The SVRI Research Grant 2025
Knowledge for Action to End Violence Against Women and Violence Against Children
Grant Application Guidelines
General Introduction

This document is designed to assist organisations conducting research on violence against women (VAW), violence against children (VAC) specially child sexual violence and other forms of violence driven by gender inequality to assess their eligibility for grants made annually by the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI) and to submit proposals in accordance with the required procedures.

Background

Violence against women and violence against children are global epidemics. At least one-third of women across the globe experience VAW and the health and development consequences that this violence brings. VAW and VAC cause great harm and cost to individuals, families, communities and governments, including multiple and long-lasting consequences for rights, health, education, productivity and participation in public spheres. For intimate partner violence alone, selected country estimates suggest that out-of-pocket expenditures, lost income and reduced productivity can amount to up to 3.7% of GDP – more than what many governments spend on primary education. A 2016 global prevalence study estimated that up to 1 billion children aged 2–17 years, have experienced physical, sexual, or emotional violence or neglect in the past year. Experiencing violence in childhood impacts on lifelong health and well-being.

VAW and VAC are driven by gender inequality, social norms and entrenched structural inequities and laws. Research and uptake of research findings are essential for understanding the drivers of VAW and VAC and the contexts within which they flourish to help identify ways in which we can bring about sustained social change to end violence against women and children.

We know more about how to prevent and respond to VAW and VAC than ever before. In terms of prevention, the handful of tested prevention programmes we once had, have expanded, including several adaptations. Even still, few interventions have been sustainably taken to scale to fundamentally transform social norms, promote gender equitable societies and reduce violence. Knowledge is still limited on the long-term effects of these interventions and what specific mechanisms are driving the changes observed so far. Further, we know very little about how to integrate violence prevention and response efforts into large infrastructural development programmes. Additionally, although we know about innovative research, quality programme implementation and rigorous evaluation clusters in high income countries, knowledge sharing platforms for researchers in low and middle-income settings remain limited and their contributions to the field have been largely overlooked.

1 Available evidence highlights the need to create synergies in research and programming to address the multiple linkages between VAW and VAC as our understanding of the intersections increase. The SVRI will consider proposals on innovative approaches to conduct intersectional or integrative research and programming that will address VAW and VAC together, or VAW and/or VAC within other sectoral work.
Effective VAW and VAC prevention and response is an area of work for civil society, companies, governments, NGOs and research institutions. Capitalizing on this momentum to achieve broader and more sustainable change requires tapping the creative energy of emerging leaders and solution-makers. It also requires documenting our successes and failures to ensure that we continue to advance the field by investing limited resources towards the most effective strategies.

**The Grant programme**

One of the goals of the 2020-2024 SVRI strategic plan is to strengthen the evidence base to improve policies and programmes to respond to and prevent VAW and VAC in low and middle income countries (LMICs). The SVRI will achieve this goal by continuing to support and fund innovative research on VAW and VAC in LMICs and to encourage debate in the field.

The SVRI since 2014 has supported and funded 89 innovative research projects in 53 countries, infusing more than $9 million USD into the field of VAW and VAC research. Support to date from the World Bank, SIDA, Wellspring Philanthropic Fund, Oak Foundation and What Works to Prevent Violence-Impact at Scale Programme, has provided funding for research that has enabled us to issue grants to unique projects that might not otherwise have received funding, such as secondary data analysis, enhancing qualitative components by adding an additional arm to a study or research on methods. In funding a broad range of methodologies, the SVRI is contributing to the technical development of the field of VAW and VAC research.5

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**The SVRI is inviting proposals for action-oriented, policy relevant research that will serve to improve and expand VAW, VAC, child sexual violence and intersections between VAW/VAC and other forms of GBV prevention and response efforts in LMICs.**

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**Eligibility criteria**

Applications for support under this award should:

- Be affiliated with a recognised, legally constituted research institution or organisation with existing research or programming capacity on VAW and VAC. **Grants will only be made to institutions and not to individuals.**
- Consortiums should involve partnerships that are multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral between multiple organizations, for example, a local NGO, practice based agency and an academic institution, or local government and an NGO or an academic institution.
- Provide a clear breakdown of responsibilities for consortium proposals, ensuring equitable partnerships and including an expert in VAW/VAC research. **The partnership arrangement must be clearly outlined and reflected in the proposal and budget allocation.**
- Preference will be given to proposals submitted and led by organizations based in LMICs6.

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5 https://svri.org/grant-database

6 Please check the World Bank’s classification of countries by countries to determine your eligibility World Bank Country and Lending Groups – World Bank Data Help Desk
Other eligibility considerations to note:
- Organisations or consortiums can submit up to two proposals, but only one proposal will be funded.
- Previous grantees will not be considered as principal applicants.
- Institutions who have an active SVRI grant may not apply.
- Grant applications that are proposing work on behalf of UN Agencies, the World Bank Group or other multi-lateral agencies will not be considered.
- All projects under this call should focus on VAW and/or VAC prevention and/or response in LMICs.

Scope of the SVRI Research Grant

The scope of SVRI funding is for research – research is “the systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge”\(^7\) that will advance the field on how to improve research, strengthen responses and/or prevent VAW, VAC- particularly child sexual violence, intersection between VAW/VAC in low and middle income countries.

What we like to see in proposals

In terms of selection, we like to see proposals that:
- Are from local organizations based in LMICs; and/or multidisciplinary, multisectoral consortia, especially those led by researchers or evidence builders residing in LMICs.
- Embrace an intersectional approach to research and involve communities where relevant, appropriate, and ethical.
- Provide a clear breakdown of responsibilities for consortium proposals, ensuring equitable partnerships and including an expert in VAW/VAC research.
- Emphasize efforts to build the capacity of early-career researchers from LMICs.
- Clearly and comprehensively outline strategies for effective dissemination of findings.
- Provide a logical and clear budget with sound justification.

In your proposal, please also ensure that you:
- Provide a clear explanation upfront on how your study builds on current evidence and shows how you have explored and built on existing research.
- Articulate how your research addresses a gap in the field, emphasizing advancement of knowledge on VAW/CSV research and programs in LMICs.
- Demonstrate how your work will strengthen policy and practice or enhance methodology within the field.

\(^7\) U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2016, 45 CFR 46.102(d)
Research supported by the SVRI Research Grant should

- Advance our understanding and knowledge.
- Apply feminist and women-centred principles to research and partnerships.
- Promote equitable participation and bring to the field diverse voices from low and middle-income countries (young researchers, practitioners, survivors, marginalised groups).
- Adhere to international safety and ethical guidelines.
- Strive for innovation in ideas, new methodologies and partnerships, while building on existing evidence.
- Strive to be collaborative, cross-sectoral and multi-disciplinary.
- Where relevant and appropriate, endeavor to engage the community where the research will take place.
- Challenge the gender hierarchy that contributes to VAW and VAC in order to promote gender equality.
- Inform policy, programmes and services and strengthen access to comprehensive care and support for survivors.

Grant value and duration

Applicants can apply for grants between $40,000 to $150,000 no longer than 18 months in length.

The provision of funding is for a limited period of time with clear measurable outcomes.

Types of violence

The United Nations defines violence VAW as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.”

VAW can include but is not limited to: intimate partner violence, including emotional, physical, sexual and financial abuse; sexual violence; reproductive coercion; trafficking; honor killings; sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse.

VAC – as per the Convention on the Rights of the Child – includes “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child”.

VAC can include but is not limited to: abuse and neglect in the family, incest, sexual abuse, infanticide; bullying and other forms of violence in the school; corporal punishment; psychological aggression; child trafficking, sale of children, child sexual exploitation and other commercial sexual exploitation of children; child labour; various forms of cyber and online violence; recruitment as child soldiers, children recruited and exploited by terrorist and violent extremist groups, and many others.
Application process, review and assessment of proposals

Application process

The SVRI will issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) inviting colleagues to apply for funding. Applicants should apply after they have considered the above requirements and assessed whether their proposal is suitable for support under this call.

All applications must be submitted via the Proposalcentral online system, and reach us by midnight (South African time on 9 July 2024).

Only applications submitted via the online system before the given closing date and time will be considered.

Please try and submit well before the deadline. The SVRI and Proposal Central cannot be held responsible for delays due to internet connectivity or problems experienced with the online form.

Registering your institution

If you are a first time user of Proposal Central you must first register, before you can proceed with your application. To do so you must:

- Go to https://proposalcentral.altum.com
- Select “First Time Users – Register”
- Complete the registration page.
- Create your own Username, password and challenge question for your user account.
- Click “SAVE” when done.
- The registration confirmation screen will confirm your new account has been created.
- For security purposes, you will receive a confirmation number by e-mail which you must enter when you log in the first time.

Contact Proposal Central at pcsupport@altum.com if you experience any difficulties with this process.

Filling in the online form

Graphics and tables: The online application form cannot accept graphics and tables. Any graphics and tables must be uploaded as attachments.

CVs of key personnel: Using the CV template provided online, provide short CVs of all personnel who will be working on this project.

Project plan: A project plan must accompany the application. Please use the template provided online.

Budget: Applicants should provide a budget for a period between 12 to 18 months in USD using the online application form. The budget should be a definitive line-item budget for all direct costs, and administrative or indirect costs, and must exclude capital expenditure and general operating support. Please note that South African applicants must submit their budgets in South African Rands. Proposals submitted by South African applicants with budgets in USD will be rejected at the point of receipt.
Indirect costs are permitted in proposals but may not exceed 15% of total costs. The total cost, including indirect costs, should not exceed the grant limit.

Indirect costs are expected to cover items such as office rental, electricity, internet access, computer programmes, and financial management costs. These costs are not expected to be itemised separately in addition to a 15% overhead. Proposals that request more than the stipulated maximum will be rejected at point of receipt.

The extent of individual cost items should match the scope of the project, reflect real or estimated cost burdens, and not be padded.

Please use the following guidelines to calculate personnel costs:
- Personnel (employee): calculate the employee daily rate using the person’s annual salary inclusive of fringe benefits (e.g. pension, medical aid etc.) divided by 260.
- Personnel (consultant): the daily cost of the consultant to your institution.

A budget narrative must accompany the budget. Additional guidance on how to complete the budget and budget narrative can be found in the online form.

Capacity statement: This statement provides the SVRI with details on the extent to which applicants have the relevant expertise / experience to manage / complete the project successfully, and the roles and responsibilities of consortium members.

Saving your work: Please remember to save your work before moving on to the next page. Also note that you cannot edit in print format. Any changes made whilst you are in print view will not be saved.

Submitting your proposal: Please note, your proposal has not been submitted if you do not receive a confirmation email from Proposal Central confirming you have submitted your proposal. Please check with Proposal Central if you are uncertain if your proposal has been submitted.

Assistance with your online application: Your questions and concerns can be directed to proposal Central Customer Service by email to pcsupport@altum.com. Follow-up questions can be directed to proposal Central’s customer service line 800 875 2562 (Toll- free U.S. and Canada) or +1 703 964 5840 (Direct Dial International).

Review process

Grantees will be selected through a rigorous, multi-layered selection process. Once the deadline has closed, all proposals are scanned/reviewed by internal SVRI staff.
Proposals that do not fulfil basic eligibility criteria will be excluded at this stage. i.e. applications that are off topic; not based within a low and middle income country; exceed project time frames or budget requirements; submitted late; not submitted via the online application system; do not meet the basic administrative application requirements. Please note, providing reviewers with a clear, well structured abstract is important for this stage of the review process.

The SVRI staff along with a technical team will undertake a more thorough review of applications using criteria provided in the following table below. A shortlist of between 20-30 proposals found eligible and technically solid will be prepared for final review by a small external expert panel. The small external international expert review committee will consist of up to 6 members, made up of representatives with technical expertise in the fields of VAW and VAC and/or proposal review experience. Participation in the expert panel is on a voluntary basis. Members of all review committees must adhere to the SVRI Conflict of Interest Policy. The results of the review process will be sent within 4-5 months of application.

### Review criteria and scoring of proposals

SVRI staff and peer reviewers are asked to evaluate proposals according to a set criteria as well as specific questions under each criterion. In submitting a proposal for funding, applicants should make every effort to ensure that the proposal address these aspects. The criteria and questions are outlined below.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>What reviewer has to comment on</th>
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<tr>
<td>Overall merit</td>
<td>Will the project build the evidence for VAW and/or VAW/VAC intersections prevention and response in LMICs? If it is an intervention, is the intervention likely to succeed with respect to the qualifications of the project team, the institution within which the project is housed? Does the proposal abstract clearly and concisely summarise the significance of the work, the major objectives of the project, the methodology to be followed, the potential impact of the research and its dissemination plan?</td>
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<td><strong>Research / Project design and methods</strong></td>
<td>Is the design / method sound, feasible and relevant to the questions being asked? Is the approach proposed appropriate and likely to accomplish the project goal and outcomes? Are potential problems recognised and addressed with alternative approaches? Does the project include a thorough proposal for capturing and sharing lessons learned during design and implementation?</td>
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<td><strong>Significance of the proposed project</strong></td>
<td>Will the project advance basic theoretical concepts, improve or enhance policy and practice in the field of VAW and/or VAC prevention and response? Does the application build on current knowledge in the field? Does it challenge and seek to shift current research or approaches to policy and practice by utilising sound theoretical concepts, approaches, methodologies, tools or interventions? Does the project provide a clear theory of change? Will the project contribute to solving barriers to progress in the field? Is the project replicable? Will the project strengthen VAW and VAC research capacity, technical skill and knowledge?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Project Manager/ Team</strong></td>
<td>Is the training and experience of the project manager and team appropriate for the project or activity? Is there sufficient expertise and level of accomplishments within the team / institution to generate confidence in success? Is the project led by or include a partner from a LMIC setting? Is there a partnership between multiple organisations established and if yes, is it established on equitable basis and explicitly following feminist principles? E.g. a local NGO and an academic institution, North-South or South-South academic partnerships. If identify as a need, does the research partnership have building research capacity as an objective? Are the roles and responsibilities of all project partners clearly outlined in the proposal?</td>
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<td><strong>Ethical considerations</strong></td>
<td>Are the research participants appropriately protected from potential research risk? Does the project include and budget for staff care activities, including addressing potential vicarious trauma? Will the project be conducted in a professional manner, in accordance with the applicable international and ethical guidelines, including but not limited to:</td>
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<td>• Putting Women First: Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on Domestic Violence Against Women, Department of Gender and Women’s Health Family and Community Health. World Health Organization 1999;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on Perpetration of Sexual Violence Jewkes R, Dartnall E and Sikweyiya Y. SVRI and Medical Research Council South Africa 2012;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Intervention Research on Violence against Women, RTI and WHO 2016;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Ethical Standards for Research during Public Health Emergencies: distilling existing guidance to support Covid - 19 R&amp;D WHO 2020;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Funding Ethically Better Funding for Violence Against Women and Violence Against Children Research in Lower and Middle Income Countries, Mago A, Dartnall E. SVRI 2022.</td>
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Is the budget credible and aligned with the project methodology? Are all budget tables detailed and complete and demonstrate that all activities/components are integrated into the budget? Does the budget narrative talk to the budget tables? Are all project costs (resources/goods, etc.) appropriately budgeted for to ensure the project will achieve its outputs in the most cost-effective way?

Upon consideration of the above criteria, global representation and specific questions, reviewers score the quality of the proposal and make recommendations on fundability.

### Overall timeline for processing proposals for funding

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<th>Steps or actions</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
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<tr>
<td>Call / request for proposals</td>
<td>9 May 2024</td>
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<td>Closing date for applications</td>
<td>9 July 2024</td>
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<td>External review</td>
<td>August – November 2024</td>
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<td>Communication of outcomes to all applicants</td>
<td>December 2024</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notification and acceptance of grants by awardees</td>
<td>January - February 2025</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance of grantees to an inception and capacity building meeting</td>
<td>April/May 2025</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Project timeframes</td>
<td>June 2025 - December 2026 (up to 18 months)</td>
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Application checklist (incomplete applications will not be considered)

- Completed online application (including project outcomes and budget).
- Completed and signed SVRI Grant Approval Form.
- CVs of key personnel using the template (available online).
- Project Plan using template provided (available online).
- References for evidence used to inform the research goals and objectives.
- Appendices (if required).

Grant information summary

- Level of award: $40,000 to $150,000.
- Period of award: 12-18 months in length.
- Closing date for applications: 9 July 2024.
- Further information: email svri@svri.org.
- Method of application: Applications must be submitted online here (Select Award Maker: Sexual Violence Research Initiative).
- Language of application: Applications in English, French and Spanish will be accepted.

Acknowledgements

The SVRI would like to acknowledge the generous contributions of our funding partners in supporting this grant, including the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), Wellspring Philanthropic Fund, Oak Foundation, What Works to Prevent Violence - Impact at Scale Programme and other in kind contributions from key experts in the field. Without your support this important funding mechanism for building evidence in the field would not be possible. Thank you.