

[Transcript from the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) Fiscal Year 2018, Building State Technology Capacity webinar, which was held on June 5, 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-Building-State-Technology-Capacity-Solicitation-508.pdf>.]

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Good afternoon, everyone. And welcome to today's webinar, the Office for Victims of Crime Fiscal Year 2018, Building State Technology Capacity. At this time, I would like to turn it over and introduce you to your presenter. It is Joel Hall. He's a Victim Justice Program Specialist with the Office for Victims of Crime.

JOEL HALL: Good afternoon, everybody. As it says, my name is Joel Hall. I work with the Office for Victims of Crime and work within the State Compensation and Assistance Formula team. My team's primary focus is to work on large state formula grants as well as smaller discretionary grants that directly impact State Administrating Agencies, aka SAA. So, if I say SAA, I'm talking about State Administrating Agencies.

So, let's go over the outline. Overview of the Office for Victims of Crime. We'll do that. Then we're going to do a breakdown of the Building State Technology Capacity solicitation, going over the Purpose and Goals, Program Focus Areas, Eligibility, Required Documents, Application and Award Timelines. Number three, how to apply. And four, questions and answers.

The Department of Justice. This program furthers the Department's mission by awarding funds to Victims of Crime or what we call VOCA Formula State Administrating Agencies, aka SAAs, to enhance states' access to technology for the purpose of providing innovative services to crime victims.

OVC's mission statement is committed to enhancing the Nation's capacity to assist crime victims and to provide leadership in changing attitudes, polices, and practices to promote justice and healing for all crime victims.

As you see in this slide, this slide discusses the primary CV program that helps fund service programs throughout the country. There are two separate formula programs that are called state crime victim compensation programs and state victim assistance programs. State crime victim compensation program formula grants supplement state funding for reimbursing victims of violent crime out-of-pocket expenses that result from a crime. All states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands receive VOCA compensation programs. The Victim Assistance Programs formula grants support providers who supply services directly to victims. All states and most territories receive annual VOCA assistance grants consisting of a mandated base amount plus additional funds based on population. The last chart on the--on the right describes the type of funds this program will be using to fund this project. All of you are formula grantees and some of you had discretionary grantee programs in the past. This discretionary grant provides formula--discretionary program the opportunity to explore other areas to further enhance victim services within their state, whether it be to the

Victim Assistance Discretionary Training Grant which was previously posted or in this case, the Building State Technology Capacity Opportunity.

Now, I went over a lot of the basic nuts and bolts of the formula grants because there's a possibility that there may be some people who are listening who are new to the formula process. So, thank you, administrators, who probably have heard this speech 100 times before.

All right. Let me--give me one second. I'm going to skip this slide here. All right. The History of this Program's Solicitation. This discretionary grant program has been funded three times in the past, and I was in charge of all of them. It was originally funded in FY 2014 with multiple purpose areas. That was a Vision 21 program and we had--and we allowed the states to basically come up with what they wanted to do in terms of technology to enhance victim services in their state, whether it be to enhancement their database systems or to enhance the actual direct victim services through technology such as, an example, telemedicine.

It was also offered again in FY 2015 and 2016--or '17 with the primary focus being the improvement of compensation programs performance measurement compliances, only for comp programs. Many of the Victim Assistance people were unable to apply. This year, we're opening it up again. So, both Victim Assistance and Comp programs can apply and I hope to see a lot of you do that.

The goal of this initiative is to provide a competitive funding opportunity to VOCA formula State Administrating Agencies, to enhance their current system or build new systems to increase access to technology; increase access to resources; and increase administrative reporting accuracy. So, you can do any of those three. We're basically leaving it pretty much open to you.

However, we do have some focus areas that we would like you to focus on. You can go outside of these focus areas. These are in no way are exclusive focus areas, but this kind of helps give the people who may be applying--the people--the states who may be applying an idea of some things that we would like to see. But again, it is in no way exclusive. I won't go over all of them. You can read them in your leisure. It's in--within the solicitation. You'll see this continued on to the next slide. And yeah, just read it.

One of the more interesting ones down here, is improve the security, confidentiality, and effective use of victims' data stored within technology systems. A lot of times we provide a lot of enhancements to technology but we can also provide security for a lot of the enhancements because there's a lot of important information related to the victims that are in the system. So, that's a new, kind of innovative idea; but again, this list is not exclusive.

Those who are eligible to apply, State Victim Assistance And Comp Programs, aka the SAAs. Now, other organizations can be--can partner with other--with other applicants within the state. Examples could be you might work with your coalitions on a large state-wide database project. Or maybe there's a telemedicine project that you may work with

a very large healthcare provider in your state. Or maybe they're--you're going to work with another department, Department of Corrections to maybe do video testimony for domestic violence victims or sexual assault victims. Any kind of those things you can think of. But--and this is very important, the State Administrating Agency must be the prime in regards to the--to applying. So, make sure that if some people on the call are a part of a coalition or not--outside of the SAA, make sure you work with your state, not with us, work with your state so that the state applies in a timely fashion.

The solicitation opened May 29, 2018 and it closes July 2, 2018 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. It's only a month and I apologize for its shortness. The grant performance--the period that the solicitations were opened this year were condensed. But, you know, it should give you a lot of time to at least get a good-sized project or application done if you start now.

The award amount is up to \$750,000 for an unspecified amount of awards not exceeding \$7 million, meaning that your application cannot have a project that is over \$750,000. And we will make awards up to \$7 million, at least those awards that are acceptable, that meet all our requirements that we ask for. All such projects are encouraged, so please feel free to apply. If you have a project--that it's just a quick software upgrade, please apply. A \$25,000 award is perfectly fine. We look forward to those, but we also encourage large projects as well.

It's important to remember that this is a competitive solicitation like 2014. Many formula grantees are used to the funds already being provided to them where that all they need to do is apply. Such as the VOCA formula grants, those are automatically awarded by Congress to the states and some of our discretionary grants we've made it if you basically applied, you would get it as long as you fill out the documentation correctly. This one is not exactly that way. You need to apply. And if a lot of people apply, we will fund the best projects first, those who fill out the application the best. Competitive award process, just like we do all throughout OJP.

Also, SAAs can submit more than one application but will need to use separate applications based on the project. So, basically if you have a multilevel project, let's say you're a state with an SAA and you have Victim Compensation and Victim Assistance Program and you want to upgrade to your Compensation Program in a telemedicine for your Victim Assistance Program, do not put both in the same application. Separate that. At the same time, you may be a Victim Assistance Program with two separate ideas such as an enhancement to your database system and maybe a video testifying system or something. Those are two separate projects that can't be combined. You might need to do two separate applications. But that--but do not exceed the \$750 (K) in regards to having one idea like a database and chopping it up into two separate applications. We can't--we won't allow that. So, it needs to be--if it's one idea, it can't exceed \$750 (K).

Projects can be 12 or 36 months long. Please adjust the time according to the size of your projects. Small projects should be 12 months. They can be a little longer but let's keep the smaller tiny projects, that might be a text messaging upgrade, short as you can. We can always extend the date later but let's, kind of, keep a small timeframe.

Larger project--larger projects must not only increase the award period but must also use the strategic planning implementation and evaluation elements listed in the solicitation. It's a very important part of when you're applying to make sure that you have those three elements if you're going to submit a very large application.

Please note in the asterisk, these forms must be submitted or the application will be denied. You'll see a bunch of different names. The project narrative must be in there. The budget detail worksheet and narrative. That's the budget narrative, it must be in there. So that's two separate documents. So, the budget detail worksheet and the budget narrative. Those are two separate documents even though it's the same component. The budget narrative is in a separate--is actually something that's created by OJP. You can find that at ojp.gov. If you go to the grants part, you will actually see that. There's also a link in the solicitation so please make sure that when you do the budget detail worksheet, you don't make your own version up. Sometimes applicants do that. But we have provided one for you. The budget narrative would be on Word and you can write it however you want to as long as it's out, you know, as long as it follows the outline of detail budget worksheet.

Time-Task Plan is very important. Please make it clear from the beginning of the start date to the end of the start date. You may not have all the information that you're--you may need at the time because, you know, you've been rushing and you're working on this. And you can use TBD, which is to be determined, for some of the end dates. But make sure you have a Time-Task Plan, at least--at least a good outline of when or how you're going to start activities at least--especially large projects, the strategic planning part.

Logic Model is a detailed section within the solicitation. Make sure you have that.

So, all of these must be complete within the solicitation. If you do not, it may--it most likely will be rejected even though it may be a great idea. So, make sure you have these documents in there.

Applications must also include--now, if you don't have these in here we may work with you a little bit in terms of making--you will have to have it in there but it won't discredit you from your applications. So, Project Abstract, SF-424, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, please remember and many of the formula grantees know this from this year, we no longer accept statements, you have got to use to SF-L--the SF-LLL form, and fill it out as completely as you can. Areas that don't apply to you, you put NA. Indirect Cost Agreements. Tribal Authorizing Resolution, if needed. So, make sure you use that as best that you can.

Again, this is what you discussed earlier, larger-scope projects must include these three elements, Strategic Plan, Implementation, and Evaluation. There is much more detail in regards to these three elements in the in the solicitation.

All right. This is a very important part that I want to talk about. How to apply for funding. Number one rule, this is not--so, this is for SAA, State Administrating Agencies who are

online right now. It is not in GMS, I've already gotten questions about this in one of our other discretionary training grants. They can't find it. It's in grants.gov. Many of you who have applied to our discretionary grants before know this. But please go to grants.gov. So, the formula grants are done through GMS, discretionary grants are through grants.gov.

Please acquire and make sure your SAM number is up to date. If you do not, this can create a problem and can take you a couple of weeks to fix. Most states have this already in place, but sometimes they don't.

Another very important one that most states do not have is acquiring Authorized Organization Representative, what we call AOR, number and password. So, you need to make sure you go through that as quickly as possible.

And I cannot emphasize as much as I can to start your application sooner. Do not wait until the last minute. By starting the application sooner, you will discover unforeseen technical difficulties earlier, or realize that you are not registered in any of the sites that I just mentioned. Some of these are different than what is required on the formula grants and the example that I already gave was the AOR. This is a common mistake, a lot of people don't know that they need to be registered for it. They register two days before the grant close and then they can't apply. That's not good.

Also, if you are having technical difficulties with grants.gov at--towards the end of the closure--closing date, make sure that you document it as much as possible, emails to grants.gov, whatever. An AOR registration is not a technical difficulty. If you haven't registered in time, that's not considered technical difficulty. However, if grants.gov is having glitches and, you know, you post--submitted something and it kicked it back, please record it, document--or document it and we may be able to reopen it for you if there's proper documentation and the need was justified. So, you know, if for example, the last day of the solicitation when it closes and you waited until the last minute and you're submitting documentation and your computer crashes or grants.gov goes down for some reason, make sure you document that stuff.

Important contact information, grants.gov customer support number is here. Do not call me. Call them if you're having difficulties navigating the system. And the most important part is--below is do not contact me directly with questions related to this grant. You need to contact NCJRS which is National Criminal Justice Reference--Response Center, their number is below here. They will, of course, come to me for questions and things that they can't answer. If it's a registration thing, they might be able to assist you. But if it's a complex question related to the programmatic side, they will come ask me. But for--to be fair and competitive--to have a fair competitive work process, we need to be as consistent as possible and having all of our discretionary grants go through this resource is very help--to make--to ensure that we are fair and competitive.

Important Websites. These are always important websites to go through. Please mark those ones that you need. Most of you already know most of these websites because you're already grantees but we put them here anyway.

And Questions and Answers. If you have any questions, this is the time to do it. I can't think of anything else that I need to say. I want to thank everybody for coming. If you have any questions, this is the time. I'll be here.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: So our first question is, "can this funding support ongoing victim notification?"

JOEL HALL: I don't know. I would say it can support new victim notification ideas that you may have in your state. Victim notification is allowable. So, I would probably say it depends on what you're asking. If it's funded through--you know, we don't want supplantation, so I'm not sure how it's funded in your state. If you're just saying, okay, we have it, yeah. With that one, I'm going to be a little restrained. I don't know the answer exactly because it can depend on so many situations with, like, how you're already funding it. You just--funding can't be used to supplant other federal funding as you may know, the supplantation law. So make sure that you're just not asking to use these funds to fund--victim notification. Hopefully, that answer--is not a clear answer, but that's the best I can give because I don't know all the variables. Sorry.

All right. Well, we're going to--we're going to wait a couple more minutes. That's the only question we received. And I want to thank everybody for coming.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "Explain SAA a little bit more. Is a nonprofit an SAA?"

JOEL HALL: That is not. All right. So, we may have some people on here who are not state agencies. An SAA is a State Administrating Agency. VOCA formula awards, which were given by OVC which is us, must go to a designated agency by the governor. An example would be, California, the California Office of Emergency Services is the designated state SAA, State Administrating Agency. They can apply for this funding. Now, they can partner with an outside organization that wants to do something large within the state, a large project or something innovative. But the SAA is the State Administrating Agency and they're not a nonprofit, they are a state agency.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Followup question, "should we reach out to the SAA if we're interested in applying?"

JOEL HALL: Yes. If you want to apply, you need to go to the SAA and they have to be the prime. Again, I want to repeat, they don't allow you to apply, they have to apply. So you may have to do some negotiations with the SAA. They may not be on this call. And they might not be even be aware of the funding, you know, depending on what your project is. And but if you have a large project, let's say you're a--you're a domestic violence coalition for example, you know, this--and you want to do a large project that will affect all the DV shelters in your area, that would be a perfect example. Go right to the SAA as soon as you can and work with them on developing an application.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "Can SAAs apply for funding jointly with other SAAs for a joint project?"

JOEL HALL: If it's within the same state, yes. So for example, if you're in a state that has two separate programs. Let's take Montana, for example, their victim comp and assistance programs are not within the same building or the same agency, and they want to work on a combined joint project, which I think that them or maybe it was another state did during 2014. The answer is yes. Yes, you can.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Okay. "Can you give additional examples of separate projects or applications from the same agency?"

JOEL HALL: Let's see. I remember from the last one, 2014, we have one that did three, three separate applications. I won't say the state because, you know. And one was to support enhancements to their database. But basically their--they had a grant--a grants management system that they had and at the time, we wanted performance measurement and enhancements so they had to update their database system for the PMT. So that was one update. Second update--second application had to do with a text message feature, which they wanted for their victim compensation program. So this state had both the victim assistance and comp program under the same roof. So, the second one was to do a text features saying, you know, your claim has been awarded or not, the text--the text message feature for the compensation program. And the third is that they had done a telemedicine project that was actually going to run through the victim assistance program, not the comp program in regards to helping with forensic interviews or counsel--forensic counseling for children of sexual abuse. So, that is an example of three applications from the same state. I think we only award two of them. I won't say which ones but we awarded two of them. So, yeah, you can do that.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Great. At this time, there's no other questions but we will give you a few more minutes here and see if anything comes in.

JOEL HALL: All right. One thing, for states, State Administrating Agencies, do not--again, part two, part one, and part two. So \$750,000 is the max. Let's say you want to do a database that's worth \$1.5 million, don't say application one, part one for \$750,000 and then part two. Please don't--again, please don't do that. And make sure that if you do something that's large and it's used by many systems within your state agency, make sure you prorate it. So, if you're coming out with a new grants management system for your entire state office or Department of Community Mental Health and it's awarded by many, many federal agencies and you're going to use this database, OVC shouldn't be funding 100 percent of it.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: We are getting a couple more questions in. One of the ones, I'm going to actually answer and I'm going to add on to that a little bit. Yes, the pre--the PowerPoint and a transcript will be available after the webinar. It will take approximately a little over a week to get it posted to the OVC website which is ovc.gov. You will also receive an email notifying you when that information has been posted. In addition, we're going to go ahead and we're going to flip back to the slide that has NCJRS's information on it and I'm going to--we're going to leave that up here for a while. If at the end of this webinar you still have other questions, you can go ahead and you can email NCJRS at

grants@ncjrs.gov and somebody will answer and get back to you and help you out with that. So you have--at the end of this webinar you still have another resource for assistance.

So, at this time we'll start taking some of the other questions. One is they're asking "if this opportunity will be offered again in 2019."

JOEL HALL: I do not know. As you may know, as you saw it prior, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018, I always--this is what one of my top projects, and I hope to, however funding every federal fiscal year changes. And this federal fiscal year for the Crime Victims Fund VOCA--there was a substantial increase which allowed the ability to--or allowed us the ability to provide this funding. I do not know what next year will hold, so I would say, apply this year if you need to. That's what is best because I do not know.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Another question, and it's a really interesting question. "What is the likelihood of getting the daily contractor rates stipulated by VOCA lifted? Technology contractors almost invariably earn more per hour than the rate VOCA allows."

JOEL HALL: It cannot be lifted. However, it can be suited if you fill out the appropriate forms in terms of, a GAN, sole--not sole source, but the rate. You cannot put into your application. The application or if it's awarded, it cannot basically supplant or go over that amount. So, that could be consistent, it could be a problem. If it's over 650--or \$650 let's say you're doing \$900 and hour or that could be something that would be dinged in terms of when you're application is scored, graded, and reviewed by the peer reviewers. But you could after the fact put in a request to OVC to exceed that and you have to have real strong justifications because I do a lot of these solicitations and a--and a lot of these awards and they're usually able to work around at \$650. I mean, it is--it is a little tricky depending on what you're asking. So be creative, maybe there's other states that have done some innovative things to work on that. Sometimes the amount is prorated between different agencies. So there's different things that can be done. But you are right, sometimes they charge these flat rates that are--that are kind of high, per day or per hour. But you're going to have to ask for OVC's approval after the fact. You can't go over that in the solicitation.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: All right. At this time, there are no other questions. Again, we'll give you a couple minutes and see if anybody jumps in with anything.

JOEL HALL: Well, looks like we don't have any more questions. I want to thank everybody for attending. Please remember, July 2nd--oops, wait a minute.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "Do county agencies work through the SAA? Should county agencies work through the State Administrating Agency?"

JOEL HALL: County? It depends. Are you a pre-existing SAA subgrantee? That would really depend. I don't know much about your agency. So you may be--you may be a smaller agency within a county and the county may work with the state. But it really

depends on the state and a lot of states don't always work with counties because, you know, it really depends on who applies for their funding. So, there's usually a link to a certain extent. But you can't go to the county to apply. So, you need to go to the State Administrating Agency. If you have a small project just for your agency, this is probably not the solicitation for you. This solicitation is—really designed for larger statewide projects that would make a big significance. Now, it could be a count--I mean, it could be a regional area that you wanted to maybe work on a website or a mobile app for domestic violence survivors, which is something that we've funded in the past. That could be something interesting and you could work with your SAA. But if you're just looking for, like, enhancement for your one agency, your small maybe say CAC, what we call Child Advocacy Center. This is probably not the project for you.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "Our VC SAA has several other victim services. Can we ask for technology for each or just the VC side of our office?" For--and VC would be victim compensation.

JOEL HALL: So--read that again to make sure, I'm [INDISTINCT]

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "Our Victim Compensation SAA has several other victim services. Can we ask for technology for each service or just the Victim Compensation side of our office?"

JOEL HALL: I don't know. I think you might be able to. I think it's possible. It depends on your project. But it--I would--I—I'm not going to discount it now. I wish I could get a better picture to say yes or no exactly, but I would think that if you do--I--I'm thinking of a few states that do that. They have multiple--yeah. It's possible. I could say, you know, you can put a question in if you could provide to NCJRS with a little more detail because I need a little more scope and to understand that. But it's possible, very possible.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: So, followup to that last question is, "Would they be separate applications in that case?"

JOEL HALL: If they're doing different things, yes. If they're--but the--but if it's three separate things under the same coin, then maybe no. So you would have to determine that. So if it's to upgrade database system that affects all three components, you may want to put one application in, even though it's for three separate components, it's kind of just updating this database. But if it's very separate--if it's very different mark--like a text--editing, a text feature versus a database upgrade is--they're a different kind of things, so I would do two separate applications in that case so. I wish I knew--I could--yeah. So, in general probably separate, but if you have--if you think they are very similar, then do one application. But you can always ask that question at NCJRS.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: All right. Nothing else has come through. We can give you a second or two.

JOEL HALL: All right. Now, I think we're done. Thank you, everybody for participating. I really greatly appreciate it. And again, July 2nd is when this application will close--so--or

the solicitation will close. So please submit your applications. Again, repeat, repeat, repeat. Start now.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Bye.

JOEL HALL: Bye.