

OVW Expanding Legal Services Initiative (ELSI) - Legal Assistance for Victims (LAV) Grant Program

FY 2025 Pre-Application Information Session

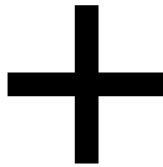
FY 2025 ELSI NOFO

- ▶ Posted on December 6, 2024
- ▶ **January 3, 2025:** Optional (but encouraged) Letter of Intent due to OVW.ELSI@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.



Mission or purpose: serve victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Do not currently offer in-house legal representation services for victims by attorneys on staff.

LAV Program Description

- ▶ The LAV Grant Program
 - ▶ was created to provide victims access to appropriately trained legal representation.
 - ▶ 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.

LAV Program Description (contd.)

- ▶ 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.

ELSI Information

NOFO pages: 4, 10-11

- ▶ ELSI is intended to allow eligible organizations that do not currently offer in-house legal services to establish a program that provides legal representation to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.
- ▶ Complete a planning period of approximately 12-18 months:
 - ▶ Participate in training and technical assistance (TTA)
 - ▶ Develop supervision and mentoring plan
 - ▶ Develop written legal practice policies and protocols
 - ▶ Determine whether to work with project partners
 - ▶ Hire an attorney and other staff (note exception for tribal grantees)
- ▶ After planning period, obtain approval from OVW and begin providing legal services.

Purpose Area

NOFO pages: 9

- ▶ ELSI addresses the following LAV purpose area:
 - ▶ 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.

Statutory Considerations - Tribal Programs

NOFO pages: 9-10

- ▶ 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 applications with a Tribal government or Tribal organization as the lead applicant or project partner.

Activities That Compromise Victim Safety

Solicitation page(s): 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 Application Companion Guide ([justice.gov/ovw/resources-applicants](https://www.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 ELSI 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
- ▶ A complete list of out-of-scope activities is listed on pages 11-12 of the NOFO and a list of unallowable costs is located on page 12.

Federal Award Information

NOFO page(s): 4

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 24 months, beginning on October 1, 2025.
- ▶ Grantees may also be eligible for 36 months of non-competitive funding to continue their projects.

Award Amounts

NOFO page(s): 8

- ▶ Applications may request up to **\$400,000** for the entire 24-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 page(s): 8-9

- ▶ All applications will be considered new.
- ▶ Current LAV grantees are generally NOT eligible for an award under this initiative.
 - ▶ Exception: LAV grantees that meet the eligibility criteria, have awards ending September 30, 2024 or earlier, and do not have a substantial amount of unobligated funds remaining (50 percent or more of the previous award) as of March 31, 2024 may be considered.
 - ▶ Project partners of current LAV grantees may be eligible if they meet all criteria.
- ▶ Note: Applicants may apply for the regular FY 2025 LAV Grant Program and ELSI but will not receive an award for both.

Questions?

Delivery of Legal Assistance Certification

NOFO page(s): 23-24

- ▶ 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 pages 23 and 24 of the NOFO for further information.

Application and Submission Information

NOFO page(s): 13- 27

- ▶ 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 application materials should email their request to: OVW.ELSI@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 page(s): 13

- ▶ Applications must follow the formatting and technical requirements outlined in the NOFO (page 13).
- ▶ 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 for the Proposal Narrative
 5. Headings and sub-headings that correspond to the sections identified in the NOFO.

Application Contents

NOFO page(s): 13

- ▶ Applications must include the following documents:
 1. Proposal Narrative
 2. Budget Detail Worksheet and Narrative
- ▶ Use these required documents to demonstrate that all program eligibility requirements have been met.
- ▶ Applications that do not include both required components above will be considered incomplete and will not be considered for funding. We do not contact applicants for missing documents.

Data Requested with Application

NOFO page(s): 14; 48-51

- ▶ Three sets of questions:
 1. Pre-Award Risk Assessment
 2. Applicant Questionnaire
 3. Summary Data Sheet
- ▶ Not scored but are required
- ▶ A list of the questions included in each survey may be found in Appendices B-C of the NOFO (pages 48-51)
- ▶ In JustGrants, applicants should click on each survey name to access and complete the surveys

Proposal Abstract

NOFO page(s): 14

- ▶ Short summary (no more than two pages double-spaced) of the proposed project
- ▶ Suggested format is on page 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 page(s): 14-18

- ▶ 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, as listed on pages 14-18 of the NOFO
- ▶ Upload as attachment in JustGrants; we suggest including the phrase “Proposal Narrative” in the filename.

The Budget

NOFO page(s): 18-21

- ▶ 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 attachment.
- ▶ Must reflect 24 months of project activity.
- ▶ Include funds to attend OVW-sponsored training and technical assistance (TTA) in the amount of \$20,000 for organizations within the 48 contiguous states or \$24,000 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

- ▶ 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 (survey)
 - ▶ 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

Additional Required Information

NOFO page(s): 23-25

- ▶ 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(s): 33

- ▶ 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 note other resources in their budget to ensure access for individuals with disabilities, Deaf/hard of hearing individuals, and persons with limited English proficiency.

Questions?

How to Apply

NOFO page(s): 26-27

- ▶ 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 page(s): 26-27

- ▶ 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 page(s): 25-30

- ▶ Applicants must complete the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) in Grants.gov.
 - ▶ Read the “Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)” section in the NOFO carefully for all requirements (page 14).
- ▶ Applicants must complete and submit the Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) in Grants.gov.
- ▶ After submitting these forms, 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 page(s): 26-28

- ▶ 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
 - ▶ Applicant Questionnaire - survey in JustGrants
 - ▶ Summary Data Sheet - survey in JustGrants
 - ▶ Proposal Narrative - uploaded as an attachment
 - ▶ Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative - 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 (6)

- ▶ 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 page(s): 1, 26-30

- ▶ 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 26-27 of the NOFO) for applicant actions with required deadlines and OVW's policy on late submissions.
 - ▶ **January 6, 2025:** optional Letter of Intent due to OVW.ELSI@usdoj.gov
 - ▶ **January 28, 2025 (11:59 pm ET):** submit SF-424 and SF-LLL 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.

OVW Policy on Duplicate Applications

NOFO page(s): 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(s): 27-30

- ▶ 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 pages 27-30 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” “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 (3)

- ▶ 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.ELSI@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