

Tribal Consultation and Listening Sessions Report: Streamlining Tribal Grant Process and Enhancing COVID-19 Response

On May 29, 2020, the Department of Justice (DOJ) Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) invited tribal leaders, representatives, and stakeholders to participate in four online webinars – two government-to-government consultations and two listening sessions. The purpose of these four webinars was to solicit recommendations and responses to OVW’s proposal to streamline the application process for OVW’s tribal-specific grant programs separate and apart from DOJ’s Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation (CTAS), as well as OVW’s proposal to issue a special solicitation for tribes this summer (2020) to address pandemic-related challenges in responding to violence against women in tribal communities. The two consultations with tribal leaders and designated governmental representatives (authorized designees) were held on June 30th and July 8th, and the two listening sessions with other tribal stakeholders were held on July 1st and July 9th. Written comments were received throughout the consultation period and up until July 22nd.

OVW decided to hold these special consultation and listening sessions pursuant to [Executive Order 13175](#) - Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments and [DOJ’s Policy on Tribal Consultation](#). The DOJ policy requires that tribes receive at least 30 days’ notice of a consultation with sufficient detail about the topic to be discussed to allow tribal leaders an opportunity to engage meaningfully in the consultation. With these requirements in mind, OVW issued a [notice](#) 32 days before the first consultation session and included a [framing paper](#) with proposals and questions for consideration by tribal leaders and representatives.

Every year, OVW also conducts a tribal consultation pursuant to the Violence Against Women Act, as amended, which requires consultation on a broad range of topics related to responding to violence against women in tribal communities. This annual consultation, for which tribes must receive 120 days’ notice, will take place in October 2020 using a similar online, webinar-based format; an [invitation to tribal leaders](#) for this annual consultation was issued in June. Given the particularly devastating effects that the COVID-19 pandemic is having on tribal communities, however, OVW decided to consult on proposals related to disbursing funds quickly to help mitigate these effects during the June/July webinars.

Background

OVW sought tribal input on a number of questions related to creating a streamlined application process for OVW’s tribal-specific grant programs separate and apart from CTAS, as well as issuing a special solicitation in summer 2020 for funds to address COVID-19-related challenges in responding to violence against women. A series of six questions related to CTAS were outlined in the [framing paper](#) that OVW released upon announcement of the two consultations and two listening sessions. Five additional questions related specifically to the solicitation to enhance COVID-19/violence against women responses were circulated to tribal leaders and representatives shortly before the first session on June 30th. The questions, the most common responses, and OVW’s consideration of issues raised are described below.

Questions Related to Streamlining OVW’s Tribal Grant Process

1. Do tribes support creating an OVW tribal-specific grant process outside of CTAS?

Twenty-nine tribal leaders, authorized designees, and stakeholders responded directly to this question.

- **Fourteen** tribal leaders and authorized designees and **six** other tribal stakeholders testified in support of OVW's proposal to create a tribal-specific grant process outside of CTAS.
 - Most of those who testified in support of removing the OVW Grants to Tribal Governments Program (TGP) from CTAS stated the CTAS application process has become increasingly overwhelming, unnecessarily burdensome, and overly bureaucratic. Many were encouraged by the idea that a new application process could be more user friendly and efficient, resulting in a more straightforward application process.
 - Several participants expressed support for this proposal but were curious how this would affect current TGP grantees.
 - Many participants stressed that, if the TGP is removed from CTAS, there would need to be extensive training available to tribes on the new application process.
- **Two** tribal leaders and authorized designees testified they do not support OVW's proposal to create a tribal-specific grant process outside of CTAS.
 - The two who testified against removing the TGP from CTAS stated that tribes have grown accustomed to the CTAS process and that it benefits tribes that want to coordinate their applications for justice-system related funding. They also stated that the removal of the TGP from CTAS will likely disproportionately affect smaller tribes, as larger tribes will be able to adjust more quickly to a new process.
- **Five** tribal leaders and authorized designees and **two** other tribal stakeholders responded to this question but did not definitively state whether or not they support OVW's proposal to create a tribal-specific grant process outside of CTAS.
 - Those who did not provide a direct answer requested additional information and also stated the following concerns/recommendations:
 - Tribes are coping with COVID-19; it is not the time to make significant changes to CTAS.
 - OVW should wait to make a decision until a full consultation has been held in order to provide tribes with a clearer explanation of the proposed streamlined process, as well as to maximize the number of responses from tribal leaders and organizations.
 - Even if the TGP (i.e., Purpose Area Five) is removed from CTAS, tribes that typically receive funding from other purpose areas will still have to apply through CTAS, which just increases the number of application processes a tribe must navigate.
 - If OVW removes the TGP from CTAS but keeps roughly the same application deadline, tribes will be forced to juggle multiple due dates at the same time.
 - The proposal seems like a superficial fix and will not actually lessen the administrative burden on tribes.

OVW Responses

- Based on input received during the consultations and listening sessions, as well as its own experience administering these programs, OVW has decided to create an OVW

tribal-specific grant process outside of CTAS – specifically, to solicit applications for the TGP outside of CTAS beginning in FY 2021 – while continuing to consult and seek feedback on the process.

- To ease the transition for tribes, OVW plans several steps, such as coordinating deadlines with CTAS, conducting multiple pre-application sessions to educate applicants on the new process, and continuing to give priority to tribes that have completed strategic planning through CTAS Purpose Area Two and identified an improved violence against women response as one of their strategic goals.
- OVW issued a summer solicitation for COVID-19 related needs in responding to violence against women that included elements of the proposed streamlined process. This solicitation gives tribes concrete examples of OVW’s proposed adjustments to the application process outside of CTAS.
- OVW is gathering feedback on the summer COVID-19 focused solicitation process from applicants and will incorporate that feedback into its FY 2021 tribal solicitations. OVW is also requesting additional testimony on the streamlined process at the 15th Annual Government-to-Government Violence Against Women Tribal Consultation to be held online October 27-30, 2020.

2. Do tribes support OVW’s proposal to test this process by issuing an OVW-specific, COVID-19 focused solicitation this summer?

Nineteen tribal leaders, authorized designees, and other tribal stakeholders responded directly to this question.

- **Eleven** tribal leaders and authorized designees and **two** other tribal stakeholders testified in favor of issuing a tribal-specific COVID-19 focused solicitation.
 - Many supported a special COVID-19 related solicitation because of the urgent needs created by the pandemic in tribal communities, particularly for victims of domestic and sexual violence.
 - Some supported using the COVID-19 solicitation as a test of the streamlined process while others expressed concerns that testing a new process without fully considering the impact it will have on the administrative and management workload of tribes is risky, especially given that tribes are preoccupied with COVID-19.
 - Several of those who testified in favor of issuing a COVID-19 solicitation tied their support to the conditions that the application would be short with few required documents, the funds allocated to tribes and tribal entities would include minimal restrictions, and that OVW would ensure an expedited distribution of available funds.
- **Four** tribal leaders and authorized designees and **two** other tribal stakeholders testified against issuing a tribal-specific COVID-19 focused solicitation.
 - Of the people who testified against issuing a COVID-19 focused solicitation, the most common justification was that tribes are dealing with COVID-19 in their communities and do not have the capacity to apply for a grant.
 - Some also expressed the concern that introducing a new, streamlined process would require training; however, tribes need access to the funds money immediately and do not have time to learn and adapt to an entirely new process.

- A number of people expressed confusion over what the streamlined process would look like in practice and stated that it was not clear in the framing paper. Some also asked for more information on why OVW expected to have carryforward funds and had not been able to award these funds during the fiscal year.

OVW Responses

- OVW decided to issue a special COVID-19 focused solicitation incorporating feedback received at the consultation and listening sessions. The solicitation was designed to respond to tribes' needs during the pandemic and provide an example of a streamlined application structure that OVW could adapt for FY 2021.
- OVW's [FY 2020 COVID-19/Violence Against Women Assistance to Tribes Solicitation](#) (COVID-19/Violence Against Women solicitation) was released on July 31, 2020 and closed on September 16, 2020. OVW made the first seven awards under the solicitation on September 21, 2020. Due to the conversion of DOJ's Grants Management System (GMS) to the Justice Grants System (JustGrants), OVW likely will not be able to make the remaining awards until November 2020.
- The potential carryforward funds used for the special solicitation amounted to approximately \$5 million, about \$3 million for the TGP and about \$2 million for OVW's Tribal Sexual Assault Services Program (TSASP). These amounts represent funds remaining in the current fiscal year after accounting for all planned expenses, including all approved awards under these two grant programs. The TGP funds also include recoveries – money that was returned from previous TGP grantees at the end of their grants.
- In response to the request for additional information on why these funds remained, OVW provides the following background: In FY 2019, the carryforward balance for the TGP was \$2.9 million. The issuance of the special summer solicitation was intended, in part, to prevent a carryforward balance of this size at the end of FY 2020 or to enable OVW to award any carryforward funds early in FY 2021, thereby awarding all available funding to tribes as quickly as possible. Receipt of insufficient fundable applications has been the main reason for the TGP carryforward amounts in recent fiscal years. One of the reasons OVW proposed to administer the TGP outside of CTAS was to increase applications for the program and award all available funds in FY 2021.

3. Are there additional advantages and disadvantages to removing the TGP from CTAS that tribes have identified, beyond those listed [in the framing paper]?

- Several participants questioned one of the listed advantages in the framing paper that, by removing the TGP from CTAS, "OVW would have greater ability to highlight the TGP." Multiple participants asked for clarification on how exactly creating a tribal-specific grant process outside of CTAS would allow OVW to highlight the TGP. Two participants specifically asked how CTAS hinders OVW's ability to highlight the TGP.
- Additional advantages mentioned:
 - The possibility of creating a more user friendly and straightforward process to apply for grants.
 - If OVW requires fewer documents at the time of the application, more tribes and tribal entities would be encouraged to apply for funding.

- If the OVW application deadline does not run concurrently with the CTAS deadline, tribes will be able to focus more intently on and dedicate more time to the OVW application rather than lumping it in with other DOJ programs.
- Additional disadvantages mentioned:
 - Tribes are responding to the pandemic in their communities, and adjusting to a new application process when CTAS has become the norm would pose administrative challenges and concerns.
 - If the OVW application deadline runs concurrently with the CTAS deadline, tribes also applying to CTAS will be forced to work on multiple applications at once, increasing the workload of tribes and tribal entities.
 - Tribes will have to complete the general applicant information multiple times throughout the different application processes, which only increases the administrative burden.

OVW Responses

- In response to the request for more information on how the TGP loses its identity within CTAS, OVW notes the tendency to refer to the grant programs in CTAS by their purpose area numbers rather than by their names. OVW also has grown concerned over the years that only tribes familiar with CTAS know about and apply for the TGP; tribes that are not necessarily looking for funding under the other CTAS programs might not be familiar with CTAS or might find the length and complexity of CTAS to be overwhelming.
- OVW is working to ensure that the advantages of administering the TGP outside of CTAS are realized, including making the application as easy as possible, limiting the number of required documents, and ensuring that the TGP deadline is not close to the CTAS deadline in FY 2021.
- OVW has sought to alleviate the administrative burden on tribes during the pandemic by making the COVID-19/Violence Against Women application process as easy as possible. OVW also plans to conduct additional outreach and pre-application information sessions in Fall 2020 on the new application process for the TGP to help ease the transition.
- The new DOJ grants system, JustGrants, is designed to cut back on entering the same information more than once across applications for DOJ funding; DOJ welcomes feedback for additional improvements once tribes start using the new system to apply for grant funding.

4. **Would tribes support any of the ideas listed [in the framing paper] for creating an OVW tribal-specific grant process and streamlining the application process for OVW's tribal-specific grant programs, particularly if OVW no longer participates in CTAS?**

Twenty-one tribal leaders, authorized designees, and tribal stakeholders responded directly to this question.

- **Nine** tribal leaders and authorized designees and **two** other tribal stakeholders testified in support of the ideas presented in the framing paper to streamline the application process.
 - These testifiers expressed their support for consolidating multiple solicitations into one, reducing the number of documents required at the time of the application,

- eliminating the community profile requirement, coordinating application due dates, and reducing required attendance to only one annual new grantee orientation.
- **Two** tribal leaders supported the ideas presented in the framing paper for streamlining the application process but recommended that OVW keep the tribal coalitions and training and technical assistance programs separate. **One** tribal leader testified in support of streamlining the process but recommended that the TGP be a standalone application.
 - **Four** tribal leaders and authorized designees and **two** other tribal stakeholders wanted more information on the streamlining proposals before expressing their definitive opinions.
 - One participant worried that the proposal to consolidate multiple programs into one solicitation sounded similar to CTAS. This participant believed that this would inevitably increase the length of the solicitation and likely complicate the process.
 - Other participants mentioned that they hope OVW is transparent with tribes and tribal entities on the plans for the streamlining process. For instance, can OVW post an example of a solicitation that combined more than one tribal grant program?
 - **One** tribal leader expressed their disapproval for consolidating the tribal grant programs into one solicitation because they feared this would mean they would have to compete for funding with non-Native applicants.

OVW Responses

- OVW provided an example of the proposed streamlined process through the summer COVID-19/Violence Against Women solicitation; although more details would be needed for larger, comprehensive projects, the structure of the solicitation and timing of document submission are examples of what OVW meant by “streamlined.”
- The summer COVID-19 focused solicitation included two programs (TGP and TSASP) but did not use the CTAS model; a complete application package was required for each program. The solicitation was still shorter and simplified in comparison to other OVW and DOJ solicitations. However, OVW is considering not using this approach in FY 2021, based on the confusion that combining programs appeared to cause among applicants. OVW is gathering additional feedback on this aspect of the streamlined proposal before making a final decision not to pursue it.
- Even if OVW were to combine tribal programs into a single solicitation, Tribal Coalitions likely would not be included because of its formula funding component. Regardless of the number of programs included, however, only tribal programs would be included; tribes would not compete against non-tribal entities for funding.

5. Do tribes have additional ideas for streamlining the application process within OVW for these programs or enhancing tribes’ access to OVW funding?

- **Implement formula funding** – Participants discussed the introduction of formula funding by OVW as a method to streamline the grant process but disagreed on whether this would harm smaller tribes.
 - **Three** tribal leaders suggested adopting formula funding in order to simplify the application process and to ensure the availability of long-term funding.
 - **Two** tribal leaders did not support the idea of formula funding. They noted that formula funding often does not take into account the specific needs of a tribe.

- **Reduce the number of special conditions on tribal awards** – Two tribal leaders suggested reducing the number of special conditions on tribal awards in order to minimize the length of time between when an award is issued and when a tribe or tribal organization can begin drawing down funds.
- **Create a document repository for applicants** – A number of participants expressed support for the JustGrants approach of having a “document bank/hub” from which applicants can pull documents needed for more than one application.
- **Eliminate required application documents** – Some participants suggested eliminating required application materials altogether to align more closely with the number of required documents for OVW’s state formula programs or using OVC’s Tribal Victim Services Set-Aside Formula Program (Tribal Set-Aside Program) as a potential model for streamlining the process.
- **Implement a “pre-award” phase** – One tribal leader suggested implementing a “pre-award” phase that would alert tribes to their consideration status. Others recommended using the two-phase approach under OVC’s Tribal Set-Aside Program. The goals of a phased approach would be to prevent tribes from expending effort when they have been disqualified and to provide a concrete timeline for those that are still under consideration.
- **Incorporate “pull down menus and check boxes” for application documents** – One tribal stakeholder recommended incorporating a process similar to the semi-annual progress reports for standard application materials in order to expedite the application process.
- **Institute different forms/processes for different types of applicants** – One participant proposed the idea of an “EZ form.” The goal would be to assist smaller tribes or tribes with fewer resources to fill out an “easy” application and then, as tribes move towards more established programs and need greater resources, they can fill out a more complex application for more funds. Four additional participants later expressed their support for this idea throughout the sessions.
- **Consider different ways to streamline OVW reporting requirements** – Participants encouraged OVW to consider different ways to streamline the reporting requirements, which can be time-consuming and burdensome. One participant suggested making the reporting tool more user friendly.

OVW Responses

- OVW has consulted repeatedly with tribes about whether to administer the TGP on a formula basis. After hearing mixed responses for several years, OVW asked interested tribal leaders and advocates to join a working group on the issue. After considering a range of potential formulas and the impact of each option on tribes, the majority of the working group recommended against a formula approach to OVW funding, in part because the size of each award would be too small to implement a meaningful response to violence against women.
- After the June/July consultation and listening sessions, OVW met with OVC to learn more about their Tribal Set-Aside Program. OVW used the OVC model of only requiring applicants likely to be funded to submit certain documents in the FY 2020 COVID-19/Violence Against Women solicitation. However, the first phase of the OVC process was designed to establish award amounts under a population-based formula; because

OVW's funding is not formula-based, OVW's first phase required basic information about how much funding the applicant needed and what it proposed to do with those funds.

- OVW also considered the request to use OVW's state formula programs as a model, both for the COVID-19/Violence Against Women solicitation and for the TGP in FY 2021. OVW determined that allowing submission of certain documents post-initial application (but pre-award) is feasible; however, other aspects of OVW's formula process actually would be more burdensome for tribes, such as the submission and review of implementation plans, a process that is statutorily required for states and territories under OVW's STOP Violence Against Women Formula Program.
- OVW's decision in the COVID-19 focused solicitation to allow applications missing certain documents to move forward in the review process meant that only those applicants likely to be funded had to submit the full set of documents. This process implemented the recommendations to use a phased approach to award making.
- For FY 2021, OVW is considering a short, easy application for new TGP applicants that would like to obtain smaller awards to plan/begin to develop a project; these recipients would have the option of applying for larger, comprehensive awards later. New applicants would not be required to use this process; it would be an option available to those not ready to submit larger, comprehensive proposals.
- OVW has already reduced the number of conditions on TGP awards and continues to identify ways to reduce the burden of conditions; however, many conditions cannot be removed – either because they reflect statutory or regulatory requirements, implement Executive Orders, or have been added as a result of audits by the DOJ Office of the Inspector General.
- JustGrants uses more check boxes and drop-down menus, carries information entered once forward through the application and award process, and allows the same document to be used for multiple applications. OVW is also looking at how best to use progress reporting capabilities in JustGrants to streamline that process as recommended by tribes.

6. Do tribes have additional suggestions on how to encourage tribes that have never received OVW grant funds to apply for grants to expand the reach of OVW funding in tribal communities?

- **Simplify the grant application process** – Tribal leaders and advocates emphasized that for grant funding to reach those most in need, the application process needs to be shorter, easier, and more user-friendly. Some tribal officials testified that the tribes that need grant funding the most may lack the capacity to complete long and complicated applications.
- **Allow grant funds to pay for grant writers** – Participants discussed whether grant funds should be allowed to cover the costs of grant writers, but a consensus was not reached.
 - Some said that the tribe knows community needs best and a professional grant writer may not be able to describe accurately what those needs are and how best to address them. A professional grant writer may describe activities that compromise victim safety in the application, which an established tribal victim services program would not have included.

- Others described how they would benefit from using grant funds to hire a grant writer because their staff is forced to fill the role of grant writer and program manager, while also providing victim services.
- **Analyze why tribes have been rejected in the past** – Participants encouraged OVW to examine why tribes have been rejected in the past for OVW funding to understand why tribes are not applying. Some questions OVW could ask are: “are tribes losing their funding?” or “are tribes lacking the proper support to maintain funding?”
- **Fund experienced technical assistance (TA) providers** – Several participants suggested that if OVW wants to reach more tribes, they need to fund experienced TA providers, who should be either from Indian country or have at least a minimum of five years working in Indian country. These TA providers can train tribes on best practices, thereby putting them in a better position to apply for OVW funds.
- **Do not make OVW’s tribal grants competitive** – Multiple tribal leaders suggested shifting OVW’s tribal grant programs to noncompetitive awards. They cited bureaucratic hoops – from grant applications to grant reporting – as barriers to tribes applying.
- **Include TA and peer-to-peer supports as an allowable cost under OVW grants** – One participant encouraged OVW to include TA and peer-to-peer supports as an allowable cost for current grantees because it will encourage tribes who have successfully obtained OVW funds to support other tribes through the process.
- **Advertise OVW grant opportunities more broadly** – Several participants suggested that OVW should advertise its grant opportunities more extensively through the use of tribal, regional, and national organizations.
- **Extend the project length of OVW tribal grants** – One tribal leader suggested increasing the project length of tribal grants. Tribes do not want to put in the effort of applying for a grant that is only funded for one to two years. More people would likely apply if the award project length were for five years or more.
- **Adjust the grant application process to accommodate smaller tribes** – Participants noted that OVW must adjust its grant application processes to accommodate the institutional capacity of smaller tribes. One participant suggested creating different tiers of applicants so smaller tribes with fewer resources are not competing against larger tribes for funding.

OVW Responses

- OVW plans to implement many of the tribal recommendations for simplifying the application process, making it more accessible to new or smaller applicants, advertising funding opportunities more broadly, and offering multiple pre-application information sessions for tribes to learn about the new process.
- OVW also is developing a plan to implement peer-to-peer support for non-grantee tribes – funding experienced tribes to work with tribes interested in applying to OVW’s grant programs for the first time.
- The statutes governing OVW’s grant programs do not permit funds to be used for professional grant writers; however, OVW can reduce the amount of narrative information required so that the application is easier to complete. Although more details would be required for a comprehensive project proposal, the summer COVID-19 focused solicitation showed how the project narrative might be simplified by using a table to guide applicants in responding to each element.

- OVW has already extended the potential length of TGP awards by offering three-year awards with the possibility of two-year, noncompetitive supplemental awards for grantees that are meeting project goals and spending their funds on schedule. This includes working with grantees to assess progress and address challenges in project implementation at the 18-month mark.
- These efforts are all designed to allow more tribes to bring these much-needed grant funds into their communities, as described in the testimony received this summer.

Questions Related to the Proposed COVID-19/Violence Against Women Tribal Solicitation

1. How long should the solicitation be open to get the funds out quickly?

- a. **OVW intends to make the application requirements as simple as possible, but wants to give the tribes enough time to submit their applications. Would four weeks be enough?**

All participants who responded to this question suggested that solicitations be open for either six or eight weeks.

- b. **Would tribes support making awards on a rolling basis as the applications come in as a way to get the funds out faster, recognizing that the funds may run out before the solicitation closes?**

Some participants were in favor of making awards on a rolling basis, while others expressed concern that this would give an unfair advantage to tribes with extensive grant writing experience.

2. How large should the awards be?

- a. **Would relatively small awards make sense, given that the funds would be used only for COVID-related needs to address violence against women in Tribal communities (e.g., would awards in the range of \$50,000 to \$100,000, with the possibility of a larger award based on demonstrated need be appropriate)?**

Several participants supported this budget range, while others argued that awards should be at least \$150,000.

3. How long should the awards be?

- a. **Would 12-month awards be long enough?**

All participants who responded to this question supported a 12 to 18-month project period.

4. The COVID Tribal solicitation likely will incorporate funding from two different grant programs, OVW's Tribal Governments Program (TGP) and Tribal Sexual Assault Services Program (TSASP).

- a. **Would tribes prefer to submit two separate applications if applying for both TGP and TSASP funding – or one consolidated application with separate project narratives and separate budgets?**

Participants who responded to this question expressed concerns that submitting two applications would be time consuming. Participants suggested making the application as simple as possible and requiring one consolidated application for those applying to both

programs. Two participants recommended using FVPSA as an example – this application was open for six weeks and only required a narrative, a budget, and a letter of acceptance.

5. Unless there is an additional COVID appropriation that includes funding for the Tribal Jurisdiction Program, OVW will not have enough carryforward money to make competitive COVID-related awards in the \$50,000 to \$100,000 range under this program. At most, OVW could offer existing grantees up to \$10,000 in special awards for COVID-related activities.

a. Should OVW offer these small awards to existing Tribal Jurisdiction grantees on a non-competitive basis?

All participants who responded to this question agreed that OVW should offer these small awards to existing Tribal Jurisdiction grantees.

Other Comments Related to the Proposed COVID-19/Violence Against Women Tribal Solicitation

- **Be flexible on the use of COVID-19 funds** – Several officials emphasized the need for greater flexibility in how grant funds are used because tribes have different needs, and the details of a well-crafted response to violence against women vary by tribe. Many tribal leaders and authorized designees recommended that the scope of the funding be as broad as possible to allow tribes to meet their unique needs at this time. Some also expressed concerns that requiring tribes to use funds specifically for COVID-19 needs would amount to narrowing the statutory purposes of the TGP.
- **Administer COVID-19 funds as quickly as possible** – Participants expressed concerns over how long it would take to develop a solicitation and disburse funds. Recognizing that COVID-19 is creating unprecedented challenges for tribes, participants stressed that the funds could be used immediately.
- **Reduce the length of the solicitation/application** – Participants emphasized that a shorter solicitation with fewer required supporting documents would allow tribes to expedite the application process.

OVW Responses

- OVW's COVID-19/Violence Against Women Assistance to Tribes solicitation was open from July 31, 2020 to September 16, 2020, incorporated the dollar amounts and project periods recommended by tribes, allowed for a small number of rolling awards, and provided the flexibilities recommended by tribes in both the application and administration processes, where feasible. It also encouraged existing Tribal Jurisdiction Program grantees to apply for COVID-19 related needs, such as testing and medical treatment for inmates convicted under Special Domestic Violence Criminal Jurisdiction.
- As discussed above, OVW is seeking feedback from applicants under the COVID-19 focused solicitation and from tribal leaders at the annual consultation in October, with the goal of continuing to improve the grant application and administration processes for tribes and tribal organizations in FY 2021 and beyond.