

OVW Fiscal Year 2024 Grant to Enhance Culturally Specific Services for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking Program Pre-Application Information Session Transcript

LINDSAY YOUNG: Good afternoon, everyone, and good morning to those of you on the West Coast. My name is Lindsay Young, and I am the newest member of the Culturally Specific Services Team, and I am very excited to welcome you all today to our first pre-application call. And, again, you all are joining Fiscal Year 2024's Grant to Enhance Culturally Specific Services for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking Program -- CSSP for short. And before we get started, I would like to also introduce the rest of my team. We have Tonette Ngassa, who will not be joining us today, but she is our Grant Management Team Lead. She supports this program, as well as the Sexual Assault Services Culturally Specific Program and Transitional Housing Program. And so, now, I will turn it to Dr. Veronica Smith to introduce herself.

DR. VERONICA SMITH: Good afternoon, everyone. Again, welcome to the pre-application call. My name is Veronica Smith, and I am a member of the Culturally Specific Services Program Team. I joined OVW in 2017. And prior to working on this program, worked with the Transitional Housing Program. So, we are just excited about how much the program has grown and has changed in the recent years. Again, we wish you all the best of luck with the application process. And I will now turn it over to Olivia.

OLIVIA DAWSON: Hi. Good morning and good afternoon. My name is Olivia Dawson, and I am a Grant Program Specialist on the Culturally Specific Services Program. I've been at the Office on Violence Against Women for a little bit over a year now. Prior to that, I was at a small federal agency also managing grants in Zimbabwe, Tanzania, and Uganda. I am very excited to read through all of your applications.

LINDSAY YOUNG: So, before we get started, we have a lot to discuss today. I just wanted to give you all the agenda and the overview of what you can expect. First, we will review the Language Access and Translation Information, then we will receive an overview from our Grants Financial Management Division Team. Then At-A-Glance for this solicitation. We will then have an overview of the Office on Violence Against Women and an overview of the Culturally Specific Services Program, the Federal Award Information, Eligibility Information, Application and Submission Information, How to Apply, and Application Review Information. And now, I will turn it over to Kristene Moore with the Grants Financial Management Team.

KRISTENE MOORE: Hi, everyone. Thanks for being here today. So, as Lindsay mentioned, I'm with the Grants Financial Management Division within OVW. In the next couple of slides, we're going to focus on aspects of your application that relate to the documents that our financial team here at the Grants Financial Management Division reviews. More specifically, we're going to discuss some items that GFMD has identified from prior years' applications that could help expedite our review process. So, for today, we're just going to highlight certain aspects of a Pre-Award Risk Assessment and provide you with a link to a detailed webinar on how to develop the budget that'll be included in your application. First, we'll highlight the items identified in the Summary Data Sheet, which is completed by you all, the applicants. Specifically, there are three items that we're going to talk about, and they are the non-profit requirement, 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 you're going to indicate that, and specify the end date of what your fiscal year is, the last fiscal year. The Grants Financial Management Division is finding that applicants don't always include all of this information. Again, we're plugging it here to just remind you to please ensure that this question is answered in its entirety on that Summary Data Sheet, which is question number three.

The other item that we're going to highlight from this solicitation is specifically if you are a non-profit organization, and it relates to the IRS three-step safe harbor procedure. If you use the IRS three-step safe harbor procedure to determine your executive's compensation, you are required to provide a disclosure letter. You're going to want to refer to the solicitation for further details and there'll be a link to a sample letter. So, note that there are four required parts to that disclosure letter, and that sample letter, again, provides the outline for all four of those parts, so please be sure to follow that example and provide a response to each of those four pieces.

The next item that we'd like to discuss is the Pre-Award Risk Assessment questions, which are required. It helps GFMD during the Pre-Award Risk Assessment review for all applications. Each applicant must prepare a response to all 11 questions and note that each question may have multiple parts to it. And, again, we've noticed from prior years that applicants don't always answer the questions fully, which in turn requires GFMD to reach out to the applicants, which in turn can delay the funding decision. Some of the most common issues that we've encountered for that Pre-Award Risk Assessment have been, for example, question number two, where the applicant indicates that they do indeed have internal policies, but they don't provide a brief list of topics covered in those policies and procedures. And, again, that's an example of question two of what we find

is incomplete. Another example is question number three, where some applicants fail to provide a brief summary of the organization's process for tracking expenditures. More specifically, whether or not it tracks budgeted versus actual expenditures. Again, those are just a few examples. But, in general, please make sure to read each piece of each question and provide a full and comprehensive response.

So, in this next slide, we just want to quickly highlight some resources that are available to you as you are creating that budget for the application. Over the last couple of years, GFMD has developed a detailed webinar presentation on how to develop a budget and be submitted with OVW applications. This presentation addresses some of the challenges that you might face with your budgets and provides some insight into OVW's budget review process. And it can be found at the link on this slide. The next step is a great resource, Uniform Guidance, which can be found at 2 CFR 200. You can search for that with any one of your search engines. And then, other resources include the DOJ Financial Guide and that solicitation itself. All great resources. And this last slide is going to have some information on how to contact us at GFMD directly.

So, this is our information. We know there's a lot of information to process regarding your application and budget, so if you have any questions, please feel free to contact us. We have a help desk that can be reached at 888-514-8556 or by email at OVW.GFMD@usdoj.gov. That wraps up the financial piece for today, so I'm going to go ahead and pass it back over to your program team.

LINDSAY YOUNG: Thank you so much for that, Kristene.

So, At-a-Glance at this year's solicitation. The Grants.gov number is O-OVW-2024-171965. The CFDA number is 16.016. The focus areas are on any of the following four crimes: domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking. The JustGrants closing date is May 7th, 2024. And the award period will be for three years or thirty-six months. The funding levels available are up to \$400,000 or up to \$475,000 if you address an OVW Priority Area, and we'll describe that a bit later. And registration -- we call SAM for short -- is the Systems for Award Management and Grants.gov. We ask that you all do this immediately but please no later than April 11th, 2024.

So, the Office on Violence Against Women -- we call it OVW for short -- is a component of the United States Department of Justice. It was created in 1995 and administers grant programs authorized by the Violence Against Women Act, also known as VAWA, 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.

About the Culturally Specific Services Program, CSSP. This program is authorized by 34 U.S.C. Section 20124. The Grants to Enhance Culturally Specific Services for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking Program supports the maintenance and replication of existing successful community-based programs, providing culturally specific services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, as well as the development of innovative culturally specific services to enhance access to services and resources for victims who face obstacles to using more traditional programs.

The definition of culturally specific services. Pursuant to 34 U.S.C. Section 12291(a)(7), culturally specific services mean 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 towards racial and ethnic minority groups. 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."

The Culturally Specific Services Program has eight purpose areas. For your application to be successful, you must address one or more of the following purpose areas. The first is working with states and local governments and social service agencies to develop and enhance effective strategies to provide culturally specific services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Number two, increasing communities' capacity to provide culturally specific resources and support for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking crimes and their families. Number three, strengthening criminal justice interventions by providing training for law enforcement, prosecution, courts, probation, and correctional facilities on culturally specific responses to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Number four, enhancing traditional services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking through the leadership of culturally specific programs, offering services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Next slide.

Number five, working in cooperation with the community to develop education and prevention strategies, highlighting culturally specific issues and resources regarding victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Number six, providing culturally specific programs for children exposed to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Number seven, providing culturally specific resources and services that address the safety, economic, housing, and workplace

needs of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, including emergency assistance. And lastly, number eight, examining the dynamics of culture and its impact on victimization and healing.

I want to note here that if you wish to address Purpose Areas 6 or 8, you must do so in conjunction with one of the other program purpose areas. So, I want to reiterate that if you address Purpose Area number 6, which is providing culturally specific programs for children exposed to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, or number 8, examining the dynamics of culture and its impact on victimization and healing, you must do so in conjunction with one of the other program purpose areas. Proposals focusing only on these two purpose areas will be removed from further consideration.

If you would like additional resources, we encourage you to please visit our website where you can see how awards contribute to the achievement of program goals and objectives. You'll have OVW program information and program performance measures under the Measuring Effectiveness Initiative with the VAWA Measuring Effectiveness Initiative webpage. You can also see examples of other successful projects in OVW's most recent report to Congress on the effectiveness of the VAWA grant programs.

OVW priorities. For Year 2024, OVW is interested in supporting the following priority areas. Applications proposing activities in the following areas will be given special consideration. The first OVW Priority Area is advanced 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. To receive special consideration for addressing this priority, applicants must propose to address either or both Purpose Area 1 and/or Purpose Area 3 and demonstrate that the applicant will enter the required community partnerships. For information on how to document these partnerships, see the Letters of Commitment section in this solicitation.

The second OVW priority is to strengthen efforts to prevent and end sexual assault, including victim services and civil and criminal justice responses. To receive special consideration for addressing this priority, applicants must focus 50% or more of their grant-funded activities on non-intimate partner sexual assault. Applicants for this priority area may include an optional planning phase in their applications. For additional requirements regarding this priority area, please see the Proposal Narrative section of the solicitation. The last OVW Priority Area is number three, expand economic justice

and financial advocacy for survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking, including as a tool for violence prevention. To receive special consideration for addressing this priority, applicants must focus on improving the financial stability of victims and survivors, including through helping them access job training, post-secondary education, trade schools, skills-building opportunities, and entrepreneurial prospects. Applicants should propose an approach for survivors to achieve financial independence and increase their ability to sustain self-sufficiency.

OVW does not fund any activities that jeopardize victim safety, deter, or prevent physical or emotional healing for 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.

And now, we'll review some activities that are considered out-of-scope. Applicants who propose any of the following activities deemed to be substantially out-of-scope may receive a deduction in points during the review process or can be eliminated entirely from consideration. The first out-of-scope activity is research projects. Funds under this program may not be used to conduct research. Surveys and focus groups, depending on their design and purpose, may constitute research and, therefore, be out-of-scope. However, assessments conducted for internal improvement purposes only may not be considered research. Secondly, family violence. And this is a common pitfall for many applicants. Under this program, grant funds may not be used to directly address child abuse or other family violence issues such as violence perpetrated by a child against a parent, parents against a child, or violence perpetrated by a sibling against another sibling. Next slide, please.

Services for children. Services can only be offered to children under age 11 who have been exposed to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking if those services are provided in conjunction with serving the child's parent or guardian, and legal services. Grant funds may not be used for criminal defense of victims charged with crimes. Representation in tort cases is also not permitted using grant funds. However, representation in post-conviction relief proceedings with respect to the conviction of a victim relating to or arising from domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or sex trafficking is permissible. Comprehensive legal services may not be more than 10% of the project's overall budget.

Now, we will talk about the Federal Award Information. So, the awards, amounts, and duration. We anticipate offering 50 awards this year with a start date for these awards

beginning on October 1st of 2024. We anticipate being able to award \$22,500,000 in awards, with the anticipated maximum dollar amount for awards between \$400,000 to \$475,000. As we've mentioned earlier, the period of performance will be thirty-six months or three years.

And now we will address the various funding levels. If you are addressing one or more of the eight CSSP Purpose Areas, you are eligible for up to \$400,000 in funding. If you address one or more of the eight CSSP Purpose Areas and OVW Priority Area number 1, which is advancing racial equity as an essential component of ending sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking, you are eligible for up to \$450,000. If you address one or more of the eight CSSP Purpose Areas and OVW Priority Area number 2, which is to strengthen efforts to prevent and end sexual assault, including victim services and civil and criminal justice responses, you are eligible for up to \$475,000 in funding. If you address one or more of the eight CSSP Purpose Areas and Priority Area number 3, which is to expand economic justice and financial advocacy for survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking, including as a tool for violence prevention, you are eligible for up to \$450,000 in funding.

And so, we have two types of applicants. You are either a new applicant or a continuing applicant. To be defined as a new applicant, those will be applicants who have never received funding under this program or whose previous funding under this program expired on or before April 30th, 2023. Continuing applicants are those who have an existing or recently closed award under this program. Recently closed will be any applicant whose award was closed after April 30th, 2023. And I just want to remind everyone that continuation of funding is not guaranteed. Just because you've received funding before, does not mean that you will necessarily receive funding moving forward.

Now, we will review the Federal Award Information and types of applications. Recipients of a Year 2023 award under this program are not eligible to apply as the lead applicant or as a partner or sub-recipient for a Year 2024 proposal. Likewise, an organization that is a partner or a sub-recipient on a for Year 2023 award is not eligible to apply as the lead applicant or as a partner/sub-recipient on a for Year 2024 proposal. I'd like to note here that current grantees with a substantial amount of unobligated funds remaining, and we define that as if you have 50% or more of the previous award, as of March 31st, 2024, without having an adequate justification, you may not be considered for funding or you may receive a reduced award amount if selected for funding in for Year 2024.

And here are some of the mandatory program requirements if you were to receive funding. OVW-sponsored training and technical assistance. Also, collection of and

reporting on performance indicators. Forms, instructions, training, and related tools for each OVW program are available on the VAWA Measuring Effectiveness Initiative webpage. OVW may conduct a program assessment or evaluation necessitating grant involvement. Therefore, recipients may be expected to dedicate some OVW-funded time and resources to participating in an assessment or evaluation. And now, I will turn it to my colleague, Dr. Veronica Smith.

DR. VERONICA SMITH: Thank you, Lindsay. Let's talk about the eligibility information. You can go to the next slide. Who is eligible to apply? First, private non-profit/Tribal organizations for which the primary purpose of the organization 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 the US territories. Native American Tribal organizations other than federally recognized tribal governments are also eligible. And we do get a lot of questions as to whether Native American governmental organizations are eligible, and again, we want to emphasize that they are not, only the non-profit Native American Tribal organizations. Also eligible to apply under these grant award funds are non-profits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education. Non-profits that do not have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education are also eligible to apply for CSSP funds.

Continuing in our eligibility information, we have provided some examples to help clarify a little more about those organizations that are eligible. The items listed below are examples of culturally specific programs that are eligible to apply, but please know that this list is not exhaustive. For additional information, please see the Required Partnerships section of the solicitation. The first example is a faith-based organization or church providing culturally specific services focused on the needs of the Black community. The second example is a culturally specific community resource center focused on the needs of the Hispanic community. The next example is a culturally specific health center focused on the needs of the Native Hawaiian community.

Additionally, a culturally specific organization that provides services focused on the needs of Black trans-women and girls who have experienced domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking is also an example of an eligible organization. Next, an Urban Indian organization that provides culturally specific services for American Indians and Native Alaskans who do not reside on or near Tribal lands. And the final example is a culturally specific organization that provides services focused on the needs of Black trans-women and girls who have experienced domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking. And we want to emphasize again that

this list is not exhaustive and if you have any questions about eligibility, please do not hesitate to contact OVW.

Additional requirements. One, the organization must have a Board of Directors or steering committee and staffing, which is reflective of the culturally specific community it serves. Next, the organization must have demonstrated expertise in serving victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking, or have entered into a formal partnership with an organization having such experience. Please note that 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, Hispanic, and Latina victims, the organization is not eligible. For more information, see the eligibility information section of the solicitation.

Other program eligibility requirements. Delivery of legal assistance certification. Pursuant to 34 USC Section 12291(b)(12), to be eligible for an award, any recipient or sub-recipient providing legal assistance with funds awarded under this program must certify in writing that you meet the requirements outlined on Page 12 in the Fiscal Year 2024 CSSP Solicitation. Sample certification letters can be found on the OVW website.

Required partnerships. To ensure that projects supported by CSSP 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 MOE, or a Memorandum of Understanding, an MOU. For information on the required contents of the MOE, the Memorandum of Exemption or the MOU, the Memorandum of Understanding, see those sections and Other Supportive Documents section of the solicitation. Next slide.

There are some required partnerships that also constitute the eligibility for applicants under the CSSP award program. All applicants must meet one of the following categories as it relates to partnership requirements. For Category I applicants, the applicant is a culturally specific organization and has a minimum of three years of demonstrated history of providing services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking for a minimum of three years. The applicant must submit an MOE, which is a Memorandum of Exemption. For those applicants, a partnership is not required.

Category II applicants. These are defined as applicants that are a culturally specific organization with three years of demonstrated history of providing services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking and will be partnering with another culturally specific organization that also has three years of demonstrated

history of providing these services. An MOU, or Memorandum of Understanding, is required for those in Category II. There is no cap on the partner compensation.

Category III. The applicant is a culturally specific organization with less than three years of demonstrated history of providing services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. The applicant will be partnering with another culturally specific organization that has the necessary three years of demonstrated history providing services. For Category III applicants, an MOU is required and there is no cap on the partner compensation.

Category IV. The applicant is a culturally specific organization with less than three years of demonstrated history of providing services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking and will be partnering with a victim service provider that has three years of demonstrated history but is not a culturally specific organization and therefore is not eligible to apply independently under the Culturally Specific Services Program. For those in Category IV, an MOU or Memorandum of Understanding is required. Partner compensation is limited to \$30,000 for the three-year award period.

There is a limit on the number of applications. 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. And now, I will turn it over to Olivia to discuss the application and submission information.

OLIVIA DAWSON: Hello. We'll now go over the application and submission information.

So, submission information. Address to request application package. The complete application package, this solicitation, including links to 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.Cultural@usdoj.gov.

Submission information, Letter of Intent. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit a non-binding Letter of Intent to OVW.Cultural@usdoj.gov by April 11th, 2024. Interested applicants who do not submit a Letter of Intent are still eligible to apply. For more information, see the Application and Submission Information section of the solicitation.

Formatting and technical requirements. Number one, please have your application be double-spaced. Charts may be single-spaced. Please use eight-by-eleven-inch pages. One-inch margins. Arial font, type no smaller than eleven-point, except for footnotes,

which may be in nine-point font. Please use page numbers no more than 20 pages for the Proposal Narrative. Word documents in the following formats, Microsoft Office Word .doc, PDF files .pdf, or text documents .txt will be accepted. Headings and sub-headings that correspond to the sections identified in this section of the solicitation are encouraged.

Application contents. OVW will not contact applicants for missing items on the list below. Applicants that do not include all the following documents will be considered substantially incomplete and will not be considered for funding, Proposal Narrative, Budget Detail Worksheet and Narrative, Memorandum of Understanding, MOU, or MOE, Memorandum of Exemption. Please make sure that those items are signed and currently dated on or after April 1st, 2024. And lastly, the Letter of Commitment or LOC, if applicable. Please make sure that it is signed and currently dated on or after April 1st, 2024. Proposal Abstract. The Proposal Abstract must provide a short summary, no more than two pages, double-spaced, of the proposed project. Include names of the applicant and partners, project title, purpose of the project including goal and intended outcome, primary activities for which funds are requested, who will benefit including geographic area to be served, products and deliverables, and how the grant will measure progress in completing project goals and objectives. The Proposal Abstract, which is to be entered into a text box in JustGrants will not be scored, but it is used throughout the review process.

Data requested with the application. All applicants must complete and submit, as an attachment, the Pre-Award Risk Assessment, Applicant Entry Questionnaire, and the Summary Data Sheet in JustGrants. These documents are not scored. Pre-Award Risk Assessment. Each applicant must respond to each question. Do not submit responses from a prior fiscal year without updating them to be responsive to all questions listed in the questionnaire. Applicant Entity Questionnaire. The Applicant Entity Questionnaire is required for every applicant for OVW funding and, therefore, includes questions that may not be obviously relevant or specifically focused on a particular grant program. Culturally Specific Services Program Summary Data Sheet. The Summary Data Sheet must be uploaded as an attachment in JustGrants and should be one to four pages in length, single or double-spaced. The Summary Data Sheet does not count towards the 20-page limit for the Proposal Narrative. Concerning the Pre-Award Risk Assessment. Failure to provide this information or to respond to questions from OVW regarding this information in a timely manner could result in the application being removed from consideration or delay an access to funds.

Proposal Narrative. Applicants must upload the Proposal Narrative as an attachment in JustGrants. The Proposal Narrative may not exceed 20 pages, double-spaced, 22

pages if the applicant is addressing OVW Priority Area 2. The Proposal Narrative must include the three sections -- Purpose of the Proposal, which is worth 15 points, What Will Be Done, which is worth 20 points, Who Will Implement the Proposal, which is also worth 20 points. The total point value of the Proposal Narrative is 55 points. For additional information, please see the Proposal Narrative section of the solicitation.

Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative. All applicants must submit these items as an attachment in JustGrants. Present a clear link between the specific project activities and the proposed budget items. Fairly and reasonably compensate all project partners for their full level of effort, unless otherwise stated in the MOU or LOC. Include sufficient funds to provide language access or describe other resources available to the applicant to ensure meaningful access for persons with limited English proficiency. Include sufficient funds to provide access for people with disabilities or who are Deaf or hard of hearing or describe other resources available to the applicant to ensure meaningful access for such people.

Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative. Applicants must submit these items as an attachment in JustGrants. Please include funds to attend OVW-sponsored TTA, so technical training and assistance, in the amount of \$15,000 for applicants located in the 48 contiguous states and \$20,000 for applicants located in the territories of Hawaii and Alaska. Follow the maximum allowable amounts and purposes for Category IV MOU partners as outlined in the Other Program Eligibility Requirements Section. Distinguish clearly between subawards and contracts in allocating any grant funds to other entities. The Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative are worth a total of 25 points. For additional information, please see the Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative section of the solicitation.

Unallowable costs. The costs associated with the activities listed below are unallowable and must not be included in applicants' budgets. Lobbying, fundraising, purchase of real property, physical modifications to buildings, including minor renovations such as painting or carpeting, and construction.

Food and beverage costs for refreshments and meals. 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 event. Next slide, please. **Letter of Commitment.** All applicants proposing to implement either Purpose Area 1, working with state and local governments and social service agencies to develop and enhance effective strategies to provide culturally specific services, and/or Purpose Area 3, strengthening criminal justice interventions by providing training for law enforcement, prosecution, courts, probation, and correctional

facilities on culturally specific responses, and seeking special consideration because they are addressing Priority 1 must submit an LOC, or Letter of Commitment, from each appropriate agency. Each LOC must be signed and currently dated by the Authorized Representative of the appropriate state or local government, social services, or law enforcement agency during the development of the application.

Memorandum of Understanding, or MOU, and Memorandum of Exemption, MOE. 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 by the Authorized Representative of each proposed partner organization during the development of the application. Please note that it is a regular pitfall for applicants to not sign or date the MOU and MOE. Category I applicants must submit an MOE in place of the MOU. The MOE must be signed and currently dated by the Authorized Representative of the applicant during the development of the application. The total point value for the MOU and MOE is 20 points. MOUs and MOEs missing signatures may result in a point deduction or removal from consideration.

How to apply. Dates and time. All applications must be submitted electronically first in Grants.gov, so these will be the forms SF-424 and SF-LLL, and then in JustGrants. Applicants who are unable to submit electronically must follow the instructions under the OVW Policy on Late Submissions. Please note that applicants must make every effort to submit their application in Grants.gov and JustGrants. The Grants.gov deadline is six days before the JustGrants application deadline. If an applicant must submit their application via email due to a technical difficulty, they must do so by the JustGrants application deadline, but no earlier than four hours prior to the JustGrants application deadline. Please see Submission Dates and Time on page 26 of the FY 2024 solicitation for a list of steps for registering with all required systems and deadlines for completing each step.

OVW will not accept applications after the JustGrants deadline except for severe inclement weather or natural or man-made disaster. For more information, see the OVW Policy on Late Submission Request Due to Severe Inclement Weather or Natural or Man-Made Disaster section of the solicitation.

Registration. To apply, all applicants must register online with the System for Award Management, or SAM, and with Grants.gov. To ensure sufficient time to complete the registration process, applicants must register online with SAM and with Grants.gov immediately but no later than April 11th. Please note that "immediately" is in all capitals on this slide. Please do this action as soon as possible if you would like to apply.

Two steps. Applications for this program will be submitted through a two-step process. One, submission of the SF-424 and SF-LLL in Grants.gov, and number two, submission of the full application, including attachments in the Justice Grants System, or JustGrants. Please submit the SF-424 and SF-LLL as early as possible, but no later than 24 to 48 hours before the Grants.gov deadline. Tip: JustGrants functions better when using a PC computer with Chrome or Edge web browser.

Issues with SAM, Grants.gov, or JustGrants registration. Register and/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 your registration began, any issues related to the registration, and all communication with technical support. Please note that failure to begin the SAM, Grants.gov, or JustGrants registration process in sufficient time, i.e., by the date identified in this solicitation, is not an acceptable reason for late submission.

OVW policy on late submissions. Applications not submitted by 8:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on May 7th, 2024, will not be considered for funding, unless the applicant receives OVW permission to submit a late application. In limited circumstances, OVW will approve a request to submit an application after the deadline. Approval of a late submission request is not an indication of the application's final disposition. Applications approved for late submission are still subject to the review process and criteria described in the solicitation. Application Review Information.

So, this is our review criteria. You'll note that the Proposal Narrative is 55 points, the purpose of the proposal is 15 points, What Will Be Done is 20 points, Who Will Implement the Proposal is 20 points, the Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative is 25 points, and the MOU/MOE is 20 points. Whoever does the financial reporting on your team needs to ensure that the SF-269s are submitted timely, as delinquent reports put a freeze on funding. Also note that if your agency expends more than \$500,000 in federal funding, they must submit a copy of their audit to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse. All of this information is included in the OC financial guide.

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

Review and Selection Process. Programmatic Review. 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 scope, activities that compromise victim safety, and, if applicable, past performance and priority area review. OVW reserves the right to deduct points from applications for the following reasons. One, activities that compromise victim safety and recovery and undermine offender accountability, we will deduct up to twenty-five points. Out-of-scope and unallowable activities, we will deduct up to 25 points. Three, past performance of the applicant, we will deduct up to twenty-five points. And number four, formatting and technical requirements, we will deduct up to five points.

Review and selection process concerning past performance. 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 reduction in points as described or be removed from consideration entirely regardless of the application's peer review score. For more information, see the Past Performance Review section criteria in the solicitation.

OVW anticipates notifying applicants of funding decisions by October 1st, 2024. Next slide, please. Federal Award Administration Information. Federal Award Information. Federal Awarding Agency Contacts. Here, you'll find the contacts for programmatic questions, and you can contact this program at 202-307-6026 or OVW.Cultural@usdoj.gov. For financial questions, please contact 888-514-8556 or OVW.gfmd@usdoj.gov.

For technical assistance with Grants.gov, please contact Grants.gov Applicant Support at 800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov. For technical assistance with JustGrants, contact OVW JustGrants Support at 866-655-4482 or OVW.JustGrantsSupport@usdoj.gov.

Application Checklist. OVW may contact applicants for missing items and OVW will not redirect documents that are inadvertently submitted with the wrong application.

So, now that our presentation is over, we'll start addressing questions in the chat. I'm going to hand it over to my colleague, Lindsay, and my other colleague, Veronica, to handle questions.

LINDSAY YOUNG: Thank you, Olivia, and thank you to everyone for listening to our presentation today. We've got a lot of great questions in the Q-and-A box. We will start answering those now. But if you do have a question and you have not put it in the Q-

and-A box, now is the time. Our first question is, "If a current grantee needs to provide an explanation for spending status on a current grant, where in the application should the justification be provided?"

DR. VERONICA SMITH: Yes. That justification can be provided in the budget section. You can just make a note that you are a current grantee and then explain whatever situation there is regarding an excessive amount of funds remaining in the budget. In addition to that, you can also contact your current grant program specialist to discuss that as well in terms of whether they, too, will require you to submit something via email to explain the excessive funds.

LINDSAY YOUNG: Thank you, Veronica. And the next question is, "Can you serve minors who are victims of dating violence directly, ages 16 to 18, in this grant?"

DR. VERONICA SMITH: Yes. The age for the CSSP program is 11 and older. We do have a lot of programs that come in under that prevention purpose area. And so, they are able to provide preventative services to younger individuals. But again, as long as they are 11 and older, yes, they can be the primary client under your program.

LINDSAY YOUNG: The next question and I can answer this, "Is the RFP states that there are four priority areas, only three were addressed." Yes. So, OVW has four programmatic priorities. However, the three programmatic priorities that we discussed today are the ones that are applicable for this specific program. So, yes, OVW does have four programmatic priorities, but only three of those priority areas will be given special consideration under the CSSP solicitation.

The next question is, "What is considered racial equity?"

DR. VERONICA SMITH: So, I am going to read a definition and we can also drop it in the chat. But according to Executive Order 13985, "racial equity is the consistent and systemic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment such as Black, Latino, and indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and other persons of color, members of religious minorities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer persons, persons with disabilities, persons who live in rural areas, and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality." And as I said, I know that is a long definition, so we can drop it in the chat. I just wanted to read it for the purposes of the recording.

LINDSAY YOUNG: Thank you, Veronica. The next question is, and I'm happy to answer this one: "I want to confirm that only Priority Area 2 can include two additional pages." No additional pages beyond the 20 if addressing numbers 1 or 3. "Also, can you confirm funding if addressing a purpose area and Priority Area 3? Is it \$450,000 or \$475,000?"

So, yes, if you are addressing Priority Area 2, you can include two additional pages. That would bring you to 22 pages that you can have. And yes, it's capped at 20 pages if you are addressing Priority Areas 1 or 3. Also, if you are addressing a purpose area and priority number area three, you are eligible to receive up to \$450,000 in grant funding.

And the next question is, "Do continuation applicants have an advantage over new applicants in the scoring?"

DR. VERONICA SMITH: No, they do not. As a matter of fact, for continuation applicants, we review your past performance and also take it into consideration when reviewing your application process. So, there is no guaranteed funding if you are a continuation applicant.

LINDSAY YOUNG: The next question is, "Is there a priority of 501(c)3 or non-501(c)3 non-profits?" The answer to that is no. Under this program, you can be a 501(c)(3) non-profit, or you cannot be a 501(c)(3) non-profit. Neither one gives you, any priority over the other, but both are eligible to apply under our solicitation.

The next question is, "Page one of the RFP states that the Letter of Intent is due April 11th. Page 14 states that it is due April 4th. Which date should we follow?" The correct date for that is April 11th. And then--sorry, the questions are--okay.

"Will this recording be sent to us?" Yes, there will be a recording of this sent to you all.

The next question -- "Our organization is in the renewal process for SAM. This process is taking much longer than we had anticipated. Are we able to register for this grant application during the renewal process?"

DR. VERONICA SMITH: So, as long as you meet those deadlines in the solicitation in terms of starting your Grants.gov and SAM.gov registration and remember to keep documentation that you have started those processes by those deadlines, you are able to submit to the OVW.Cultural email address. But just be reminded, as we stressed in the slides, that in order for you to submit your application through email, you must refer to OVW's late policy, which is in the solicitation. And we want to just make sure that folks understand because we had quite a few applications submitted through email last

year that were not able to be accepted as late because applicants did not start the Grants.gov and the SAM.gov registration processes in enough time before those deadlines and the solicitation. Again, you just want to make sure, as Lindsay said earlier, go ahead and do those things immediately. Make sure if there are errors or problems that, you stay on top of that and maintain all of that documentation so that if you do not have that process completed by the JustGrants deadline that, you're able to submit it by that 8:59 Eastern Time to the OVW.Cultural email address.

LINDSAY YOUNG: Thank you, Veronica. The next question is "Under eligibility, the RFP states an advisory board or steering committee, but Veronica stated a Board of Directors. Please clarify."

DR. VERONICA SMITH: Yes. A Board of Directors can suffice. We just want to make sure that there is some type of governing body for your organization, whether that is an advisory board, a steering committee, or a Board of Directors. And so, if you do have a Board of Directors as opposed to an advisory board or steering committee, again, that is an acceptable committee or governing body.

LINDSAY YOUNG: Thank you. The next question is, "We provide a meal to youth who will participate in the program. Are these meals allowed? If yes, how should they be described within a narrative and in the budget?"

DR. VERONICA SMITH: So, you are able to provide food to clients and program participants. Again, those restrictions around food are primarily focused on staff and certainly any type of conference or training. But because this is the culturally specific services program, we do understand that for some targeted groups that food is an essential component to their culture. And so, within your narrative and your budget, just explain and emphasize that the meals that are included in that line item are specific for those participants of your program. And again, you may even want to emphasize whether there is some specific cultural relevance or importance surrounding the meals or even the specific meal choice, but you are able to do that for your clients.

LINDSAY YOUNG: Thank you, Veronica. The next question is, "Clarify LOC from specific appropriate agency, please."

DR. VERONICA SMITH: So, the Letter of Commitment is to confirm that your organization has entered into a partnership with another organization, whether that is a state or local government, or it could be a community organization in which you are helping to provide some type of training or even support. We have organizations that provide interpretation services for their court systems and for law enforcement. And

again, the LOC is specific to that, those purpose areas, one and three where you are forming those partnerships in order to be able to provide services, again, either to state and local governments or it could be other community organizations. And so, that LOC should be on letterhead from that organization indicating that they will be or that they are making a commitment to partner with you as a part of the project submitted under the CSSP award program.

LINDSAY YOUNG: Thank you. The next question is, "Can you state where the OC financial guide is located?"

DR. VERONICA SMITH: So, the OC financial guide is located on the OVW website. When you go under the funding tab on our website, there are resources, and other useful information for applicants. So, those things are on the OVW website, the financial guide.

LINDSAY YOUNG: The next question is, "Can you please provide the MOU/MOE link or application?"

OLIVIA DAWSON: Here, Lindsey, I'll hop in. The sample MOU/MOE link is in the solicitation. It'll be hyperlinked within the body of the solicitation. And I can pull it up here if you want to continue asking questions.

LINDSAY YOUNG: Sure. The next question is, "The LOC, Letter of Commitment, where is this located, and can you provide the link?"

OLIVIA DAWSON: Let me pull up the hyperlinks from the solicitation and we can send them in the chat at this moment.

LINDSAY YOUNG: Thank you. The next question is, "What is expected to demonstrate a history of providing services to the victims of sexual assault?"

DR. VERONICA SMITH: So, that would be described in the MOE or the Memorandum of Exemption. The solicitation contains the specific information that needs to be included both in that MOE as well as in that MOU. Please refer to that solicitation to make sure that you are answering those questions because it'll have you to pretty much document, you know, how many years have you been providing services. What are those specific services that you have provided? You can also identify the qualifications of your staff members, including how many years they have been providing those services. Those are some examples of how you can demonstrate a history. Again,

please refer to the MOE and the MOU sections and the solicitation for other specific ways that you can demonstrate that.

LINDSAY YOUNG: The next question is, "What is recommended to demonstrate service for each purpose area?"

DR. VERONICA SMITH: So, for the purpose areas, you basically select at least one that you will focus on with the implementation of your project. Then, in your project narrative, you will explain how you are going to go about implementing the purpose area to serve your community. Those are things that you all will tell us in terms of what activities you will be providing, what timeline you will be looking to provide those activities in, and what target groups you will focus on. And so, again, once you identify which of those eight purpose areas you want to address, you then explain in your narrative how your project components meet that specific purpose area. And again, remember if you all have questions about those things, you can reach out to us at that OVW.Cultural email address because we know sometimes it can be a little confusing to even figure out which ones you may fit into. Those are questions that we can answer for you.

LINDSAY YOUNG: Thank you. The next question is, "You addressed children, can you address children under 11 years if it involves aggravated sexual assault services?" So, to clarify with that, services can only be offered to children under the age of 11 who have been exposed to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking if those services are provided in conjunction with serving the child's parents or guardian.

The next question is, "Is there a page limit on the MOU attachments? For example, an extensive resume or curriculum vitae."

DR. VERONICA SMITH: No, there is no page limit. I just want to reiterate what my colleagues stated during the actual presentation is that common pitfalls with those MOUs are people not signing and having current dates on those documents. So, while there is no page limit, please ensure that those documents are signed and have a current date because they are legal documents. Another pitfall with regard to the resume and curriculum vitae is that people will put in their narrative to see the attached resume. So, you know, a resume doesn't necessarily tell us what they will be doing under your program or project, so you just want to make sure that you are explaining those things in the who/what implement section as opposed to simply putting see resume or see curriculum vitae.

LINDSAY YOUNG: The next questions are, "Where can we find the allowable expenses for the grant and where can we find an MOE sample?"

DR. VERONICA SMITH: So, because there are so many allowable expenses, we only identify those that are not allowable. There is no list of what is allowable. If you have a question, please reach out to us at that OVW.Cultural, but make sure that you are referencing the solicitation for those expenses that are unallowable. But again, because there are a lot more things that are allowable, we don't have a list of those. And there was a question about an MOE. I believe Olivia was posting some links. Again, the solicitation is, you know, your manual for this application process. So, please make sure that you are consulting the solicitation because there are links in it to help you find those resources and those samples.

OLIVIA DAWSON: Yes, Veronica. I supplied both the link to the MOU/MOE page and the link to the Letter of Commitment page embedded in the answered questions and you can find this hyperlinked in each one of those sections in the solicitation.

LINDSAY YOUNG: Thank you, Olivia. The next question is, "Are you able to combine purpose areas with a priority area, i.e., racial equity and priority with Purpose Areas 5, 6, and 8?" So, yes, to be eligible for your application to be considered, you must address one of the eight purpose areas. You will receive special consideration if you, in addition to one of those eight purpose areas, also address one of the OVW priority areas. I also just want to note that as we mentioned before, if you wish to address Purpose Areas 6 or 8, you must do so in conjunction with one of the other program purpose areas. Proposals focusing on only those two will be removed from consideration. But yes, as long as you are addressing one of the purpose areas, one or more of those purpose areas, then you can combine it with one of the priority areas. So, again, you must address the purpose areas, but you do not have to address the OVW priority areas. But if you do, you will be given special consideration.

The next question -- "Can a fiscal sponsor organization apply as the lead organization?"

DR. VERONICA SMITH: So, that fiscal sponsor must meet the eligibility requirements, meaning that they file into one of those categories that we described under eligibility in terms of, you know, being a for-profit or non-profit and that the primary purpose of that organization is to serve one of those racial groups that were solicited. And so, again, you know, sometimes because people don't have those three years of experience, they may look to a fiscal sponsor to be that primary applicant, but that fiscal sponsor must meet the eligibility requirements and most fiscal sponsors don't provide those direct services. So, again, you can apply under Category 4--actually 3 and 4 if you don't have

those three years of experience. And then, the fiscal sponsor could potentially be a partner. But whether it is a fiscal sponsor or a non-profit organization, they must meet the eligibility requirements.

LINDSAY YOUNG: Thank you, Veronica. The next question is, "Can men who are victims of domestic violence be solely served under this grant solicitation?"

DR. VERONICA SMITH: Yes, they can. This, of course, is the Office on Violence Against Women but this is federal funding. And so, we do not discriminate. We recognize that men are also victims in addition to women. In accordance with that, while the culturally specific services program by statute must fund programs that are primarily targeting one of those racial groups that we mentioned, your organization is required to serve anyone who may ask for services. And so, we just want to clarify that because CSSP does have those racial group targeted areas, it does not mean that you turn away any victim. Again, these are these are federal funds, so we do not discriminate against anyone who is requesting services.

LINDSAY YOUNG: Thank you. The next question is, "Can you apply for two different grants under VAWA? For example, race-specific and one other incorporated into one submission or separately and individually or can one organization only receive certain funds per term?"

DR. VERONICA SMITH: And please, you know, comment in the chat if we are misunderstanding your question, but I believe you are asking whether OVW allows organizations to apply for more than one of our grant award programs at the same time. And yes, you can. We have 19 programs across our office. As long as those solicitations are still open, you can apply for more than one. The caveat is that you cannot submit the exact same program or project to different award programs to receive, you know, the multiple streams of funding for the same program within OVW. For example, if you apply for our Transitional Housing Program and the CSSP program, you can do that. You just need to submit different projects to T-housing versus CSSP. And again, if I did not clearly understand your question, please let us know.

LINDSAY YOUNG: Thank you. The next question is, "Page eight, number three, can you address the guardianship and primary child victim requirements?"

DR. VERONICA SMITH: Page eight, number three. So, I believe on page eight, number three, focuses on the out-of-scope activities. Number three specifically focuses on services for children which says services can only be offered to children who are witnesses or victims of violence if those services are provided in conjunction with

services being provided to the child's parent or guardian who is a victim of one of the four crimes, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. And so, if you are asking specifically about that guardian, that does mean that they are a legal guardian who has custody of that child. And they are seeking to get those services from your program. But as we stated before, if they are 11 years and younger, the adult must be their primary client.

LINDSAY YOUNG: Thank you. The next question is, "Is there a minimum number for the Board of Directors?"

DR. VERONICA SMITH: No. If those things, you know, are not in the solicitation, we are not specifically, you know, requiring a certain number. Those are internal things that your organization can and should have policies regarding.

LINDSAY YOUNG: The next question is, "How would we confirm food costs that are associated with victim-only services?"

DR. VERONICA SMITH: So, I'm focusing on "confirm," and I'm wondering if you're asking whether we require you to provide any type of documentation that those funds are primarily being used to serve your program participants or your clients. And no, basically, you just need to state that in your narrative, but there is no specific documentation that we are looking for you to submit in order to confirm that you are using those funds solely for your participants.

LINDSAY YOUNG: The next question is, "What if one of the guardians or parents is the perpetrator of the minor under 11 years? Would service to the other guardian parent would suffice? Would service to the other guardian or parent suffice?"

DR. VERONICA SMITH: Absolutely. I'm assuming you're saying that perhaps the offending parent is not participating in the program or is not available to participate in the program. Can the other parent or guardian suffice? And yes, they can.

LINDSAY YOUNG: The next question is, "What kind of accounting systems are considered allowable?"

DR. VERONICA SMITH: So, again, there is a financial questionnaire that must be completed. Please refer to the solicitation because it will ask you questions. And basically, we are asking you to tell us what systems you have in place to manage your funds. You know, we don't require that you use, you know, Excel or Quickbooks or any specific financial management program. We do require that you do have some system

in place to ensure that you are appropriately managing these federal funds. But those are things that you tell us. We don't have, you know, specific requirements in terms of what those systems are.

LINDSAY YOUNG: Thank you. The last question that we have here is, it says -- Olivia, they're requesting the link for the Letter of Commitment. It seems as if we have attached the Letter of Intent and they're asking if we can also provide a link for the Letter of Commitment."

OLIVIA DAWSON: Yeah, I'm looking for it right now. Just give me a moment.

LINDSAY YOUNG: Thank you. As we do that, that is our last question, but we will also pause for a moment just in case anyone has any questions that they'd like to ask that they have not been able to put into the question-and-answer chat box. Also, thank you, everyone, for your patience. We actually do not have a sample Letter of Commitment in the solicitation currently, but we hope to upload a sample application that you all can reference. We hope to have that uploaded to the website soon, so please continue to look for that. I hope that that will also help you to see a sample application and budget to guide you through how you draft your application. And I actually see two more questions that just popped up. One is, "Will we be allowed to modify the budget later if we need to make some changes?"

OLIVIA DAWSON: 100%. You're going to submit an initial budget, and then, if your application is funded and you receive the award, you will go through a budget approval process. At that point, you can make changes. If there are no changes at that point, you can submit a grant award modification at any time during the grant period to change your budget.

LINDSAY YOUNG: Thank you, Olivia. And then, our last question says, "The RFP states all application documents must follow formatting rules. Does this apply to the Letter of Commitment and Letter of Intent, et cetera?"

OLIVIA DAWSON: So, concerning the Letter of Intent or LOI, I would use the formatting template that's hyperlinked in the solicitation and the one that is provided in the chat. But again, Letter of Commitment isn't mandatory. It isn't necessary to submit for your application to be accepted. It's only encouraged.

LINDSAY YOUNG: Thank you, Olivia. And one last question is, "Can we serve more than one racial group?" And the answer is yes. Whatever population that you are serving in your communities, and you are doing so in a culturally specific way, then yes,

you are able to serve more than one racial group. And I just want to clarify, one thing Olivia said was yes, the Letter of Intent is optional. You do not have to submit that. The Letter of Commitment is required only if applicable to what the solicitation says, so you may have to submit the Letter of Commitment, but the Letter of Intent is optional. I think that is the last question that I see. So, again, thank you all for joining us today. And good luck and we look forward to reading all of your applications. Thank you.