

SUBMITTING A COMPETITIVE HUMAN TRAFFICKING GRANT PROPOSAL

Selecting a Grant to Pursue

Federal grants through the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) provide opportunities for organizations to expand capacity to serve victims of all forms of human trafficking. Each year, OVC releases a number of different solicitations to develop, expand, or strengthen victim service programs for victims of human trafficking. Being selective about which grant(s) to pursue and preparing required materials prior to beginning the application process may increase an organization's ability to submit complete and timely proposals. A proposal is an opportunity to convey to the funding agency the value of an organization's work, staff, vision, and long-term sustainability.

Drafting a Complete Proposal

There are several steps an organization can take to make sure their proposal is both focused on the requirements of a particular solicitation and comprehensive in its approach to addressing the problem.

- [Review the solicitation](#) to ensure the organization is eligible.
- [Include only project ideas that are within the scope of the solicitation](#), which is typically defined by the program-specific information, program purpose area(s) and/or the program goals, objectives, and deliverables.
- [Adhere to all solicitation requirements](#), like word count, file type, attachments, and deadlines.
- [Consider partnering with other organizations](#) to offer a more comprehensive response, to address all solicitation requirements, and to position your organization to be as competitive as possible. Some solicitations require formal interagency partnerships to meet the objectives of the grant program.

- Determine if a subgrant award or contract(s) should be included in the proposal to round out the strengths of the program design.
- Demonstrate a trauma-informed, victim-centered approach in the proposal and outline work that is both victim-centered and trauma-informed.
- Demonstrate the qualifications of staff involved in the project and include staff bios that match the skills and backgrounds required for the work in the solicitation.
- Illustrate knowledge of the community to be served by using demographic data of the population, available data documenting the nature of the problem of human trafficking within the target area, and relevant data to highlight the areas of unmet needs in identifying and serving victims of both labor and sex trafficking in the proposed project area.
- Showcase experience by demonstrating a strategy and organizational history of serving each type of victim of human trafficking identified in the solicitation and explain the progression of prior grant experience to illustrate capacity to manage funding.
- Include program staff and project partners, if applicable, in the process by involving the team in writing the grant proposal content so expectations, deliverables, and outcomes described in the proposal are attainable.
- Present a proposal that is uniquely developed in response to the solicitation under which it is to be submitted; incorporate feedback on previously submitted applications, if applicable; do not resubmit an application developed in response to a prior year solicitation unless invited to do so by the funding agency.

To learn more about how to apply, visit the [OVC website](#).

The Importance of Community Knowledge and Partnerships

Demonstrating a strong understanding of the community to be served in a proposal through the use of data, presenting relevant staff experience, and information about historical service delivery is critical in submitting a strong proposal. Connecting the victim services proposed to the demographics of the community to be served is a critical opportunity to illustrate understanding of local human trafficking activity. This requires identifying data sources beyond national hotline data to demonstrate an understanding of the areas of need and then connecting that data to a strategy—illustrating how your

organization will address the needs identified. Local arrest and prosecution data, statewide reports, community demographics, and data from and about the industries historically more vulnerable to trafficking can provide a local perspective.

In addition, identifying and building partnerships to address gaps in service can help an organization offer a more comprehensive proposal and meet all the solicitation's requirements. Be creative with establishing partnerships to support the work in the proposed project; think outside traditional/typical partners. Innovative partnership ideas may include, for example, health service providers, educational institutions, and other aligned professionals who interact with the population to be served.

Using partners is also an opportunity to ensure cultural competency is demonstrated in a proposal. Look for partners who complement, not compete with, the services of the organization submitting the proposal. Finally, set up all partnerships identified in the proposal prior to submitting the proposal and include the memoranda of understanding or other partnership agreement documentation.

Lastly, relevant community organizations who are not formal project partners can still support an organization's grant submission through a letter of support. A letter of support can come from another community organization, a local government official, or an elected official and be submitted with an organization's grant application.