Background

The NATO Science for Peace & Security (SPS) Programme enhances security-related civil science and technology to address emerging security challenges and their impact on international security. It connects scientists, experts and officials from NATO and partner nations to work together to address these challenges.

Through the Programme, NATO has demonstrated a longstanding commitment to science, innovation and practical cooperation with partners. Today, through a balanced 360° approach, SPS promotes practical cooperation based on these core dimensions that define its identity:

- **Science**: The SPS Programme helps to foster research, innovation, applied science and technology, as well as knowledge exchange in an effort to address common security challenges. As a brand, SPS has a very wide network extending to hundreds of universities and institutions across Allied nations and partner countries.

- **Partnership**: The collaborative framework of the Programme brings together scientists, experts and policy makers from Allied and partner countries to address today’s security challenges. SPS is well known as one of the most important partnership programmes that is available to all partners, proving that practical cooperation is achievable across political barriers through scientific exchange.

- **Security**: According to the scope of the SPS Programme and guidance from NATO nations, all projects developed under SPS must have a security dimension. This is also reflected in the SPS Key Priorities developed by Allies.

- **Unconventional issues**: The SPS Programme’s primary purpose is to strengthen NATO’s partnership policy. Following a comprehensive Strategic Assessment of the SPS Programme in 2013, it has grown to include projects that encompass capacity building, hybrid threats and Women Peace and Security UNSCR 1325, while preserving the important scientific dimension of the Programme.
Boundaries of the call for proposals

This Call for Proposals is soliciting applications for collaborative projects, workshops or training courses in the area of security-related civil science, technology, innovation, and beyond.

The SPS Programme provides support and expert advice for security-relevant activities in the form of four established grant mechanisms: Multi-Year Projects (MYP), Advanced Research Workshops (ARW), Advanced Training Courses (ATC), and Advanced Study Institutes (ASI). Interested applicants should develop proposals for activities that fit within one of these formats. Details on where to find application instructions and templates can be found below in the section “Programme requirements”.

Participation in the SPS Programme enables experts and scientists to develop innovative solutions to today’s security challenges, and to build partnerships with their peers in NATO and partner nations. Applications are to be jointly prepared by scientists or experts from at least one NATO and one partner nation, and be linked to NATO’s Strategic Objectives. Proposals shall specifically respond to one or more of the SPS Key Priorities as detailed in the next section.

Note: SPS supports projects in the field of security-related civilian science and/or related to dual-use applications. Proposals that have pure military objectives should be addressed to different programmes, in particular the NATO Science and Technology Organization (STO) Collaboration Support Office (CSO).

Scope of the Call for Proposals

This call solicits proposals addressing one or more of the SPS Key Priorities as listed below:

1) Facilitate mutually beneficial cooperation on issues of common interest, including international efforts to meet emerging security challenges
   a) Counter-Terrorism
      i) Methods for the protection of critical infrastructure, supplies and personnel;
      ii) Human factors in the defence against terrorism;
      iii) Detection technologies against the terrorist threat for explosive devices and other illicit activities;
      iv) Risk management, best practices and technologies in response to terrorism.
   b) Energy Security
      i) Innovative energy solutions for the military; battlefield energy solutions; renewable energy solutions with military applications;
      ii) Energy infrastructure security;
      iii) Maritime aspects of energy security;
      iv) Technological aspects of energy security.
   c) Cyber Defence
      i) Critical infrastructure protection, including sharing of best practices, capacity building and policies;
ii) Support in developing cyber defence capabilities, including new technologies and support to the construction of information technology infrastructure;
iii) Cyber defence situation awareness.

d) Defence against CBRN Agents
i) Methods and technology regarding the protection against, diagnosing effects, detection, decontamination, destruction, disposal and containment of CBRN agents;
ii) Risk management and recovery strategies and technologies;
iii) Medical countermeasures against CBRN agents.

e) Environmental Security
i) Security issues arising from key environmental and resource constraints, including health risks, climate change, water scarcity and increasing energy needs, which have the potential to significantly affect NATO’s planning and operations;
ii) Disaster forecast and prevention of natural catastrophes;
iii) Defence-related environmental issues.

2) Enhance support for NATO-led operations and missions
a) Provision of civilian support through SPS Key Priorities;
b) Provision of access to information through internet connectivity as in the SILK-Afghanistan Programme;
c) Cultural and social aspects in military operations and missions;
d) Enhancing cooperation with other international actors.

3) Enhance awareness on security developments including through early warning, with a view to preventing crises
a) Security-related Advanced Technology: Emerging technologies including nanotechnology, optical technology, micro satellites, metallurgy and the development of UAV platforms.
b) Border and Port Security
i) Border and port security technology;
ii) Cross border communication systems and data fusion;
iii) Expert advice and assessments of border security needs and best practice.
c) Mine and Unexploded Ordnance Detection and Clearance
i) Development and provision of advanced technologies, methodologies and best practices;
ii) Solutions to counter Improvised Explosive Devices (IED).
d) Human and Social Aspects of Security related to NATO’s strategic objectives.

4) Any project clearly linked to a threat to security not otherwise defined in these priorities may also be considered for funding under the SPS Programme. Such proposals will be examined for links to NATO’s Strategic Objectives.
Programme requirements

As one of the principal goals of the Science for Peace and Security Programme is to promote cooperation between NATO countries and NATO partner nations, only applications from researchers in those countries (see below) can be accepted. Applications should be submitted to sps.applications@hq.nato.int mentioning in the subject of the email the text “Open Call for Proposals March 2020” and all relevant enquiries should be addressed to sps.info@hq.nato.int

Please note that the applications deadline has been extended to:
1 June 2020 (23:59 Central European Time)

Note: Until 1 June 2020, SPS will be accepting applications also for two Special Calls for Proposals on Advanced Technologies and Explosives Detection. Applicants interested in these thematic areas may submit applications in response to the respective Special Calls, or in the context of this Open Call. Applicants should refer to application manuals and templates for the specific call they are applying for. Only complete applications submitted using the correct templates may be considered as eligible.

→ All application manuals and templates applicable to this Open Call are available here.

→ All application manuals and templates applicable to the Special Calls on Advanced Technologies and Explosives Detection are available here.

NATO Countries
Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia (the Invitee)1, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States.

Eligible NATO partner Countries
Afghanistan, Algeria, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Egypt, Finland, Georgia, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyz Republic, Malta, Mauritania, Republic of Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, New Zealand, Pakistan, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan.

1 North Macedonia (the Invitee) may apply for SPS activities as a NATO country.