DARYL FOX: Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to today's webinar, FY 2021 Building State Technology Capacity, hosted by the Office for Victims of Crime.

At this time, I'd like to introduce today's presenter, Joel Hall, Associate Director within the State Victim Resource Division of the Office for Victims of Crime. Joel?

JOEL HALL: Good afternoon, everybody. Thank you, Daryl. I want to thank you all for attending this pre-application webinar. For some of you who may know, I've done this for--this is kind of one of my projects that I've been running for going on 5, 6 years now. Sometimes we skip a year in between the different solicitations for the Building State Technology. We didn't have it last year, but this year we're having it again, and we're looking forward to helping advance the needs of your technology needs to help better serve victims throughout the nation and your states.

Webinar outline. We're going to go over--a quick overview of OVC and its mission, a breakdown of the solicitation, project purpose goals, objectives, eligibility, application and award timelines, required documents, application process, and at the end, we'll do questions and answers.

OVC's mission is committed to enhancing the Nation's capacity to assist crime victims and to provide leadership in changing policies and practices to promote justice and healing for all victims of crime. We do a lot--we fund a lot of different programs. Many of you probably have worked with us up there, whether it be tribal, state, victims of human trafficking, international terrorism, mass casualty. We do a lot and we continue to look for new opportunities and new grantees that can help us complete our mission.

This solicitation will close on Thursday, July 1, 2021. It doesn't say it right here, but it's 11:59 A--or PM, so make sure that--my only advice that I can give you is start early. We have a lot of new systems. So we're going to go over a little bit in regards to how to apply. So the--my only advice is don't wait until the last minute. Try as early as you can in case there's errors or any technical challenges that you may run into, so that we can assist you. There are also wonderful, a lot of trainings that are on JustGrants, which we'll go over later down, in terms of application submission as well. The start date for the award, will start on October the 1, 2021, and it will run up to 3 years, depending on what your project--how long you want your project. And we'll go over that a little bit, but…

So this is important for everybody who's on the call. This solicitation is specifically designed for what we call State Administrating Agencies SAAs, that's for state governments or territory--or governments or territories and other possessions of the United States. There are chances for, if this happens to be a nonprofit that's working with the state, and they could probably partner and do something interesting, but that--the application must come from the state. So you can't, kind of, build it and then partner with the state you need to already be having a working relationship

with the state and already kind of have something. A great example was another state did a[n] elder abuse hotline, and so they know they wanted that opportunity but they couldn't apply for it themselves because they were not the State Administrating Agency, so they worked with their partner agency who was and they work together, and came up with resources for an elder abuse hotline. This was about 2 or 3 years to go. So that's a good example of working together. And I think another one was working on an elder abuse project as well. It was a coalition and so they worked together with their state administrating agency. But you must work with your state administrating agency on that.

Program Description. The solicitation is seeking applications for Victims of Crime (VOCA) Formula Assistance and Compensation State Administering Programs to implement statewide technology programs to enhance victims' access to services, foster innovation and efficiency in the provision of services, improve the quality of services, improve the accessibility and responsiveness of victim service organizations. That is all. So for those who have applied, or have been with us for a long time relating to this solicitation, sometimes we put specific things that we want to see. For example, 2 years ago we were really trying to promote elder abuse hotlines and other types of--I think Telehealth, as well. We're leaving this pretty wide open. So as long as you're using technology to enhance victim services, we're going to let the--let the applicants tell us what they think is innovative or what they want. So it's pretty wide open and we're not going to put any parameters on this. So if you can come up with something unique, it could be from Telehealth, it could be as simple as just updating simple software to update your victim conversation databases that get better information or data for the reports that you need to do. It could be anything, it could be hotlines, like, apps. Be creative. And we're here to listen. And try to reach out and do anything innovative as we can, that's why we left this very blank and general, so that you can complete--have--so you are not restricted and you can be as creative as you want to be.

Again, the goal is to implement statewide technology programs to enhance victims' access to services, foster innovation and efficiency in the provision of services, improve the quality of services, and improve the accessibility and responsiveness of victim service organizations.

So when you do apply, if it's not something small, you will need to conduct strategic planning to identify gaps in technology and implement a strategic plan to enhance statewide technology capacities. So that's an important part of the application, you need to have that. As--if it's--if it's something larger that you want to do, say, you know, like an--a statewide hotline for victims, whether it be elder abuse or something else, you need to have a, kind of, strategic plan. Implement technology enhancements to improve the state's technology capacity as relevant to victims. So you need to put that in as much as you can to help us understand what your project is.

Collaborate with community stakeholders, make sure this is all in your application, victim service providers, subrecipient organization, and other allied professionals on technology needs of state. Comprehensive assessment to evaluate effectiveness of the program at the end. Program data collection, how are you going to be able to report on data on this. This will be reported into the PMTs and future [will] be into JustGrants when that--when that's done. But we'll need to report on the data and other objectives identified by OVC.

So these are the deliverables. Again, strategic planning, a final implementation plan, execution of the implementation plan, comprehensive assessment, detailed final report, this is important when the project is done. Even if it's a small project or something simple, we want a final report. And other deliverables as identified by OVC.

In FY '21, in addition to executing any statutory prioritization that may be applicable, OJP will give priority consideration to applicants as follows. Applications that will advance the promotion of civil rights, access to justice, support to crime victims, protection of public from crime and evolving threats, and building trust between law enforcement and the community. As well as applications that demonstrate that the individuals who are intended to benefit from the requested grant reside in high-poverty areas or persistent-poverty counties. Now this is the general statement. A lot of states have many of these areas, so--but this is something that is required by the Department of Justice. And any of the projects that you are thinking about and that can actually work with--work these areas and help facilitate the goals of the Administration, we will--would really like you to put that in there if you can. We're really looking forward to innovative programs that can meet the goals of the Administration.

Maximum numbers of awards expected to make is six. So there's only going to be six awards this time. Sometimes for those who have done this in the past, I know we've had more money. This year, we're not--we don't have as much money as we usually have, but that's okay. So, we plan to make up to six awards. The maximum amount for each award is $600,000. Now there's probably a slight error on this slide. If I was going to write it over again, I'd probably write "up to $600,000." So you don't need to put $600,000 down. If your project's only $350,000, put that down. But your proposal for application cannot exceed $600,000. The total cost of the award will be for $3.6 million. And again, the period of performance duration is 36 months. You can--So, you can keep it at 36 months. That is not a requirement. If it's something small and you want to do it for 1 year, it probably--should probably say 12 to 36 months, that's what I usually write. However, I put 36 months this time down because even the small projects tend to go longer than anticipated. So if you, you know, one safe bet is to, you know, give yourself extra time. Contracts, IT individuals, different, you know, collaborating with partners sometimes could take longer than you think it will. So it doesn't always hurt to spend a little longer on these awards. And just a reminder that statutorily, at this time, statutorily, VOCA awards are, kind of, stopped at the 36-period month. So we don't have a lot of flexibility to do an extension.

Awards will be made as cooperative agreements. What is a cooperative agreement different than a grant award? It's basically, you know, in terms of--it's a more substantial involvement between agencies and the recipient. So you're still going to be charged with doing most of the work yourself, but we will have more say. In terms of, you know, if for example there's a new database that's being built, say an application of some type, we may ask you to consult with our OCIO to make sure--to make sure that basically it's meeting federal requirements or, you know, it's 508-compliant or different things of that nature. So it's certainly important that we have this, kind of, control when we talk about technology. But in most cases, we're going to allow you to do, you know, whatever your project is. So just be aware, it's a cooperative agreement and not a grant.

Application and Submission Information.

Applications must include the following. These elements are very important and if they don't have these three elements, your application will not make it past or will not make it to review. We have the Proposal Abstract, the Proposal Narrative, and the Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative. So those three elements need to be included within the application.

The abstract must be clear and a simple statement--a simple summary statement about your proposal. The application should not--the abstract should not be like 20 pages long, you can save that for the narrative. Make it quick. And what I always try to tell people--and it doesn't always happen--but, write the abstract so that I can have a general understanding of 90 percent of the project within one paragraph.

The Proposal Narrative must be double-spaced, using standard 12-point font, no less than 1-inch margins, do not exceed 20 pages, and should be submitted as an attachment in JustGrants. Make sure you clearly label it as the Proposal Narrative, that--we would greatly appreciate it.

And that goes with all documents. I'm not sure what's going to look like this year when we see the JustGrants applications come in. But in GMS in the past, the--mostly how well you label the document helps us process your applications quicker. And for those who are reviewing it externally before us, in terms of what we call BMR, if you don't label things easily and you put a lot of documents, sometimes it's harder for us to find it. So label it as clearly as possible, even in, hot--you know, large capital letters if you need to.

Proposal Narratives, you should have description of the issue, project design and implementation, capabilities and competencies, plan for collecting the data required for this solicitation's performance measures.

Describe the problem to be addressed. Describe the current services and gaps. Describe how funding will alleviate the problem. Describe the technology innovation to be implemented that will address the problem. Again, be creative. We love creativity. And, again, to meet the priorities of the Administration, but also come up with new ideas so that we can showcase other--for other states, other SAAs, and throughout the Nation.

Proposal Narrative: project design and implementation. This section should include goals, objectives, and activities that are aligned with the solicitation. Be brief, concise, and clear. Make sure the information is consistent throughout your proposal. I see this a lot where information is just very scatter shot, it's up and down, it's hard to find. I would just be as detailed as possible, being--sectioning out things in terms of here's the problem statement, here's our solution, here's the technology that we're going to use, that makes it easier for us and the peer reviewers to read it. Like this, the acronym SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-bound. Focus on future and setting a realistic timeline to complete the project. That is also important. This goes back to the 36 months. Again, I think one of the questions was it can be less than 36 months if you want it to be, but if you--be realistic about the time that you will need.

Identify the key individuals and organizations involved in the project. Demonstrate that the individuals and organizations identified have the capacity to address the stated need, including

the expertise necessary to conduct the strategic planning process, collaboration with stakeholders, develop and execute an implementation plan, and successfully implement the proposed project activities. Three, describe specific roles and responsibility of all project partners and key staff. This is an important one. This is one I see in a lot of the applications. People don't clearly define roles, so it's very important. It helps us in terms of doing the evaluation. Demonstrate the capacity and expertise of the lead applicant and all project partners to implement the project and launch technological innovations. Demonstrate the applicant's and partners' expertise using technology to implement the project. Describe who will implement activities described in the Project Design and Implementation section. And include descriptions and copies of resumes for proposed key staff personnel. If you do not know, all those--who those individuals, you can just let us know in the project narrative. But if you do have the key person from your state agency that will be applying and at least starting, have that person's resume and other important information.

Plan for Collecting Data. Who will--who will be responsible for reporting the required performance measurement? Put that in the project narrative. That's important. How will data be collected? Any additional performance metrics? What data sources will be used? Any legal, policy, or other barriers to gaining access? It's very important that you, kind of, come up with a plan for collecting data. Sometimes it can be hard with technology projects, especially if they're smaller, but you can still add some information in there. You might want to think about that while you're doing the application.

Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative. See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide. Use the JustGrants web-based form. It's similar to what we've done before, so that form really hasn't changed. It's just, kind of, now web-based now. Performance costs--performance costs should relate to the key personnel for the project. The budget should include adequate funding to fully implement the project, broken out by year, that's reflecting 36 months. The budget should be mathematically sound and correspond with the information described in the Proposal Narrative and aligned with the project design. One important thing with the budget. Let me get back to the budget. It's just be clear between the different--between subgrants and contracts. If you're--for services--You know, if you're going to buy technology or you're going to, you know, do a lot of those things, contracts are best. But if there's somebody doing a particular service, let's say you're hiring a consultant or a subject matter expert, that person might be actually a subgrant depending on what kind of services they're providing to the project. So, you know, it's a one-time deal, so just relook at the DOJ Grants Financial Guide when it comes to that. There's a lot of detailed information related to that.

Applications should also include, along with the three required documents, the following information. I won't go all over--all of these things, but these are important documentations that we require of all of OJP applications. Many of you are familiar with these. Some of them will apply to you, some of them will not. So, take your time and make sure you attach them as well. Clearly detail the title. My thing that I like to see to make it easier is you should start the file name with the title. So like for example, time-task plan, you should say "time-task plan" and then you can say, you know, "elder abused project" or state--the state name. You know, have that--the title of these documents out in front so it makes it easier for us to find it.

Application Process.

So, for the application process, we have a lot of different tools that we have in terms of eLearning Videos. So if you are interested, make sure that you go onto these--follow these links and go to the JustGrants homepage and you will find a lot of information on how to apply. For the SAA's who are out there, you can also ask your grant manager as well. And we're going to try to be hosting some different webinars throughout the period to help with the application submission as well. But, you know, we'll record--we're going to record any of those trainings that we have. But there's also live information on the JustGrants website as well, so you can click on it. And I can only tell you again, which I've said before, is be prepared, you might want to take--learn these things. If you have decided that you want to apply for this particular funding opportunity, you might want to start learning these things now. I know that I've had to take a lot of trainings as well. And I continue to do so.

Recording available. So, the Application Mechanics: Submitting an Application, steps to take to apply, so these are very important.

DOJ Application Submission Checklist. How to prepare to apply, completing the abbreviated application on Grants.gov, Entity Onboarding and JustGrants, completing, reviewing, helpful user tips.

Access recording and slide deck from previous webinars and the training, refer to the JustGrants Training Application Submission. Bookmark the JustGrants Training.

Submission Information. Make sure you go to register at Grants.gov. That's your step one. So this year, for those who are not aware, there's a two-application process. So it's originally, you have to go to Grants.gov to register and kind of apply, then you got to go to JustGrants. So again, it's very important to go ahead and start the process as soon as you can.

OJP Grant Application Resource Guide. Again, save this link. It's very important for many of the resources that you'll need that we go to this as much as you can. And it's very important. Let me go down here in a second.

Here's some OVC resources: ovc@doj.gov, OJP; the DOJ Grants Financial Guide; JustGrants; Grants.gov; the OJP Grant Application Resource Center, which we just talked about; OVC TTAC Training and Technical Assistance; Grant Performance Measurement Reporting; and the OJP Resource Center, NCJRS. You'll notice in the solicitation and if there--if you have questions, don't contact me. You're actually going to go to NCJRS for the questions related to that. I can answer some questions in the chat, of course, in here. But you go through them, because that way, it's fair--they answer, you know. We try to be as fair with the application process as possible.

Here we have important contact information. Grants.gov, JustGrants, Submitting full application, technical assistance with program requirements contact the OJP Response Center. If for some odd reason you are having some technology problems, especially right before it closes, make sure you contact us or go through the JustGrants Support Center. If you need to appeal any

decision that you were not applied at that time, you need to make--document that you were actually trying to get in to the system and trying to, you know, that you had problems.

These are important dates here. So we did the--we kind of separated the dates that things were due. So on June 17th is you need to apply in JustGrants, and then by July 1st, you need to--I mean, Grants.gov, excuse me. June 17th, you need to apply by at Grants.gov. By July 1st, you need to do JustGrants. Again, it's a two phase application process--project. Luckily, you only need to pull the documentation once. You know, start working all the pieces and upload them.

And Q & A.

Let's see here. "Could a project be for less than 3 years?"

Absolutely. Just make sure you give yourself some time to get them--some things done if you need to.

Yes, actually, you can obtain the forms before doing the application on JustGrants. All those forms are linked through the Resource Center--OJP Application Resource Center. So all the links that Tammy provided, you should be able to get those forms ahead of time. To look them over, they're all standard OJP forms. I think even if, you know, without going through the Resource Center, if you went to ojp.gov, you would find this as well, and you can start filling those out ahead of time, such as the lobbying forms. There's a lot of forms.

Well, I want to give it one more minute, because I don't see any more questions just yet. Daryl, that was the last one from Kim, is that correct?

DARYL FOX: There's another one on, "If Tribal governments can apply?"

JOEL HALL: No, they cannot, unless they're part of the SAA. The State Administering Agency is the only one that can apply.

DARYL FOX: And there's one. "If priority is granted to applicants who have not received this funding in the past?"

JOEL HALL: I don't think so. I think we're looking for the opportunities. We haven't had it for a while. I think that if you put that in your application, that might be--that might be a good thing to put in there. But we're not having any, kind of, like point system for those who haven't applied in the past.

Going back to this Tribal governments question, so the answer is you can't directly apply, but you can always partner with your State Administering Agency. So, for example, if it's South Dakota, you would go with the Department of Public Safety in South Dakota. And that's just one example. And you could say, "Hey, we want to do this project. Can you apply for us?" I mean, you could actually go all the work for them. This is what happened in Missouri. There was another subrecipient who basically did all the applications and the SAA just worked with them to get it applied for us. So…

DARYL FOX: Then there is a question or two, you know, just to reiterate, the PowerPoint, transcript, and recording are all going to be posted to the OVC website within about 5 to 10 business days. So yes, that will be made available if you need to go back and reference anything within the slide, especially slide 35 that has the contact information for Grants.gov, JustGrants, and the Response Center. So, definitely keep an eye out for that.

JOEL HALL: Well...

DARYL FOX: There's one. One coming in the chat, Joel.

JOEL HALL: Okay.

DARYL FOX: "Can State Compensation Programs apply?"

JOEL HALL: Absolutely, Victim Compensation and Assistance. And you can receive more than one application per SAA. So, let's say you have a State Administering Agency that runs both the Victim Assistance Program and the Victim Compensation Program, and they have two separate projects, one for Victims Assistance and Victim Comp; they can apply twice.

Yes, State Administering Agencies, these are agencies that are approved by the state to administer VOCA funds.

DARYL FOX: "So when--if an outside party's helping write the grant, can they have access with our staff?" I'm not sure...

JOEL HALL: …see that one.

DARYL FOX: ...that's getting at.

JOEL HALL: So Kelly says, "If the comp prog--and assistance programs are separate and they are applying kind of against each other?"

Yeah, technically, yes. They're two separate projects, two separate applications, and they could be technically competing against each other. If it's a joint project, then you could put them together. But I'm not sure, you know, if it's something completely separate, one's going to do Telehealth and one is going to do improve… So let's say for assistance it's Telehealth and for compensation it's database improvements. So that is two--that's a separate kind of thing.

It said, "So if we are a subgrantee for VOCA funds, we would be eligible?"

No, you would not be. You'd have to be the actual agency that awarded you. The SAA is the state agency that awarded you your VOCA funds.

What was the question you asked me, Daryl? I don't see that in the chat. Again, I'm trying to run this chat on my phone. So, I don't know...

DARYL FOX: It's, so, it was in the Q&A. It's a--it's a little broad. "If an outside party's helping write the grant, can they have access with our staff?" That's how it's written. If you want to elaborate on that, to the person that had submitted that, go ahead and do that. We can hopefully, maybe specify what you're getting at there.

And that's really all that's come in through the Q&A.

JOEL HALL: Okay.

DARYL FOX: And I know there's some of you who put it in the chat, if you want, just put it in the Q&A as well. And we can--we can get to that, but...

JOEL HALL: Well, well, I think that's all I've got. So, let me see. Let me look at that question in the Q&A. Well, all right. That's all I got.

DARYL FOX: Okay. Well, Joel, unless there's anything else? On behalf for the Office Victims of Crime and our panelist, we want to thank you for joining today's webinar. Now this will end today's presentation.

JOEL HALL: All right. Thank you very much.