

## OVW Fiscal Year 2024 Sexual Assault Services Culturally Specific Program Pre-Application Information Session Transcript

RITA PUMPHREY: Hello, everyone, and welcome to the Office on Violence Against Women Fiscal Year 2024 Sexual Assault Services Culturally Specific Program Pre-Application Information Session. On behalf of the Office on Violence Against Women, the Sexual Assault Services Culturally Specific Program welcomes you to this call. I'm going to turn it over to the Grants Financial Management Division's Mychal Sterling, Team Lead.

MYCHAL STERLING: Good afternoon. Good morning, everyone. My name is Mychal Sterling from the Grants Financial Management Division team. In the next couple of slides, we are going to focus on aspects of your application that relate to the documents that our financial team, the Grants Financial Management Division (GFMD) reviews. More specifically, we'll discuss some items that GFMD has identified from prior years' applications that could help with expediting our review process. For today, we're going to highlight certain aspects of the Pre-Award Risk Assessment and provide you with a link to a detailed webinar on how to develop the budget that will be included in your application.

First, we'll highlight the items identified in the Summary Data Sheet, which is completed by all applicants. Specifically, two items we would like to address 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 they have, then they indicate that, and also specify the end date of their last fiscal year. However, GFMD is finding that applicants do not always include all of this information. Please ensure that this question is answered in its entirety on the Summary Data Sheet, which is question 3.

Another item that we'd like to highlight from the solicitation is specifically for nonprofit 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 and a link to a sample letter. Note that there are four required parts of this disclosure letter. The sample letter outlines all four parts of the disclosure, so please make sure to follow the sample and provide a response to each of the four parts.

The next item we would like to discuss is 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 the funding decision. Some of the common issues we've encountered have been, for example, question 2, where the applicant indicates that they do indeed have internal policies, but they do not provide a brief list of topics covered in their policies and

procedures. On question 3, some applicants fail to provide a brief summary of the organization's process for tracking expenditures and, more specifically, whether or not it tracks 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 next slide will quickly highlight some resources that are available as you are creating the budget to be submitted for your application. Over the last couple of years, GFMD has developed a detailed webinar presentation on how to develop a budget to be submitted with OVW applications. This presentation addresses some of the challenges that you may face with your budgets and provides some insight on OVW's budget review process. This webinar can be found on the link on this slide. Next up is the Uniform Guidance, which can be found at 2 CFR Part 200. Use your favorite search engine to find this one. Other resources include the Department of Justice Financial Guide and the solicitation itself.

We know this can be a lot of information to process, so if you have any questions about the GFMD information discussed, please feel free to contact the GFMD Helpdesk at 888-514-8556 or by email at [OVW.GFMD@usdoj.gov](mailto:OVW.GFMD@usdoj.gov).

And now, I will leave it open for any questions that you may have regarding the Grants Financial Management Division portion of the solicitation. There is a question that came up in the chatbox, which is, "Are we required to have an audit to apply?" So, if you meet the requirements per the Uniform Guidance for the single audit—the single audit is if you have expended more than \$750,000 of federal funds in your last fiscal year—you are required to complete a single audit. This is a more in-depth audit with an external auditor that your organization would hire to complete, and is completed and submitted to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse. To submit an application, an audit is not required to be included, but during our Pre-Award Risk Assessment review, we will check that, as indicated in the slides. In the Summary Data Sheet, you have to provide a statement specifying if you have expended \$750,000 or more in your last fiscal year. And if that is a yes, we will check to see if your single audit has been submitted on a timely basis to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse.

Another question came: "If you never spent \$750,000, is your organization disqualified?" Again, the single audit is not an application requirement. This is a federal regulation. Not every organization will expend over \$750,000. So they're not required to submit a single audit to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse. That single audit is not a part of the application. What is part of the application is that, if you do expend over that amount, you trigger the requirement of the federal regulation, which is that you have to complete a single audit. If you have not expended \$750,000 of federal funds in your last fiscal year, you're not required to submit a single audit. And that is not something that is going to be submitted with the application. You would just include it in the Summary Data Sheet that you do not meet threshold.

And there was another question. They asked, “Will they have access to the slides?” So, I’m guessing they will have access to these slides after the presentation, is that correct?

TONETTE NGASSA: Yes, that’s correct. Are there any additional questions for Mychal? Okay. Thank you so much, Mychal. I really appreciate you taking the time to come onto the presentation today.

MYCHAL STERLING: You’re welcome. Have a good day, everyone.

TONETTE NGASSA: You do as well. My name is Tonette Ngassa, and I’m a Team Lead at the Office on Violence Against Women. I’ve managed this program since 2015. Before we begin, during the presentation, you may submit your comments or questions in the Q&A box. Questions will be answered at the end of this session or during the Q&A session.

OVW is a component of the United States Department of Justice. Created in 1995, OVW administers grant programs authorized by the Violence Against Women Act and subsequent legislation and provides national leadership on issues of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. OVW grants support coordinated community responses to hold offenders accountable and serve victims.

A little bit about the Sexual Assault Services Culturally Specific Program. This program is authorized by 34 U.S.C. Section 12511(c). The Sexual Assault Services Culturally Specific Program supports nonprofit organizations that focus primarily on culturally specific communities and have experience in the area of sexual assault or that partner with an organization having such expertise. The goal of the SAS Culturally Specific Program is to establish, maintain, and expand sustainable, culturally appropriate services that address the unique needs and challenges of victims of sexual assault from culturally specific communities. Pursuant to 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(7), “culturally specific services” means community-based services that include culturally relevant and linguistically specific services and resources to culturally specific communities. Pursuant to 34 U.S.C. Section 12291(a)(6), “culturally specific” means primarily directed toward racial and ethnic minority groups, as defined in 42 U.S.C. Section 300u-6(g). Section 300u-6(g) defines “racial and ethnic minority groups” as “American Indians (including Alaska Natives, Eskimos, and Aleuts), Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, Blacks, and Hispanics.”

Purpose Areas. Pursuant to 34 U.S.C. Section 12511(c), funds under this program must be used to support the establishment, maintenance, and expansion of culturally specific intervention and related assistance for victims of sexual assault. Pursuant to 34 U.S.C. 12511(b)(2)(C), such intervention and related assistance may include 24-hour hotline services providing crisis intervention services and referral; accompaniment and advocacy through medical, criminal justice, and social support systems, including medical facilities, police, and court proceedings; crisis intervention, short-term individual and group support services, and comprehensive service coordination and supervision to assist sexual assault victims and family or household members; information and referral

to assist sexual assault victims and family or household members; community-based, culturally specific services and support mechanisms, including outreach activities for underserved communities; and development and distribution of materials on issues related to the services described above. Pursuant to 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(7), “culturally specific services” means community-based services that include culturally relevant and linguistically specific services and resources to culturally specific communities.

OVW does not fund activities that jeopardize victim safety, deter or prevent physical or emotional healing of victims, or allow offenders to escape responsibility for their actions. Applications that propose any such activities may receive a deduction in points during the review process or may be eliminated from consideration. Information on activities that compromise victim safety and recovery or undermine offender accountability may be found in the Solicitation Companion Guide.

The activities listed below are out of the program’s scope and will not be supported by the program’s funding. Applications that propose activities deemed to be substantially out of scope may receive a deduction in points during the review process or may be eliminated from consideration: research projects (funds under this program may not be used to conduct research); activities focused on prevention efforts and training, i.e., bystander intervention, social norms campaigns, presentations on healthy relationships; Sexual Assault Forensic Medical Examiner programs; Sexual Assault Response Team coordination; and providing training to allied professionals and the community, for example, to law enforcement, child protective services, prosecution, or other community-based organizations. Limited training that directly supports the services provided by the project may be provided to grantee staff and project partners. However, any training activities will require prior approval from OVW.

The anticipated number of awards is 20. The period of performance will start on October 1, 2024. The anticipated total amount to be awarded under the solicitation is \$7.5 million. The anticipated maximum dollar amount of awards is \$375,000. The period of performance is 36 months.

Federal award information or types of applications. New applicants are those that have never received funding under this program or whose previous funding under this program expired on or before April 9, 2023. Continuation applicants are those that have an existing or recently closed (after April 9, 2023) award under this program. Continuation funding is not guaranteed.

Planning grants. Applicants must be culturally specific organizations and have a partner with a demonstrated history of providing sexual assault victim services. Up to four planning grants will be awarded. There are two phases. Phase 1, or the planning phase, is up to 24 months and for \$100,000. Note, planning grantees will not provide direct services to sexual assault victims and/or survivors during Phase 1, or the planning phase. Phase 2, direct service provision, is \$275,000. Planning grants under this program will be made for up to \$100,000 for a period of up to 24 months. Funds must be used to establish culturally specific sexual assault services. Proposed activities may

include but are not limited to the following: participating in site visits, peer-to-peer exchange, and technical assistance events; developing relevant policies and procedures; delivering culturally specific sexual assault training to staff and leadership; funding a project or planning coordinator; creating and/or revising program documents; coordinating and conducting planning meetings; and establishing an advisory or consulting committee. Include a tentative timeline for carrying out the proposed planning activities. Applicants applying for a planning grant are required to set aside \$15,000 of the total budget for OVW training and technical assistance. These funds will be used during the period of performance of the grant project.

Planning grants, Phase 2: 24-hour hotline services providing crisis intervention services and referral; accompaniment and advocacy through medical, criminal justice, and social support systems, including medical facilities, police, and court proceedings; crisis intervention, short-term individual and group support services, and comprehensive service coordination and supervision to assist sexual assault victims and family or household members; and information and referral to assist sexual assault victims and family or household members.

Recipients of a fiscal year 2022 or fiscal year 2023 award under this program are not eligible to apply as a lead applicant or as a partner subrecipient on a fiscal year 2024 proposal. Likewise, an organization that is a partner or subrecipient of a fiscal year 2022 or fiscal year 2023 award is not eligible to apply as the lead applicant or as a partner subrecipient on a fiscal year 2024 proposal. Note, current grantees with a substantial amount of unobligated funds remaining (50% or more of the previous award) as of March 31, 2024, without adequate justification may not be considered for funding or may receive a reduced award amount if selected for funding for fiscal year 2024.

Mandatory program requirements. OVW-sponsored training and technical assistance. OVW may conduct a program assessment or evaluation necessitating grantee involvement. Therefore, recipients may be expected to dedicate some OVW-funded time and resources to participating in an assessment or evaluation. The provision of sexual assault victim services to non-intimate partner sexual assault victims.

Applications proposing projects to serve only victims of intimate partner sexual assault will be removed from further funding consideration. Note, planning grantees will not provide direct services to sexual assault victims and/or survivors during the initial 24-month project period.

I'm going to now go into the eligibility information. Who is eligible to apply: private, nonprofit, and tribal organizations for which the primary purpose of the organization as a whole is to provide culturally specific services to American Indians, including Alaska Natives, Eskimos, and Aleuts; Asian-Americans; Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders; Blacks; or Hispanics in the United States or U.S. territories; Native American tribal organizations (other than federally recognized tribal governments); and nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS (other than institutions of higher education).

You must also have documented organizational experience in the area of sexual assault intervention or have entered into a formal partnership with an organization having such expertise; have expertise in the development of community-based, linguistically and culturally specific outreach and intervention services relevant to the specific communities to which assistance will be provided or have the capacity to link to the existing services in the community tailored to the needs of culturally specific populations; and have an advisory board or steering committee and staffing that are reflective of the culturally specific community. Note, if the culturally specific program is one division within a larger organization with other areas of substantive work—for example, a division within a domestic violence organization focusing on Black or Hispanic victims—the organization is not eligible.

To ensure the projects supported by SAS Cultural funds are implemented by eligible organizations with the required expertise, applicants must document their expertise and/or the expertise of their project partners. Applicants must submit either a Memorandum of Exemption or a Memorandum of Understanding. For more information on the required contents of the MOE and MOU, see the Memorandum of Understanding and Other Supportive Documents section of the solicitation.

The required partnerships. Category I: The applicant is a culturally specific organization and the applicant agency has a demonstrated history of providing sexual assault victim services beyond intimate partner sexual assault for a minimum of three years. No partnership is required. Category II: The applicant is a culturally specific organization and will be partnering with another culturally specific organization that would otherwise be eligible to apply independently under the SAS Culturally Specific Program, and either the applicant or its partners has a demonstrated history of providing sexual assault victim services beyond intimate partner sexual assault for a minimum of three years. Category III: The applicant is a culturally specific organization with less than three years of experience providing sexual assault victim services beyond intimate partner sexual assault. The applicant will be partnering with an organization with a demonstrated history of providing sexual assault victim services that is otherwise not eligible to apply independently under the SAS Cultural Program. In such a case, partner compensation is limited to \$30,000 for the three-year award period. The partner must use these funds to provide technical assistance on sexual assault and related victim services to the applicant. This is a chart reflecting what was just read.

OVW will consider only one application per organization for the same service area. In addition, if an applicant submits multiple versions of the same application, OVW will review only the most recent system-validated version submitted before the deadline.

Application and submission information will be next. The complete application package for this solicitation, including links to the required forms, is available on Grants.gov and on the OVW website. Applicants wishing to request a paper copy of these materials should contact 202-307-6026 or OVW.SASP.Cultural@usdoj.gov. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit a non-binding letter of intent to

OVW.SASP.Cultural@usdoj.gov by March 7, 2024. Interested applicants that do not submit a letter of intent are still eligible to apply.

For technical assistance with Grants.gov, contact Grants.gov Applicant Support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov. For technical assistance with JustGrants, contact OVW JustGrants Support at 1-866-655-4482 or OVW.JustGrantsSupport@usdoj.gov. The application content is the Proposal Narrative, Budget Detail Worksheet and Narrative, and Memorandum of Understanding or Memorandum of Exemption, signed and currently dated (on or after January 1, 2024).

The Proposal Abstract must provide a short summary, no more than two pages double-spaced, of the proposed project, including the names of the applicant and partners; project title; purpose of the project, including the goal and intended outcome; primary activities for which funds are requested; who will benefit, including the geographic area to be served; and products and deliverables. The project abstract, which is to be entered into a text box in JustGrants, will not be scored but is used throughout the review process.

The Data Requested With Application includes three questionnaires that must be completed in JustGrants but are not scored: the Pre-Award Risk Assessment, the Applicant Entity Questionnaire, and a SAS Culturally Specific Summary Data Sheet. Although the questionnaires must be completed in JustGrants, the questions can be reviewed in Appendices B, C, and D of this solicitation. The Proposal Narrative may not exceed 20 pages double-spaced and includes the Purpose of the Proposal (not applicable to planning grants), What Will Be Done, and Who Will Implement the Proposal sections. The total point value for the Proposal Narrative section is 60 points. This is broken down for planning grants and non-planning grants.

All applications must include a detailed budget and Budget Narrative. Display a clear link between the specific project activities and the proposed budget items. Include funds to attend OVW-sponsored TTA in the amount of \$15,000 for applicants located within the 48 contiguous states and \$20,000 for applicants located in the territories, Hawaii, and Alaska. The grant award period is 36 months. Budgets must reflect 36 months of project activity. The Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative are worth a total of 20 points. For additional information, please see the Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative section of the solicitation. Also, review the sample Budget Detail Worksheet and the Creating a Budget webinar available on the OVW website.

Unallowable costs: lobbying; fundraising; purchase of real property; physical modifications to buildings, including minor renovations such as painting or carpeting; and construction. Generally, food and beverage costs are not allowable. Recipients must receive prior approval to use grant funds to provide a working meal and/or refreshments at a meeting, conference, training, or other events.

Memorandum of Understanding and Memorandum of Exemption. Applicants must upload the MOU or MOE as an attachment in JustGrants. 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 a single document and must be currently signed and dated on or after January 1, 2024, by the Authorized Representative of each proposed partner organization during the development of the application. Category I applicants must submit an MOE in place of the MOU. The total point value for the MOU/MOE is 20 points. MOUs missing signatures may result in a point deduction or removal from consideration.

We're going to go a little into how to apply. So again, the deadline for this application is April 9. This is a three-year program or 36 months. The award is up to \$375,000. And you should do your registration for SAM and Grants.gov no later than March 14 or today. Applications must be submitted electronically via Grants.gov and JustGrants. Applicants that are unable to submit electronically must follow the instructions under OVW Policy on Late Submissions. See submission dates and times below for a list of steps for registering with all the required systems, and the deadlines for completing each step.

To submit an application, all applicants must register online with the System for Award Management (SAM) and with Grants.gov. To ensure sufficient time to complete the registration process, applicants must register online with SAM and Grants.gov immediately, but no later than March 31. We really recommend you start that today. Applications for this program will be submitted through a two-step process: submission of the SF-424 and SF-LLL in Grants.gov and submission of the full application, including attachments, in the JustGrants System. Submit the SF-424 and SF-LLL as early as possible, but not later than 24 to 48 hours before the Grants.gov deadline.

Register or confirm existing registration at least three weeks prior to the application deadline to ensure that the individual who will be submitting the application has SAM, Grants.gov, and JustGrants access and is the person registered to submit on behalf of the applicant. Maintain documentation of when registration began, any issues related to registration, and all communication with technical support. Failure to begin the SAM, Grants.gov, and JustGrants registration process in sufficient time, i.e., by the date identified in the solicitation, is not an acceptable reason for late submission.

We're going to go through the application review information. So, the Proposal Narrative is worth a total of 60 points. The Purpose of the Proposal is 20 points. What Will Be Done is 20 points. Who Will Implement is 20 points. The Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative is 20 points, and the MOU/MOE is also 20 points.

All applications undergo a Basic Minimum Review Requirement to determine if the application will move forward to peer review. Applications missing any of the following elements will be removed from further consideration and not forwarded to peer review: the Project Narrative, Budget Narrative and Budget Detail Worksheet, complete MOU or MOE, which must be a single document currently signed and dated.

OVW will subject all eligible, complete, and timely applications to the peer review process, which is based on the criteria outlined in the solicitation. OVW may use internal reviewers, external reviewers, or a combination of both.

All applications that are considered for funding will be subject to a programmatic review. The programmatic review consists of assessing the application for compliance with the program's scope, activities that compromise victim safety, and, if applicable, past performance and priority area review. OVW reserves the right to deduct points from the applications for the following reasons: activities that compromise victim safety and recovery and undermine offender accountability (we may deduct up to 25 points); out-of-scope and unallowable activities (we may deduct up to 25 points); past performance (we may deduct up to 25 points); and formatting and technical requirements (we may deduct up to 5 points).

As a part of the programmatic review process, applicants with current or recently closed OVW awards will be reviewed for past performance and risk. An applicant with considerable past performance issues may receive a deduction in points as described or be removed from consideration entirely regardless of the applicant's peer review score. For more information, see the Past Performance Review section and criteria in the solicitation.

OVW anticipates notifying applicants of funding decisions by October 1, 2024.

Next, we'll go through the federal award administration information. For programmatic questions, you can contact this program at 202-307-6026 or [OVW.SASP.Cultural@usdoj.gov](mailto:OVW.SASP.Cultural@usdoj.gov). For financial questions, contact 1-888-514-8556 or [OVW.GFMD@usdoj.gov](mailto:OVW.GFMD@usdoj.gov). For technical assistance with Grants.gov, contact Grants.gov Applicant Support at 800-518-4726 or [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). For technical assistance with JustGrants, contact OVW JustGrants Support at 866-655-4482 or [OVW.JustGrantsSupport@usdoj.gov](mailto:OVW.JustGrantsSupport@usdoj.gov).

A few helpful tips. Read the solicitation in its entirety before applying. Follow the solicitation. The information in the application should be as detailed as possible. Continuation applicants should write the application as if this is the first time that OVW has ever heard of their project. Ensure that each section is completely addressed, even if it feels redundant. Number all pages. Write out names and terms. Limit the use of acronyms included in the application. Information submitted beyond what is required in the solicitation will not be read by OVW staff or peer reviewers. Utilize the fiscal year 2023 Solicitation Companion Guide. Visit [JustGrants.usdoj.gov](https://JustGrants.usdoj.gov) for helpful guidance on application submission.

A few additional tips. Use the checklist in the solicitation. Have a second reviewer check your application. Connect your budget to the Project Narrative. MOU partners do not need to be local. Culturally specific activities are allowed and encouraged. You must be a culturally specific organization. Think about how you're responding to the gaps in

services. Remember, OVW funds are your tax dollars coming back into your community. Apply, apply, apply. And start now.

We're going to go ahead and move to the question-and-answer portion. So I'm going to stop sharing my screen. Okay. I'm going to read through each question. If you have additional questions, feel free to keep adding them in. This is from Jason: "Where it asks us to describe the communities in the service area, including but not limited to traditionally underserved populations such as communities of color, people with disabilities, people who are Deaf or hard of hearing, persons with limited English proficiency, older adults, and LGBTQ+ communities. Does this mean we should describe the overall community makeup? We are in New York and it's hard to summarize the whole city or the culturally specific community that is the focus of the project." You should respond to the culturally specific community that you're intending this project to be for. I hope that answers the question. If you are working at some of those intersections, you can absolutely speak to that as well.

"How does the partner demonstrate that they have been providing sexual assault victim services for three years?" So, if you look at what is requested for the Memorandum of Understanding and Memorandum of Exemption, there is a list of questions that are going to get at how many survivors you served in the last three years and when you started providing those services. That's how you'll be able to respond to that question about three years. And this is Felisa.

"Can a non-culturally specific organization apply as the primary grantee if their partner subgrantee is a culturally specific organization?" And this is from an anonymous participant. The answer to that question is no. So, in order to apply for this program, the minimum requirement is that you have to be a culturally specific organization working with tribal communities, Hispanic communities, Black communities, Asian-American, Pacific Islanders, etc. That's the minimum. You don't even have to be a sexual assault service provider. You have to be a culturally specific organization. And then you can actually partner with a sexual assault provider in order to apply for this program.

"It looks like the letter of intent is due March 14 instead of March 7." Correct. It's due today. The letter of intent is not actually required. It just helps us to gauge how many applications are coming in, but it is not required.

"Can we provide services to military women in the community?" This is a culturally specific program—but you can do things at the intersections. If you were a culturally specific organization that wants to work with the military, that wants to work with, say, Hispanic survivors of military sexual assault, you would absolutely be able to apply to this program. Just remember, you have to be a culturally specific organization in order to apply.

"Will funding the harvesting and cooking of traditional food be allowed as culturally specific program elements for this grant?" When we talked about the fact that you can't do any sort of purchasing of food, that really is regarding doing food for staff, for a

training or conference or something like that. But you are permitted to do food that is for the survivors and their children. If you wanted to do an activity for your survivors, you would be permitted to do that. I will say this. You have to send us some information and get approval from OVW, because we want to make sure that it's for survivors and their children as opposed to staff. But there is some room to be able to do it for survivors. I hope that answers your question.

"Does the MOU/MOE have a page limit? Must it follow the same formatting requirements as the narrative—double-spaced, etc.?" The MOE does not have a page limit or a minimum page requirement. We just request that, when you look in the solicitation, that you answer all of the questions that are listed there. And then, of course, make sure that you sign and date that MOE and that it's signed and dated at least after January 1, 2024.

"Can you share what the score cutoffs for funding in previous competitions have been?" We actually don't have score cutoffs really. And we don't share the scores. We will share the peer review comments. Those can be shared, but we don't share the scores.

"For planning grants, do we make a budget for the planning and implementation, \$375,000 or \$100,000, when writing the Proposal Narrative? Only do the planning portions, correct?" For the planning grants, the total award is \$375,000. You'll do an initial budget of just \$100,000, which is for the planning phase. And then you'll do a second budget, which is the remainder of the award, which will be \$275,000.

Anonymous participant. "If the majority of people that an organization serves are from BIPOC communities but there is no focus on a specific group, would this organization still be eligible to apply?" Your organization has to still be a culturally specific community. I can give you an example of that. I'm originally from Baltimore. Where I'm from in Baltimore was an entirely Black community. If an organization were to open up in the area that I was born in, then most likely all of the survivors walking through the door would've been Black. But if the organization's mission was not to specifically serve Black survivors, that organization would not be eligible because it is still not a culturally specific organization. The culturally specific organization is not based on who comes through the door. It's based on what the mission is for that organization. Was your organization founded to work with Hispanic survivors or Black survivors? That's what makes it a culturally specific organization and that's what makes it eligible to apply for this program.

Lisa. Follow-up from the two-part question. "Thanks for the answer in the first part. When writing the Proposal Narrative, only do the planning portions, correct?" So, correct. If you are applying for a planning grant, it's going to tell you that there's a section that you don't have to worry about doing, but that's all, and it's written into the solicitation. You'll have to respond only to those questions that are specific to a planning

grantee if you're applying for a planning grant. If you are not applying for the planning grant, they'll also give you directions on what sections you'll submit for that as well.

Charlene. "If our organization applies for a planning grant, will we automatically be eligible and considered for the full \$375,000 planning grant?" So, correct. The way the planning grants are done is in two phases. The initial phase of the planning grant is where you are hiring staff, you're training, you may be working on your policies and procedures. Once that section has been completed, you'll move on to the second phase of the award. It's not a competitive process after that. You just have to finish that initial stage, and then you would be eligible to start the second phase.

"Can you repeat if there is a page limit for the MOE/MOU?" There is no page limit for the MOE or MOU. It's just responding to the questions. There are some we see that are a page or two, and then there are some that are seven to eight pages. It really is dependent upon the organization, but there are no page limits or requirements.

"If the organization has a contractor providing services utilized for sexual assault victims, is that considered to be providing services?" We do have some culturally specific organizations that may be just starting out or creating a program, and they may hire folks who are not actual employees of the organization who provide some of those direct services. That is something that we have permitted and is seen as acceptable.

Divina. "We are a humanitarian organization that provides specific services to the local Ethiopian and Latin-American community. Would that qualify as culturally specific?" So, your humanitarian organization would have to be an organization that is culturally specific, i.e., your organization would have to have been set up to work with Black survivors, tribal survivors, Asian-Americans, Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, etc. That would have to be the mission of your organization, not just simply who comes through the door. You have to have been set up to work with those culturally specific communities.

"For planning, if awarded, can we put information on our website about the grant program?" For anyone, once you have gotten an award from OVW, we will oftentimes see organizations leverage the fact that they've received an OVW award. That's perfectly appropriate. You can let folks know that you've gotten an award. What you would not be permitted to do with a planning grant is start providing direct services, because during the Phase 1 planning phase, you're not permitted to provide direct services. You're preparing your organization to do the sexual assault direct service provision.

So, for Divina. "We are set up to serve more than one cultural community, is that okay?" That is absolutely appropriate. We have a number of organizations that serve multiple culturally specific communities. The thing I will still go back to is that your organization has to be set up to work with those communities. You should have a mission that says you were set up to work with, for example, the Hispanic community. You were set up to

work with the Black community, you were set up to work with the tribal community. It can't simply be who happens to come through your doors.

Anonymous participant. "For a planning grant, if budgeted for, can one of the site visit locations conduct sexual assault training for staff and leadership? From whom can the recipient get training, and does the trainer need to be a partner organization or from OVW?" Your MOU partner should be an organization that has at least three years of experience providing sexual assault services outside of the context of intimate partner violence, because that MOU partner is going to help the lead applicant to apply for the planning grant and be able to get the experience. That's why the MOU partner is required for the planning grantees.

Anonymous participant. "Are we expected to set a goal for the number of survivors we will serve annually, or can we focus on other process-related objectives?" You'll notice in the solicitation; it's going to ask you to give an idea of how many folks you think you're going to serve. You can put those numbers in. But I'll be honest. With OVW, we recognize that those are anticipated numbers and do not always happen in that way. We know that you have no clue how many people you're going to serve. And we honestly expect that at OVW.

Michael. "Apologies if this is redundant. We serve immigrants who are part of multiple cultural communities. Are we eligible?" I'll give you an example. There are some programs that may be, for instance, refugee resettlement programs. Is a refugee resettlement program eligible to apply? Most of the time, they are not, because usually those organizations were not set up to serve the culturally specific community. They're set up to serve refugees who may be from Russia, who may be from Albania, who could be from anywhere. They're not set up to serve based on race and ethnicity. In order to be eligible to apply for this program, your organization has to be one that is set up to serve specific racial and ethnic groups—and those being tribal, Black, Hispanic, Asian-American, Pacific Islander, etc. If your organization was specifically set up to serve those racial and ethnic groups, yes, you would be eligible. If you were not set up to serve those racial and ethnic groups, then you would be ineligible.

Anonymous participant. "Can you repeat your answer for the page limit?" There is no page limit for the MOU. There is also no page limit for the MOE. It can be whatever you feel it needs to be in order to respond to the questions we ask for your MOU or MOE.

Anonymous participant. "Does the MOE need to be double-spaced, too? I'm terrified of getting the formatting wrong." It should be double-spaced, but again, there are no requirements around how long or how short it should be. It really can be as long as you feel it needs to be to respond to those questions; if it's 10, if it's eight, if it's five—it really is however long you think it needs to be to respond to the questions. We would not take points off because it was longer or shorter. In both the peer review and our programmatic review, we're looking at whether or not it responds to those questions.

Now, thank you from Judith. “Great information.” No problem. Are there any additional questions? So, anonymous participant. “What sets great applications apart from good ones?” Honestly, the thing I would really advise is, at the end where I talked about the tips, really respond to all of the questions. Even when they seem redundant, still go ahead and respond to those. Also, maybe do not use a ton of acronyms, because a peer reviewer may not understand what an acronym stands for, and you don’t want to lose points because you said something that wasn’t understood because you were using acronyms. I also really highly recommend using the checklist that’s toward the end of the solicitation, because that’s going to help to make sure you send in a complete application. I also highly recommend having a second person look at the application. It can be hard to review your own work. Just having a second set of eyes can be really helpful. But answer every single question. Thoroughly read the solicitation before you start working on it—and start working on it now. Don’t wait until the last moment. I know a lot of folks are, like, “Well, I’ve got lots of things to do.” But what we find is, when people are rushing at the last minute to finish, sometimes they miss things, and we hate for that to happen to you. So, answer all the questions and start now.

So, from Divina, another question. “We have only formally been providing sexual abuse services under this legal formation since last year. However, we have been providing free services since 2020. Could we still apply on our own?” The requirement to apply without an MOU partner is you need 36 months of providing sexual assault services. I don’t know exactly what your history is, but I would say, look at the solicitation and determine if you feel that you have at least three years of experience providing sexual assault services. If not, you would be required to have an MOU partner.

Anonymous participant. “Can you further clarify the training question answer? Even if the partner is an experienced sexual assault organization and the applicant is an experienced culturally centered organization, additional training may be desired during planning, so are there limitations or restrictions on who can provide training?” I hope I understand what this question is. You are permitted to receive training from your MOU partners. You can also provide training to your MOU partners. But you cannot provide training outside of your MOU partner, because this is a direct services grant.

“Many survivors our organization works with have experienced sexual assault in both interpersonal violence and non-intimate personal violence contacts. But the application seems to ask us to count IPV and non-IPV separately. How should we describe and count these situations?” The reason why it asks for you to count it separately is because if your organization has primarily worked with victims who have experienced sexual assault within the context of domestic violence, if that’s the majority of your work, you would not be eligible to apply. You really have to have been providing services outside of the context of domestic violence in order to be eligible for this program. That’s the reason why you have to count it separately. So, because the Sexual Assault Services Culturally Specific Program is one that deals with sexual assault across the lifespan, oftentimes, because folks understand that they cannot have primarily responded to domestic violence, they’ll talk about people who may have experienced child sexual abuse. They may talk about people who have experienced sexual assault within the

workplace. But if the primary work that you've done is within domestic violence, it is not going to be eligible. You're not going to be an eligible program to apply.

The next question is, "Can we receive training from organizations other than our MOU partner?" You absolutely can. One of the things about our program and that travel set-aside money—if you are within the continental U.S., it's going to be \$15,000, and if you're in Hawaii, Alaska, or the territories, it's going to be \$20,000—is you can use that money for training as well. You can use it for local training, you can use it to go to national trainings, but we absolutely provide you funding, and that's whether you do a planning grant or if you do the full grant straight out of the gate. Either one of them will allow you to attend a top training, and it doesn't have to be only with your MOU partner. Are there any additional questions?

MARIE WHITE: Okay. So, if there are no further questions for Tonette, we do appreciate everyone for joining us today on the call. As she mentioned, you'll receive a copy of the slides and the recording as well in the coming days. Thank you so much and have a great rest of your day.

TONETTE NGASSA: Thank you. Good luck with your applications.