

Emergency Fund for HIV Response

Call for Proposals

About the Emergency Fund for HIV response

Over the last weeks, the new United States administration has taken a cascade of actions that are already having a catastrophic impact on the global HIV response. Aidsfonds is deeply concerned about the impact of the 90-day pause for all U.S. foreign assistance, including for activities supported by The United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Worldwide, over 20 million people depend on PEPFAR for their HIV treatment. When HIV services get interrupted, HIV might spread further, and drug resistance may increase.

Aidsfonds set up an Emergency Fund for HIV response to support partners in their work and to fill some of the most critical gaps caused by the PEPFAR suspension. The fund offers current and past partners and grantees to submit plans and budget to a maximum of €15.000 till the end of the 90-day period (24th April 2025) to continue to provide access to essential treatment and testing services.

The overall objective of the fund is to continue contributing to Aidsfonds dream goal 1 *No more death from AIDS and no new HIV infections* during this unprecedented crisis.

A [recent survey](#) conducted by Aidsfonds and the Global network of People Living with HIV (GNP+) shows that our community partners, who provide critical HIV services to their communities face increased difficulties to reach people in need. An initial mapping of the impact of the funding freeze shows that of the **564 survey** responses, the vast majority (**95%**) **confirmed that they were directly impacted**. The results reveal a widespread and severe impact of the *stop-work order* and the reinstatement of the global gag rule on HIV programs across various countries. **Immediate funding cuts** were reported by 82% of the respondents, forcing organisations to scale back operations rapidly and causing staff lay-offs.

Specifically, community programmes that provide access to lifesaving HIV treatment and testing services are affected. Respondents report **service disruptions**, such as stock out of antiretrovirals, HIV testing kits, PrEP, PEP and condoms, and **implementation halting** of community outreach, prevention programmes paused, and community testing events and follow up appointments suspended.

Despite the waiver, many reported **difficulty in maintaining adherence** to life-saving HIV medication due to disruptions in medication supply. The lack of clarity on funding for interventions outside of the scope of the waiver, such as access to PrEP for key populations (sex workers, people who use drugs, LGBTIQ+ communities, and prisoners) will significantly impact the overall effectiveness of treatment.

Additionally, the suspension triggered an increase in **stigma and discrimination** experienced by people who are already experiencing barriers in accessing services and human rights violations. These disruptions threaten to create a new generation of preventable HIV infections.

The Emergency Fund will address the following needs:

The Emergency response fund will support community organisations and clinics to keep people living with HIV (PLHIV) healthy and maintain access to essential treatment and prevention services. This includes life-saving antiretroviral therapy (ARVs), HIV testing and other critical prevention services (see *eligibility criteria* for more details).

Who can apply?

The Emergency response fund has been set up to support:

- Current Aidsfonds and Robert Carr Fund grantees and partners
- Organisations that had a direct contract with Aidsfonds and RCF in the twelve months prior to their application

This means you must either be receiving funds directly from Aidsfonds or RCF (not through an alliance or partnership where Aidsfonds is lead agent) or have received direct funding from Aidsfonds within the past twelve months.

If you have a direct **contract** with Aidsfonds please reach out to your Aidsfonds/Robert Carr Fund (RCF) contact to discuss if your proposed activities can be accommodated under your existing contract(s). Most running projects offer the flexibility to alter to current situations (e.g. RCF, Hands Off, Love Alliance). If this is not possible, we can offer a maximum of

€15.000 grants to be used to address the impact of the crisis. Partners are asked to submit a short proposal (including a simple plan and budget) in our online grant system).

For **past partners** without a contract in place (but your organisation has received funds directly from Aidsfonds up to twelve months prior to your application), we kindly ask applicants to fill in a proposal in our [online application form](#). Please note we will not be able to accept applications by email. The maximum amount per grant is €15.000.

In case of any problems or questions, please contact emergencyfund@aidsfonds.nl

Assessment of Applications

Applications meeting the eligibility criteria will be scored based on selection criteria. They will be assessed every week on an ongoing basis. Decisions will be made within 3 working days after which a notice of approval will be sent by email. We aim to initiate transfer of the funds within 7 days of a positive decision. Due to the emergency nature of the fund and the fast turnover it will NOT be possible to appeal decisions on grants.

Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility criteria for the applicant

- The applicant is a current grantee or partner of Aidsfonds. This means you are currently receiving funds directly from Aidsfonds or Robert Carr Fund (not via an alliance or partnership for which Aidsfonds is lead agent). Or you have received funds directly from Aidsfonds up to twelve months prior to your application. Proposals of individuals will not be taken into consideration for funding.

Eligibility criteria for the application

- The proposal is aimed at mitigating the impact of halting of PEPFAR funding for people living with or vulnerable to HIV and contributes to Aidsfonds dream goal 1 *No more death from AIDS and no new HIV infections*.
- The proposal responds to provide people living with or vulnerable to HIV continued access to lifesaving treatment and prevention, this includes: **antiretroviral treatment (ART), HIV testing, HIV treatment education, outreach and adherence support, viral load tests, CD4 cell count tests, HIV prevention services such as PrEP, harm reduction and opioid agonist treatment in combination with ART and direct staff costs**.
- The proposal is implemented in Aidsfonds an project countries that is also a PEPFAR-designated country: Angola, Botswana, eSwatini, Indonesia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Ukraine, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

- The activities will be immediately implemented and will last no longer than the 24th of April 2025.
- The proposed activities cannot be accommodated by your current Aidsfonds/RCF grant/project.
- The portal to submit your proposal is in English. We do accept proposals submitted in your preferred language.
- The proposal is submitted through the [online application form](#).
- The funding request does not exceed €15.000
- Applicants are allowed a maximum of 1 grant per organisation.

Organisational information is collected with care and delicacy. Information will be stored in a secured database.

Assessment Criteria

After an application is found to be eligible, the application will be assessed by the Operational Team based on the following criteria:

- The extent to which the proposal mitigates the impact of the PEPFAR crisis on people living with HIV and other vulnerable communities.
- The extent to which the proposal is in line with the priorities of the Emergency response fund and Aidsfonds' dream goal.
- The budget is clear and reasonable and reflects the proposed activities.
- The applicant shows the capacity to implement the proposed activities.

Each criterion is scored from 1 to 5, in relation to each other. Only applications with an average score higher than 3.5 will be considered for funding.

When reviewing the applications, we will keep the following in mind:

- We will work on a first come first serve basis.
- We will prioritise activities which are not (easily) fundable through current Aidsfonds/RCF funding streams.
- We may prioritise activities that can support our advocacy, communications or fundraising work aimed at benefitting our communities.

What is not funded?

Unfortunately, the emergency response fund cannot address all the needs identified in our survey. We will not be able to fund:

- Staff costs not directly related to the proposed activities.
- Organisational support (to be covered by existing grants).
- Activities or commodities that can be covered by existing projects.
- Advocacy (to be covered by existing grants).

- Mental health support for beneficiaries, staff and activists (to be covered by existing grants where possible).
- Community-led monitoring (to be covered by existing grants where possible).
- Gender-based violence support.

Questions & Answers (Q&A)

Why has Aidsfonds started this Fund?

Aidsfonds is very concerned about the impact of the 90-day pause for all U.S foreign assistance, including for activities supported by The United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) on the continuation of life-saving prevention and treatment for people living with or vulnerable to HIV. When HIV services get interrupted, HIV might spread further, and drug resistance may increase. From the survey conducted by Aidsfonds and GNP+ it is clear that our community partners, who provide critical HIV services to their communities face increased difficulties to reach people in need.

Survey outcomes - In total, we received 564 responses and the vast majority (95%) confirmed that they were directly impacted, specifically community programmes that provide access to lifesaving treatment and testing services are affected. Key affected areas include: service disruptions (i.e. stock outs of tests and condoms), implementation halting (community outreach and prevention programmes), closure of organisations/clinics and staff lay-offs and an increase of stigma and discrimination experienced by people who are already experiencing barriers in accessing services and human rights violations due to HIV-related stigma, discrimination and exclusion. These disruptions threaten to create a new generation of preventable HIV infections.

What is the goal of the fund?

The overall objective of the fund is to continue contributing to the Aidsfonds strategic goals during this pandemic:

- Less than 200,000 new HIV infections globally.
- Everyone living with HIV worldwide receives treatment.
- Awareness and support in society, and full funding of the HIV response.

What needs will the Fund address?

The Emergency response fund will address the halt in essential prevention, testing and treatment support to people living with HIV and people at increased risk of HIV. The fund will support community organisations and clinics to keep people living with HIV healthy and maintain access to essential treatment and prevention services. This includes life-saving

antiretroviral therapy (ARVs), HIV testing and other critical prevention services (see *eligibility criteria* for more details).

My organisation does not receive Aidsfonds funding directly at the moment, can we still apply?

To be able to respond rapidly, only direct grantees are eligible to apply for the Emergency response fund. This means you are currently receiving funds directly from Aidsfonds or Robert Carr Fund, OR you have received funds directly from Aidsfonds up to twelve months prior to your application.

If you are a sub-grantee (e.g. through one of the networks in the Robert Carr Fund), you cannot apply. However, you could coordinate with the organisation that is directly receiving funds from Aidsfonds about the possibility to submit a joint proposal as a sub-grantee. In any case, it will be good to check with your Aidsfonds contact person what the possibilities are. Some activities may be accommodated under your existing contract. This also applies to sub-grantees from the Love Alliance.

What if my organisation needs more than EUR 15.000?

The grant is for the period of the funding freeze (till 24th April 2025). If you need more than € 15.000 during this period, please discuss this first with your Aidsfonds contact person. Some activities may be accommodated under your existing contract.

Can we submit more than one proposal?

Due to the limited funding available, applicants can only submit one application to a maximum of €15.000.

In which language should I submit a proposal?

The portal to submit your proposal is in English. We do accept proposals submitted in your preferred language.

How do I apply?

Applicants can fill in an online application form through our [Grant portal](#). Please note we will not be able to accept applications by email. The application form consists of two parts:

- The first part covers the proposed intervention(s) (narrative description and an excel budget).
- The second part consists of organizational and banking details.

Both parts have to be completed to submit an application.

We have submitted an application, when will we know whether the proposal has been approved?

Applications will be assessed every week on an ongoing basis. Decisions will be made within 3 working days after which a notice of approval will be sent by email. We aim to initiate transfer of the funds within 7 days of a positive decision.

Can we appeal the decision if our proposal is rejected?

Due to the emergency nature of the fund and the fast turnover, it will NOT be possible to appeal decisions on grants. However, based on the feedback you receive and in consultation with your Aidsfonds contact person, you could submit a new modified application.

What is not funded?

- Staff costs not directly related to the proposed activities.
- Organisational support (to be covered by existing grants).
- Activities or commodities that can be covered by existing projects.
- Advocacy (to be covered by existing grants).
- Mental health support for beneficiaries, staff and activists (to be covered by existing grants where possible).
- Community-led monitoring (to be covered by existing grants where possible).
- Gender-based violence support.

It may be good to check with your Aidsfonds contact person what the possibilities are for your proposed activities. Some activities may be accommodated (through reallocation) under your existing contract.

How long will the Emergency response fund be open?

It will remain open depending on available funding and needs.

Have your questions not been addressed in this Q&A?

In case of any other questions or problems, please contact emergencyfund@aidsfonds.nl.