

DARYL FOX: Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to today's webinar, FY 2024 Field-Generated Solicitation: Increasing Options and Expanding Access for Victims of Crime, hosted by the Office for Victims of Crime. At this time, it's my pleasure to introduce Silvia Torres, Victim Justice Program Specialist with OVC, to begin. Silvia?

SILVIA TORRES: Thank you, Daryl. Good afternoon, everybody. My name is Silvia Torres. I am a Victim Justice Program Specialist with the Office for Victims of Crime, or as you may often hear it as, OVC. Thank you for joining today's webinar, during which we are just going to go over the overview--give you a brief overview about OVC, our mission. I will then talk about the solicitation and then go into a little bit more detailed information as to what a complete application package should include, and then we'll open it up for questions.

The Office for Victims of Crime, our mission is to enhance the nation's capacity to assist crime victims, to provide leadership in changing attitudes, policies, and practices, to promote justice and healing for all crime victims. OVC administers the Crime Victims Fund which supports formula programs to states, territories, and tribes, as well as many of the OVC discretionary grant programs for victims of crime, including mass violence and terrorism. OVC is also the largest federal funder of human trafficking programs. In addition, we offer extensive training and technical assistance to all grantees.

Now, I'll just turn a little bit over to talk about this funding opportunity. Let's talk about, oh, the eligibility. As you can see in our screens, it's open to--pretty open to a lot of organizations including Native American tribal organizations, then nonprofits, small businesses. And while the main applicant has to meet the eligibility grant criteria, for this particular funding opportunity, we are welcoming the applicants to propose partners and obviously subawardees. And we'll talk about--a little bit more about those partners in a sec.

Program goals. As way of background, this funding opportunity has been issued for years now, I think it's since 2022. And what we aim is to--for the field to tell us about an issue that they see in their communities and meet a gap in services. And then they tell us how they want--you, as an applicant, believe would be best to meet that gap, to cover that gap. And we have been able to provide funding for a myriad of projects including legal services, victim advocacy, core diversion programs included in that, trauma recovery services, and hate crimes, and many others. So again, the idea is to come up with innovative ideas or solutions, in this case, to expand and increase the service options that victims of crimes have in the targeted areas. And also, we want to focus on underheard and underrepresented communities. Again, this is all about increasing their access.

So as I said before, we were going to be talking about the partnerships because this is OVC's particular area of interest for this fiscal year, for this solicitation. For that reason, the partnerships can be between applicants and local entities that those entities would have a unique understanding of the needs of the residents impacted by crime. So applicants are encouraged to partner with those local entities. And, you know, examples

can be, you know, you wouldn't think of a typical partnership but it can be a hair salon, a barber shop, a funeral home, community centers, and libraries, right? That's a lot of community gathering there in those places. However, you may also consider partnering with national memberships. One example that I can think of right now is the National Black Lawyers. So those are just examples, but obviously not limited to any of those that I just cited.

What are the goals and objectives? Again, because this is so open, we ask you to propose your own goals, your own objectives, and your own deliverables, because each project may be totally different from anything else that another applicant may propose. So the only recommendation for us is that you be as explicit as possible.

Now, the--this year, and following Executive Order 13985 for Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government, you have two priority areas that you could apply for. They are shown there and they're called 1A, 1B, right? So in particular sections, and I will describe these in a little bit of detail, you are to restate and demonstrate to some degree which priority area, if any, if applicable, your project would fall in and would be requesting that priority consideration. And this is just a little reminder, that if your institution--actually, all institutions, receives federal government--federal dollars, you must ensure that crime victims with limited English proficiency or disability have access to translation and interpretation services. So we want to make sure that you include, right, those costs of those services in your budget. And we know that certain languages are, you know, the consultants delivering those services, their fees may be beyond what OJP allows, which is \$81.25 an hour or \$650 a day. So if you have a consultant that you want to propose beyond that allowable threshold, you could certainly ask for a higher rate, and we would consider that--in that--if an award is made, you would have to have that prior approval to have that consultant to be able to deliver services at that higher rate. So, that's just something to keep in mind.

So in terms of the award information, we have or we're set to make five awards under this funding opportunity. And each award would be up to \$5,000 each. Our award start dates is typically October 1st of every fiscal year. And you can ask up to 36 months of duration. If you feel, you know, your project does not need those 36 months, obviously you can request less than that.

Now, let's turn over a little bit--to discuss a little bit more about the application process as I said earlier in the webinar. What does the application must include, right, in order to be peer-reviewed, and as we call it, meet the basic minimum requirements. So first is the two forms, the SF-424 and the SF-LLL, that's lobbying, which are submitted through Grants.gov. Then your abstract, your narrative, and your budget, and your budget narrative are to be submitted through--oh, I'm sorry, through JustGrants. JustGrants is our grants management software or system. If there are existing grantees [INDISTINCT] we have a few who may be familiar with that. And if not there, you may have been receiving already a lot of emails about trainings or webinars that we have been conducting to walk you through the JustGrants system as well. You may notice that

each--within each section, for instance, of the proposal narrative and the budget, you have a little percentage, right, to--after that particular component. For instance, statement of the problem, it has a 10% after that. That--what it means is the weight that is assigned to that component, and that combined will be the total score of your applications. So obviously, because this is so field-generated, the project design and implementation component of the proposal narrative has already a weight of 45%. And that's why I also said, please be as detailed as possible so that we understand exactly what it is you are proposing, how you're proposing it, who will implement it, et cetera.

Now, in terms of the proposal abstract, it should be, obviously, a clear and simple of the--of the proposal--of the project perhaps that you're proposing, no more than 400 words. And this is one of the areas where you have to--if applicable, you should include and address how you would meet priority area consideration 1A and/or 1B.

Now, for the proposal narrative, project design and implementation, we have a little few tips that we are providing about, you know, what to keep in mind when you write that section of the application. This is another, I think, area where you would address priority consideration 1A and/or 1B depending on the--on your project.

Now, in terms of capabilities and competencies, we ask you to describe the experience of your organization managing federal grants, state, or private funds, in, you know, to demonstrate that you have experience supporting services for victims of crime. And if you are proposing to partner with another organization like we are encouraging you to do, you should also demonstrate how the public can help you implement and achieve the goals of the award.

Another component, obviously, is the plan for collecting data. So, you know, that is not only a requirement under us, but it's also a way to help your progress--your project. We assess to see if it's within the goals of you what you proposed to do. And then, sometimes, it also helps to reassess and make any changes as needed, right?

So, if you take a look in the solicitation, there is a link where it will describe exactly what data elements you are expected to be collecting under this initiative. Now, your budget is the last component of your application. And, again, that's if you're applying for priority 1B, you have to demonstrate that you are dedicating 40% of the total award to that partner institution.

This is the SMART approach obviously. It is just to remind you to be as specific as possible and detailed as possible. But also the main takeaways for the budget is, anything that you propose should correlate with the budget items that you are requesting. And, again, the plan for implementation. So, you--let's say, you apply for the 36-month project period. So, each year the activities--the activities for each year should also correlate to the timeline that you are proposing. So everything should, you know, correlate the amounts requested and the activities that you are proposing.

Now, the attachments, some of them may or may not apply to your project, right, and these are just the list of those elements that may be included. There is also a checklist at the end of the application that helps to make sure that you have everything, every document that you need in order to have your full package put together.

So our application process is a two-tier, obviously, and we have two deadlines, separate systems, separate things. So, the forms that I mentioned earlier, the SF-424 and the SF-LLL are submitted in Grants.gov and they must be submitted by July 15 at 11:59 Eastern--PM Eastern Time. The second major deadline that's through Grants--JustGrants.gov, and that is due by July 22nd 8:59 PM Eastern Time. And that is for you to submit your full application. This is a requirement even before you start applying for the solicitation. You must be registered or have a current valid registration with SAM.gov. So if you are new, a new entity, just perhaps this might be your first time applying for the federal grant, we recommend that you do that registration as early as possible because it does take, I believe last time, it's about 10 days. So it's a lengthy process and you just want to give yourself enough time to complete that process.

Now, we also have, as I mentioned, the--a resource to become familiar with grant--award--I'm sorry, the Grants.gov [INDISTINCT] as the website in order for you to start submitting the two required applications--forms that are to be submitted through Grants.gov.

Then, this is some contact information in case you have any difficulties getting through SAM.gov or Grants.gov. That's just something to keep in mind. That information is also found in the solicitation.

Now, this is for any issues with JustGrants or any technical issues that you may encounter, and that may prevent you from submitting your full application. So that's the OJP response center. That is their number. It's important, one recommendation is when you call or if you have to call the OJP response center for whatever reason, it's important that you keep that information in--whatchamacallit? Ticket number. Because that way, the supporting documentation that you will be required to submit if you--for--you are not able to submit your application on time, and you can--and you have to submit a waiver for a late application. So, please keep those numbers very close to you.

Now, I also mentioned that we are going to talk about a little bit of the resources. Obviously, we have a lot but these are some of the most pertaining resources to--at this stage. So, if you are not familiar with JustGrants or if you have any questions as to, you know, let's say, as simple as how to attach a file. We are having live virtual sessions from Wednesdays at 2:30 to 4:30 Eastern Time. And these are some of the dates, right, June 19, June 26, July 3rd. And also, we may be adding more. So I--this is the website at the bottom of your screen, in case you wanted to check if there are any other upcoming trainings. [<https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/training/application-submission>]

The--and then, again, this is in your--in the solicitation. The link to the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide, it really is a very useful tool. It walks you through every

step of the process. [<https://www.ojp.gov/funding/apply/ojp-grant-application-resource-guide>]

Again, the JustGrants training resources have really great, like, videos and manual guides for--actually, from pre-award to post-award. So it's a wealth of resources out there to help you navigate the system. [<https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov>]

And, I guess, the DOJ Grants Financial Guide, that's kind of our manual. We as grant managers and users, on your end, grantees, have step-by--not step-by-step, but the overall guidance that--for major topics, again pre-award to post-award closeout and the way that DOJ works for every aspect of that grant components. Again, that's fantastic and, for instance, if your application is selected for funding, you will be asked to complete a training, and the training is based on this Financial Guide. [<https://ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/index.htm>]

And last but not least is the grant measuring report. Again, each program has their set of, what I call key performance measures. And this is the website where you can look at the data that is required to be collected under this program. [<https://ojp.gov/performance>] And this is just a reminder if you like to keep in touch with us or to know about us and follow us some of the social media that we keep pretty much up to date today. Pretty good source of information.

I hope I covered everything that you were expecting. But in case I have not, I will turn it over to Daryl so that I may be able to answer any questions that you may have. Thank you, Daryl.

DARYL FOX: Great. Thanks so much, Silvia. And thanks everybody who's joined today. And just to reference that the recording, PowerPoint, and transcript for today will be posted to OVC's website. So if there's anything you need to go back and reference from today, you'll be able to do so. An email will be sent to the registrant list once everything is available and posted. If you have a question, far bottom right of your screen, three dots like Q&A and we'll be glad to go through those. We still have a lot of time left today.

“Is assistance with the cost related to substance abused treatment considered a basic need under the terms of this grant opportunity?” Silvia?

SILVIA TORRES: I was trying to unmute myself. Again, I think I forgot to mention, this topic--this is open to any topic that you want to address through this funding opportunity.

DARYL FOX: “If we have an FY 2022 Increasing Options and Expanding Access grant, which ends in '25, can they apply this year for an entirely different project?”

SILVIA TORRES: Absolutely. If you're a current grantee, you can apply as long as this is a completely different project, right? And it sounds like you might be thinking about that, so, yes.

DARYL FOX: And there was just a couple questions on eligibility again. We can go back to that slide. Their specific question, "Is a small new nonprofit eligible?" Their current focus as an organization is assisting victims of domestic violence in rural areas.

SILVIA TORRES: Yes. Again, as long as you are a registered nonprofit organization, that meets the eligibility requirement under the solicitation.

DARYL FOX: Great. And I put that slide back up for everybody. Shows the entire eligibility for it.

Is--you mentioned in a link, the solicitation outlines, what data would need to be collected? Can you just--do you know that link offhand or point to the page number or just expand on that? What does that include?

SILVIA TORRES: Sure. Daryl, if you just scroll down to one of the slides where I believe I have the link there for the performance measures.

DARYL FOX: It's in the resources or grant reporting?

SILVIA TORRES: Right. Uh-hmm. So that's the link, the [ojp.gov/performance](http://ojp.gov/performance). And the way--when you go to that website, you would have to--I believe there is options in the--there is, like, little box to the right-hand side. And that will take you to another little site and then that's where you would find--first of all, they give you, like, a map of all the solicitations and then you click on the field-generated solicitation and that would help--give you exactly the questions or the data to be collected under this award--under this program.

DARYL FOX: Great. And I included that in the chat and also answered this question with that link. So you can link directly to that as you need to.

"Are there any age or geography focuses for this opportunity?"

SILVIA TORRES: Again, this is the beautiful part about a field-generate--this field-generated--particularly, there are no restrictions on topics, on geography or anything, so no, obviously, the US and territories.

DARYL FOX: That kind of leads into the next question, probably the same answer. "Are there are types of crimes covered or is it just kind of general as far as that's focused?"

SILVIA TORRES: No restrictions from us. It's quite the concession, right, pretty open.

DARYL FOX: Then, "Is a project required to have a partnership or is that just a preference?"

SILVIA TORRES: So because our area, the focus area--usually, when we have issued this solicitation in previous years, there's always an OVC area of interest. So most of

applications try to address that area of interest, right? Our area of interest this year, which tends to get to--the partnerships within--with institutions or entities that are not your typical, so while you are not required to come in with that type of partnership, it's one of the areas of interest for OVC.

DARYL FOX: "Are there any formatting requirements, font size, spacing, page count, word limits associated with the application?"

SILVIA TORRES: So that is also provided in the--a link in the solicitation. The page count is 20 pages and the fonts and the types that is, I believe, described in one of the links, but typically, you know, your Times New Roman, your Arial, 12. But, you know, as you go through the solicitation, just be sure just to look at the links, because they will give you a lot more, you know, detailed information on those particular details.

DARYL FOX: "Is it acceptable to request a full \$500,000 award amount and have a grant period of 24 months?"

SILVIA TORRES: Again, you can request up to 36 months. It depends, again, on the project that you are proposing. If you feel that--we normally get the applications for the 36 months. Why? First, if the proposal gets selected for funding, we--that grantee or award recipient would only have access to 10% of the federal award until their budget is reviewed and approved by the Office of the Chief Financial Officer. And--because, obviously, it's only one of the several components within the Office of Justice Programs, there are hundreds of budgets to be reviewed by that office. So that review may take a month, it may take several months. So that being said, if you apply for a 24-month project, you may have already gone into month four or five of the award period. And what you are really allowed to do within that initial amount that you can access before that project is approved is minimal. It's just to get the little foundation, like they hire, the program--for example, the project coordinator or director. But you cannot get into any subawards or contracts or anything, right? Unless--yes, you could, but that would be at your own risk. So for that reason, it's typical that with every new project, it takes quite a few months to get it off the ground. So unless you--if the person that is asking this question. Unless you're have--and I'm--and I'm only guessing, yeah--if you have a project that you want to spend and you already have everything in place and you don't need time to think about this project strategy to implement the award, your partner is getting all of your documents in order, like for instance, subcontracts for consultants aboard, then you may, you know, consider that you only need 24 months. But like we said, it can be up to 36 months.

DARYL FOX: This particular question, I wanted to go back to the two areas, 1A and 1B. I'm assuming it's the priority area slide, Silvia. Just to kind of rehash really quickly.

SILVIA TORRES: Right. So again, these are the two priority areas. The one is you would have to demonstrate a new project. We promote racial equity and remove the barriers to access, right? For communities that have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by inequality. So you would have to demonstrate

how your project would address that. The second one is that you have the capabilities and competencies to implement the proposed projects by having the--a culturally specific organization and dedicating at least 40% of the requested award funding, total. So those are the two priority areas. Now, I just wanted to also highlight that even if you apply for 1A or 1B, or both, 1A and 1B, that doesn't mean that, you know, you would automatically be selected for funding. That's just an area for consideration, but not automatically. And that an award will be made because you are addressing those two priority areas. There are other considerations that OJP and OVC take into consideration when making funding decisions.

DARYL FOX: "Does the total amount allocated for project partners equal 40% or can it be less?"

SILVIA TORRES: At least. That's why it is--the subrecipient has to receive at least 40% of the total requested amount. These are very good questions, I'm glad you're asking those.

DARYL FOX: And regarding the \$500,000 amount, is that per year or is that for the total duration of the grant?

SILVIA TORRES: Thank you for asking that question, or clarification on that. Yes, the \$500,000 are total amount. And again, when I talk about the budget, right, and how you purpose your project. So if your activities pick up or, you know, you propose--for instance, if your timeline, there are more activities, for example, in year two of the three-year budget--project period, then I would think you would dedicate more of the budget towards that to see if it will require more personnel perhaps, more activities if you're serving crime victims in that period. So, you know, again, like I said, the activities should align with the amount that you requested each year.

DARYL FOX: For this particular question, "Are agencies working with emerging victim populations that aren't yet considered 'crime' victims count for this? For example, they serve victims of cults and coercive control. In this wider topic, it really isn't considered a crime at this point. But what happens to them, typically, can be. Is this something that would be eligible?"

SILVIA TORRES: Well, this goes along with our mission. Our mission is to help grantees to assist victims of crime in expanding services and increasing that access. But our goal are victims of crime. So I think that would answer your question--that question.

DARYL FOX: Is there a specific amount that must be allocated in the budget for OVC finance training?

SILVIA TORRES: There is no cost. When I mention that it would do--require, like, the grant award administrator and the person that would oversee the financial aspects of the award. It's usually called the finance manager. There's no charge for the required



training. It's a virtual training. It may be offered in person sometimes, but out of convenience a lot of grantees do it online. It's an online training, several modules to it. It's completely free of charge. Also, the technical assistance that I mention that we offer for all grantees is free of charge. Those are awards that OVC issues to the technical assistance provider to--for those particular service to our grantees without any cost to any grantee.

DARYL FOX: Is there a general--you mentioned this earlier, Silvia, generally speaking, but is there a list of areas of interest for this or is it truly just a broad scope for [INDISTINCT]

SILVIA TORRES: I think our area of interest is creating--unless you already are an organization that have the pulse of the community and know every need of a crime victim in that community. But usually, we're looking into--in this particular solicitation for, I guess, venues that we haven't considered as channels for communication or information, right? So for instance, I mentioned the beauty salons because people go there and they talk about their personal lives, right, many times, often times. And if the--that--the information about the needs, right, or a gap in services, or the information about the services available to that population that clients may not be aware of. That can be a--that venue can be--can serve as that channel of communication about the needs but also about, you know, the programs that community and business may not necessarily know about. For instance, victim compensation, right? That's just an example. So that's why we are looking at the particular interest area this year.

DARYL FOX: "Is there a timeframe on when the award applicants will be notified?"

SILVIA TORRES: Usually in--because our awards--our period start August 1st. Okay. Fiscal year in this, August 1st, 2024. We start issuing awards towards the end of September. So, you know, the selected applicants will receive that--our letter by the--with instructions as to how to accept the award, if there's any questions or what have you. And that happens typically towards the end of September.

DARYL FOX: "In the case of proposed partnerships, is there a preference for which entity should be the lead applicant?" You know, the particular questioner is a non-profit who's looking to partner with a county or state entity. Is there a suggestion on who the lead should be or has to be for that?

SILVIA TORRES: So if you take a look at the eligibility criteria, right? As long as the--let's say the lead applicant meets that criteria. But also, you have to keep in mind that you have to demonstrate that the applicant has experience in managing either federal, state, or local funding to support crime victims. So whomever has the--that experience and whomever is going to oversee the implementation of the project should be the main applicant. However, for instance, if a nonprofit is primarily with a state agency for instance or county agency, I would imagine the nonprofit is the one because that falls under the eligibility criteria. The [INDISTINCT] does not meet to me that eligibility criteria. But, you know, it's all about how you--it depends, you know, in the kinds of

partnerships and, you know, yeah. Other than--I will just say just to make sure you do, the person asking the question, meet the eligibility criteria and the experience required under competencies and capabilities.

DARYL FOX: On the Priority Areas, is it acceptable to address both?

SILVIA TORRES: If--again, it depends on your project. So, yeah, if your project will meet both, sure. But you, the person asking this question, you are the person to answer whether your project would meet 1A, 1B, or both. But you can--like, if you went to the site, you know, some may fit both or some may just fit one. I don't know.

DARYL FOX: Is there a limit on indirect cost rates within institutions?

SILVIA TORRES: Yes. And for instances, if there is an existing agreement in our cost agreement, that will be, you know, what determines the indirect cost. However, if you--if it's a new organization that is not negotiating an agreement with the federal government, you may request the de minimis rate, right? And I believe we are in the process of changing it from 10 to 15% that you could ask. So you should, you know, consult about--look up a little bit more about that, information about how the de minimis rate would apply.

DARYL FOX: "Does OVC have a specific definition for historically underserved populations? What that would entail?"

SILVIA TORRES: I can't think of the definition off the top of my head. But if there's not a link in the solicitation, you can send that question to the OJP Resource Center--Response Center that I cited before. They would be able to answer your question. And I think in the first few pages of this solicitation, they have that link for questions that you may have. And I'm sorry, at this right moment, I can't think of that definition, but they will be able to provide that answer.

DARYL FOX: Yes, Silvia. And I think that's a good segue to kind of pause her for a moment as well. So, there's a lot of questions coming in on eligibility and your specific kind of angle on applications. So anything like that with the programmatic requirements, the OJP Response Center is who you want to contact here, as Silvia mention. So at [grants@ncjrs.gov](mailto:grants@ncjrs.gov) here, who work with OVC on crafting, you know, specific responses to your questions like that. So if--you know, once we conclude today, you know, you can queue those up and send those there, and they'll be able to provide a more official response to your specific query on your eligibility. Actually, not eligibility, but on your project.

SILVIA TORRES: Absolutely.

DARYL FOX: So I'll leave this slide up.

SILVIA TORRES: [INDISTINCT]

DARYL FOX: And then one person just generally had asked about where they find grants and where their organization can apply. They have variety of different venues, Silvia, but obviously, the OVC website would be a great start. Just go to their current funding opportunities and you'll have a list of everything that's been posted and that will be posted for the particular fiscal year.

SILVIA TORRES: And if it's a new organization, right, Grants.gov, right, has every federal agency that you can imagine in their funding opportunities field. It's a little complex but has a wealth of information on all grant funding opportunities. But yeah, it's--Daryl, you are absolutely right. If it's something that OVC or any of our other components within the Office of Justice Programs you're interested in applying, you know, that would be the place. And within the field OVC, obviously, we have information about not only about our current funding opportunities but you can also look at what kind of projects have been funded. If you just want to get an idea as to the myriad of programs that are funded by the OVC.

DARYL FOX: "Is prior OVC approval required to hold half-day trainings or workshops to educate community service providers on available services to crime victims?"

SILVIA TORRES: I recommend that you take a look into the resources that I cited. The DOJ Financial Guide, it has a section about conference costs. And in there, you will have detailed information as to what we consider a conference, even though it can be a meeting, a training, or a conference. And, yeah, it has pretty good guidance as to the expectations in how you would need--be--if, you know, that's what you're proposing and it gets selected for funding, then how you go about obtaining approval for that.

DARYL FOX: Does a for-profit organization qualify as a small business, or must the for-profit entity be registered as a small business with the SPA to qualify?

SILVIA TORRES: Correct. Correct. A small business, right. They have to [INDISTINCT]. If it's a profit--for-profit organization, one thing that I forgot to mention--that organization or that entity must forgo profit or management fees. So--and then--and again, you know, I believe the solicitation addresses that.

DARYL FOX: Great. So with that Silvia, we are at 3:00 p.m. Once again, as mentioned, I'll put this slide up if you need the OJP Response Center information. And again, the recording for today will be made available to everyone through email once everything is posted. So you can reference this as you need to as you work on your applications. So is there anything in closing you want to mention, Silvia, before we close out?

SILVIA TORRES: Sure. I just wanted to thank everybody for staying and listening to this webinar. And apologize for the rusty voice, still trying to deal with a cold. But I do appreciate your interest and your time in joining us today. Thank you, Daryl, as well.

DARYL FOX: So on behalf of the Office of Victims of Crime and our panelist, thank you for joining today's webinar. This will end today's presentation.