

[Transcript from the [OVC Fiscal Year 2021 VOCA Victim Compensation Fellow](#) pre-application webinar, which was held June 2, 2021. The archived webinar can be found at: <https://ovc.ojp.gov/funding/funding-webinars.>]

DARYL FOX: Good afternoon, everyone and welcome to today's webinar, FY 2021 VOCA Victim Compensation Fellow, hosted by the Office for Victims of Crime.

At this time, I'd like to introduce today's presenter Jalila Sebbata, Grants Management Specialist within the State Victim Resource Division of the Office for Victims of Crime. Jalila?

JALILA SEBBATA: Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Jalila Sebbata. I'm a Grant Management Specialist with the Office for Victims of Crime, State Victim Resource Division.

During this webinar, we will cover OVC Overview and Mission; breakdown of the solicitation to include project purpose, goal, and objectives, eligibility, application and award timelines, required documents for submission; application process, as well as a short question and answer at the end of the session.

OVC Overview and Mission. OVC is committed to enhancing the Nation's capacity to assist crime victims and to providing leadership in changing policies and practices to promote justice and healing for all victims of crime. The Office for Victims of Crime administers the Crime Victims Fund, which is financed by fines and penalties paid by convicted federal offenders and not from tax dollars. OVC channels that money towards victim compensation and assistance throughout the United States, raises awareness about victims' issues, promotes compliance with victims' rights laws, and provides training and technical assistance as well as publications and products to victim assistance professionals. Due to Crime Victims Fund, OVC programs support victims in tribal communities, state victim compensation and assistance programs, provide training and technical assistance and information resources, support victims of human trafficking and national scope demonstration and service projects.

This is the overall timeline. The solicitation opened on May 19<sup>th</sup>, and will close on Monday, July 19<sup>th</sup>, at 11:59 PM, Eastern Time. DOJ expects to award grants no later than September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021. And all project start dates should be on or after October 1, 2021. Please note, successful applicants may not begin work until the budget has been reviewed and officially approved by OJP. Additional information or restrictions will be outlined in--within the award package.

Eligibility, only individuals are eligible to apply for the solicitation. The successful candidate must demonstrate substantial knowledge of data and research related to victimization and victim services, and have the skills to communicate orally and in writing with a broad audience of stakeholders. Applicants must be able to be on site at OVC in Washington, D.C., for a minimum of 1 week per 6 months throughout a 36-month project period, unless there are unique circumstances that would prevent the grantee fellow from being on site. Again, organizations are not eligible to apply. For additional information on eligibility, please review the title page of the solicitation.

Program Description. This program will support a grantee fellow at OVC. The individual awarded funding under this program will work collaboratively with OVC and the crime victim services field to improve support and resources for state victim compensation programs.

Located on page 5 of the solicitation, please review the details around schedule, time sheets, equipment/supplies, security clearance, relationship to OVC, federal debt, lobbying, and financial management training.

The goal of this fellowship program is to improve support and resources for state compensation programs to more efficiently and effectively administer their programs and VOCA Victim Compensation Program funding, including increasing access to compensation for victims of color who have historically had challenges with accessing or receiving compensation in comparison to other eligible victim populations.

Objectives. Assist OVC and OJP work with State Administrators to support compensation programs. Assess individual state compensation programs and applicable laws, rules, regulations, policies and other guidance or programs impacting the operations and execution of state compensation programs. Identify barriers that prevent all victims of crime including, victims of color, from accessing and receiving compensation and provide recommendations at the national and state level to overcome those barriers. Advance OVC and OJP's support of compensation programs to promote equity in access to and receipt of compensation funding. Identify model best practices across compensation programs, share these best practices with OVC and other state programs, and develop trainings and public outreach efforts to raise awareness about these practices. And finally, make recommendations to OVC about how to institutionalize communication and collaboration innovation that will improve coordination with State Administrators.

The project will produce the following deliverables. A nationwide assessment of state compensation programs incorporating previous OVC and OJP and other field generated work in this area. A report on recommendations to improve OVC and OJP's efforts to enhance communication with states regarding compensation programs. This will include recommendations for OVC to institutionalize improved communication and collaboration with State Administrators. A report on recommendations to improve OVC and OJP's support of state compensation systems, policies, and structures to include: A, identify barriers that prevent all victims of crime, including victims of color, from accessing and receiving compensation; B, recommendations at the national and state level to overcome those barriers; and C, recommendations to advance OVC and OJP efforts to promote equity in access to and receive of compensation funding. Trainings, outreach, public awareness efforts and public resources, which are developed and conducted to raise awareness about OVC's efforts to increase support to state compensation programs. Focused groups facilitated with compensation administrators and OVC staff to gain better understanding of the needs of the compensation programs at the state level. And finally, monthly reports submitted to the OVC program manager outlining the activities completed.

This FY 2021, OJP will give priority consideration in award decisions, the applications that demonstrate ways in which their project will advance one or more of the Department of Justice

priorities, which include promoting civil rights, increasing access to justice, reporting crime victims, protecting the public from crime and evolving threats, and building trust between law enforcement and the community. Another priority consideration will be for applicants that demonstrate that the individuals who are intended to benefit from the requested grant reside in high-poverty areas or persistent-poverty counties. The solicitation contains the definitions of these terms.

OVC expects to make one award for a maximum dollar amount of \$400,000. The period of performance start date will be October 1, 2021. And the period of performance will be for 36 months. OVC may, in certain cases, provide additional funding in future years to awards made under this solicitation through continuation award. OJP will consider among other factors, OJP's strategic priorities, a recipients' overall management of the award and progress of award-funded work when making continuation award decisions. All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and to any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law.

The award funded under this solicitation will be made as a cooperative agreement. This means that there will be substantial involvement between OVC and the recipient during the performance period. The awarding agency will closely participate in the performance of the program. Please see the administrative national policy and other legal requirement section of the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for more information on the legal requirements generally applicable to cooperative agreements. I believe the chat box included the link.

Now we'll move to information pertaining to the application and submission process.

These elements must be included in the application submission to meet the basic minimum requirements in order to advance to peer review and receive consideration for funding. One, the Proposal Abstract. Two, the Proposal Narrative, which includes the Description of the Issue, which accounts for 20 percent; the Project Design and Implementation, another 20 percent; Capabilities and Competencies, accounts for 45 percent; Plan for Collecting the Data for this Solicitation's Performance Measures, which is 5 percent. And finally, the Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative which are a web-based form and accounts for 10 percent.

Starting with the Proposal Abstract. A Proposal Abstract of no more than 400 words summarizing the proposed project including project activities, products and deliverables, the service area and who will benefit from the proposed project will be completed in the JustGrants web-based form.

Second, the Proposal Narrative. Please ensure to adhere to the Proposal Narrative formatting requirements included here. If the Proposal Narrative fails to comply with these link-related restrictions, OVC may consider such noncompliance in peer review and in final award decisions. The Proposal Narrative must be double-spaced, use a standard 12-point font, have no less--no less than 1-inch margins, not exceed 20 pages, pages should be numbered, and be submitted as an attachment in JustGrants.

Now I'll going to details about each of the following four sections, which are part of the Proposal Narrative.

Starting with the Description of the Issue. The applicant must clearly articulate an understanding of the problem that this project plans to address by providing information about current practices and state compensation programs, how data can be used by victim compensation administrators and other providers in the field to improve services for victims, gaps in information and knowledge by practitioners within the field, gaps in accessing compensation, focusing on victims of color, problems related to disseminating information to the field, and integration of information into practice.

Project Design and Implementation. This section should include goals, objectives, and activities that are aligned with the solicitation. It should be brief, concise, and clear. Make sure the information is consistent throughout your proposal. Create solid goals and measurable objectives that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound. Focus on the future and setting a realistic timeline to complete the project.

Capabilities and Competencies. This section must provide a clear description of academic and professional expertise in the fellowship specialization subject matter area, including but not limited to, experience with administration or management of victim compensation programs. Document experience in providing oral presentations and developing written publications or technical assistance products for broad audiences of stakeholders. Describe other relevant competencies. Resumes or a CV must be included as a separate attachment within JustGrants.

Finally, the Plan for Collecting Data. This section must state the applicant's understanding of the performance data reporting requirement for this grant program and describe the plan for collecting all of the performance measure data required by the solicitation. It should also outline a plan for conducting evaluation activities to determine if the project is meeting goals and objectives. A link to a sample performance measurement questionnaire is located on page 10 of the solicitation. And these are just some additional questions to consider as you're preparing this part of the Proposal Narrative.

The Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative. The budget worksheet and narrative is now a web-based form in JustGrants. Each applicant will complete the JustGrants web-based form as part of their application. Break out costs by year reflecting a total of 36 months of project activities. Applicants can see the Budget Preparation and Submission Information section of the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for details on the budget and associated documentation. Page 8 of the solicitation contains a list of allowable and unallowable expenses under this solicitation. Please review carefully.

Along with the three required documents that we just reviewed, this screen lists other documents to be included, as mentioned on the application checklist of the solicitation. Use the checklist in your--in your review prior to submitting your application. Additional information on each of these documents is located within the solicitation, as well as within the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

So, now we're going to go over the actual application process.

So as we mentioned previously, the first step is going to be--or one of the steps for applying will be through JustGrants. There's a number of training materials posted on the [Justice Grants Training: Application Submission](#) page. These include eLearning Videos that provide you information on how to successfully navigate the mechanics of submitting an application. And they are listed here on this slide.

I'm highlighting one of them here. To provide targeted assistance to applicants applying for Department of Justice funding, DOJ JustGrants team is offering webinar sessions on [the] application submission process. Applicants should consider reviewing the prerecorded [Application Mechanics: Submitting an Application](#) webinar. It'll explain steps to take prior to applying for funding, how to find open DOJ funding opportunities in Grants.gov, how to apply for funding using JustGrants, the JustGrants roles and their responsibilities and required actions, how to navigate and use JustGrants to submit your application and where to find training materials, job aids, and other resources that will assist you.

Please ensure to use the [DOJ Application Submission Checklist](#), which covers all of the necessary steps to complete the two-part application process in Grants.gov and JustGrants.

So, to wrap things up, there's a number of resources available to assist you with the application submission. Please refer to the [JustGrants Training Application Submission](#) page for additional information and training. You will have access to previous [recordings](#) and [slide decks](#) from past webinars. Also, bookmark the [JustGrants Training](#) page for updates to training and resources.

In FY 2021, applications will be submitted to DOJ in a new two-step process. Step one, application--applicants will submit an SF-424 and an SF-LLL in Grants.gov. To register in Grants.gov, applicants will need to obtain a Data Universal Numeric System (DUNS number) and System of Award Management (SAM) registration or renewal. Step two, applicants will submit the full application into--including attachments, excuse me, in JustGrants at [JustGrants.usdoj.gov](#). To be considered timely, an application must be submitted by the application deadline using Grants.gov. And the applicant must have received a validation message from Grants.gov that indicates successful and timely submission. OJP urges applicants to submit applications at least 72 hours prior to the application due date to allow time for the applicant to receive validation messages or rejection notifications from Grants.gov, and to correct in a timely fashion any problems that may have caused the rejection notification. OJP strongly encourages applicants to review the How to Apply section in the OJP Grants Resource Guide.

This solicitation incorporates the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) by reference. The OJP Grant Application Resource Guide provides guidance to applicants for the preparation and submission to OJP of applications for funding. If this solicitation expressly modifies any provision in the resource guide, the applicant is to follow the guidelines in this solicitation as to that provision.

This is a list of important websites referenced throughout this solicitation that may serve as useful resources for you as you prepare your application. The [Office for Victims of Crime](#) website, [DOJ Grants Financial Guide](#), the [JustGrants](#) website, [Grants.gov](#) website, [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#), the [OVC Training and Technical Assistance Center](#), [Grant Performance Measurement Reporting](#) website, [OJP Resource Center](#). And I see that everything has been--all the links are included in the chat box here.

So here's the list of contact information that will be important to you as you prepare your application. First, we have Grants.gov, which is available to provide technical assistance when submitting the SF-424 and SF-LLL. They can be reached by phone at 800-518-4726, or email to [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). Next is JustGrants, which is available to provide technical assistance on submitting the full application. They can be reached by phone at 833-872-5175 or by email to [JustGrants@us--JustGrants.support@usdoj.gov](mailto:JustGrants@us--JustGrants.support@usdoj.gov). Finally, is the OJP Response Center, which is available to provide technical assistance with programmatic requirements. They can be reached by phone at 800-851-3420 or email to [grants@ncjrs.gov](mailto:grants@ncjrs.gov).

So I just want to highlight the important dates one more time. Make note of these two dates. Please submit part one, which is the SF-424 and SF-LLL in Grants.gov by July 6, 11:59 PM, Eastern. Then you can submit part two, which is the full application with attachments in JustGrants by July 19, 2021, 11:59 PM, Eastern Time.

And I guess we can take some questions now. I know I saw some passing through.

DARYL FOX: Just a reminder before we get into Q&A, anybody that does have a question, go ahead and enter that in that section with the three dots; bottom right side of your screen. We'll hopefully be able to answer that during the call. Also, the PowerPoint, transcript, and the recording will all be posted to the OVC websites. If there's something you missed or want to go back to in reference, that will be available on the OVC website within about 5 business days or so.

So getting into this, Jalila. "The intention to do an assessment of compensation programs across the country, is there a particular service area or should they--the fellow spotlighting certain areas?"

JALILA SEBBATA: I don't have any additional information to share pertaining to that. That's outside of what's listed currently, in the solicitation.

DARYL FOX: Then this one, I'm more than positive this would be a Grants.gov question. "If a person has an LLC with an EIN and DUNS number and is registered with SAM but the LLC is only for this particular person. They want to know if they can apply under that LLC or apply as an individual, with their social security number." For that one, yeah...

JALILA SEBBATA: Can you repeat that again?

DARYL FOX: Yeah, it's in the chat. Actually, if you want to read it verbatim for your--it was in the chat section.

JALILA SEBBATA: In the chat? I don't see... Let's see.

DARYL FOX: Oh, actually, it was, yeah, two, 3:17.

JALILA SEBBATA: Oh, here. "I have LLC that has an EIN..."

I think as long as it's clear to us that you are an individual applying, then I don't--I don't think you'll need to register like an alternative DUNS or SAM.

DARYL FOX: There's really--there's nothing else in the queue at this moment. We can hang on for a little bit here. If anybody does have questions, please go ahead and enter that.

To highlight this slide, and once again, if you have questions regarding the two forms for Grants.gov, you can contact them here. The JustGrants, which is the new system this year for the full application, and a lot of good information as Jalila said, as far as FAQ's and training guides and videos, please access them here. And anything programmatic related, as far as the solicitation is concerned, the OJP Response Center, very good resource for you to answer a lot of questions that you may have regarding that.

And at this time, I'm not seeing any other questions coming in.

Somebody did just ask, "I'm not sure a DUNS number can be obtained as an individual, what should be done in that case?"

For that, certainly the Grants.gov here listed on the first line here. Anything with that process, it'd probably best to go ahead and submit that question to them for an official response for the experts in that particular system.

JALILA SEBBATA: Yeah, I agree. Definitely submit that to Grants.gov.

DARYL FOX: They may also have an FAQ section where you can access that without having to wait for a response.

JALILA SEBBATA: I see a question about, "Can a church apply?"

Unfortunately, for this particular solicitation, we are only accepting applicants--applications from individuals.

DARYL FOX: And that's still the ones I'm seeing at this time. Do you want to wait another moment or so?

JALILA SEBBATA: Yeah. Sure.

DARYL FOX: And also, the full application, available on the OVC website has a lot more detailed information than what we reviewed here. So please certainly reference that as you need for more information.

Okay. Unless there's anything else, is there anything in closing, Jalila, that you want to mention?

JALILA SEBBATA: I just want to reiterate if anybody thinks of any programmatic questions later on, as you begin your applications, please make sure to send them over to the OJP Response Center so that we can get those answered for you. And I just want to thank everyone who took the time to join us. Thank you from myself and from the Office for Victims of Crime. This is an exciting solicitation and we look forward to receiving applications and beginning work on this fellowship. Thank you.

DARYL FOX: Okay. So, on behalf of the Office for Victims of Crime and our panelist, we want to thank you for joining today's webinar. This will end today's presentation.