

OVC FY25 Specialized Human Trafficking Assistance: Supporting Survivor Engagement in Anti-Trafficking Programming Notice of Funding Opportunity Webinar Transcript

Serena Roche: Hello, everyone. Today's pre-application webinar for the [OVC Fiscal Year 2025 Specialized Human Trafficking Assistance: Supporting Survivor Engagement in Anti-Trafficking Programming](#) Notice of Funding Opportunity will be presented by OVC Grants Management Specialists Lindsay Waldrop and Jamie Welch and will provide an overview of one of their available grants. Thank you again for watching. Now, let's turn things over to Lindsay and Jamie.

Lindsay Waldrop: Hello, and thank you for joining us today. This pre-application webinar is for the [FY25 Specialized Human Trafficking Assistance: Supporting Survivor Engagement in Anti-Trafficking Programming](#) Notice of Funding Opportunity or NOFO. My name is Lindsay Waldrop, and I am joined today by my colleague, Jamie Welch. In this recorded webinar, we will provide an overview of OJP, talk about OVC's mission, and the NOFO, including the funding opportunity focus, eligibility, and required documents. Then, we will talk about the application process and resources. It will be helpful if you are following along with the NOFO and taking notes to help you when you are submitting your application by the deadline.

The Office of Justice Programs provides grant funding, training, research, and statistics to the criminal justice community. There are six component offices within the Office of Justice Programs, of which OVC is one. The Office for Victims of Crime, which is part of the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, administers the Crime Victims Fund, which is financed by fines and penalties from convictions in federal cases and not tax dollars. This funding supports formula programs to states, territories, and Tribes, as well as many OVC discretionary grant programs for victims of crime.

I will now hand it over to Jamie, who will provide an overview of this notice of funding opportunity.

Jamie Welch: Thank you, Lindsay. OVC anticipates making one award under this funding opportunity of up to \$1.2 million for a 36-month performance period.

Program description, which can be found on page eight of the NOFO. To inform and improve anti-trafficking programming, applicants should propose approaches that help build OVC anti-trafficking grantees' capacity to identify and partner with survivors in their local community, state, or region. The awardee will deliver training and technical assistance on effective victim service programming for trafficking survivors. This includes intense support to recipients of each fiscal year's new human trafficking victim service awards during their first year of implementation, as well as ongoing support for entities implementing existing awards.

OVC expects the successful applicant to propose innovative strategies for OVC anti-trafficking grantees to develop these partnerships and offer organizational peer support on survivor engagement approaches. OVC is interested in proposals that maximize the number of grantees supported through this effort.

Applicants should refer to application contents, submission requirements, and deadlines, as well as the budget detail form for information on allowable and unallowable costs that may inform the development of their project design.

Eligibility. Each category of funding has different eligibility requirements. These are detailed in the NOFO starting on page seven. Please be sure to confirm that your entity is eligible to apply in your desired application category.

Program Goal. The goal of the program is to support victims of human trafficking by helping providers improve the quality of available services through training and technical assistance on survivor engagement.

Program Objectives. There are two program objectives.

Objective 1: Provide assistance to OVC anti-trafficking grantees.

Objective 2: Support capacity building to provide quality anti-trafficking victim services.

OVC anticipates that funding through this initiative will support the expansion of the skills, expertise, and capacity of OVC human trafficking grantees, their program partners, and other stakeholders responding to victims of human trafficking.

Funding Priorities. Applicants seeking priority consideration should specify in the proposal narrative and the budget detail form, as applicable, which of the following goals the project is intending to advance and how it will do so. Addressing these priority areas is one of many factors that OJP considers in making funding decisions. Receiving priority consideration for one or more priority areas does not guarantee a funding award.

Performance Measures. Applicants can visit OJP's performance measurement page at ojp.gov/performance for more information on performance measurement activities.

Unallowable Use of Funds. The activities listed here are outside the scope of the program and will not be funded. Please be sure to review the guidance carefully as you prepare your application.

Additionally, as you prepare your application, be sure to refer to the budget detail form for further information on allowable and unallowable costs that may inform the development of your project design.

Unallowable Use of Funds (continued). As mentioned, the activities listed here are outside the scope of the program and will not be funded. Please be sure to review this guidance carefully as you prepare your application.

Funding Instrument. OJP expects to make awards under this funding opportunity as cooperative agreements, which allow OJP to have substantial involvement in carrying out award activities.

Lindsay, I'll turn it over for you to talk about application content.

Lindsay Waldrop: Thank you, Jamie. To be considered for funding, your application must include the SF-424 submitted in [Grants.gov](#), as well as a proposal narrative and budget detail form submitted in [JustGrants](#). Your application must include a proposal narrative that follows all formatting and content requirements, as detailed in the NOFO. The narrative should be double spaced using a standard 12-point font, have no less than 1-inch margins, not exceed 20 numbered pages, and be submitted as an attachment in JustGrants.

If the proposal narrative fails to comply with these length related restrictions OVC may consider such non-compliance in peer review and in final award decisions.

Tables, charts, and graphs may be included in the proposal narrative and can be created in a legible font smaller than 12-point. These items will count toward the page limit.

Your proposal narrative must include the four sections listed here and their merit review criteria. Your application will be evaluated for technical merit based on how your proposed project addresses these criteria.

In the first section of the proposal narrative, you will identify the issue or problem you wish to address with this project. Using supporting information and data, you will need to demonstrate the need's impact on the target population and how it relates to the purpose of the NOFO.

In the second section of your proposal narrative, you will identify your project's goals and objectives, and how these address the purpose of the NOFO.

The third section of your proposal narrative should be the Project Design and Implementation section. Here, you will detail the project activities that will help you meet your goals and objectives identified in Section 2.

The final section of your proposal narrative should detail your capabilities and competencies that you bring to successfully complete your proposed project.

Your application must include a detailed line-item budget using the JustGrants budget detail form. You may propose a budget that is less than the anticipated award ceiling amount. The budget should be reasonable to conduct the proposed project and be within your capacity to manage. The budget detail form collects the individual costs under each cost category needed to implement your proposed project.

Applicants should ensure the name/description of each cost is clear and provide the detailed calculation. So, cost per unit and number of units for the total cost. Applicants should enter additional narrative, as needed, to fully describe the cost calculations and connection to the project goals and objectives—including, if applicable, describing connections to OJP priority goals.

Budget proposals should include the funding needed to implement the proposed activities. In preparing their budgets, applicants should consider what types of costs are allowable, if awarded funding. Costs are allowable when they are reasonable, allocable to, and necessary for the performance of the project.

Along with your budget detail form in [JustGrants](#), your application may also require additional attachments. For those applicants with a current federally approved indirect cost rate agreement, you should upload it as an attachment in [JustGrants](#). Additionally, if you propose a rate for a consultant on your project that is higher than the established maximum rate, then you will need to request approval before incurring costs at that higher rate.

If applicable, you should also attach any supporting memoranda of understanding or letters of intent. Each MOU or LOI should include the following: names of the organizations involved in the agreement, what service or services and other work will be performed under the agreement and by what organization, and the duration of the agreement.

Your application must include the SF-424, proposal narrative, and budget detail form. In addition to these required elements, your application should also include many of the elements noted here. Please review the NOFO checklist carefully to identify which you should use. Use the checklist in your review prior to submitting your application.

To meet the basic minimum requirements to advance in peer review and receive consideration for funding, your application must: Be from an eligible applicant. Not exceed the award ceiling. Be responsive to the scope of the NOFO. And include an SF-424 form found in Grants.gov, a proposal narrative in JustGrants, budget detail form, including budget items, their calculations, and explanations in JustGrants.

And please remember, if you fail to submit any of the required documents, your application will not be considered for funding.

Jamie, will you cover Application Submission?

Jamie Welch: Great. Thanks, Lindsay. We will now share a brief overview of the application submission process.

Application Submission Overview. Your entity must register with [SAM.gov](#) and obtain a Unique Entity Identifier, and you must maintain active [SAM.gov](#) registration status at all times. For entities new to [SAM.gov](#), the registration process can take some time, so start early—at any point during the year—to be sure that your status reaches "Active" before you need to submit an application.

You will need to renew your registration in [SAM.gov](#) every 12 months. Even if you've applied for a federal grant before, you need to check that your registration is current and renew it if it is not. Applicants who do not have an active [SAM.gov](#) status will not be able to complete step 1 of the application process in [Grants.gov](#).

Also, be sure that your organization's points of contact in [SAM.gov](#) are updated, especially the electronic business point of contact, or the E-Biz POC, making sure those are current. The E-Biz POC may receive notices about time-sensitive actions they need to take during the application process.

The process for submitting your application begins in [Grants.gov](#). Once you have located the funding opportunity in [Grants.gov](#), you must submit the SF-424. This is the extent of the application requirement in [Grants.gov](#). Once your application has been submitted, and validated, in [Grants.gov](#), it will be sent to JustGrants for completion.

It may take several days for [Grants.gov](#) to complete validations and release it to [JustGrants](#). You will complete the rest of the application in [JustGrants](#).

Application Submission Reminders. There are two application steps, each with their own deadline. You must submit the required documents by the [Grants.gov](#) deadline of February 24, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. eastern time to be considered.

We encourage you not to wait until close to the deadline to submit your application. Please keep in mind during the final step of submission the [JustGrants](#) system will check your application for completeness. Unfortunately, we have had applicants fail to successfully submit their application because the NOFO deadline had passed before this process was completed.

Those that are completed after the deadline will not be considered for funding.

You may enter preliminary information into [Grants.gov](#), even if you haven't fully determined your budget or project scope. You will be able to edit and update all of your entries in [JustGrants](#).

Once you have submitted the forms in [Grants.gov](#), you will submit the rest of your application in JustGrants. The [JustGrants](#) deadline is March 3, 2026, at 8:59 p.m. eastern time.

The [JustGrants](#) submission should include all items that are required in the NOFO. For technical assistance submitting your application in any of these platforms, please contact the appropriate help desks listed in the NOFO and at the end of this training.

What happens after application submission? After the [JustGrants](#) deadline has passed, OVC will thoroughly review all applications. As a reminder, this process only applies to competitive NOFOs. Non-competitive NOFOs follow a different process.

First, we check to confirm that the application contains the basic minimum requirements that were described in the funding opportunity. For applications that miss these requirements, you will receive notice that your application has been eliminated from further review.

For competitive opportunities, peer reviewers who are subject matter experts assess the technical merits of an application.

OVC staff then assesses applications based on factors such as geographic diversity, past performance, and whether applications are likely to meet the funding opportunities, goals, and objectives.

We then evaluate the fiscal integrity of the applicant, examine proposed costs, and determine whether the budget and budget narrative accurately explain the project's costs and whether those costs are allowable and reasonable.

Finally, OVC reviews potential risks presented by applicants prior to making an award.

This pre-award risk assessment takes into account a variety of factors, including an applicant's financial capacity and past performance. During the review process, OVC may contact you to clarify program or budget details.

Applicants are often eager to learn about how their application is progressing through the review process. Unfortunately, DOJ staff, including User Support and the OJP Response Center, cannot share any information with you until the final awards have been made public.

Award Notices. If your application has been funded, specific [JustGrants](#) users for your organization will be notified by email and will see the award appear in their [JustGrants](#) account. If you receive notice of an award, you must take specific steps in [JustGrants](#) to accept or decline it.

The DOJ award acceptance checklist on the [JustGrants Resources website](#) can walk you through those steps.

If you are not selected for funding, OJP will notify you by email after all award recipients have been notified. You can visit [OJP's Grant Awards](#) website to see all OJP awards made by year, program, and locality.

All right, Lindsay, I will turn it over to you for application resources.

Lindsay Waldrop: Thank you. We have many resources available to help guide you through the application process.

Grants.Gov Quick Start Guide. Grants.gov has a [comprehensive quick start guide](#) to help you register for and apply to OVC awards. The guide includes sections on registering, roles, workspaces, completing forms, and submitting your application.

JustGrants Training Resources. The [JustGrants website](#) has a collection of resources available for you to use. Training materials include self-guided e-learning videos, supplemented by job aid reference guides, checklists, and infographics. These resources will help you learn to navigate the system to complete various essential grants management tasks during the application process.

Additional Resources. The [DOJ Grant Application Submission Checklist](#) includes a step-by-step instructions on preparing your OVC application.

The [Office of Justice Programs Grant Application Resource Guide](#) provides guidance to assist OJP grant applicants in preparing and submitting applications for OJP funding. It addresses a variety of policies, statutes, and regulations that apply to many—or in some case, all—OJP program applicants or to grants and cooperative agreements awarded in fiscal year 2025. Some OJP programs may have program NOFOs that expressly modify a provision of this guide. In such cases, the applicant is to follow the guidelines in the NOFO as to any such expressly modified provision.

DOJ Grants Financial Guide. The [DOJ Grants Financial Guide](#) is the primary reference manual to assist OJP, OVW, and COPS Office award recipients in fulfilling their fiduciary responsibility to safeguard grant funds and ensure funds are used for the purposes for which they were awarded.

Applicants will want to become familiar with the guide. It compiles a variety of laws, rules, and regulations that affect the financial and administrative management of your award. References to the underlying laws and regulations have been provided in the guide as much as possible.

The top 10 topics in the guide include financial management systems, allowable costs, unallowable costs, federal financial reports, among others.

Information About OVC. Visit the [OVC website](#) to learn about OVC's history and funding, find multimedia projects, and register for any upcoming events.

Application Submission Training. Today, we've given you a brief overview of how to apply for the [OVC FY25 Specialized Human Trafficking Assistance: Supporting Survivor Engagement in Anti-Trafficking Programming](#).

For further detailed training on application submission, you can attend a live weekly training session, download detailed training slides, or watch a prerecorded version of the training.

Important Contact Information. Be sure to start your application in Grants.gov and JustGrants as soon as possible to confirm you have access. If possible, submit your application well before the due date. OJP will only accept late applications if an applicant can demonstrate that there is a technical reason that they could not submit.

So, you will want to ensure you have plenty of time to address any technical issues you may encounter.

JustGrants can be reached by phone at 833-872-5175, or email to JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov.

When contacting any of these systems help desks, please be sure to request a tracking number so you can document that you sought assistance with your issue. This will be important in the event you need to document that you had a technical issue that prevented you from submitting your application.

Finally, the OJP Response Center is available to answer any questions about programmatic requirements of the NOFO. They can be reached by phone at 1-800-851-3420, or email at OJP.ResponseCenter@usdoj.gov.

If you are a current grantee, we appreciate your understanding that your grant manager and other OVC staff cannot answer questions about an open NOFO directly. For purposes of fairness and transparency, if you reach out to us, we will refer you back to the OJP Response Center so that your question can be documented and addressed officially.

Finally, please keep in mind that the OJP Response Center is also who you need to contact within 24 hours of the [Grants.gov](#) or [JustGrants](#) NOFO deadlines, should you experience any technical issues that prevented your application submission. Keep in mind, you will need to be able to document technical issues, which is why starting your application early and maintaining any tracking numbers, if you have reported an issue, is critical.

If you need assistance when registering or working in [SAM.gov](#) or [Grants.gov](#), please contact their help desk directly.

Thank you for your time and attention today.

Serena Roche: Thank you, Lindsay and Jamie, for that thorough overview of this important funding opportunity. We hope you found the information presented here today helpful. If you're interested and eligible for this NOFO here are the next steps to take:

- Access the NOFOs at Grants.gov and ovc.ojp.gov.
- Register in Grants.gov. early—this process can take several weeks.
- Review program-specific application deadlines and requirements.
- Contact the OJP Response Center for assistance.

For more information about the Office for Victims of Crime, please visit [ovc.ojp.gov](#). Thank you for your time and we hope to see you again.