

Minnesota Department of Public Safety  
Office of Justice Programs, Crime Victim Services  
445 Minnesota Street, Suite 2300  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1515  
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## **Request for Proposals**

Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) S.T.O.P.  
24-month Special Projects  
Due October 27, 2016

### **Description**

#### **Purpose**

This RFP is designed to solicit proposals to develop and strengthen effective law enforcement and prosecution strategies to combat violent crimes against women, including the crimes of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking. These funds are for time-limited special projects to create systems change by improving the criminal justice system's response to violence against women.

***Note:** These funds are not intended for supporting on-going direct advocacy services to victims, or to sustain existing victim service programming. These funds are also not intended for Sexual Assault Multi-disciplinary Action Response Teams (SMART).*

#### **Grant Term**

Applicants may apply for a project timeline spanning the 24-month grant period of January 1, 2017 – December 31, 2018.

#### **Eligible Applicants**

Public and private non-profit entities including local units of government and community-based non-profit organizations are eligible to apply for these funds.

Note: Tribal Reservation governments are eligible for VAWA special project funding to address the law enforcement and/or prosecution response to domestic and sexual violence on Tribal Reservations through a separate RFP process that will occur in spring, 2017.

*For non-profits:* Federal 501(c)3 tax exempt status is not required. To be eligible, an applicant must be legally incorporated as a non-profit in Minnesota and possess state and federal identification numbers. Community-based groups that are not yet incorporated are eligible to apply if using fiscal agents with non-profit status.

### **Application Deadline**

Applications must be submitted using the web-based E-grants system by **4:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 27, 2016**. No paper submissions will be accepted. Applications will not be received nor reviewed after this deadline. It is recommended you start early on your application. Do not wait to submit close to the deadline in case of technical difficulties.

### **Funds Available**

Approximately \$1.1 million is available for special projects. **Eligible projects must be a collaborative effort between criminal justice system agencies and community-based sexual assault and/or domestic violence programs.** Applicants may apply for grants of any amount, however it is anticipated the majority of awards will fall within the \$40,000 to \$150,000 range.

Special projects may be submitted in one of two categories:

- 1) Project to Address Protection Order Issues; and
- 2) Project to Address another STOP Program Purpose Area.

Approximately \$550,000 is available in each category. The Protection Order Issues category is an area of focus for Minnesota's STOP funds, to target efforts addressing the multitude of protection order issues across the state. This category will continue to be an area of focus for VAWA special project funding for approximately 6 more years.

In addition, 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, and
- 2) demonstrate a well thought out and feasible project work plan that targets the problems identified.

### **Match Requirements**

For local unit of government applicants there is a 25% match requirement on grant funds under this RFP. (Non-profit victim service applicants are not required to provide match, but may if they choose.) An awarded grant to a government-based applicant may not cover more than 75% of the total costs of the project being funded. Therefore the match requirement is figured by taking the one-third (1/3) of the budget request amount and rounding it up to the nearest dollar. For example, for a funding request of \$50,000, the match requirement would be \$16,667 ( $\$50,000/3$ , rounded-up to the nearest dollar).

Match may be in the form of cash (hard match) or in-kind (soft match) and will be reported on financial status reports (FSRs). Match must be fully met by the end of the grant period and be for the same purpose as the proposed project.

#### **Cash Match:**

Examples: state or local government appropriations, individual donations, private foundation grants, United Way, etc.

**In-Kind Match:**

In-kind match may include the monetary value of time contributed by people involved in or supervising the special project but not paid through the project, and the value of donated goods, services, meeting space, training materials, equipment, etc.

Grantees must maintain records that clearly show the source, the amount, and the period during which the match was allocated. The basis for determining the value of personal services, materials and equipment must be documented and to the extent feasible, supported by the same methods used by the grantee for its own paid employees. For further guidance on volunteer time, go to [http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer\\_time](http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time).

**Supplanting**

Funds may not be used to replace state, local or other public funds that would otherwise be available for the same purpose.

**Application Process**

All applications must be submitted via E-grants, the OJP online grants management system, at <https://app.dps.mn.gov/egrants/>. **NOTE: When ready to submit your application, click on “View Status Options” from your Grant Menu and then click on “Apply Status” under the *Application Submitted* option.** If you fail to do this your application won't actually be submitted. For assistance submitting your application or navigating through the application, you should reference the Grantee/User Manual by clicking on the *Training Materials* link at the top of most E-grants screens.

To establish a new user account if you do not already have one, click on the purple “New User” option in the login box in the upper right corner of the E-grants homepage and fill out the profile. E-grants User Guides can be found on the OJP Grants webpage at: <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ojp/grants/Pages/default.aspx>

**TECHICAL ASSISTANCE**

- **For questions regarding the application, please call:**  
Chris Anderson, Office of Justice Programs, Minnesota Department of Public Safety: [chris.anderson@state.mn.us](mailto:chris.anderson@state.mn.us) or 651-201-7302.
- **For questions regarding the E-grants online submission process, please call:**  
1-800-820-1890 or [helpdesk@agatesoftware.com](mailto:helpdesk@agatesoftware.com)
- **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ):**  
A FAQ document will be updated weekly with responses to questions received about the application, up until the October 27th due date. Access the FAQ on the OJP website: <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ojp/grants>.

## **Definitions**

Domestic violence program = an organization, or program of an organization that has a primary mission of serving victims of domestic violence.

Sexual assault program = an organization, or program of an organization that has a primary mission of serving sexual assault victims.

Local unit of government = refers to any unit of government (e.g., city or county attorney's office, law enforcement agency, etc.).

Accessible and appropriate services = Services which are welcoming, culturally inclusive, physically accessible, and appropriate to all victims seeking assistance. Those working with victims are aware of the cultural, individual and role differences including those related to race/ethnicity, language, sex, gender, age, sexual orientation, physical and/or cognitive ability, social class, economic status, education, marital status, religious affiliation, and residency, without regard to immigration status.

Traditionally underserved populations = Populations who face barriers in accessing and using victim services including underserved racial and ethnic populations; populations underserved because of geographic location, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity; and populations underserved because of special needs (such as language barriers, disabilities, alienage status or age).

Diverse backgrounds = applicants should demonstrate their understanding that women have unique needs that may be based on ethnic and cultural background, age, disability, sexual orientation, income, geographic isolation, immigration status and so on. Your application should reflect an understanding of the diversity of your community. It should also include plans for addressing the unique needs of groups in your community.

Technical assistance = includes a variety of methods (e.g., training, onsite and phone consultation, meeting facilitation, protocol development, etc.) designed to assist an organization or community in improving their response to victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence or stalking.

## **Statutory Purpose Areas**

Grants supported through the VAWA STOP program funds **must** meet one or more of the following statutory purpose areas. Not all STOP purpose areas are listed here – only those that pertain to special project funding to create systems change in the criminal justice system.

1. Training law enforcement officers, judges, other court personnel, and prosecutors to more effectively identify and respond to violent crimes against women, including the crimes of sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking, and dating violence, including the use of nonimmigrant status under subparagraphs (U) and (T) of section 101(a)(15) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)).
2. Developing, training, or expanding units of law enforcement officers, judges, other court personnel, and prosecutors specifically targeting violent crimes against women, including the crimes of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.
3. Developing and implementing more effective police, court, and prosecution policies, protocols, orders, and services specifically devoted to preventing, identifying, and responding to violent crimes against women, including the crimes of sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, and domestic violence, as well as the appropriate treatment of victims.
4. Developing, installing, or expanding data collection and communication systems, including computerized systems, linking police, prosecutors, and courts or for the purpose of identifying, classifying, and tracking arrests, protection orders, violations of protection orders, prosecutions, and convictions for violent crimes against women, including the crimes of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.
5. Supporting formal and informal statewide, multidisciplinary efforts, to the extent not supported by State funds, to coordinate the response of state law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, courts, victim services agencies, and other state agencies and departments, to violent crimes against women, including the crimes of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.
6. Training of sexual assault forensic medical personnel examiners in the collection and preservation of evidence, analysis, prevention, and providing expert testimony and treatment of trauma related to sexual assault.
7. Developing, enlarging, or strengthening programs to assist law enforcement, prosecutors, courts, and others to address the needs and circumstances of older and disabled women who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, or sexual assault, including recognizing, investigating, and prosecuting instances of such violence or assault and targeting outreach and support, counseling, and other victim services to such older and disabled individuals.
8. Developing and strengthening policies, protocols, best practices, and training for law enforcement agencies and prosecutors relating to the investigation and prosecution of sexual assault cases and the appropriate treatment of victims.
9. Developing, enlarging or strengthening programs addressing sexual assault against men, women and youth in correctional or detention settings.

10. Developing, enlarging or strengthening programs and projects to provide services and responses to male and female victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, whose ability to access traditional services and responses is affected by their sexual orientation or gender identity, as defined in section 249(c) of title 18, United States Code.

## **Project Activities**

The emphasis of VAWA funding continues to be on the implementation of comprehensive strategies addressing violence against women that are sensitive to the needs and safety of victims and hold offenders accountable for their crimes. All states, including Minnesota, are being asked to carry out these strategies by forging lasting partnerships between the criminal justice system and victim advocacy organizations, and by encouraging communities to look beyond traditional resources and to look to new partners to respond more vigorously to domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking crimes, such as faith-based and community organizations.

Special project grants funded under this RFP are intended to create permanent improvements in the criminal justice system's response to violence against women. Funded activities must add value and be efforts that are above and beyond what currently exist in the community. Funds are not intended to sustain existing programming. Applicants will be asked to complete a sustainability narrative to address sustainability of the systems change generated by this project funding.

### **Activities That May Compromise Victim Safety**

Ensuring victim safety is the guiding principle underlying the VAWA funding program. The following activities have been found to jeopardize victim safety, deter or prevent physical or emotional healing for victims, or allow offenders to escape responsibility for their actions and cannot be supported with VAWA funding:

- Procedures or policies that exclude victims from receiving safe shelter, advocacy services, counseling, and other assistance based on their actual or perceived age, immigration status, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identify, mental health condition, physical health condition, criminal record, work in the sex industry, or the age and/or gender of their children;
- Procedures or policies that compromise the confidentiality of information and privacy of persons receiving OVW-funded services;
- Offering perpetrators the option of entering pre-trial diversion programs or placing batterers in anger management programs;
- Requiring mediation or counseling for couples as a systemic response to domestic violence or sexual assault, or in situations in which child sexual abuse is alleged;
- Requiring victims to report sexual assault, stalking, or domestic violence crimes to law

- enforcement or forcing victims to participate in criminal proceedings;
- Relying on court-mandated batterer intervention programs that do not use the power of the criminal justice system to hold batterers accountable for their behavior; or
- Supporting policies or engaging in practices that impose restrictive conditions to be met by the victim in order to receive services (e.g., attending counseling, seeking an order for protection).

### **Unallowable Activities**

The following activities are unallowable with VAWA funding:

- Lobbying
- Fundraising
- Purchase of real property
- Construction
- Physical modifications to building, including minor renovations (such as painting or carpeting)

### **Food and Beverage Costs**

Neither VAWA funds nor match funds can be used to purchase food and/or beverages for any meeting, conference, training, or other event, except if the following applies:

- The location of the event is not in close proximity to food establishments. (It should be a priority to try to secure a location near reasonably priced and accessible commercial food establishments.)
- Not serving food will significantly lengthen the day or necessitate extending the meeting to achieve meeting outcomes.
- A special presentation at a conference requires a plenary address where there is no other time for food to be obtained; or
- Other extenuating circumstances necessitate the provision of food.

Justification for an exception listed above must be included in your application and budget. This may or may not be approved. Include this information in the narrative, section b. *Project overview, systems change & problems.*

### **Application Components**

The following will be addressed in the E-grants application:

- A. Applicant Form
- B. Terms and Conditions / Grant Program Guidelines / OJP Grant Manual
- C. General and Administrative Standards
- D. Narrative
- E. Work Plan
- F. Application Attachments
  - USDOJ Certifications
  - EEOP Certification

- Civil Rights Training
- Confidentiality Notice Acknowledgement Form

G. Budget

A. **Applicant Form**

Applicants will input directly into E-grants information such as the authorized representatives, tax identification numbers and other identifying information. This will be the cover sheet of the application.

B. **Terms and Conditions / Grant Program Guidelines / OJP Grant Manual**

As part of submitting this application in E-grants you agree to the Terms and Conditions and the Grant Program Guidelines. These address State requirements such as worker's compensation and data privacy, and Federal requirements such as civil rights and affirmative action. In addition, grantees agree to follow the [OJP Grant Manual](#) which provides basic information on policies and procedures for grant administration. By agreeing to these you are certifying you have the authority to make these commitments. Please print and review these documents with the appropriate agency staff prior to submitting the application in E-grants. These documents become by reference part of the formal grant contract agreement.

C. **General and Administrative Standards**

All applicants must demonstrate that their organization meets or has a plan for meeting all *General and Administrative Standards* by December 31, 2017.

D. **Narrative**

Applicants need to address the following (a through d) in a *Microsoft Word* document with 1 inch margins, single spaced, with a 12 point font size. When ready to submit, upload the narrative in E-grants. Please use the lettered headings and subheadings for the numbered lists. *Out of respect for the application reviewers we ask that applicants follow the page guidelines provided.*

a. **Overview of total agency – 10 points** (1-page)

Provide a brief overview of the organization, including the agency's mission, brief history, and primary activities/purpose. (If the application project is focused toward a particular underserved community or population, provide evidence of understanding the needs of women from that community who have been victims of violence.)

b. **Project overview, systems change & problems – 40 points** (2-4 pages)

Provide, in clear detail:

1. A clear, comprehensive description of the project;
2. Precisely what system changes are being attempted;
3. Identification of the problems being addressed;
4. An explanation of the strategies you've chosen (e.g., why do you think the strategies you've chosen will work); and



5. How women who are victims of violence will benefit from this project. If applying to serve a particular underserved community or population, identify this and address the unique safety needs of women in that community.)

c. **Planning & collaborative partners – 10 points** (1-2 pages)

1. Describe the planning process that occurred for your project.
2. Describe who was involved and how collaborative partners were identified.
3. List all collaborative partners and their roles in the project.

d. **Evaluation plan – 10 points** (1-page)

Provide a comprehensive plan:

1. List measurable outcomes for the project;
2. Describe how the evaluation will be developed; and
3. Describe what evaluation methods and tools will be used.

All collaborative partners in the project should be a part of the evaluation plan.

e. **Sustainability plan – 10 points** (1-page)

Provide evidence of a plan, from the outset, to sustain the accomplishments of the project after the grant period ends. Explain how the systems change efforts will continue and through what means.

E. **Work Plan – 20 points** (no page guidelines)

Applicants must download the blank *Work Plan* form in E-grants and then upload it back into E-grants. The work plan should include 1 to 4 measurable objectives identifying what you plan to achieve during the grant period. Each objective should have activities (1 to 6 steps or tasks in achieving the objective). Include time frames and positions responsible for each activity.

Reviewers look for clear, measurable objectives that are well planned, can be accomplished within the allotted time, and will be effective in addressing the needs the applicant has identified. Reviewers look for how the proposed project intends to create systems change that will improve the criminal justice system response to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and/or stalking.

F. **Application Attachments**

Recipients of federal funding are required to sign and upload these certifications found in E-grants:

- USDOJ Certifications
- EEOC Certification
- Civil Rights Training – Applicants are required to watch a PowerPoint presentation and upload a signed acknowledgment form
- Confidentiality Notice Acknowledgement Form

## G. Budget

This criterion refers to the reasonableness of line items and total budget in relation to anticipated results. Budget forms will be assessed for the relevance and allowability of costs to program objectives, whether the outcomes appear achievable within the proposed budget, if personnel costs demonstrate adequate staffing and whether budget items are clearly described and justified.

Budget considerations include:

- The budget covers a two-year period from Jan. 1, 2017 – Dec. 31, 2018.
- All expenses must be itemized and allowable.
- Calculations should be provided for all budget amounts (e.g., staff travel: 60 miles roundtrip to courthouse x 8 trips/month x 24 months x \$0.54 per mile = \$6,220).
- Round figures to the nearest dollar.
- Funding may be used to supplement but not supplant state and local government funds.

### Indirect Cost Rate

Applicants have a choice:

- a. Use a 10% indirect cost rate for costs not normally broken out by program; federal funding allows up to a 10% indirect cost rate for any grantee that has never received a federally approved indirect cost rate, of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC). MTDC excludes equipment, rental costs, participant support costs (Direct Client Assistance), and the portion of each subaward and subcontract in excess of \$25,000.
- b. Budget expenses in the applicable budget categories; or
- c. Use their federally approved indirect cost rate and submit a copy to OJP with the application.

“Indirect costs” should be entered under “Other Expenses,” in the short description box on the budget document. Applicants must provide a detailed list of the expenses that are included in their indirect cost amount, and these expenses may not be included elsewhere in the budget. The same applies to those using their federally approved rate.

## **Application Review Process**

This is a competitive application process. Reviewers will read and rate applications according to the following scale:

Overview of total agency	10 points
Project overview, systems change & problems	40 points
Planning & collaborative partners	10 points
Evaluation plan	10 points
Sustainability plan	10 points
Work plan	<u>20 points</u>
TOTAL POINTS	100 points

To see the rating form go to <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ojp/grants>.

Reviewers will be asked to rate each application based on the information provided and the clarity, substance and strength of the application, as well as:

- the complete and thorough response to all information requested in this application;
- how well the needs of victims/survivors from diverse backgrounds are addressed when developing project activities; and
- the compelling need for the project activities as described by the applicant and the strength of the case made for funding.

A 2<sup>nd</sup> level staff review will consider geographic locations, budget analysis, and current and past grantee performance including outstanding reports due, uncompleted projects, unspent or returned funds, status in regard to compliance with applicable standards, and termination of a grant due to noncompliance with the terms of a grant agreement.

Applicants will be notified of grant awards by November 30, 2016. Any appeals should be submitted in writing by December 10, 2016, to Raeone Magnuson, Executive Director, MN Office of Justice Programs, 445 Minnesota St., Suite 2300, St. Paul, MN 55101.

## **Post Award Requirements**

- **Grant contract process.** After being selected for funding, OJP staff will work with the applicant to negotiate a final budget. The formal grant contract will be initiated, signed by grantee and OJP, and fully executed. It is then a legally binding agreement. Grant agreements not signed and returned within 30 days of receipt may be canceled.
- **Administrative capacity and risk assessment review.** All awarded grantees will need to have an administrative capacity and risk assessment review completed by OJP staff before the grant becomes operational.
- **Training.** Grantees may be required to attend new OJP grantee orientation training.
- **Progress Reporting.** All programs awarded funds are required to complete program narrative and financial reports in E-grants. Grantees will also be required to submit the *U.S. Department of Justice VAWA STOP Annual Progress Report* at the conclusion of each calendar year.
- **Grant payments.** This is a cost reimbursement grant. Grantees will only be paid for eligible expenses (after the grant contract is fully executed) that are incurred and are consistent with the negotiated budget. Non-profit agencies may request a one-month's cash advance at the beginning of the grant period.

- **File Documents.** If selected to receive funding, the applicant must submit, or already have on file at OJP, the most current version of the following applicable documents prior to the issuance of a grant contract:
  - Current By-laws
  - Articles of Incorporation
  - IRS Form 990 for the 2 most recent years
  - Governing board roster
  
- **OJP Grant Manual.** Grantees agree to follow the OJP Grant Manual as part of the application process. The manual is a resource for how OJP manages grants and covers topics such as grant administration policies, program modification policies, general accounting requirements, etc.  
<https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ojp/grants/Documents/grant%20manual%20current.pdf>

### **Right of Cancellation**

The State reserves the right to cancel this solicitation if it is considered to be in its best interest. The State reserves the right to negotiate modifications to the application or to reject any and all applications received as a result of this Request for Proposals. The State will not award a grant contract solely on the basis of an application made in response to this request, or pay for information solicited or obtained as part of this process.