

VAWA STOP Special Projects 2015 Frequently Asked Questions

Updated 10/3/14

Added October 3, 2014

Q: My assumption is that the budget you want us to upload is for an *annual* amount, not the full amount we are requesting? In other words, if we are seeking \$120,000 for a 24-month period, we would show you a budget of \$60,000 (one year's worth of the full grant). Is that correct?

A: That is not correct. Your budget should include the total amount you are requesting over the total grant period.

Q: Can budgets be adjusted in the same way our current CVS budgets are? So that, if awarded, we find that some expenses may have been over-projected, and others under-projected, we can make those adjustments during the grant year?

A: Yes, budget revisions can happen during the grant period.

Q: We are proposing hiring a FT Project Coordinator for our project. Is it significantly preferable to OJP for us to hire a full-time employee for the two year period vs hiring a consultant (which would probably be easier for us to find vs someone seeking a temporary position)? AND/OR if we put in our budget that we want to hire a FT employee but are only able to find people interested in the position as a consultant, would we be able to make that adjustment?

A: OJP prefers whatever is best for you to meet your project goals. If you are not able to hire personnel in the manner that was planned in your application, you can adjust your plan to meet the needs of the project.

Q: Is the amount we put in the budget the amount we are requesting from VAWA funds, and NOT the full amount of the line item? In other words, it is ONLY the VAWA amount, and NOT inclusive of the match dollars?

A: Your budget should include your requested amount in the "Award" column and your match amount (award multiplied by .3334) in the "Match" column. Any additional funds (beyond the match requirement) being contributed to the project do not need to be included in the budget.

Q: It was stated that consideration will be given to organizations who have not received STOP grant monies before. We received/administered a STOP grant several years ago on behalf of a collaborative. Is there any place in the application that we could articulate that those STOP grant monies were not for our specific agency's use, but on behalf of a multi-agency collaborative project?

A: A logical place in the application to mention this would be in the “Overview of Total Agency” section.

Q: Under Section C (Grant Program Guidelines) of the RFP it states “Applicants must also upload signed certifications indicating they will meet the requirements of receiving federal VAWA STOP funding upon being awarded.” Where do we upload these certifications?

A: The certification upload piece was omitted from the application in E-grants. You do not need to submit these certifications during the application process. Rather, if you are recommended for funding, you will be asked to address these certifications prior to your grant being awarded.

Added September 26, 2014

Q: Can the law enforcement officer’s time be used as match if the officer is attending training while on duty?

A: Yes

Q: The RFP states on page 1, “These funds are also not intended for Sexual Assault Multi-disciplinary Action Response Teams (SMART).” However on page 6, number 8 of the Statutory Purpose Areas states: “Developing, implementing, or enhancing Sexual Assault Response Teams, or other similar coordinated community responses to sexual assault.” These two statements seem to contradict each other. Can you please explain to me the difference perhaps among a SMART, Sexual Assault Response Team and a Coordinated Community Response Team?

A: In Minnesota, a portion of STOP special project funds is annually dedicated to supporting a network of SMARTs across the state, as well as the Sexual Violence Justice Institute (SVJI) at the MN Coalition Against Sexual Assault for being the resource center for SMARTs. When there is funding available to fund a new SMART, a separate RFP is issued specifically for that purpose because there are very specific activities required and generally different grant periods.

Page 6 includes a list of VAWA Program Purpose Areas specific to law enforcement or prosecution related projects. Projects funded through this RFP need to fit under one of these categories to be eligible for VAWA funding. We included #8 because, for example, an established domestic violence coordinated community response team (CCR) might wish to expand their work to address some sexual assault issues, without developing a SMART. Our preference is for coordinated teams to address sexual assault in a thorough way, creating protocols and receiving technical assistance from SVJI as part of the SMART network. However, there are limited funds for new SMARTs and we know some counties may wish to choose something different.

Added September 19, 2014

Q: Is a county-based victim services program that is located on reservation land but is not a tribal government program, and is not funded specifically to serve the tribal reservation, eligible to apply for this RFP?

A: Yes

Q: The STOP RFP indicates that projects can be proposed for two or three years. Is there any potential for proposing a two year project that actually begins a year into the 3-year timeline – so starting January 2016 and going through December 2017?

A: The start date for all projects under this RFP will be the same: January 1, 2015. The RFP does not include staggering start dates.

Q: When do you anticipate OJP opening the next round of special projects? Three years from now? Two?

A: VAWA Special Project RFPs are normally issued every two years, and we anticipate this will remain the same, even though there may be applications under this RFP submitted for 3-year projects. In the unlikely circumstance that all the applications submitted under this RFP are for 3-year projects, then the next RFP would be released three years from now instead.

This is the first time the RFP includes the option of 3-year projects, which means potentially a more frequent RFP process down the road. However, factors such as future VAWA STOP award amounts, and how much of the current funding is granted as 3-year projects, may affect the timelines for how VAWA special project funding is administered. We are experimenting with this administrative process and don't have firm answers for future timelines.

Added September 15, 2014

Q: The RFP states, "... the majority of awards will fall within the \$40,000 - \$150,000 range." Will you consider funding applications requesting higher amounts than this range?

A: Yes. The range is provided to give applicants a sense of what most awards may be and to help applicants determine how broad to make their project. There is limited funding available and OJP hopes to provide a number of awards for various types of projects. Applications with a higher requested amount will certainly be reviewed and considered.

Added September 5, 2014

Q: In the past we were required to include an MOU with the domestic violence agency we were collaborating with. I understand that the project "must be a collaborative effort" with domestic violence programs, etc. Does this collaborative effort again require an MOU or would a letter of support, or some other demonstration, be sufficient?

A: MOU's and support letters are not required in this application and should not be submitted. (If applicants submit letters the letters will be removed and not included in the grant review.) The collaboration within your project should be detailed in your narrative, and clearly evident in your work plan and evaluation plan as well.

Q: Can grant funds be used to backfill for law enforcement officers attending training?

A: Yes. We understand the challenges faced by law enforcement agencies (small agencies, especially) to provide adequate coverage when officers attend training. Because this RFP is focused on creating criminal justice systems change we know project specific training is important. The amount of funding used for backfill should be reasonable within the scope of the project budget. In other words, it may be difficult for a project with a high amount of funding being used for backfill, to rate competitively against other systems change projects.

Added August 26, 2014

Q: The RFP states that “consideration for funding priority will be given to agencies that: 1) have not been funded for a STOP special project in the past 5 years.” Does that mean it would be unlikely for an agency that received VAWA STOP in the last 5 years to be awarded a grant? Does that mean other agencies would receive higher priority?

A: The likeliness of any application being funded will depend on how many applications are received and the quality of those applications. Applicants that have not been funded for a STOP special project in the past 5 years will be prioritized if their application makes a strong case for funding. We are trying to expand special project opportunities to a broader pool of applicants.

Q: The RFP states “Tribal Reservation governments are not eligible to apply under this RFP.” Can a victim service program located on the reservation, (or funded to specifically serve the reservation), apply under this RFP?

A: No. The OJP grant contract would still be with the tribal government because they are the legal entity for the victim service program. Special project work focused on the reservation is eligible in the next RFP, open only to Tribal Reservation governments.

Q: When do you expect the next RFP for Tribal Reservation governments to be released?

A: An estimated date is late 2014, but the release may not happen until the spring of 2015.

Q: If an American Indian serving agency located in an urban area would wish to apply to conduct a special project with several Tribal Reservations, would this type of project be eligible under this current RFP?

A: No, because the focus of activity for this project is still the Tribal Reservation. Special project funding to address the law enforcement and/or prosecution response to domestic and sexual violence on reservations will be addressed in the upcoming Tribal Reservation RFP.