

Resilience Fund Fellowship 2021

Extortion and Organized Crime

Call for Applications

Deadline: 4 January 2021

Description:

The Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GI-TOC) is pleased to announce the **second edition** of the Resilience Fellowship, 'Extortion as an illicit economy of organized crime', to build a platform for cross-sectoral, global and interdisciplinary collaboration between civil-society actors, human-rights activists, journalists, artists, scholars, policymakers, grassroots community leaders and others working to counter the effects of organized crime.

The Fellowship is part of the GI-TOC's flagship Resilience Fund, which provides grants and support to civil-society individuals and organizations working to counter the impacts of criminal governance and violence across the world. The Resilience Fund is funded by the governments of Norway and Germany, and works in partnership with international organizations and NGOs worldwide (more information may be found [here](#)).

The Resilience Fund's first edition in 2020 provided support and opportunities to a cohort of 10 individuals from around the world on the chosen theme: disappearances related to organized crime. During the past year, these Fellows have collaborated on this global issue in their communities. The virtual exchanges we held throughout the year have resulted in new projects, new narratives and new knowledge about disappearances related to organized crime around the world. [Meet the Fellows](#).

The Resilience Fellowship is based on a three-pronged approach:

- **Sponsorship:** Providing financial support so that Fellows will have the time and resources for their individual work and a collaborative project during the fellowship year. Grants of US\$15 000 per Fellow will be awarded for one year.

- **Networking:** Offering mentorship opportunities with experts from the GI-TOC, as well as bringing Fellows together to begin a collaborative project to be undertaken during their fellowship year.
- **Dissemination:** Creating a platform for Fellows to publicly share their work and ideas – via venues such as conferences, civil-society forums, and national and international publications – which will widen public discourse, deepen engagement with society and invite the support and participation from the general public and, ultimately, policymakers.

The Resilience Fellowship is not designed to be a standalone grant-application procedure to develop individual projects, but a support mechanism for collaborative processes with other committed individuals who are already developing creative perspectives on community resilience and organized crime through dialogue, commitment and action. Thus, the Fund will give preference to those applicants with the incentives and means to collaborate on sustainable projects.

Theme for 2021: Extortion and organized crime

For 2021, the theme of the Resilience Fellowship will be **extortion and organized crime**. Within this framework, Fellows will be asked to combine their various perspectives in the development of collaborative outputs, as well as to represent the Fund as Resilience Fund Ambassadors who will raise awareness of the theme, issues and the importance of civil society in countering organized crime.

This theme was selected because it is a long-standing core strategy and business model of organized criminal groups, but it is also an urgent and salient issue today, as it continues to violate human rights and fundamental freedoms. Extortion is frequently used as a strategy to spread terror within society. It is a motor of migration and displacement in many communities. For organized-crime groups, it is a tool of control and fear. According to the GI-TOC report [A criminal culture: Extortion in Central America](#): ‘The damage caused by extortion is huge and widespread. It harms the economy of nations, the legitimacy of government and the social fabric of families and communities.’

This issue is not exclusive to any country, region or continent. It is prevalent around the world, making it a relevant and extremely important theme to many potential Fellows. Moreover, extortion affects communities at the most basic level – and in the long-term – hindering community-level resilience by eroding trust, fueling frustration and creating a climate of fear. Despite all this, remarkable and innovative community responses have been observed. By helping Fellows explore the issue of extortion more deeply, creative local and global solutions can emerge, inspiring

communities and their responses. In this way, the Resilience Fund will cultivate progress towards its central objective: to incubate resilience in communities affected by organized crime.

Here are some examples of issues that Resilience Fellows may work on related to extortion:

- Community responses to extortion.
- Extortion of migrants.
- Territorial-based gang extortion.
- **Extortion and technology.**
- Extortion and sexual violence.
- Extortion and overlapping criminal economies (human trafficking, corruption, drug trafficking).
- Extortion to the private sector (local, national or international enterprises).

Here are some examples of projects that could be developed:

- Telling the story of people and communities affected by extortion.
- Identifying community resilience to extortion.
- State-focused advocacy encouraging recognition of the issue, official responses and provision of services.
- Advocacy for inter-institutional coordination (national, regional or global) to respond effectively to extortion.
- Capacity building to improve the response to the crime (for example, training, assessing data quality, or creating handbooks or guidelines).
- Creations of networks against extortion.

The list above is only for guidance, and we encourage those who feel that their initiatives fit the theme to apply.

Eligibility criteria

For the year 2021, a total of 10 Fellows will be selected.

These can represent the fields of journalism and media; activism; advocacy and community mobilization; the creative arts (including artists, writers, filmmakers and others); community leaders (religious, cultural or youth leaders); academia (researchers and scholars), and the public sector

(policymakers). Individuals from other disciplines will be considered if their work is relevant to the Resilience Fellowship's objectives and annual theme.

The Fellowship welcomes applications from individuals of any gender, ethnicity, age, religion, or any other defining factor, who work in communities affected by organized crime. The overall make-up of the 10 Fellows will be diverse and will reflect an equitable geographic and gender balance.

Selection criteria:

1. Participants should be from countries disproportionately affected by organized crime and/or from least developed countries (LDCs).
2. Participants should ideally work closely within communities severely affected by extortion related to organized crime, or have strong ties within them, and should have ongoing or established projects or engagement. The cross-border nature of issues relating to organized crime allows applicants working within a wider, non-geographic community to be considered on a case to-case basis. There is no requirement that the Fellow live in the community concerned.
3. Participants should be able to demonstrate how the funding and support will be used.
4. Participants who have direct experience in their communities' issues, related to the annual theme, are particularly encouraged to apply.
5. Participants must be fluent in at least one of these three languages: Spanish, English and French.
6. Participants' prior work should demonstrate a commitment to the ethics and values of the Resilience Fund.

Grant information

Each fellow will receive US\$15 000 (divided in three payments of US\$5 000) to be executed with no other limitation than the principles of professionalism, integrity and transparency; the proposal presented in the application form; the terms and conditions of the Fellowship agreement, and the implementation of collaborative actions with other fellows.

Fellows will commit to:

- Participate in at least one monthly e-learning session or virtual meeting, as well as in the culminating Resilience Dialogue event in the last quarter of the year.
- Serve, to the best of their abilities, as a Fund Ambassador, advocating for the shared principles and objectives of the Fund, the Fellowship, and the fight against organized crime.

- Implement an individual project.
- Implement a collaborative project with other Fellows and use the Resilience Fund's communication tools.

The grant will be formalized by the signing of a Fellowship Agreement between the GI-TOC and the grantee.

Pre-scheduled activities:

The Fellowship will start on 30 January 2021 and end on 31 December 2021. Due to the risks of COVID-19, all activities planned will be held virtually, but depending on how the pandemic evolves, the Fellowship will assess the possibility to support in-person events.

Fellows must be available to participate in the following activities as part of the Fellowships agreement:

Participate in an induction and the appointment of a mentor and a liaison.

The Fellowship will begin with a one-to-one induction to the Fellowship. Fellows will be assigned a mentor and a liaison by the GI-TOC, based on the Fellow's geographic area, focus and discipline. The mentorship will be an opportunity for the Fellow to receive support in his/her projects and provide links to the GI-TOC network as well as the mentor's network. The method of communication between the mentor and the Fellow will be decided at the beginning and according to the preferences of both. This can include the use of email, mobile phone or any other application that guarantees communication security.

Attend capacity-building e-learning sessions.

At least once a month we will invite all fellows to an e-learning session on issues that include – but are not limited to – cybersecurity, advocacy, communication tools and criminal economies linked to extortion. This will be an opportunity for Fellows to connect, share experiences and start their collaborative project.

Participate in a Resilience Dialogue at the end of the year.

Towards the end of the Fellowship, a Resilience Dialogue will bring all Fellows together in an opportunity to present the Fellows' work, to reflect on lessons learned and to consider ways forward on the issues on which they have been working on.

These activities do not preclude other opportunities for the Fellow to attend other events related to their work in the framework of the grant.

How to apply (ONLINE FORM)

Interested parties must submit an application through the online form provided in the Resilience Fund webpage (also available at the end of this section). This form contains a set of questions where you should highlight the following information:

- A description of who you are: your personal details (such as name, nationality, date of birth, etc.) and your work linked to the Fellowship's theme, **extortion as an illicit economy of organized crime**.
- Your motivation:
 - How has organized crime affected your community? (With emphasis on this year's theme.)
 - What does resilience mean to you?
 - What have you done to encourage resilience in your community or the community you have been working with?
 - What specific problem would you like to help solve in relation to the theme of this Fellowship?
 - What actions would you implement with the Fellowship? Identify clear and specifications. If you have received other grants or fellowships please specify which ones and explain the coordination mechanisms you will use to comply with all of them.
 - Why do you believe you are a good candidate for this Fellowship?
- An outline of the work you have done so far, including links mentioning your work (such as news clippings, videos, documents, publications, etc.)

You will not be able to attach any documents to your application. Please make sure that you have included all relevant information in the online form. It will not be possible to edit it once it has been submitted.

Applications will not be received by email. They must all be submitted via the online form.

<https://forms.gle/qGV2QwyaLgf4yxJD8>

If you have technical issues uploading your application or if you have any questions, please contact: fellowship@globalinitiative.net

Key dates

7 December 2020: Call for applications opens.

4 January 2021: End of the call for applications. The Resilience Fund Grants Committee will start reviewing applications.

15 January 2021: Decisions on the status of applications will be communicated to applicants. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified via email. Shortlisted candidates will be contacted to request further information and/or be interviewed.

30 January 2021: Accepted candidates will be contacted directly about their successful application, with further information about next steps.

8 February 2021: Upon confirmation from all candidates, the cohort of 10 Fellows will be announced publicly. The Fellowship will begin with a virtual introductory event for all fellows.