans fat will reduce health care costs by preventing heart attacks, which require costly care⁵.
- Feasible: Artificial trans fat can be replaced in foods without changing taste or cost to the consumer⁵. Healthier alternatives already exist and are being used⁶.
- Health equity promoting: Eliminating trans fat can reduce social-economic and urban-rural inequalities in health, even in contexts with relatively low artificial trans fat intake⁷.
- Practical: As more and more countries regulate trans fat, food manufacturers can reformulate products in the same way for sale in multiple countries, which can reduce R&D costs and allow for easier trade between countries and within regions. Additionally, manufacturers selling products containing trans fat may shift to new markets where elimination policies are not in place. Implementing regulations before trans fat levels are high reduces future enforcement difficulty and cost⁸.

⁴ Kontis, Vasilis, et al. "Three public health interventions could save 94 million lives in 25 years: global impact assessment analysis." *Circulation* 140.9 (2019): 715-725.

⁵ Ghebreyesus, Tedros Adhanom, and Thomas R. Frieden. "REPLACE: a roadmap to make the world trans fat free by 2023." *The Lancet* 391.10134 (2018): 1978-1980.

⁶ World Health Organization. (2019). Countdown to 2023: WHO report on global trans fat elimination 2019. Available at: <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/334170/9789240010178-eng.pdf>

⁷ Marklund, Matti, et al. "Estimated health benefits, costs, and cost-effectiveness of eliminating industrial trans-fatty acids in Australia: A modelling study." *PLoS medicine* 17.11 (2020): e1003407.

⁸ NCD Alliance. Trans fat free by 2023. Case Studies in Trans Fat Elimination. Geneva, Switzerland, 2019. Available at: <https://ncdalliance.org/resources/transfatfree2023report>

- An investment in overall nutrition and food safety: Trans fat elimination is an opportunity to build regulatory systems that can be leveraged for food safety and for healthier foods.

5. Proposal Request

Projects should cover a time frame of no more than 6 months and are capped at \$15,000. Civil society organizations, academic organizations, quasi-governmental bodies, or advocacy organizations with a successful track record of advancing public health policies can apply and are encouraged to submit a letter of support from the relevant government authorities (e.g., FDA, MOH) as part of their application.

A successful proposal will:

- Focus on a country where best-practice trans fat policies are not yet in effect or enacted⁹, where RTSL-supported civil society organization are not already working on trans fat policy advocacy¹⁰, and which have a policy environment amenable to civil society intervention and policy progress.
- Include clear, short term objective(s) that support trans fat elimination and identify a target audience and a measurable change or action that is feasible within the given timeframe.
- Describe key activities (including timeline and how they support the aim and objectives).

Activities could include:

- Stakeholder and policy mapping.
- Communications and community mobilization activities to raise awareness of the negative health impact of trans fat consumption (and levels of exposure to artificial trans fat, if available) to elevate trans fat as a public health priority, and generate public and policymaker support.
- Engagement with key stakeholders and policymakers to build consensus around evidence-based policy solutions, counter opposition, and solidify political will for change. This may include:
 - Interacting with decision makers to influence the policy process, for example, through in-person meetings, phone calls, briefings, workshops, providing testimony at hearings, attending events where decision-makers are present, and providing position papers and other forms of information.
 - Using media to influence decision-makers, which may include earned media coverage and owned media coverage. Paid media may also be considered in some instances.
 - Other culturally relevant advocacy strategies.

⁹ Refer to the WHO TFA Country Score Card which monitors trans fat policies in countries: <https://extranet.who.int/nutrition/gina/en/scorecard/TFA>. The Scorecard includes information on countries that have best-practice policies, or that have adopted best-practice policies that will come into effect at a later date.

¹⁰ Policy advocacy activities are currently underway in Nigeria, Ethiopia, Eastern African Community countries, Argentina, Mexico, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Philippines. These countries will not be considered for the minigrant program.

- Technical assistance to government officials throughout the policy process by providing policy drafting support, compiling evidence, or conducting assessments to advance policy development (e.g., cost-benefit analysis, regulatory impact assessment). (Resolve to Save Lives can provide legal expertise and support for developing and drafting policy provisions.)
- Specify metrics to evaluate the success of activities. Evaluation metrics may include:
 - Policy advanced in the policymaking process (i.e., government makes public commitment to eliminate, policy is drafted, policy is out for public comment, policy is passed with compliance period defined)
 - Completed stakeholder and policy mapping
 - # stories on trans fat published in the media
 - # of people reached through communications efforts on trans fats
 - # of people reached through social media (e.g., views, impressions, shares)
 - Legal or technical assistance provided
 - Drafted government action plan to eliminate trans fats
 - Activated government technical working group to address trans fat elimination
 - Initiated government activities that are part of the policy process, e.g., food study, replacement oils mapping, cost effectiveness analysis, industry engagement

Successful applicants will receive both funding and technical assistance from Resolve to Save Lives and will be expected to share lessons learned. Award recipients will be expected to:

- Participate in a virtual orientation and training on technical aspects of trans fat elimination.
- Work with Resolve to Save Lives to identify areas for technical support (including for message development, legal drafting, and advocacy activities implementation).
- Leverage existing materials available on the LINKS Community Toolkit which includes resources on:
 - background and evidence of trans fat elimination (e.g., annotated bibliography, FAQs, fact sheets),
 - communications and advocacy (e.g., policy advocacy slides, policy briefings, PSA videos);
 - implementation (e.g., country case studies, food sampling and lab protocols); and
 - monitoring and evaluation (e.g., WHO annual progress reports, and country scorecard).
- Work with Resolve to Save Lives to identify and create new resources as needed to accelerate and support policy advocacy activities.
- Participate in a Community of Practice on trans fat elimination policies to share and learn from other experiences.

By the end of the 6 months, it is expected that key policymakers are onboard with a plan and timeline for passing a best-practice trans fat elimination policy. Ideally, a best-practice policy is drafted and under review by the authorities for passage. We understand this is a tight timeline for passing a policy;



Grantees that demonstrate that a policy is in an advanced stage and on track for passage will be considered for subsequent funding.

6. Instructions for RFP Respondents

1. **Contact Person.** Implementing Organizations shall send their notification of intent to bid, refer any questions, and submit their proposals via email to Lindsay Steele, lsteel@resolvetosavelives.org.
2. **Due Date.** Proposals must be submitted in PDF format to lsteel@resolvetosavelives.org by **May 7, 2021, at 5:00PM Eastern Daylight Time.**
3. **Proposal Submission.** Proposals should use the RTSL proposal template (found [here](#) and in Attachment A) and be emailed as a PDF, together with all relevant and any supporting documentation, to: Lindsay Steele (lsteel@resolvetosavelives.org) with **Trans fat Policy Advocacy RFP** in the subject line, **by 5:00PM EDT on May 7, 2021.**
4. **Selection Criteria.** The grantees' responses shall be evaluated by a committee of approximately three (3) Vital Strategies staff members. Selection criteria shall include:
 - Scope of the proposed work and alignment with elements of a successful proposal as outlined in this RFP
 - Demonstration of knowledge on the basic components necessary to successfully complete the proposed activities
 - The Implementing Organization's ability, capacity, and skill to fully and satisfactorily provide the activities required in this RFP
 - The Implementing Organization's responsiveness and compliance with the RFP requirements and questionsNote: Preference will be given applicants in low and middle-income countries.
5. **Complete Proposal.** Incomplete proposals are subject to rejection.

7. Attachment A

Proposal Template (one-time grant)

We appreciate your interest in collaboration and submitting a proposal. We look forward to working with you throughout the proposal process. Please note that this is a proposal shaping document and not a commitment by Vital Strategies to fund the work.

Please email the completed form to lstele@resolvetosavelives.org

I. Prospective Grantee Information

Organization Name	
Address	
Primary Contact Person Name Title Phone Email	

II. Proposal Information

Proposal Title	
Proposal Date	
Project Duration (# of months) Maximum: 6 months	
Project Dates (Start date – end date)	
Amount Requested (USD) Maximum: \$15,000	

III. Executive Summary

Please provide a high-level summary of the proposed work. Maximum 150 words

IV. Problem Statement

What is the problem that this project will address? Provide relevant background and explain the specific components of the problem that the project will address. Maximum 200 words

V. Objective
What is the objective of this work? (Objective must be measurable for the defined project period) Maximum 50 words

VI. Scope
What is the project scope? Specify geographic and demographic scope. Maximum 150 words

VII. Key Activities and Timeline
Outline the main activities of the work and the timeline associated with each. Maximum 300 words

Note: The maximum length for this grant is 6 months.

Activity	Year 1			
	Q 1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				

VIII. Deliverables
Identify key deliverables of the work (and time frame for each). Maximum 200 words

IX. Organizational capacity/related work
Describe how the organization is well prepared to successfully complete the proposed work; describe relevant work/experience to date. Maximum 150 words

X. Budget
Provide a brief description of the budget categories and amounts, including personnel, activities, supplies, and contracts, etc.

Note: The maximum budget for this grant is USD 15,000