

OVW Fiscal Year 2024 Grants to Engage Men and Boys as Allies in the Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls Program

Pre-Application Information Session Transcript

KRISTA BLAKENEY-MITCHELL: Welcome and thank you for joining the Office on Violence Against Women Pre-Application Information Session for the Fiscal Year 2024 Grants to Engage Men and Boys as Allies in the Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls Program, also referred to as the Engaging Men or EM Program Solicitation. I am Krista Blakeney-Mitchell, Associate Director for the Engaging Men Program.

This information session is being presented by the OVW Engaging Men Team members, Traci Rollins, Brandyn Salvatore, and Elaina Roberts. This webinar is meant to serve as a source of information regarding the Engaging Men Program's application process. It is strongly recommended that you read the full solicitation and have it open to follow along today as we will reference information and page numbers. We recognize that reading the solicitation and preparing an application can be a challenging process. Our goal in this session is to clarify several important aspects of the solicitation and application process in order to help you successfully submit an application. I will now turn it over to Traci to begin the presentation.

TRACI ROLLINS: Thank you, Krista, and everyone, for joining us today and for your interest in applying to the EM Program. While it is not possible to go over every aspect of the solicitation in the time allotted today, we will cover the scope of the EM Program, provide important deadlines and eligibility requirements, including the program requirements and out-of-scope activities under the program, application information, the solicitation process and key dates, helpful tips, and, finally, we'll go over how to apply the two-step application process that is required for all applicants. At the end of the slide are resources and contact information to assist you as you begin your application. This session will be broken into two parts. In one part, we will discuss the EM Program itself, award length and amounts, priority area, and purpose area, required partnerships, and in and out-of-scope activities. In Part Two, we will discuss eligible requirements, important dates, the submission process, grants financial management, and application tips. All prospective applicants are responsible for closely reading the FY24 EM Solicitation and the OVW Solicitation Companion Guide to ensure that your application is complete and competitive.

Before we get started, please note the EM Solicitation is one of two solicitations issued under the Consolidated Youth and Engaging Men Grant Program, also referred to as the CYEM Program. The other solicitation is focused on serving children and youth impacted by domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and sex trafficking. This information session focuses solely on the Engaging Men Solicitation. If you are interested in submitting an application for funding under the Children and Youth Program, please view the information session specifically for that solicitation. While you

may apply to both the EM and CY programs, you can only receive a grant from one or the other. The Engaging Men and Boys (EM) Program supports projects that create educational programming and community organizing to encourage men and boys to work as allies with women and girls to prevent domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and sex trafficking. Within the EM Program, there's one purpose area that applicants must address in their proposed project, which I will discuss more during the presentation.

The grant award period for the Engaging Men Program is for 36 months and tentatively begins on October the 1st, 2024, and ends on September the 30th, 2027. Applicants should submit applications with project activities and budgets that reflect this period. Projects can receive an award for up to \$350,000 and applicants should request the entire amount in the application. OVW estimates that we will make up to nine awards this year for an estimated \$3.1 million. OVW anticipates notifying all applicants for funding decisions by October the 1st, 2024. Please see page eight in the solicitation for more information.

Every year, OVW identifies specific topics or issues related to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and sex trafficking that the office will focus attention on. Again, applicants may choose to incorporate the priority area into their proposal. Applicants proposing projects to address the priority area will be given special consideration during the recommendation process. What this means is that OVW has the discretion to recommend a lower-scoring application for funding if it meaningfully addresses the priority area.

This year, the priority is to advance equity and Tribal Sovereignty as essential components of ending sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking by improving outreach, services, civil and criminal justice responses, prevention, and support for survivors from historically marginalized and underserved communities, particularly those facing disproportionate rates or impacts of violence and multiple barriers to services, justice, and safety. Please note that applicants are not required to address the priority area. It is optional. A common mistake we see with applications that claim to address a priority area is that they do not include all of the requirements of the priority area in the Proposal Narrative which results in a lower score during peer review. So, if you do choose to include the priority area in your proposed project, be certain to have fully reviewed the requirements listed and that your Proposal Narrative and budget clearly includes activities, strategies, and partnerships to address the priority area. Please see page six in the solicitation for what is necessary to meet this priority, as well as MOU requirements on pages 20 and 21 in the solicitation.

In addition to the OVW priorities just discussed, the EM Program has seen a rise in youth experiencing online harm and abuse. Therefore, the EM Program has program-specific priority in response to the widespread and increasing harm posed by the distribution of nonconsensual intimate images, deepfake, online enticement, extortion, cyberstalking, and other forms of technology-facilitated abuse. Excuse me. The EM Program has identified the prevention of technology-facilitated abuse as a specific

priority. Special consideration will be given to applications that meaningfully engage men and boys as upstanders and role models working against technology-facilitated abuse. As a reminder, applicants should clearly state that they are addressing this priority and indicate how they are meaningfully doing so. Applicants are strongly encouraged but not required to address this priority area. Please see page six in the solicitation.

We will now go over the EM Program's purpose area, which can be found on page five of the solicitation. To implement education, training, and other programming that enables men and boys to serve as allies in the prevention of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and sex trafficking, applicants must address the purpose area in the proposed project. The activities described in the Proposal Narrative and the budget should be reflective of the purpose area. Before moving along, I want to reiterate a few important points and provide you with some helpful hints to assist you in submitting a strong application that addresses the purpose area. While you must meet the requirements in the solicitation, this does not mean that you cannot add activities to your project that go beyond the required activities for the purpose area. In fact, applicants should feel free to add activities in addition to the program requirements, as long as they are allowable within the scope of this program and do not undermine victims' safety. Strong proposals will include a clear call to action on how men and boys can become active allies in the prevention of violence against women and girls. Please refer to page 10 of the solicitation for additional requirements that you'd like to address in your proposal.

A very important requirement for every applicant is partnerships. Each proposal must have at least one agency serving as the victim service provider and one agency servicing as the community-based organization with a demonstrated experience providing support, enrichment, and/or leadership development programming that focuses on men and boys. Applicants and partners are limited to serving in one role for application proposal purposes, regardless of whether an organization identifies as being both a victim service provider and a community-based organization. This is very important, and we'll disqualify you if you either do not meet this requirement or it is not clear that you have two organizations to fulfill the two roles. We have disqualified applicants based on not having the partnership requirement or it is not clear at the time of review who's serving in which role. Please be very clear in identifying in your proposal and the summary datasheet which agency is serving as the victim service provider and which agency as the community-based organization.

Here are two examples of what required partnerships may look like. First, a victim service provider is submitting an application to develop a program for men in the immigrant community to become leaders in their neighborhood by teaching young boys bystander intervention skills. If the applicant is the victim service provider, the required partnership for this project will be a culturally-specific or population-specific community-based organization that provides support, enrichment, or leadership development programming for men and boys. The community-based organization is not the victim service provider for they pose as the expertise and access necessary for the victim

service provider to engage with the men and boys in the immigrant community that will be participating in the project. The second example is a community-based organization that provides a fatherhood program for men in the community. The proposed project will integrate training and education on domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and sex trafficking into the existing program to empower men to be allies in preventing violence against women. Because the community-based organization does not have the same expertise that a victim service provider would have as related to the same crime. They must partner with a victim service provider. Please refer to page 11 for the definition of a victim service provider.

Another requirement for the EM Program is the development of a coordinated community response, also known as a CCR. Because of this, applicants are encouraged to have more than the required partnership. These should be multiple disciplinary partnerships documented in the Memorandum of Understanding, or MOU, to ensure the proposed project has the necessary expertise, experience, and capacity to engage men and boys as allies, preventing violence against women and girls. The CCR team should represent the community-based--the community band addressed in the proposal and include a community-based organization that meets the needs of that community and helps achieve the proposed goals and objectives. A sample MOU can be found on the OVW website.

OVW and the EM Program have specific out-of-scope activities that cannot be supported with grant funds. Some common mistakes we've seen are applications that include these out-of-scope activities and unallowable costs outlined on the slide. For example, direct victim services and grant funds may not be used to provide direct victim services such as victim advocacy, legal assistance, short or long-term counseling, transitional housing, or medical corps accompaniment. Grant funds may not be used to provide support for perpetrators of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, such as counseling, data intervention, or anger management. Grant funds may not be used to develop or provide training, products, or policies that focus on sexual harassment, bullying, or having outside of the context of grantees' work to prevent domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or sex trafficking. Grant funds may not be used to implement potential programs that focus primarily on alcohol and substance abuse outside of the context of grantees' work to prevent domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or sex trafficking. Please note that these intersections can be addressed, just not in isolation or as the focus of the grant activity. Costs associated with fundraising activities are unallowable and must not be included in the applicant's budget. Please carefully review the full list of the out-of-scope activities on pages six and seven and the unallowable costs on page eighteen of the solicitation. I will now pass this over to Brandyn, who will go over program eligibility and application requirement.

BRANDYN SALVATORE: Thank you, Traci. And thanks for turning the slide. Let's now turn to the eligibility requirements and some very important deadlines. Eligibility as mentioned on the cover of the solicitation as well as on page 14, eligible applicants are limited to non-profit, nongovernmental entities including community-based organizations

and culturally-specific organizations such as urban Indian organizations and Native Hawaiian organizations, Tribal organizations, Indian Tribal Governments, and units of local government, or agencies of units of local government in the United States or US territories. Please note that foreign entities, programs, and institutions of higher education, regardless of non-profit status, are not eligible for funding under the EM Program. Recipients and partners or subrecipients of CY, which is the Children and Youth or EM, Engaging Men funding in FY '22 or FY '23 are not eligible to apply as the lead applicant or as a partner or sub-recipient on the FY '24 EM application. Additionally, current grantees with a substantial amount of unobligated funds that are remaining as of March 31st, 2024, a substantial amount, meaning 50% or more of the previous award without adequate justification, may not be considered for funding or may receive a reduced award amount if selected for funding in FY '24. Applications submitted by ineligible entities or that do not meet the program requirements may not be considered for funding.

Both new and continuation applications are accepted. New applications are those that have never received funding under the EM or CY Program or whose funding under the programs expired on or before March 28th, 2023. Continuation applications are those that have an existing EM or CY Program grant or whose grants closed after March 28th, 2023. Continuation funding is not guaranteed. A reminder that applications may apply to both CY and EM Programs, but applicants can only receive funding under one program. When you're thinking about your proposal, please remember that any proposed project must support only local, community-specific strategies. Additionally, the applicant and its project partners must be based in the project's service area. Grant funds may not be used to conduct or support regional or statewide activities.

Next, we're going to highlight the important dates and application steps that you should have in mind as you prepare for your application. Applicants may find this funding opportunity on Grants.gov by using the assistance listing number 16.888, the Grants.gov opportunity number O-OVW-2024-17932, or the title of the solicitation. Applications are due in JustGrants.gov by 8:59 PM Eastern Time on Tuesday, April 30th, 2024. Please note the two-step submission process using JustGrants and Grants.gov as well as the different deadlines and different systems used during this process. First, you will start the application in Grants.gov. This is where you will upload the filled-out SF-424 and SF-LLL documents. Second, the application process will continue and be submitted in JustGrants. The process of registering and activating these accounts can take several weeks. It is strongly suggested that applicants ensure they are registered and have active accounts in SAM.gov, Grants.gov, and JustGrants by April 9th. For returning applicants, you should ensure your Universal Entity Identifier and SAM registrations are not expired. The deadline to submit your SF-424 and SF-LLL in Grants.gov, sorry, is 11:59 PM Eastern Time on April 26th, 2024. The deadline to submit the full application in JustGrants is 8:59 PM Eastern Time on April 30th, 2024. Please see page two of the solicitation for more information. OVW will not accept late submissions except under limited circumstances as described in the OVW policy on late submission requests due to severe inclement weather or natural or manmade disaster section of the solicitation, which is pages 23 to 24.

Applicants must use a number of systems to successfully submit an application. Note that these systems all have dedicated support. Please refer to the solicitation, pages 15 to 21, for specific information. Applications must include a proposal narrative, a budget worksheet and narrative, and a Memorandum of Understanding. The proposal narrative, budget worksheet and narrative, and MOU are scored during peer review out of 100 points total. Applicants missing one or more of these components may be removed from further consideration. Reviewers will only read these three attachments and will read no other documents that are submitted.

We'll be discussing the proposal narrative. The proposal narrative is worth a total of 70 points and includes the Purpose of the Proposal section, worth 10 points; the What Will be Done section, worth 40 points; and the Who Will Implement section, worth 20 points. The three required documents should tell a unified story about the project. The same project should be reflected in all three of these documents so that the peer reviewer and OVW program specialist can see the clear connection between activities proposed, the budget to support those proposed activities, and an MOU that reflects the people and organizations that can implement these activities. Each numbered item under the Purpose of the Proposal, What Will be Done, and Who Will Implement must be answered directly and in that specific order. Applicants should have headings and subheadings, either a number or with shorthand for each numbered item and should only include the requested information there. Please note that if you include it elsewhere in the narrative, it will not count, and you will lose points. Please see pages 14 to 16 of the solicitation for proposal narrative requirements. Please note that the proposal narrative may not exceed 15 pages, double-spaced, and should be no smaller than 11-point font. Reviewers will not read beyond this page limit. You do not want to lose valuable points due to going over the page limit or from not following the formatting requirements. See page 12 of the solicitation for formatting details.

All budgets should include the required OVW Training and Technical Assistance set aside. Projects located in the contiguous US must allocate \$15,000, and projects located in the US territories, Hawaii, or Alaska, must allocate \$20,000. All budgets should include adequate funds to address language access and accessibility needs. If you have other resources to cover the costs of these services, please note that in your budget. Pages 17 through 20 provide detailed information on how to develop and submit your budget for your proposed project. See Appendix A starting on page 30 of the solicitation for budget information and a sample budget narrative.

We'll now be talking about the MOU. The MOU is a document containing the terms of the partnership and the roles and responsibilities between two or more parties. The MOU must be included as an attachment to the application in JustGrants. The MOU must be a single document. Do not submit more than one MOU. The MOU must also be signed and dated by the Authorized Representative of each proposed partner organization during the development of the application. An MOU can include multiple signature pages as long as each page includes the names, titles, and date for all signatories to the MOU. OVW will accept electronic signatures. There is no page limit

for the MOU, so there is no excuse for not providing the information requested. Like the budget, the MOU may be reviewed separately from the full application. So, it is important to include all of the requested information even if you have addressed it elsewhere in the application. Please note that the MOU must state that each project partner has reviewed the budget, is aware of the total amount being requested, and is being equitably compensated for their work under the grant or is agreeing to be partially compensated or receive no compensation from the grant. Please see pages 20 and 21 of the solicitation for MOU requirements. Each of these is scored during peer review, totaling 100 points. Applications missing one or more of these components may be removed from further consideration. Thank you for listening. And now, we will hear from our Grants Financial Management Division or GFMD.

VALERIE CRUZAN: Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Valerie Cruzan, and I'm a Financial Analyst with the Office on Violence Against Women, the Grants Financial Management Division, also known as GFMD. In the next couple of slides, we are going to focus on aspects of your application that relate to the documents that GFMD reviews. More specifically, we'll discuss some items that we have identified from prior years' applications that could help with expediting our review process. We will highlight certain aspects of the pre-award risk assessment and provide you with a detailed webinar on how to develop the budget that will be included as part of your application.

First, we'll highlight the items identified in the summary datasheet, which is completed by all applicants. Two items that we would like to discuss are the single-audit response and the IRS three-step safe-harbor procedure. OVW requests that all applicants provide a statement as to whether they have expended \$750,000 or more in federal funds during their last fiscal year. If you have, then you must indicate that, and also specify the end date of your last fiscal year. However, GFMD is finding that applicants do not always include all of this information, so please ensure that this question is answered in its entirety on the summary datasheet. Another item that we'd like to highlight from the solicitation is specifically for non-profit organizations. If you use the IRS three-step safe-harbor procedure to determine your executive's compensation, you are required to provide a disclosure letter. Please refer to the solicitation for further details in a link to a sample letter.

Note that there are four required parts of this disclosure letter. The sample letter provided outlines all four parts, so please be sure to follow the sample and provide a response to each of the four pieces. Finally, we'd like to discuss the pre-award risk assessment questions, which assist GFMD during their pre-award risk assessment review for all applications. Each applicant must prepare a response to all 11 questions. And each question has multiple parts. We've noticed from prior years that applicants do not always fully answer all parts of the questions, which in turn, requires GFMD to reach out to the applicant and may delay funding decisions. Some of the most common issues that we have encountered have been, for example, in question two, the applicant indicates that they do have internal policies, but they do not provide a brief list of the topics covered in those policies. Question number three, some applicants fail to provide a brief summary of the organization's process for tracking expenditures and specifically

whether or not they track budgeted versus actual expenditures. These are just a few examples, but in general, please make sure that you read each piece of each question and provide a full and comprehensive response.

This is our contact information for GFMD. If you have any questions about the information that we are discussing here, please feel free to contact our help desk at 888-514-8556 or by email at OVW.FGMD@usdoj.gov.

This slide just quickly highlights some resources that are available to you as you're creating the budget that will be submitted with your application. Over the last few years, we have developed a webinar presentation on how to develop the budget. The presentation addresses some of the challenges that you may face with your budgets and provides some insight on our budget review process. This webinar can be found on the link on the slide. We also have the link to the uniform guidance, which can be found at 2 CFR 200. And then, some other resources we have on there are the DOJ Financial Guide, as well as your program-specific solicitation itself. And that is all. Thank you.

ELAINA ROBERTS: This slide highlights several resources that are available to assist applicants with completing and submitting an application. You will find the EM Program frequently asked questions, the CYEM Storybook and the DOJ self-guided training resources on these sites. Please review and use these resources as you develop your applications. They are there to help you. If you have any questions as you develop your applications, you can reach out, if you have programmatic questions, to the consolidated use email box that was referenced earlier as well. As Valerie said, if you have financial questions, you're developing your budget, reach out to GFMD. And if you have technical questions with Grants.gov or JustGrants, you can reach out to the support folks, either via email or you can call them.

TRACI ROLLINS: Okay. So, I see a question here. "Institutions of higher education eligible partners for a non-profit applicant or ineligible altogether?" So, higher education institutions are ineligible altogether.

ELAINA ROBERTS: Although we have had some instances where they can be a project partner on the Engaging Men Program, because it depends on how they're going to function. Higher education is not eligible to be the lead applicant, but we have had in the past instances where they're project partners.

TRACI ROLLINS: Okay. Thank you for that, Elaina. We have another question, a question regarding the applicant's location. "Native Pride provides trauma-informed culturally-resilience based on prevention training throughout Indian country. We have been partnered with the Fort Totten Tribe in North Dakota for the past five years and plan on implementing the OVW project in North Dakota. Since Native Crowd works across Indian country, we are not physically located in North Dakota. But we have worked in the Tribe in the past five years. Would Native Pride be eligible to apply for this grant?"

ELAINA ROBERTS: I think my question on this one is--I'm so sorry. It's a little bit of a lengthy question that I know may not apply to a lot of folks on this call. Native Pride is a non-profit, right? It is not the Tribe. And so, what would be important is that the activities would be community-based, and if that is part of the Tribal lands the Tribe operates on, then I think – I know we have Krista who is our Associate Director, and Brandyn, but again, the point of these programs is to be community-based. But if you're partnering with a Tribal organization that crosses multiple states, then it is understandable that some of those activities would cross. I hope that's helpful.

KRISTA BLAKENEY-MITCHELL: I agree. That was a good response, Elaina. If you have some questions about the particulars for your service area, definitely reach out to the email box--OVW...

VANESSA: Hi.

KRISTA BLAKENEY-MITCHELL: ...email box. Go ahead.

VANESSA: Hi, I'm Vanessa. Yes, so the Tribe is physically located in North Dakota. The proposed activities would be conducted in North Dakota on the Tribal Government reservation. The applicant is not physically located in North Dakota but has worked with this Tribal Government for the past five years to implement activities and strategies in their Tribal community. And we just want to make sure that Native Pride as a non-profit would still be eligible to apply and partner with the Tribal Government.

KRISTA BLAKENEY-MITCHELL: Yeah. I think the issue, and like Elaina said, this doesn't apply to everyone, so we may want to have a side conversation with you. But I think the question that we have is that the main or the primary applicant, the lead applicant is not located in the community that's going to be served. We understand the longstanding partnership, which is great. However, for the purposes of this program, you might want to think about who the lead applicant would be so that you can meet the eligibility requirements.

ELAINA ROBERTS: "When should programming begin?" I think what you're asking is not so much when the grant begins as when you're going to begin implementing. That's going to depend on how you go through the planning phase, but the award period will start on October 1. And you have to wait until your budget's approved to do anything.

Another question is, "Will you fund pre-existing programs, specifically programs that have been previously funded, but the funding will run out before October of 2024?" Yes, that potentially would be a continuation grantee. And so, it sounds like you are eligible, you were probably funded in '24, so what would that be? 2021? Maybe in 2021? Or maybe 2020? So, it sounds like you would be eligible. And based on the application, of course, you may receive funding. Darrell?

DARRELL: Yes. I wanted to ask, is an MOU needed for every partnering organization that you partner with this project?

ELAINA ROBERTS: I would refer to what the solicitation says in terms of the required partnerships. An MOU is required at the time of application and that MOU should have the signatures of the required partners that are listed in the solicitation. If you're talking about additional partners that aren't required or maybe partners that could be part of the coordinated community response team, those are partnerships that can be developed down the road and do not need to be on that MOU and submitted with the application at the time. And in fact, during the planning phase, you may actually find other partners that you want to partner with. But there is a specific partnership in the solicitation. It's the community-based and the victim service provider. So, those two, whether that's you or someone else, those two have to be on an MOU signed and submitted with the application.

BRANDYN SALVATORE: "Is the EM grant expected to be open in 2025? This would give new applicants time to develop the partnerships and CCR team required." I'm assuming that this means, like will we have an FY 2025 solicitation? And I do just want to flag that even if you were to apply this year, you can always request your consensus comments from peer review. And so, even if when you do apply, whether it's 2024, 2025, 2026, et cetera, you can get the feedback from that group to see where perhaps you lost points or what areas you have to improve. While you certainly can apply in 2025, I just do want to flag, especially for first-time applicants, that that is something that you can still benefit from. Don't feel discouraged if you don't receive funding right away. We really try to provide as much feedback as possible on that.

ELAINA ROBERTS: And I'll just add that as long as we have funding, we will keep putting the solicitation out. So, in terms of 2025, it just depends on what the appropriations are.

TRACI ROLLINS: Okay. Thank you, Elaina. So, we are right at time. With that, we're at the end of this presentation. Thank you for being interested in the FY '24 Engaging Men and Boys Solicitation. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us via the EM mailbox with any additional questions that you may have. Thank you.