

[Transcript from the OVC Fiscal Year 2018 Specialized Human Trafficking Training and Technical Assistance webinar, which was held on May 31, 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/FY-2018-Specialized-Human-Trafficking-Training-and-Technical-Assistance-Solicitation-508.pdf>.]

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Good afternoon, everyone. And welcome to today's webinar, Fiscal Year 2018 Specialized Human Trafficking Training and Technical Assistance hosted by the Office for Victims of Crime. Today's webinar is about an open and competitive solicitation. Therefore, OVC staff will not be able to answer any questions regarding how you should design your proposal. Just please note that at this time. So without any further ado, I would like to introduce you to today's presenter. Silvia Torres, Victim Justice Program Specialist with the Office for Victims of Crime.

SILVIA TORRES: Good afternoon, everybody. And I'm pleased to be here with you to talk about the key areas for this solicitation. As you may notice, it's a brand new program that we created in response to the need of the field. The webinar we provided a general review of the purpose, the purpose areas, and the information about the application process, and key components but I do recommend that you refer back to the solicitation itself in case you have any doubts or may have any questions. And there are links provided in the solicitation. We'll also furnish additional guidance on any of the particular areas.

The purpose, as I mentioned earlier, of this solicitation, obviously, ultimately is to enhance the quality and efficiency of the services offered to victims of human trafficking. And to assist the providers in developing or implementing effective interventions that meet the needs of those survivors.

And let's start discussing the eligibility under this solicitation. As most of our programs, all states, units of local government, federally recognized Indian tribal governments, nonprofits, and nongovernmental organizations are eligible to apply. One of the key--also eligibility criteria for this solicitation is that the applicants have to have experience in providing the technical assistance in the purpose area under which you are planning to apply. And it could be a combination of the subaward with the main applicant. You will be able to also apply under one or more of the purpose areas available. And again, this section is--and the solicitation, it talks a little bit more about it.

The next topics that I'm going to cover is the project areas. And as you may know, there are three main purpose areas on which assist--technical assistance will be provided to service providers and core personnel. The first one is the Comprehensive Legal Services. The second one is Trauma-Informed Responses and Services. And the third one is Increased Identification, Referrals, and Assistance of Human Trafficking in the Court Settings.

So under purpose area one, the idea is to provide legal technical assistance to the providers serving human trafficking victims by enabling them to enhance their understanding of all their clients' needs and also enhance their referral process to the

most appropriate resources. The--keep in mind that the proposed project has to address the full range of the legal needs of trafficking victims. And I think the examples were included in the solicitation. And just to name a few, they may include family law, employment law, victims' rights, criminal restitution, and any civil actions. The technical assistance provider, or applicant, can also provide legal and social service providers--with assistance to develop additional resources such as creating pro bono partnerships or expanding legal services. And the applicant has to demonstrate the capacity to provide the training and support to service providers throughout the United States which includes the U.S. territories and tribal lands. Now you--some of you may be aware that although this is a technical assistance solicitation, just to keep in mind that any proposal should not include providing technical assistance on direct representation on vacatur or expungement manners for the fiscal year 2018--2019 funding guidance.

Under area number two, shifting over to purpose area number two, it's technical assistance to provide Trauma-Informed Responses and Services, and again, this is to enhance, to provide some semblance or a trauma-informed approach, or helping them to create or integrate a more trauma-informed system within their organizations by assisting them in creating or revising their policies, and their procedures and practices. And the overall guidance the idea is to abide by SAMHSA's 10 Implementation Domains from the Concept of Trauma and Guidance for Trauma-Informed Approach, associated with the solicitation and the link that was provided in the solicitation. And that they can include the areas of--including in the governance of leadership, policy, physical environment, as I said, with creating assessment, with the treatment services, and training and evaluation. But they can also include creating a subaward for organizations that are interested in developing a trauma-informed system within their organizations. That's also very feasible and applicable under this solicitation.

In--under this scope of work, we included some examples just to give an idea of what an applicant could be focusing on but obviously, they are not limited to those activities. So activities such as developing trainings for trafficking service--victim service providers, facilitating strategic sessions either with the staff, let's say, an organization with its board and their directors, depending on size of organization; or like I said, a subaward with one or more service provider's interested in developing the trauma-informed service.

And moving onto purpose area three, which is named Increased Identification Referrals and Assistance of Human Trafficking in Court Settings. The idea is to increase, obviously the identification of the human trafficking victims in court settings, and training the core personnel of topics to improve the treatment in identification of human trafficking victims both sex and labor. Also enhancing the referrals to the most appropriate service providers depending on the cases, and decreasing the re-victimization of trafficking victims who go--are going through the judicial system, justice system. So, it can take many angles. One thing to keep in mind is that this is--whatever the application may look like, it cannot build up on any previous sectors and resources to educate a courts such as the Human Trafficking and the State Courts Collaborative. And we expect the trainings to be more than just basic training from human trafficking. The type of court setting can vary

depending on your choice, you can do focus on diversion courts, mental courts, criminal court, it will be--or a combination thereof. There are a lot of possibilities under there.

And depending on how you choose your program plan to be, the Scope of Work can vary but this slide that you are looking at right now, just--it shows some of the examples of activities that are possible under this purpose area. And like I--like I said, it could be a combination of the human trafficking and prostitution, domestic violence, sexual assault, and the examples highlighted there.

As with multiple programs, the Deliverables remain the same in terms, obviously, of your data collection and evaluation. In this particular solicitation, it will obviously involve technical assistance materials to enhance the field with knowledge about your corresponding purpose area. The--it could also be--if appropriate providing training at any pertaining conference or webinar, or you using other existing mechanisms. It is encouraged and recommended to coordinate with other OVC technical assistance recipients already--again not to duplicate efforts--or to just expand the already existing technical assistance services in projects pertaining to your particular purpose area.

Under the application, the key elements remain mostly the same, as with other applications and those include your program narrative, your detailed budget and your budget narrative. And if you are collaborating with other organizations, we'd like to see your memorandums of understanding, letters of intent, and any proposed subawards, if any. Your action of research, this year we are moving into action research which is the--is a form of your project evaluation as well; as your plans for collecting data, required under this solicitation, and your project timeline, keeping in mind that if you're having trainings and conferences, you may want to look at the requirements for those under the OJP financial guide and obviously, the training plan if you want to conduct trainings under this--any of the purpose areas that you may be planning to apply.

The intent for us is to make one award under each of the three areas and up to \$900,000 for each of those. So, approximately about \$2.7 million in total under the whole solicitation for a 3-year period starting in October 1, 2018. And this solicitation does not call for a match, unlike other programs under our human trafficking funding.

The key date is Wednesday, June 27, 2018, by 11:59 p.m., eastern standard time, to submit your application. And I highly encourage you to try to make every effort to submit that earlier, just in case you run into any technical difficulties because if the issue is on you, OJP would not allow for any waivers for late submissions. So, critical to keep that in mind and to--if you're a new applicant to do your SAM and your DUNS, and any other requirements that are--have to come in before you can apply under that solicitation.

Now, we have some time. Sorry, I tried to be brief in order to be able to answer your questions because most of the presentation, we take it from our solicitation. But most importantly is to answer any questions you may have. And with that, I turn it over to Michelle.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Hi everyone, we do have quite a few questions here so we will slowly work through them. You can continue submitting your questions as we move along.

Our first question, “there are a number of OVC human trafficking RFPs out right now. Are eligible entities able to apply for more than one of these?”

SILVIA TORRES: Indeed. Nothing precludes you from applying under different types of programs, as long as you meet the eligibility and your organization has the capacity to fulfill what you've proposed to do under each of the solicitations and that they don't overlap with one another.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: And this question has come through a couple of times from different people. So if more than two people have asked this we're addressing it at the same time right now. “Are state universities included under states or are public state-owned institutions of higher education eligible to apply?”

SILVIA TORRES: If it's a--if it's a state-created institution, they would be able to apply. If it's a state-created institution they will be--they would be able to apply under the solicitation.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Confirming, applicants can apply for a minimum of one purpose area and possibly all three purpose areas but applicants are not required to apply for all three purpose areas, is this correct?”

SILVIA TORRES: That is correct, you can apply under one or under--or three or two of those.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Can you clarify how”--excuse me, I apologize. “In priority area one, is OVC expecting TTA services to be provided to their legal services grantees or all grantees serving human trafficking survivors?”

SILVIA TORRES: So you can provide comprehensive legal services to any service provider. And I know we encourage that you do provide the technical assistance to our OVC existing grantees if they request that assistance. But it's open to any social service providers that are serving human trafficking victims.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Okay. One second please. I apologize.

We have a question here about vacatur issues and what we're going to ask you to do because this is a complex question, would you please submit that question directly to the National Criminal Justice Reference Service? I changed the slide and you're going to find their information at the bottom, there's a phone number, an email, and a web chat. We do suggest that you email them. So you can actually, if you want to, even do that right this moment, and then we--NCJRS will work with Silvia to get you an answer to that question.

Moving along, “I see that institutions of higher education were excluded from the list of eligible applicants. Was that intentional or do academic institutions of higher education qualify as nonprofit organizations?”

SILVIA TORRES: Again if your institution is a nonprofit institution you are more than welcome to apply for any of the purpose areas or all of the purpose areas. It is not with any intent to exclude higher education institutions.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “In purpose area two, would OVC require TPA services to be provided to victim service provider grantees or all grantees that serve human trafficking survivors?” Did I--did we already ask that one?

SILVIA TORRES: Yeah, I think we--it was a similar question. And again, you are encouraged, obviously, to provide assistance to our current OVC grantees, but also any other service providers serving human trafficking victims.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Okay. So basically it was the same question except two different--or the same person asking about two different purpose areas. And then a similar question, “under priority area three, would--if the OVC's expectation that TA services be provided only to its court service grantees or all grantees providing--that provide survivor services.” So that's for purpose area three.

SILVIA TORRES: Right. So for that purpose area, it is particularly intended for court personnel and the definition of court personnel, is in the solicitation. It could be--on the judges, their assistants, the prosecutor's office. So it's really that--that one has a particular targeted audience, for the technical assistance.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Is the scope of work in all three purpose areas intended to be national TA provided throughout the United States?”

SILVIA TORRES: Yes. It is, again, it's just the nature of this solicitation that it is expected that the technical assistance would--the technical assistance provider would either deliver the assistance via--using webinars or teleconferences, or on site. But it is to be anywhere across the United States, and as I said, in the U.S. territories, as needed.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Followup question similar to this previous--this current one is “they just want to clarify that it should be national not a specific state.”

SILVIA TORRES: It should be. Again, let me backtrack a little bit. It depends what you propose to do, we--we're not telling you that it has to be national. Just tell us what you have in mind and--in your proposal. And if there's a specific reason to choose a region versus a state or versus across the United States, it is up to you.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Are the guidelines regarding the geographic area jurisdiction for this project state-level, county-level, nationally, etc. I think it's another similar question.

SILVIA TORRES: It is a similar question. No, I think that was just--it sounds like you were referencing the eligibility but not the—this scope of geographic regions for this solicitation.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: The following question is regarding private academic institutions. So they're saying that private institutions were excluded from the list of eligible applicants. "And are private institutions of higher education, do they qualify as nonprofit organizations?"

SILVIA TORRES: It depends how the private institution is created, if they are defined as a nonprofit then you're eligible; but if you are for profit, you will not be eligible to apply under the solicitation.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "If there's an existing OVC TTA project in the state can the applicant pursue this funding so long as efforts are made to not overlap?"

SILVIA TORRES: Indeed, indeed. And you can demonstrate that in your program narrative that it will be the intent not to duplicate but to perhaps enhance, as you said, that you can apply to enhance, or to create new or existing technical assistance.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "Are there any penalties that we should be aware of regarding letters of intent, or MOUs with subcontractor and subgrantees, if so what are those penalties? For example would we be penalized for submitting a letter of support instead of a letter of intent?"

SILVIA TORRES: I believe you are referring to the key components of the application and you see, that's the way the application is reviewed and scored. And I believe that was included in the solicitation for the amount of points assigned to each of those components. But I wouldn't call it being penalized, it's just on the review process.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "We are a juvenile court, are we eligible to apply, and if so could we subcontract with a provider agency?"

SILVIA TORRES: I would recommend that you look at the eligibility criteria again. And if you feel that you meet the eligibility criteria, I don't suppose there are any reasons why couldn't apply for it.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "On page 14 of the solicitation, capabilities and competencies, purpose area one and two appear to be switched, can you confirm, I cannot put the full text in here." So there's not a lot of space for them to list that but the questioning."

SILVIA TORRES: I would recommend, like we did with another question, that you contact the National Criminal Justice Reference Service and to formulate that question again, maybe they have--they can take a little bit more in-depth [look] at the solicitation to see if indeed what, kind of--changed, and they will be able to confirm that information for you.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "Can this project leverage existing TTA products and efforts being used on--in other projects including other OVC projects for the purpose of this project?" I don't think we're actually following your question, so if you could maybe clarify it a little bit and send another follow up that would be appreciative.

"Applicants must disclose information on open federal and state funds in use, does this apply to subgrantees?"

SILVIA TORRES: I believe the guidance indicates that the applicant has to disclose that information.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: All right. Okay, "the RFP specifies the requirement for submitting a training plan as an additional attachment, and this plan appears to be focused on conducting local training for community partners, and professional development training for organizational staff." Not sure if there's any more to your question, that's all that is appearing, so if there is some follow up, if you could please submit that. I see it, right below, I apologize. "Is this a requirement, or only to be submitted if our training is to occur solely at a local and community level?"

SILVIA TORRES: So keeping in mind that this is a technical assistance, that may comprise obviously a lot of training activities, I would recommend that you do include your training plan, the way you envision it. And I guess following that--the guidance in the solicitation.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "Is there supposed to be an overlap between existing OVC TTA projects? Can tools developed for those projects to be leveraged and used for this new project?" So that's the follow up to the earlier question.

SILVIA TORRES: Yeah. The applicant can help to distribute new or existing materials that are applicable to each of the purpose areas under the—in which they plan to apply. So yes, the answer is yes.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: All right. Let's see here. Let me, give me a second here. I see some other things popping up in different areas. So let me take a look at that, and we will get back to you. All right. So after looking through the questions it looks--it appears that we have answered everything at this time. You can have a few more moments. Silvia has a few other things that she would like to address. And if nothing else comes through then we will end the webinar.

SILVIA TORRES: Yeah. So, thinking about our questions and thank you. This has been very, very interesting, and interactive, and your questions have been very, very great. So I gather that there are several questions about eligibility, and, you know, if--a few may know it becomes very technical in terms of the definitions as to whether a private institution can apply, etc. So I do recommend like I said--at the beginning of the webinar to refer back to the solicitation where we explained--and we have a very detailed definition on nonprofit organizations, and state institutions etc. So--and you--if you still have questions, again,

you can formulate them to the NCJRS Response Center and if they don't have the answer they will contact me, and I will communicate through them to you, to provide the most accurate answer. And again, under--I just wanted to also reemphasize that under our award demands, there would be only one work under each of the purpose areas. So if you apply for two or more it's considered separate award. But only one award under each purpose area for up to \$900,000.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: One other question that had come through, somebody is asking "to explain the difference between a subgrantee and a subaward. If we partner with another agency to provide TTA is that considered a subaward?"

SILVIA TORRES: Thank you for the question. That comes up very often. And the answer is it's just terminology that we use interchangeably. So, you may hear subaward, subcontract. It is the same. And if you partner with somebody to conduct the technical assistance, it depends. It would be--it's--a quick definition of a subaward is if the institution comes to help you complete the goals of the program, then it's a subaward. If you're going to--going to for instance, collaborate with that particular organization, just to do one of the maybe 10 trainings that you plan under an application, if that is considered as a consultant or a contract for that particular service. It would be how you view that particular organization being involved in your project. But there can only be one main applicant in the list of the collaborating organizations that you plan to execute any subaward with.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: A couple other questions. One individual just wanted to make sure that we clarify that the solicitation will be due at 11:59 p.m., the day that--the final of the application which is June 27th.

SILVIA TORRES: June 27th.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: At 11:59 p.m., eastern standard time.

SILVIA TORRES: It's 11:59 p.m., eastern standard time. That's the last minute that you can hit that--click that submit button. But obviously, I already mentioned that I wouldn't recommend that.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Also, somebody asked to provide a link to the solicitation. The solicitation is available on Grants.gov as well as the OVC website. The OVC website is very easy, OVC.gov and you can go to that main page. Go under Current Funding and you're going to see a list of all their current funding availability and there will be attachments, PDFs there for each solicitation. Again, that is OVC.gov, Current Funding, and then a list of all the open funding opportunities will appear.

"Is there a preference for letters of support or MOUs?"

SILVIA TORRES: It depends on your--on your application. If you are planning to eventually execute subaward with the memorandums of understanding that you would be

submitting the application, then it is recommended to go that way. Again, it's up to you what you propose to do with your--in your application.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Can you address any potential conflicts of interest that may potentially disqualify applicants?

SILVIA TORRES: I think that's a very broad question. And if you have a particular situation or scenario that you want to ask about, again, I would recommend that you do look at our website. The OJP Financial Guide may address potential conflicts of interest that grantees may sometimes find themselves. And again, with any more programmatic and for general questions, please consult with the NCJRS.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: With regard to the subawards and subgrantees, page 17 of the solicitation will provide information on proposed subawards of any and on proposed procurement contracts if any. So, you can go and look there for additional information.

Also, regarding the due date and time, as a reminder, you are extreme--you are encouraged to apply at least 72 hours prior to that 11:59 deadline. Again, because if there are any problems with the submissions and Grants.gov gets a little bit tied up, you'll have a little bit of wiggle room in there. So, do not wait until 11:58 to put in your application.

SILVIA TORRES: In this fiscal year, you may be aware there are a lot of solicitations being issued at the same time and the deadlines being very close to one another. So, the system may get a little overwhelmed. So, thinking about that like Michele says, the earlier, the better and I know the deadlines are coming very soon. But just--it's just strongly recommended.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: One second, please and we'll continue on. Just give me a minute. So, there was a question about clarifying comments that were made regarding the Human Trafficking and the State Courts Collaborative. So, Silvia is going to address that right now.

SILVIA TORRES: So, the--under this purpose area, you are expecting not to duplicate the efforts of that. It was a grant 2 years ago and that's why we included the information about that program in our solicitation. So, if you click on that link, that would take you to have more information about the program. And that's why you are asked not to duplicate those efforts.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Again, if you do have questions that are not being answered and you're asking the same one repeatedly and you're not satisfied with the answer, we do suggest that you reach out to the National Criminal Justice Reference Service. Their information is listed right now on the screen and you can reach--you can send your questions there. Also, go back and look at the solicitation. Much of the information is there. Read it again. Page 17 of the solicitation does address the subaward question that was answered. But if that still does not satisfy you and you're still having problems, please

submit that question to NCJRS. We'll give you a few more minutes. It looks at this time that there are no other questions. So, I'll give you a couple more minutes.

Again, just to reiterate, the due time--the due date is July--June 27th, 11:59, eastern standard time. But you are highly recommended to submit your application 72 hours prior to that, if not sooner. At this time, it does appear that we have addressed all the questions and nothing else is outstanding.

SILVIA TORRES: Thank you all for your time and your questions. And I look forward to looking at all your applications. Thank you again.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: One more question just came through and we'll--we're going to grab it. "Does one need an analysis consultant on staff?"

SILVIA TORRES: It depends on the project that you are proposing to do and we defer that to you.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: All right. Thank you everyone. Again, if you do have any questions, please send them to the National Criminal Justice Reference Service, that information is here. The slides and the transcript of today's webinar will be posted to the OVC website in approximately 10 business days. But in the meantime, any questions can be submitted to the NCJRS. Thank you all. Have a wonderful day.