DARYL FOX: Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to today's webinar, "OVC Fiscal Year 2022 Measuring the Impact of Victim Services: Implementation, Management, and Sustainment of the Measures for Providers Responding to Victimization Experiences or iMPRoVE Project."

At this time, it's my pleasure to introduce Ashley Russell, Program Specialist with the Office for Victims of Crime for some welcoming remarks and to begin in the presentation. Ashley?

ASHLEY RUSSELL: Thank you, Daryl. And thank you for everyone for joining us today. We appreciate your time as we walk through all this information and your interest in this project and this solicitation. So, as Daryl said, I'm Ashley Russell, Program Specialist in the Operations Division for the Office for Victims of Crime.

Throughout this webinar, we have a lot of information to cover, so we'll start at a high level OVC's overview and mission. We'll do a breakdown of the solicitation, going through the purpose goals and objectives, eligibility requirements, application and award timelines, and required documents. And then, we'll have time for application process and, hopefully, enough time for questions and answers. So we have lot of information to get through, and I'd like to remind everyone that all of this information is covered in the solicitation. And there are areas where you can reach out for help after this session is over, if you have further questions after you've listened to all this information. And please feel free to enter any questions you have during this time in the Q&A. We'd love to be able to talk to you today and get those questions answered for you.

So just an OVC overview. Our mission at OVC is committed to enhancing the Nation's capacity to assist crime victims and to providing leadership in changing attitudes, policies, and practices to promote justice and healing for all victims of crime. And as you can see in this list right here, OVC funding supports a number of different victims, a number of different victim service programs, as well as a lot of information and resources out in the field.

Some important dates to remember. The Grants.gov deadline for the solicitation is Tuesday, July 5, 2022. The grant--JustGrants deadline is Tuesday, July 12, 2022. And DOJ expects to award grants no later than September 30th of '22. And all start date should be on or after October 1st. So please note, successful applicants may not begin work until the budget has been reviewed and officially approved by OJP. So any additional information or restrictions may be outlined in the award package. So just be mindful of these timeline deadlines.

Just a quick look at eligibility for this solicitation. Overall, we don't have any strict-- restrictions on who can apply aside from other additional items in the application, but overall eligibility is welcome to just about everyone.

So a little bit of a description on this program. So this solicitation seeks to fund one entity to implement, manage, and sustain the Measures for Providing--for Providers Responding to Victimization Experiences or the iMPRoVE project, as you heard in the title. The iMPRoVE project provides an assessment survey tool for victim service providers to use to measure outcomes and assess the effectiveness and quality of services provided to their clients. So OVC is working to help drive the victim service field from a focus on effort to a focus on results and effectiveness by creating a standardized approach to measuring these outcomes and quality of services across the field. Just a little bit of background, and again you can read this in the full solicitation. OVC regularly collects performance-measured data on outputs from all grant-funded activities. And in partnership with NIJ and OVW, they have a solicitation that's out--or that started in 2019 that has created this iMPRoVE tool. And so, as the tool has been built out, we want to continue this project and see it implemented across the victim service field. And so outcome tools like this, in combination with our output data, give a much bigger sense and a much bigger picture of service provision across the country.

So a little bit more specific information. The iMPRoVE tool uses best practices in survey research and accounts for the fact that different types of service providers have different intended outcomes for their services. This extensively tested and validated instrument with a user-friendly software platform enables service providers to readily collect and analyze outcome and satisfaction measures. It provides victim service providers with a systematic way of listening to the clients' voices to ensure their needs are being met to the greatest extent possible and allows providers to quantify the extent to which their services meaningfully victims' lives.

So the goal of this solicitation is just like we said in the solicitation title, to implement, manage, and sustain this project. And we call it a project because, yes, there is the iMPRoVE tool, but this project is so much more than just the tool itself.

So a couple of objectives to be mindful of. The first would be education and training. So responsible for bringing awareness and communication about the iMPRoVE tool. And you'll see in some of the deliverables, we have things like an outreach plan, making sure there's awareness about it around the country, and the benefits of this tool and benefits of outcome and satisfaction measures. And then, kind of, once that information has gone out and if victim service providers choose to participate and use this tool, then this project will be supporting the training of the victim service providers with the user guide and toolkit.

Second objective being the iMPRoVE survey implementation and management. So being responsible for distributing the iMPRoVE tool to all the victim service providers that are interested, managing and overseeing participating providers and sustaining the tool across new and existing participants. So sustain that looks a lot like continuing the education and technical assistance, as well as any--creating any data analysis products that cultivate long-term engagement with the tool and data collection, and also outreach--continuing outreach so that new victim service providers can become aware and, you know, decide to use the tool as well.

So another objective, the data collection and analysis. Being responsible for proper data collection and sharing agreements, cleaning and managing data from respondents, analyzing survey responses and providing feedback to the service providers, and working with them to understand how to use their data and how to make decisions based off all the information that they're gathering.

And then, lastly, system upkeep. So working with OVC to determine the appropriate servers for storing all of the data in addition to providing management technical assistance for the data collection platform.

So deliverables, like I mentioned, really align with the objectives. You can see a lot of strategic planning at the front end. Overall implementation of the tool's distribution, educations and trainings and technical assistance, a couple reports throughout the year, midyear and annual reports on a number of topics, and then a comprehensive final report, also subject to other deliverables as determined by OVC throughout the project.

So some information on the federal award. There will be one award for a maximum of $1.5 million for a project--period performance start date of October 1st and will last for 36 months. So there will be one primary grant recipient. All organizations that are designated as partners, consultants, or subrecipients must submit a Letter of Intent signed by the organization principal.

This award will be a cooperative agreement, so there will be a substantial involvement between OVC and the recipient during the performance period and OVC will work closely and participate in the performance of the program. If you have other interest in looking deeper into that, you can see the Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements section of the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for more information.

So Application and Submission Information.

So there are few things that applications must include, and these are, to me, the basic minimum requirement to advance to peer review and receive consideration for funding. So Proposal Abstract; the Proposal Narrative, and you can kind of see the breakdown of weight for each section; and then the Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative. And if you fail to submit any of these required documents, your application will not be considered for funding. So make sure to go over your checklist, check it twice, and make sure these three components are absolutely included in your application.

So for the Proposal Abstract, we just want a clear and simple summary statement of your proposal. The abstract should be no more than 400 words and include the purpose of the project, primary activities, expected outcomes, the service area, and intended beneficiaries and subrecipients. This will be completed in the JustGrants' web-based form. And in addition, it should be written in third person and will be made publicly available on the OJP website, if it is awarded.

For the Proposal Narrative, it must be double-spaced, use a standard 12-point font, have no less than 1-inch margins, and it should not exceed 25 pages. So pages should be numbered "1 of 25," "2 of 25," and so on. And then be submitted as an attachment in JustGrants.

So the following sections are part of the Proposal Narrative and we'll go through each of those in just a minute. So we have the description of the issue, the design and implementation, capabilities and competencies, and then a plan for collecting data required for this solicitation's performance measures. You want to make sure that you fulfill each and every requirement.

So for the narrative description of the issue, this section must describe the need for, and use of, outcome measures to assess the effectiveness and quality of service--of services provided to victims of crime; how the project provides value to the victim service field; the key challenges of survey implementation and sustainment that could be encountered; and how funding will support reaching the goals of this project. So as you're writing out your description, you'll want to make sure to hit each of these key points that are provided here and again outlined in the solicitation.

So the project design and implementation, this should include goals, objectives, and activities that are aligned with the solicitation. You'll want to make sure to be brief, concise, and clear. Again, there are only 25 pages allowed for the full application. You'll want to make sure the information is consistent throughout your proposal, creating solid goals and measurable objectives. We always like to use the objectives should be SMART term, so Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-Bound. So focus on the future and setting a realistic time--timeline to complete the project.

Some other key things to think about is you'll want to describe your strategy to address needs identified in the description of the--of the issue that we just went over. So, again, going over those key points and describing how you will address each of those pieces. List proposed activities and describe their relationship to the objectives. Provide description of your methods and how you'll carry out the activities. And then, in your timetable, indicating, you know, clear milestones in your plan moving forward.

Next, we have the capabilities and competencies section. So you'll want to describe, you know, the capabilities and competencies needed to accomplish the goals and objectives of the project and provide examples of prior experience with survey implementation and sustainment, with examples of successful outreach to, or proper identification of, organizations working with underserved communities.

And then last section for the narrative is the plan for collecting data. So describe the process for measuring project performance; identify who will collect the data, and who is responsible for the performance measurements, and how the information will be used to guide and evaluate the impact of the project; and then describe the process to accurately report the data. Now, specific performance measures are not listed in the

solicitation at this time. They have not been posted yet. But examples can be found on our website and you will also see a link to that information in the solicitation. So you can go take a look at the examples that have been posted online and, kind of, get a sense of what information we'll be collecting that's relevant to your project.

And then next, we'll have the Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative. So this is in web-based form using the form in JustGrants. So you'll want to be mindful of personnel cost and how they relate to the key personnel for the project. The budget should include adequate funding to fully implement the project, broken out by year, reflecting 36 months. And the project should--The budget should be mathematically sound and correspond with information described in the proposal narrative and aligned with the project design. Applicants can also see the Budget Preparation and Submission Info section of the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for details on budget and associated documentation.

You'll want to make sure to create a SMART budget just like our goals and objectives. You want it to be specific when listing your expenses. You want to make sure all the costs are measurable, ensure your budget items are attainable, make sure then your budget is relevant for each item accounted for, and that the budget is time-bound and broken down by year or month-by-month.

So along with those three required documents mentioned earlier, there is also information that should be included. Now, we have a list of items noted here on this slide. You can see in a lot of those sections, it says if applicable, so just based on what aligns with your project and your organization or who is applying. So make sure to go over your checklist. Make sure you have all your required documents and any additional information that needs to be submitted along with your application.

So some hallmarks of an outstanding application. Using simple and concise language. Ensure information is presentable and organized. Add tables, graphs, staff photos, and other images when possible while being mindful of grant guidelines. Be realistic about how you will achieve your goals. Get feedback from those who may run the project. Make sure the proposal is consistent with the solicitation. And then check, recheck, and check again, especially the budget, grant requirements, references, and other grant details.

Common reasons cited for a weak application include too ambitious or lacks focus, applicant lacks appropriate expertise to carry out the proposed project, no evidence of feasibility. So do not assume that the reviewers are as familiar with the project as you are, especially thinking about ,kind of, those descriptive pieces in the narrative, the description of the issue. So really being mindful, you know, of what you're writing and who you're writing to as they might not be as familiar with this work. And then, poor writing and a lot of errors.

So now I'll hand it back over to Daryl to cover the Application Process before we transition to the Q&A session.

DARYL FOX: Great. Thanks so much, Ashley. So whereas a lot of the programmatic information and requirements within the application were discussed, we're going to switch gears a little bit and talk about the Application Process at this time.

So to reiterate what was mentioned earlier, the Application Process is now a two-step process, consisting of submitting items into both Grants.gov and JustGrants. Each have their own specific due dates. So as you'll see here, July 5th is the Grants.gov deadline. You must meet that deadline in order to proceed to the Grants.gov--or JustGrants, I apologize, deadline for July 12th. And as always, it's recommended to get it in 48 to 72 hours prior to these deadlines, just in case there's any technical issues that you may encounter, or you need to modify anything.

So part of the grants lifecycle involves completing and submitting web-based forms as well as attachments that are requested in the published solicitation. So, once again, the JustGrants process begins in Grants.gov with the submission of the SF-424 and SF-LLL, which is the lobbying activities form. It's essentially the extent of the application requirements in Grants.gov. Aside from these two things, most of your submission is going to be in the JustGrants system for the full application.

Once the application is submitted and validated in Grants.gov, it is then sent to JustGrants for completion. Now, this may take several days to complete validations and release to JustGrants, but just know that that will be the process. It's okay to enter preliminary information in Grants.gov. If you haven't fully determined your budget or scope. You'll be able to edit this and update all your entries in JustGrants.

So, once again, Grants.gov, it's a separate system from JustGrants. It does provide access to funding opportunities from multiple government agencies. It is not managed by the Department of Justice. So if you do have questions about Grants.gov, you'll need to contact them directly for support, and we'll get to those--that information later in the presentation today. You will apply by selecting the option to apply. And then, you know, enter your email address, log in, and you'll receive notifications to that. Once again, it's at least 48 to 72 hours preferred to get your application in Grants.gov and submit those web-based forms, the SF-424 and LLL. And then once again, if the deadline has passed, you will not be able to proceed to the JustGrants portion of the application.

And then step two, as mentioned, JustGrants right here and in the chat will be the link [JustGrants.usdoj.gov](JustGrants.usdoj.gov). We'll get to some resources that are listed on that site to help you with your applications at that point.

So there are certain web-based forms that must be submitted directly into the system. Whereas in past years, everything was attachments, there are web-based forms. So your Proposal Abstract is one of them and solicitations-specific data with the application. You will also need to submit your goals, objectives, deliverables, and your timelines. And then, make sure your budget information is included in the Budget Detail Form. And lastly, your Disclosure of Duplication Cost Items. So pay attention to the

required sections they'll be noted within the system. If it is required and presents you with web-based entries, you cannot upload a document instead. You have to enter it in those web-based entries. So just be mindful of the format that is required within the system.

After you've submitted your application, you're probably wondering what's next. Once all the applications have been reviewed, then the entity will be notified, which will happen prior to the start date of the program. It's going to notify the Entity Administrator and Authorized Representative when it's received and it goes from Grants.gov to JustGrants. Then the Entity Administrator, who you designate, is notified if an award has been made. Just a note on the technical portion of the system. If you've submitted your application, the status is going to be considered "submitted," but you may see a banner on the site that indicates that it's past due. That banner just indicates the submission deadline has passed, not that your application is due. You can go ahead and ignore that in the system. So there's a notation there. If you have a confirmation of submission, everything should be fine.

Then as I mentioned, JustGrants is a robust system with several elements to it. And the team there does provide a lot of training, resources, and reference material on their site for you to reference. On the left image here, you'll see the--a training section with the dropdown with a variety of different topics you can access. There's also job aid reference guides, links to step-by-step videos. These are very short videos and meant to be used while you're working. So you don't have to feel like you need to set aside time and view them all and then submit your application. If you do need help, you'll be able to reference those as you go along. So if you're in the middle of a task and just want to verify the next steps, there's going to be wonderful resources for you to access. So in sum, these, you know, are all available on the JustGrants website that will be entered into the chat for you to access as needed.

JustGrants also offers [office hours](#) that one can join, specifically application mechanics on the how to once you're ready to apply. You'll see listed here a list of the June dates. One is actually going on today and now as we speak, on June 8th. But all these will be archived and posted to the site as well. So the link has been entered in the chat and it's listed here as well.

This solicitation incorporates the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) by reference. This guide provides guidance to applicants for the preparation and submission of OJP applications for funding. So the link is going to be posted in the chat and it's also listed here. So it's a wonderful resource, especially if you're going to get--be getting ready to apply, definitely you want to reference this.

To assist potential applicants developing strong proposals to OVC's [current funding opportunities](#), including this one, OVC hosted educational webinars to learn more about the program objectives and submission requirements. These were held earlier in the year. There is a four-part series, 1: Getting Ready to Apply, Considerations When Building Your Budget, a little more specific. And then Preparing Your Proposal,

submitting, and then What to Expect Next. Part 4 was an Overview of the Upcoming Funding Opportunities for the Fiscal Year 2022. We're nearing the release of the last few here, but you can go to the OVC website and see everything that's currently open at this time as far as funding opportunities. And you can also sign up to receive updates, News From OVC. It's a great listserv to subscribe to, to keep up to date on what's coming out, not only for solicitations but publications, resources, programs, events, etc., from the Office for Victims of Crime.

There's a lot listed here for important web resources. For reference, we're going to put that in the chat so you can hyperlink to those as you need to. But in addition to the OVC website, the DOJ Grants Financial Guide. So, if you have questions about budget and things, you can access it from that link. We talked about JustGrants, Grants.gov, the Application Resource Guide as well. Coming down to the OVC TTAC Center for training and technical assistance needs or information. A wonderful resource. Grant Performance Measurement Reporting and then the OJP Resource Center. We'll talk about this a little later. But if you do have any questions regarding the programmatic side of things with this solicitation or any others, that's going to be the entity that can help you troubleshoot.

And actually it's on this slide that we'll reference that. So with the two-part application process, each is going--entity is going to have their own training, technical assistance contact information, which you'll see here. It's also going to be entered in the chat. So with the two entities, the SF-424 and SF-LLL for Grants.gov, if you do have any technical questions, you can contact them here, support@grants.gov. The full application for JustGrants, it's going to be JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov. And then as I mentioned, the OJP Response Center is going to be more with the programmatic requirements in the solicitation. That's at grants@ncjrs.gov. We'll have this slide up there in the Q&A, if you need to reference this at any point.

And to reiterate again, I can't stress--the two-part submission date. Each has their own specific date and time. The Grants.gov deadline is July 5th, 11:59 p.m., Eastern. And then the JustGrants for the full application is going to be July 12th, but you'll notice 8:59 p.m., Eastern. That's new this year from the standard 11:59 p.m. So just be mindful of that.

Stay connected. If you're interested in updates from OVC, you can do so. This link is going to be put in the chat. You can subscribe to news, not only for solicitations, as mentioned, but other items, resources, programs from OVC.

And then obviously go social. There's links to Facebook, Twitter, YouTube. There's a variety of resources constantly sending out information on items relevant to the victim services field that you can access.

So with that, I know it's a lot of information, we'll kind of switch gears again and get into the question and answer portion. Just two reminders before we do. That if you do have a question, the far bottom right of your screen, three dots, hit Q&A, select all panelists,

send that question. We still have quite a bit of time left today and we can get to those questions. And, also, if you missed anything or want to reference anything today, we'll go ahead and be posting the recording, PowerPoint, and transcript for today to the OVC website. Once those items are available, you'll get a notice in your email, the one that you registered with today, where to find those.

So with that, Ashley, go ahead and begin the Q&A portion.

ASHLEY RUSSELL: Great. Thank you. Let's see. Looks like we have one question. "So far, who developed the tool and what system is it maintained in now?"

So again as I mentioned, the tool development came from an NIJ 2019 solicitation. And so the recipient then, was RTI. And what system is it maintained in now? It's currently-- We're still building that out at the moment. So it hasn't--We haven't gone to pilot testing just yet. We're still building out the system. And, for the life of me, I can't remember the name at the moment. I apologize for that.

Okay. So a second question that came in, it said, "I wanted to know where we can access the iMPRoVE tool in order to assess our eligibility."

So it is not public yet. So I don't know at this moment how to provide that kind of information or eligibility for you.

Let's see. Another question that came in is, "For service area, can we focus on a portion of the country and then plan to scale up?"

So that's something you can discuss in your application, how you plan to address the kind of outreach and implementation of the program. So for that, I would say, you know, address what your plan would be in that situation and we'll see what the peer reviewers say to that.

Another question that came in is, "Where can we find info on the validity, etc.? Is there a published work?"

So I don't believe there is any published work that is public information at this time. There are some recordings. And I don't know if we have anything that is publicly available at this time. So my--I guess my recommendation for your solicitation application would--to assess kind of the information available through what you know for outcome measures and its use in the field and then how you would use a tool in that sense to conduct this kind of outreach and implementation of the project.

DARYL FOX: And while we're waiting for other questions to be entered, I'll put--go ahead and put the important contact information side up for you all to reference here.

Ashley, I just wanted to make sure your audio is still connected?

ASHLEY RUSSELL: Huh. Thank you so much. I answered a question on mute. I was double muted. I apologize for that. You'd think by now we'd have that under control.

So what I was saying was to the question, "It is very hard to write a data collection and analysis section without the tool. Any idea when it will be ready?"

And so we would just recommend to not be so set on the tool itself, but rather focusing more on the implementation of a survey project in terms of how you would develop, kind of, the outreach plan and get the information out, focusing really on reaching underserved communities and making sure you have access, you know, to all types of victims of all types of crime and all types of victim service providers. And then also focusing on the strength of training and TA, working with victim service providers, and other--kind of, other strengths and capabilities that your project team has to implement some kind of survey project. And additionally to really be able to sustain the project over time. And you can use prior examples in your narrative of, you know, other survey tools that you've implemented and how you kept that survey going over time with a variety of different victim service providers.

Let's see. Someone asks, "Will the awardee receive training in how to use the tool?"

So, yes, there will be a user guide and training available, once it's completed. And so if there's a, you know, transition of knowledge and anything from the actual tool's creation, then all of that information will be available going forward.

DARYL FOX: Ashley, just checking in again on your audio.

ASHLEY RUSSELL: Yup. Just looking through some of the questions and making sure we can address them. So one of them is, "Are there incentives for service providers allowed, so, you know, anything to encourage completion of the tool?"

So just to, kind of, maybe clarify a little bit about the tool. So the tool would be for the victim service providers. No exchange of money. This is kind of a voluntary basis for the victim service providers to have this tool to use as a resource to them. So one of the things we'd be encouraging is for the project lead to be able to explain to victim service providers and encourage them to use this because it is beneficial to them and their understanding of the work that they're doing, their service provision, and the quality of their services. So really building up their knowledge in the victim service field, building up their knowledge of what their services are providing and how their--how their clients are feeling about these services. And that really leads to, you know, are there improvements they could make in their own organization? So we really emphasize this as a voluntary tool. And, again, this is a tool that would be handed off to the victim service provider to implement. So the project is not, you know, doing the survey itself, but having the victim service provider, kind of, take ownership of using this survey to survey their clients and understanding the quality of their--the services that they're providing.

Okay. So another question is, "Does law enforcement and social service agencies fall within the definition of victim service providers? And what is the target quantity of victim service providers that grantees should strive to meet?"

So to answer your first question, yes, law enforcement and social service agencies fall within the definition of victim service providers. The tool itself has the ability for those who provide victim services to, kind of, go through questions to determine what, kind of, bucket of performance--not performance measures. Sorry. Of, you know, measures relate most to the services that they provide, because, as we know, all victim service providers, kind of, have different goals and intentions of the services they provide. So, yes, all these agencies or groups that provide services, they fall within that victim service provider definition, and they will have a way and an ability to determine what set of measures is appropriate for the services they provide.

To your second question, "what is the target quantity?" No specific target quantity at the moment. We would just hope that this information is, you know, out there and used by all victim service providers. You know, lofty goal, all victim service providers across the country. We know that, you know, you can--we have a census, the 2017 census of victim service providers. There are thousands of providers across the country. So we want to be able to reach as many as possible. And so that's something you can speak to in, kind of, your outreach plan on how you aim to get this information out there and encourage victim service providers to understand how important this information is just to their own organization's functioning and service provision.

Let's see. Okay. Another--oh. Another question is, "Three years is a short amount of time to demonstrate sustainability. Will there be a follow-up solicitation for extending the project?"

So, yes, we know that this is really valuable and useful information, and depending on availability of funding in the next couple of years, we'll then determine. But, you know, it is our hope that we'll--we're able to extend this project and have another solicitation, you know, at the end of this project period.

So it looks like those are all the questions that have come in so far. So a lot of great questions. Really appreciate your interest. We still have a couple more minutes on this session, so we'll stay on if anyone else has any other thoughts or questions they'd like to bring up.

DARYL FOX: Okay. And, once again, if you do have anything after we adjourn today, you can contact Grants.gov, JustGrants, or OJP Response Center, if you do have questions.

ASHLEY RUSSELL: Okay. It looks like we have one more question that's come through, so I'll read it out. "I imagine organizations would have questions for the awardee about how to address the areas of improvement shown through their iMPRoVE data. Should applicants include information about ability to do this in the application?"

So, sure, if--you know, if TA in that sense, in terms of how to improve their services or how to adjust their services based on their data is not part of your organization's normal functioning, there's a suite of resources and information available through OVC Training and Technical Assistance that can also help in that area. So I think there's, you know, a lot to focus on in terms of being able to help them understand what their data is saying. But then, you know, if that actual technical assistance isn't in your area, being able to refer them to other providers for that kind of assistance.

DARYL FOX: Okay. That seems to be all the questions in the queue at this time. Ashley, is there anything in closing you wanted to mention?

ASHLEY RUSSELL: No. I just want to say thank you all for joining us today to walk through this solicitation and we look forward to your applications.

DARYL FOX: Okay. Thanks so much. So on behalf of the Office for Victims of Crime and our panelist, we want to thank you for joining today's webinar. This will end today's presentation.