

[Transcript from the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) Fiscal Year 2018 Initiative to Enhance Crime Victims' Rights Enforcement and Victim Access to Legal Assistance solicitation webinar, which was held on June 14, 2018. The archived webinar can be found at https://www.ovc.gov/grants/webinars_archive.html. The solicitation can be found at <https://www.ovc.gov/grants/pdfxt/FY18-Initiative-to-Enhance-Crime-Victims-Rights-508.pdf>.]

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Good afternoon, everyone. And welcome to today's webinar, [OVC Fiscal Year 2018, Initiative to Enhance Crime Victims' Rights Enforcement and Victim Access to Legal Assistance](#), hosted by the Office for Victims of Crime. So at this time, I would like to introduce you to today's presenter, Kate Peterson, Attorney Advisor for the Office of--Office for Victims of Crime.

KATHRINA S. PETERSON: Good afternoon, everybody. Thank you very much for joining us this afternoon. On east coast time, it's right after lunch, so we will try to—or I will try to keep this as lively as possible. Thanks again for joining. So--and thanks Mary Jo for introducing us--me--I keep saying us. Stacy Phillips is also helping with this solicitation and will be overseeing this award. She unfortunately couldn't be here today, but in my world, she is present so that's why I keep referring to me as an us.

So going from there, let me start off with the agenda and talk about what we are--what I will be talking about today. So to start off, I'm going to give--talk about the purpose, the background, and then cover the eligibility, the goals and objectives, the critical application elements, how to apply, award information, and the grants agreement. And then cover any questions that you all have and try to answer them.

Oops, sorry, I'm sorry.

Okay. So eligibility. This is covered in the solicitation and, basically, eligible applicants are limited to nonprofit organizations; faith-based and community-based organizations; colleges or universities, including tribal institutions of higher education; and public agencies; federally recognized Indian tribal governments, as determined by the Secretary of the Interior; or tribal organizations. What I also want to emphasize is that included in eligible applicants is also law schools. It doesn't say that specifically, but that is included under colleges and universities.

Now getting into the more detailed part of the eligibility requirements. Eligible applicants must also demonstrate the capacity to competitively award subgrants to individual legal clinics. They must also demonstrate the ability to provide programmatic, financial, and administrative oversight and support to multiple legal clinics; the knowledge and understanding of the enforcement of crime victims' rights; the experience of providing legal counsel and crime victims' rights; enforcement services for victims in criminal cases; and providing legal assistance to victims of crime in collateral legal matters; sufficient staff resources and the capacity to fulfill the objectives required by this program; and the capacity to carry out the objectives of this program as a stand-alone program.

So we're going to get into a little bit more in a few slides about the purpose and the background. But overall, for those of you who have joined, obviously you're somewhat familiar with the solicitation, the way the solicitation is going to work is that we are selecting one TA Provider that is going to be managing this project. And then from there, the TA Provider is going to be competing out to different subrecipients who--six--up to six subrecipients who will be--these legal clinics who will be providing crime victims' rights enforcement and legal services to crime victims. So that initial applicant is the TA Provider and that's what we are--that's what we are looking for in this solicitation. And so, therefore, it is very important that the initial applicant for this solicitation understands and has experience with crime victims' rights, and also has the ability--has a demonstrated ability and a demonstrated capacity to oversee and manage the six legal clinics.

And I also wanted to talk about number six, the capacity to carry out the objectives of this program as a stand-alone program. What that means is that what we are looking for is not to repeat a program that currently exists, but to fund a program that will--could be--could exist within a program that currently exists, but this project will be a stand-alone program. So, it can't be--this program can't be something that will be funded to current--to fund current activities that you all are already providing. This has to be a new specific project and a new specific program so--and I hope that's clear. If there are questions and followups, I can take those through the question and answer section. But the point is, is that we can't fund programs that are already being funded or already exist. This has to be a new program, and it must be supported by the institution. You must show that the institution--that it's supporting the new program also. That's another eligibility requirement.

Okay. The goals of the program, getting to the heart of the matter. To provide victims with crime victims' rights enforcement and representation on collateral civil legal matters. To raise awareness about crime victims' rights enforcement among prosecutors, criminal justice professionals, attorneys, local bar associations, law students, advocates, and other allied professionals working with victims, and expand the body of professionals who will advocate for the enforcement of crime victims' rights.

The objectives of this solicitation are the following. Overall, the selected applicant will competitively select up to six crime victims' rights clinics and provide intensive training and technical assistance to the clinics as the clinics launch their programs to enforce crime victims' rights, represent victims in collateral civil legal matters, and train allied professionals.

The six crime victims' rights clinics, selected by the training and technical assistance provider, in consultation with OVC, will enforce the crime victims' rights at the federal, state, local, and/or tribal levels, and will provide legal assistance on collateral civil legal matters that are substantially related to the victimization. They will also use funding to enforce victims' rights under the Crime Victims' Rights Act, or other federal statutes, and state and/or local laws. They will also demonstrate how attorneys would have standing in civil, criminal, administrative, appellate, or other proceedings to enforce crime victims' rights, and they will provide training and education on crime victims' rights enforcement to allied professionals.

I think what I also want to add in here is that what we are hoping to really get out of this project is to grow the population of attorneys through our experience with providing civil legal services. But as you can tell, the heart of this solicitation and the heart of the award is crime victims' rights enforcement. And so what we are hoping is that attorneys will come out of this and be able to have the expertise to enforce crime victims' rights in addition to doing the civil legal issues, representing victims on the civil legal issues, that are very much related and go hand-in-hand with the crime victims' rights.

And I have a really bad feeling that I skipped a slide at the beginning. That, I did, right? So --because I think--and then that's--not good because it--all right. I'm going back. So I apologize. I don't know how I did that, but I managed to not provide the right context. Okay. Because this is the exciting part for me.

All right, because--so I'll go through the slide language and then I'll go into my--the little detailed background off the slide notes. All right, so the project furthers the Department's mission by providing resources to fund crime victims' rights enforcement and civil legal assistance on collateral civil legal matters. The Office for Victims of Crime has funded similar programs for the--for more than 10 years. For Fiscal Year 2018, grant funds will be awarded to the one managing technical assistance provider, which will select up to six crime victims' rights clinics.

So, going back to point number 2, which is that we funded similar programs for more than 10 years. So, starting in 2007, we had issued a solicitation and award to crime victims' rights clinics that were doing solely crime victims' rights work. And from there forward, we also--we issued other solicitations in other years that were doing crime victims' rights clinics. Then in 2012, after the Vision 21 initiative had started and service providers in the field were identifying the need for legal services for victims and this huge gap in legal services for victims, and most importantly, the huge gap in holistic comprehensive legal services for victims, meaning that there were--was not a streamlined legal services network for victims, including crime victims' rights enforcement. So in 2012, OVC issued a solicitation and awarded six grants--six--awarded funding to six different legal networks to provide these legal services, streamline legal services. And again, it's--they--and [OVC](#) issued four awards in 2014 to provide similar legal services.

So in both--in those 10 networks, they are providing civil legal services and were also incorporating crime victims' rights. What we found is that there--from the 2007 awards and then in addition, the 2012 and 2014, there was not as much of a merging as we were hoping for between the crime victims' rights enforcement work and the civil legal services. So this 2018 solicitation is our baby of merging of the two, really, with the crime victims' rights enforcement focus and also allowing attorneys who are doing crime victims' rights enforcement work to also focus on civil legal matters that are substantially related to the crime victims' rights enforcement work. So, I apologize for skipping over that initial--the initial slide. I'm not sure how I managed to do that. I should've let Mary Jo handle the slides--the pushing the buttons to begin with, but that's the context and that's why we're here and we are all at OVC so excited about this solicitation. So I hope that, in addition to

people who are--or organizations that are considering applying for the TA, that there are also clinics that are considering applying to the TA Provider later on because the clinics are going to be actually executing at the--at that level and providing the hands-on services and the trainings. So, now I am going to head forward and try not to botch that again. Okay--So, then we go--All right.

So, we talked about the objectives, and I think we had covered pretty much the objectives and I talked about the overall objective, which was to really give attorneys also the expertise with crime victims' rights enforcement. And in addition, there is a training and technical assistance component to this, not just for the TA Provider but also for the clinics. At the clinic level, we are also expecting that the six sites selected will be working with professionals in the field to train professionals in the field on crime victims' rights. So, that will mean other attorneys, civil attorneys, law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, and other allied professionals on what crime victims' rights enforcement actually is and how you all can work together to help victims enforce their rights. Okay.

So now, getting into the critical application elements. There's a program abstract, and then the program narrative. In the program narrative, it doesn't say it on this slide, but the program narrative, the maximum page number is 20 pages. It must include a description of the issue, a project design and implementation, capabilities and competencies, a plan for collecting the data required for this solicitation's performance measures, project goals and objectives, and a description of how survivors will be incorporated into the training and technical assistance and the development of the crime victims' rights clinics.

And that last element is really critical and we will expect that from the applicants for this solicitation, and I will also let you know we will be expecting that from the clinics that will be applying to the TTA provider as well. Okay. We also--there's also the budget detail worksheet and budget narrative, resumes or curriculum vitae of key personnel, letter of commitment, if applicable, and the--and review criteria scoring breakdown can be found on pages 26 to 27 of the application. I'm going to go back to the letter of commitment. What that letter of commitment is, is if you are part of an institution, like a university or a law school, we are requiring that you submit a letter of commitment from the dean or other leadership from your university demonstrating a commitment from the university, law school, college, whatever the entity is, acknowledging that you are applying for funding and that you have a commitment from the underlying entity to support this program and that the entity, university, et cetera, will support the program should you get the funding. And you should know that, also, if that applies to you, or to your organization, that is 5 percent of your application consideration. So, it's not just that it has to be submitted as an attachment, it is 5 percent of your evaluation for the application. Okay.

How To apply. You refer to section--the--you refer to section "How To Apply," which begins on page 22. The applicants must register and submit applications through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). You must submit the application at least 72 hours prior to the application due date. That can't be right, right? Oh, that's not a must--I don't know why I just said that. Ignore that. That's a bad lawyer mistake on my part, I apologize. Submit the--we suggest that you submit the application at least 72 hours prior to the application due date. And that

is because we have so many technical problems on our end. I would like to say that it is not true, but that is true, that it is--we just--to avoid those technical problems and allow yourself a little bit of wiggle room, submit it 72 hours ahead of time. And I'm telling you from previous experience, over the last several years. It always happens, there are always glitches, and there is no guarantee that just because you have a glitch or a technical problem, even if it is on the part of our side, that you will get a waiver to submit it after the fact. It is a very high standard to get it submitted after the fact, too. I really strongly encourage you to submit it 72 hours ahead of time. If you are having problems, the [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) hotline number is listed here (800-518-4726, 606-545-5035) (support@grants.gov). And if you're having technical problems, there's another number for you to call as well. Again, there is more instructions on how to apply.

I'm going to talk about [SAM](#) because registering in [SAM](#) is absolutely critical, and if you have not already registered in [SAM](#), even if you are not applying for this solicitation and you're applying for another solicitation, as soon as you get off this webinar, go and register in [SAM](#). It is absolutely critical, it takes a long time, and there's been delays, so please do that right away.

Failure to follow the [Grants.gov](#) instructions on how to register and apply as posted on the--website will not generally be a reason to--a reason to get an excuse or allow to apply after the fact, neither will failure to follow each instruction on the OJP solicitation and technical issues with the applicants' computer or information technology environment, such as issues with firewalls or browser incompatibility is also not a reason that you will be excused from submitting the application on time. And, again, just going back to [SAM](#), failure to register in [SAM](#) or [Grants.gov](#), in sufficient time is not a reason that you will get a waiver to apply outside of the allowable time period, which is July 2nd.

Okay. Back into the meat of the solicitation, there is going to be one award to the TA Provider. The TA Provider, again, will competitively select up to six crime victims' rights clinics. The estimated total amount of the award is \$6.9 million. We expect that \$900,000 will be awarded to the TA Provider and that \$1 million will be awarded to each individual crime victims' rights clinic site, about that, depending on the needs of the TA Provider and the needs of each crime victims' rights clinic. The anticipated period of performance for these grants is from October 1, 2018, through September 30, 2021. All awards are subject to the availability of funding and to any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law. And, again, the deadline to apply is Monday, July 2nd, 2018, and you must apply by 11:59 p.m. eastern standard time. My computer keeps freezing from time to time. So now, we have questions and answers. I don't know if anybody has submitted any questions. It doesn't look like it.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: We don't have any questions at this time. So, I am going to move, while we're waiting and give you a little bit of time to think of something, I'm going to move to the next slide that's--oh--that has important contact information. And this slide will show you, once again, the information for the [Grants.gov](#) customer service hotline, as well as the [National Criminal Justice Reference Service](#) (800-851-3420) and their response center. Their--so the [Grants.gov](#) hotline, you can use that if you're having any technical

problems with your application. NCJRS's response center is available to you if you have any questions about the solicitation requirements or general assistance that might be needed. There's a phone number, an email address, grants@ncjrs.gov, as well as a web chat. NCJRS is available 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. eastern time, Monday through Friday. And the day the solicitation closes, they are available until 8:00 p.m. And so they will be there to assist you. But, again, I will stress, as Kathrina did, is please submit your application at least 72 hours in advance. That way, if you do have problems, you have some time to work through them. So, we will give you a few more minutes to see if any questions come up.

KATHRINA S. PETERSON: Okay, guys, it's Kate. I'm making a shameless plug for questions. I'll take any questions. This is, you know, this is our chance. I'm not allowed to talk to you all after this, so if there's anything, happy to answer any questions that I can, and if I can't answer them now, we can get a followup answer.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: How do we locate the application on the Grants.gov website?

KATHRINA S. PETERSON: My suggestion would be to go to [OVC.gov](https://www.ovc.gov) and look under their funding, and then there's a current funding tab underneath that, and there's a whole list of all the open solicitations offered through [OVC](https://www.ovc.gov). So, again, that is [OVC.gov](https://www.ovc.gov).

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: All right. We have not received any further questions at this time. So, you can also go to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) if you do want to locate the solicitation package as well. So, at this time, we will end the webinar. On behalf of [OVC](https://www.ovc.gov), we thank you very much for attending.

KATHRINA S. PETERSON: Thank you.