

OVW Legal Assistance for Victims (LAV) Grant Program

FY 2025 Pre-Application Information Session

FY 2025 LAV Notification of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

- ▶ Posted on December 6, 2024
- ▶ **January 3, 2025:** Optional (but encouraged) Letter of Intent due to OVW.LAV@usdoj.gov
- ▶ Applications submitted through a two-step process:
 - ▶ **By January 28, 2025 (11:59 pm ET):** submit SF-424 and SF-LLL in Grants.gov
 - ▶ **By January 30, 2025 (8:59 pm ET):** submit full application (including attachments) in JustGrants
- ▶ OVW anticipates notifying all applicants of funding decisions by October 1, 2025

Eligible Applicants

NOFO pages: 6-7

- ▶ Private nonprofit entities.
- ▶ Indian tribal governments, including tribal consortia.
- ▶ Tribal organizations.
- ▶ Territorial organizations.
- ▶ Publicly funded organizations not acting in a governmental capacity, such as law schools.

Program Description

NOFO page: 4

- ▶ The LAV Grant Program
 - ▶ was created to increase the availability of legal assistance to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.
 - ▶ supports the provision of comprehensive legal services.
- ▶ Services must include legal representation by a **licensed** attorney.
 - ▶ Legal assistance may be provided by BIA accredited representatives in immigration proceedings, by VA authorized representatives in VA claims, or anyone who functions as an attorney or lay advocate in tribal court, **in addition** to a licensed attorney.
 - ▶ Applicants who will provide services in Tribal Courts **only** may propose projects that include lay advocates who are authorized to provide representation in those courts. These projects are not required to have a licensed attorney.

Program Description (continued)

NOFO pages: 11-12

- ▶ Services unrelated to legal assistance are **unallowable** under the LAV Program.
- ▶ LAV Grant Program funds may not be used to provide criminal defense services.
 - ▶ However, funds can be used to provide post-conviction relief if the conviction is relating to or arising from domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or sex trafficking of the victim.

LAV Purpose Areas

NOFO page: 10

1. Cooperative efforts and projects between domestic violence, dating violence, and sexual assault victim service providers and legal assistance providers to provide legal assistance for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and sexual assault.
2. Efforts and projects to provide legal assistance for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and sexual assault by organizations with a demonstrated history of providing direct legal or advocacy services on behalf of these victims.
3. Efforts and projects to provide competent supervised pro bono legal assistance for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, except that not more than 10 percent of the funds awarded may be used for this purpose.*

*NOTE: This refers to the total funds awarded by the LAV Program. Individual applicants may exceed this 10 percent threshold.

Statutory Considerations - Sexual Assault

NOFO page: 10

- ▶ OVW recognizes the need to address the lack of available direct legal services for survivors of sexual assault and the unique aspects of sexual assault trauma from which survivors must heal.
- ▶ Applicants proposing to focus **50 percent or more** of their grant-funded activities on intimate **and** non-intimate partner sexual assault legal services will be given special consideration.
 - ▶ This must include direct legal services for victims of non-intimate partner sexual assault.
 - ▶ Lead applicant or project partner must have the mission or purpose to serve victims of sexual assault.
- ▶ Applications from organizations with the mission or purpose to provide direct services to victims of non-intimate partner sexual assault and which propose to focus **all** of their grant-funded activities on sexual assault, including at least 80 percent on **non-intimate partner sexual assault** legal services, can apply for larger awards and may be eligible for an additional 24 months of non-competitive funding.

Statutory Considerations - Tribal Programs

NOFO page: 11

- ▶ Pursuant to 34 U.S.C. § 20121(f)(2)(A), not less than three percent of funds made available for the LAV Program must be used for projects that assist adult and youth victims of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and sexual assault on lands within the jurisdiction of an Indian tribe.
- ▶ Applications proposing to assist such victims will receive special consideration in order to meet this requirement, but they must include the percentage of proposed activities that will support services to victims on tribal lands. This information should be included in the Summary Data Sheet. Additional priority consideration will be given to applicants with a Tribal government or Tribal organization as the lead applicant or project partner.

Activities That Compromise Victim Safety

NOFO page: 11

- ▶ OVW does not fund activities that jeopardize victim safety, deter or prevent physical or emotional healing for victims, or allow offenders to escape responsibility for their actions.
- ▶ Information on activities that compromise victim safety and recovery and undermine offender accountability may be found in the FY 2025 Application Companion Guide (justice.gov/ovw/resources-applicants).

Out-of-Scope Activities

NOFO page(s): 11-12

- ▶ Applications including out-of-scope or unallowable activities may be removed from consideration or may result in a point deduction during the review process.
- ▶ For instance, you may not use LAV funds for:
 - ▶ Research projects
 - ▶ Support of law reform initiatives
 - ▶ Funds for victim assistance/support unrelated to the provision of legal assistance or legal advocacy
 - ▶ Development and/or provision of state- or community-wide training

Funds Availability and Award Period

NOFO pages: 35 and 19

Availability of Funds

- ▶ All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law.

Award Period

- ▶ The grant award period is 36 months, beginning on or around October 1, 2025.

Award Amounts

NOFO page: 19

- ▶ Applications that are submitted by sexual assault coalitions or nonprofit, nongovernmental or tribal organizations with demonstrated expertise on sexual assault and which propose to focus 100 percent of their grant-funded activities on sexual assault (including at least 80 percent on non-intimate partner sexual assault legal services) may request up to **\$900,000** for the entire 36-month period.
- ▶ All other applications may request up to **\$750,000** for the entire 36-month period.
- ▶ OVW has the discretion to award grants for greater or lesser amounts than requested and to negotiate the scope of work and budget with applicants prior to award of a grant.

Applicant Types

NOFO pages: 8-9

- ▶ **New applicants** are organizations that have never received direct funding under the LAV Program or whose previous LAV Program funding expired on or before January 30, 2024.
- ▶ **Continuation applicants** are organizations that have an existing or recently closed (after January 30, 2024) award under the LAV Program. Continuation funding is not guaranteed.

NOTE: Recipients of an FY 2024 LAV award or of an FY 2023 LAV award that was for 36 months are generally NOT eligible to apply as the lead applicant on an FY 2025 LAV proposal. However, they may apply as the lead applicant if the FY 2025 LAV application is for a distinct office that serves a different geographic area than the office that received funding in FY 2024 or FY 2023.

Continuation Applicant Note

NOFO pages: 8-9

- ▶ Current grantees with a substantial amount of unobligated funds remaining (50 percent or more of the previous award) as of March 31, 2025 without adequate justification may be removed from consideration for funding, or may receive a reduced award amount if selected for funding in FY 2025.

Applicant Types (contd.)

NOFO page: 8

- ▶ **Non-competitive applicants** are organizations that have an existing award (project period end date of 9/30/25) that addresses the LAV Program sexual assault statutory consideration area by focusing 80 percent or more of its grant-funded activities on legal services for victims of non-intimate partner sexual assault.
 - ▶ The LAV Unit has contacted you if you are eligible to apply as a non-competitive applicant.
 - ▶ Non-competitive applicants should review the NOFO carefully, as some application requirements differ from those applying competitively.

Questions?

16 of 50

Required Partnership

NOFO pages: 7-8

- ▶ Applications must include as lead applicant or a partner:
 1. A nonprofit, nongovernmental or tribal organization (or designated division/program) with the **mission or purpose of providing direct services** to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking.
 2. A nonprofit, nongovernmental, tribal organization, or tribal government (or designated division/program) with experience and expertise in providing **legal representation by an attorney** to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.
- ▶ Documentation of the required partnerships must be provided through either a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or a Memorandum of Exemption (MOE)
- ▶ An applicant without the required partnership will be removed from consideration.

Delivery of Legal Assistance Certification

NOFO page: 26

- ▶ The required certification shall take the form of a letter, on letterhead, signed and dated by the Authorized Representative.
- ▶ The signed certification letter must be uploaded as a separate attachment in JustGrants.
- ▶ See page 26 of the NOFO for further information
 - ▶ Note that some requirements have been changed from previous years.

Application and Submission Information

NOFO pages: 28-31

- ▶ The complete application package is available on Grants.gov or at the OVW website at www.justice.gov/ovw.
- ▶ Applicants wishing to request a paper copy of the materials should email their request to: ovw.lav@usdoj.gov.
- ▶ Failure to submit an application that contains all of the specified elements will negatively affect the review of the application and may result in the application not being considered for funding.
- ▶ The applicant must ensure that a complete application is submitted by the deadline. **OVW will not contact applicants for missing items.**
- ▶ Applicants should not submit documents that were not specifically asked for in the NOFO. Providing information that was not requested (such as letters of support from other organizations in your community or service area) will not increase the likelihood of being selected for funding.

Formatting and Technical Requirements

NOFO pages: 13-14

- ▶ Applications must follow the formatting and technical requirements outlined in the NOFO.
- ▶ Points may be deducted for applications that do not adhere to the formatting and technical requirements.
- ▶ Some key requirements include:
 1. Double-spaced (charts may be single-spaced)
 2. Arial font, no smaller than 11 point
 3. Page numbers
 4. No more than 20 pages (competitive applications) or 15 pages (non-competitive applications) for the Proposal Narrative
 5. Headings and sub-headings that correspond to the sections identified in the NOFO.

Application Contents

NOFO page: 13-27

- ▶ Applications must include the following documents:
 1. Proposal Narrative
 2. Budget Detail Worksheet and Narrative
 3. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Memorandum of Exemption (MOE)
- ▶ Use these required documents to demonstrate that all program eligibility requirements (e.g., expert as lead applicant or partner, no unallowable activities) have been met.
- ▶ Applications that do not include all of the required components above will be considered incomplete and will not be considered for funding. We do not contact applicants for missing documents.
- ▶ Please note there are additional questions in the Proposal Narrative and MOU/MOE if an application is addressing a statutory consideration or addressing the pro bono purpose area.

Data Requested with Application

NOFO page(s): 14; 51-52

- ▶ One set of questions:
 1. Pre-Award Risk Assessment
- ▶ Not scored but is required
- ▶ A list of the questions included in the survey may be found in Appendix B of the NOFO(pages 51-52)
- ▶ In JustGrants, applicants should click on the survey name to access and complete the survey

Summary Data Sheet

NOFO pages: 14, 53-54

- ▶ The Summary Data Sheet should be completed in a separate document and added as an attachment in JustGrants.
- ▶ The Summary Data Sheet is not scored.
- ▶ The questions can be found in Appendix C on pages 53 and 54 of the NOFO.

Proposal Abstract

NOFO page: 14

- ▶ Short summary (**no more than two pages double-spaced**) of the proposed project
- ▶ Suggested format is on pages 14 of the NOFO
- ▶ Applicants should not summarize past accomplishments in this section
- ▶ The abstract will not be scored but is used throughout the review process.
- ▶ Should be entered into a text box in JustGrants

Proposal Narrative

NOFO pages: 15-18

- ▶ May not exceed 20 pages double spaced
- ▶ Must include the following 3 sections:
 - 1) Purpose of the Application
 - 2) What Will Be Done
 - 3) Who Will Implement the Project
- ▶ Must answer every question in each section
- ▶ Upload as attachment in JustGrants; we suggest including the phrase “Proposal Narrative” in the filename.

The Budget

NOFO pages: 18-20

- ▶ Budget should be included as an attachment to your application
 - ▶ OVW strongly encourages the use of a spreadsheet (e.g., Excel, Numbers, etc.) for the budget attachments
- ▶ Must reflect 36 months of project activity.
- ▶ Include funds to attend OVW-sponsored training and technical assistance (TTA) in the amount of \$15,000 for organizations within the 48 contiguous states or \$20,000 for organizations located within the territories, Hawaii, or Alaska.
- ▶ Applicants may budget expenses in excess of the required TTA amount if they plan to use grant funds to attend relevant non-OVW sponsored conferences or training (Note: If awarded, you will need to request permission to attend).

Grants Financial Management Division (GFMD)

NOFO page(s):14 and 51-54

- ▶ Summary Data Sheet (questionnaire)
- ▶ Single Audit (threshold and fiscal year)
- ▶ IRS three-step safe-harbor procedure-Executive Compensation -
- ▶ Sample Disclosure Letter
 - ▶ Address all four parts

- ▶ Pre-Award Risk Assessment (questionnaire)
- ▶ Eleven questions; Multiple parts to each question
- ▶ Most Common issues:
 - ▶ Brief list of policies and procedures not provided
 - ▶ Budgeted vs. Actual process not provided
 - ▶ Record Retention policy not provided
 - ▶ Knowledge of rules and regulations

Resources

Training for OVW Applicants:

<https://www.justice.gov/ovw/resources-applicants>

Budget Information and Sample Budget Detail Worksheet:

<https://www.justice.gov/ovw/media/1326736/dl?inline>

Creating a Budget Webinar

<https://www.justice.gov/ovw/video/creating-budget-training-ovw-applicants>

Uniform Guidance - 2 CFR Part 200

<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200?toc=1>

DOJ Grants Financial Guide:

<https://www.justice.gov/ovw/media/1375646/dl?inline>

Program Specific Solicitation:

<https://www.justice.gov/ovw/open-notice-of-funding-opportunities>

Contact Information

OVW GFMD Helpdesk:

1-888-514-8556

OVW.GFMD@usdoj.gov

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

NOFO pages: 22-24

- ▶ The MOU is a document containing the terms of the partnership and the roles and responsibilities between two or more parties.
- ▶ Applications must include as lead applicant or MOU partner:
 1. A nonprofit, nongovernmental or tribal organization (or designated division/program) with the mission or purpose of providing direct services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking.
 2. A nonprofit, nongovernmental, tribal organization, or tribal government (or designated division/program) with experience and expertise in providing legal representation by an attorney to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.
- ▶ There are additional requirements for applications addressing the sexual assault priority area.
- ▶ The MOU must be signed by all partners. Electronic signatures will be accepted. (Note: limited exception for applications that include a tribal government.)

Memorandum of Exemption (MOE)

NOFO pages: 24-25

- ▶ Lead applicants (1) whose mission or purpose is to provide direct services to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking victims AND (2) who have experience and expertise in providing legal representation by an attorney to those victims may submit an MOE in lieu of an MOU.
 - ▶ If a project partner will receive a subaward, the application should include an MOU (not an MOE), even if the lead applicant fulfills both partnership requirements.
- ▶ The MOE must demonstrate that the lead applicant (or subdivision) fulfills both criteria above.
- ▶ Your organization's Authorized Representative should sign the MOE. (**Note:** limited exception for applications from tribal governments.)
- ▶ If an MOE is submitted in lieu of an MOU, and the applicant does not meet these criteria, the application may be removed from consideration.

Additional Application Components and Disclosures and Assurances

NOFO pages: 25-27

- ▶ Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) and Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
- ▶ Letter of Nonsupplanting
- ▶ Confidentiality Notice Form
- ▶ DOJ Certified Standard Assurances and
- ▶ DOJ Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements

Federal Civil Rights Law

NOFO page: 36

- ▶ Comply with applicable federal civil rights laws, which among other things prohibit recipients from discriminating on the basis of national origin and disability.
- ▶ Applicants must include funds or other resources in their budget to ensure access for individuals with disabilities, Deaf/hard of hearing individuals, and persons with limited English proficiency.

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Questions?

34 of 50

How to Apply

NOFO pages: 28-29

- ▶ Applicants may find this funding opportunity on Grants.gov by using the CFDA number, Grants.gov opportunity number, or the title of this NOFO, all of which can be found on the cover page.
- ▶ The FY 2025 application submission process is a two-step process. Application materials will be submitted in Grants.gov and JustGrants.

How to Apply (cont.)

NOFO pages: 28-29

- ▶ Read the NOFO carefully to understand all steps required to submit an application and the time required to complete each step.
- ▶ Some steps, such as obtaining a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number or registering with the System for Award Management (SAM) or Grants.gov, may take several days to complete.
- ▶ We recommend that applicants begin these processes as soon as possible but no later than the dates suggested in the NOFO.

Grants.gov

NOFO pages: 28-29

- ▶ Applicants must complete the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) in Grants.gov.
 - ▶ Read the “How to Apply” section in the NOFO carefully for all requirements (page 28).
- ▶ After submitting this form, the applicant will receive an email notification to complete the rest of the application in JustGrants. If the applicant is a new user in JustGrants, the email will include instructions on registering with JustGrants.

JustGrants

NOFO pages: 29-31

- ▶ Applicants will then submit the full application, including attachments, in JustGrants.
 - ▶ Proposal Abstract - entered in a text box
 - ▶ Pre-Award Risk Assessment - survey in JustGrants
 - ▶ Summary Data Sheet - uploaded as an attachment
 - ▶ Proposal Narrative - uploaded as an attachment
 - ▶ Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative - uploaded as an attachment
 - ▶ Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Memorandum of Exemption (MOE) - uploaded as an attachment
- ▶ Read the NOFO carefully for other documentation required for all applications or when applicable.

JustGrants (2)

- ▶ In JustGrants, each applying organization has an assigned Entity Administrator who manages organization-level information and assigns other roles in the system. The Entity Administrator is also the E-Biz POC designated in SAM.gov.
 - ▶ For more information on registering with JustGrants, see justicegrants.usdoj.gov.
- ▶ Within 24 hours of JustGrants receiving your application from Grants.gov, the user submitting the application in Grants.gov and the SAM E-Biz POC will receive emails with instructions to register for a JustGrants account.
- ▶ The emails are from DOJ's secure user management system (DIAMD). We recommend adding "DIAMD-NoReply@usdoj.gov" to your trusted sender list.

JustGrants (3)

- ▶ The SAM E-Biz POC (Entity Administrator) must log in to JustGrants to confirm organizational information and add users. The user submitting the application in JustGrants is the Application Submitter.
- ▶ After registering for JustGrants accounts, the Application Submitter and Entity Administrator will receive emails from JustGrants with a link to the application started in Grants.gov.
- ▶ Alternatively, the Application Submitter can log in to JustGrants and locate the pending application in their Worklist on the home/landing page.

JustGrants (4)

- ▶ Each lead applicant must have at least one Authorized Representative (with documented authority to sign an agreement with the federal government) designated on JustGrants.
- ▶ Before the application is submitted, the Entity Administrator must log in to JustGrants to review the Authorized Representatives associated with the organization. If an Authorized Representative does not have a JustGrants account, the Entity Administrator will need to invite them to register.
- ▶ Within minutes of being invited to be an Authorized Representative, the individual will receive an email from DIAMD-NoReply@usdoj.gov with instructions on how to create an account in DOJ's secure user management system.
- ▶ Once the Authorized Representative receives the email and completes the steps to create an account, the Authorized Representative will be available in JustGrants.

JustGrants (5)

- ▶ The Application Submitter will complete the application on JustGrants by entering data into web-based forms, uploading attachments, and accepting assurances and certifications. The Application Submitter will also need to select the Authorized Representative(s).
- ▶ Once all sections are completed, the Application Submitter will submit the application.
- ▶ The Application Submitter, Entity Administrator, and Authorized Representative will all receive emails from JustGrants confirming successful submission of the application.

JustGrants (cont.)

- ▶ The Department of Justice has made a collection of self-guided training resources, including training and a Virtual Q&A session on Application Submission, available at:
justicegrants.usdoj.gov/training-resources/justgrants-training/grants-management-lifecycle.

Application Deadline

NOFO pages: 1, 5, 13, 29

- ▶ Final applications are due on JustGrants by 8:59 p.m. ET on Thursday, January 30, 2025.
- ▶ Applications submitted after this time will not be considered for funding.
- ▶ Carefully review the “How to Apply” section (pages 28-32 of the NOFO) for applicant actions with required deadlines and OVW's policy on late submissions.
 - ▶ January 3, 2025: optional Letter of Intent due to OVW.LAV@usdoj.gov
 - ▶ January 28, 2025 (11:59 pm ET): submit SF-424 in Grants.gov
 - ▶ January 30, 2025 (8:59 pm ET): submit full application in JustGrants
- ▶ Submitting the application components at least 48 hours before each deadline will enable applicants to receive notice of a failed submission and provide an opportunity to correct the error before the applicable deadline.

Limit on the Number of Applications

NOFO page: 9

- ▶ Applicants should only submit one application per program. If an applicant submits multiple versions of an application, OVW will review the most recent system-validated version submitted.

OVW Policy on Late Submissions

NOFO page: 31-32

- ▶ OVW offers several options for an applicant to provide advance notice of a delayed application.
- ▶ An applicant's request to submit an application after the deadline will be considered by OVW if all of the steps on page 32 are followed.
 - ▶ Extensions are granted only in rare circumstances.
 - ▶ Failure to begin the registration or application submission process in sufficient time is not an acceptable reason for a late application submission.

Tips for Applicants

- ▶ Read the NOFO carefully and note requirements and restrictions.
- ▶ Write your application as if the reader knows nothing about your organization.
- ▶ *Show* us how your organization will implement each of the requirements.
- ▶ Describe how you would address complex needs of *all* survivors in your community.
- ▶ Describe your community's needs with specificity using recent, local data, if available.

Tips for Applicants (2)

- ▶ Ensure your budget can support the goals and objectives in your narrative.
- ▶ Staff writing the narrative, implementing the project, and drafting the budget should collaborate.
- ▶ For uploaded documents, filenames should be descriptive and match the language in the NOFO (e.g., include “Proposal Narrative,” “MOU,” “Salary Range Document” in the filenames).
- ▶ Note all deadlines, and note that the Grants.gov deadline is a few days prior to the JustGrants deadline.

Tips for Applicants (cont.)

- ▶ Don't include or reference attachments that the NOFO does not ask for.
- ▶ Don't copy language in the NOFO when attempting to demonstrate expertise.
- ▶ Don't go over the budget cap.
- ▶ Don't ignore formatting and technical requirements.
- ▶ Don't forget to review your application before submitting!

Have Questions?

▶ Programmatic Questions:

- ▶ Email OVW.LAV@usdoj.gov (preferred) or call 202-451-7587

▶ Financial Questions:

- ▶ Email OVW.GFMD@usdoj.gov or call 888-514-8556

▶ Technical Questions:

- ▶ Grants.gov Applicant Support: email support@grants.gov or call 800-518-4726
- ▶ OVW JustGrants Support: email OVW.JustGrantsSupport@usdoj.gov or call 866-655-4482