

# TECHNOLOGY & LAW PROJECT'S RURAL VICTIM LEGAL ASSISTANCE SUBGRANT SOLICITATION

## A Project of the National Crime Victim Law Institute Through a Cooperative Agreement from the Office for Victims of Crime

### I. INTRODUCTION

The National Crime Victim Law Institute (NCVLI), through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), award number 2017-VF-GX-K130, is soliciting proposals for the Increase Legal Access in Rural Areas grant (Project). This Project is intended to encourage innovative ideas and methods to increase legal services to crime victims in rural areas. Specifically, the Project will fund three sites that will leverage technology to provide holistic legal services, including enforcement of victims' rights, to crime victims in rural communities. NCVLI anticipates awarding three subawards up to \$750,000 each for programs starting in 2018 and ending August 31, 2020.

### II. BACKGROUND

As set forth in the [Vision 21: Transforming Victim Services Final Report](#) (Vision 21 Report), there are substantial gaps in the provision of legal services to victims of crime:

"Challenges remain that prevent victims of crime from fully accessing their legal rights and receiving comprehensive legal services." The Vision 21 Report also recognized that, "as the 21st century progresses, the victim services field will integrate innovative technologies into its operations, fostering accountability and operational efficiency and ensuring that victims of crime will have streamlined access to services regardless of location, socioeconomic status, and other traditional barriers."

In fiscal year 2017, OVC launched the Increasing Legal Access to Victims of Crime: Innovations in Access to Justice Program (Program) to build on the Department of Justice's efforts to support legal services for crime victims to increase legal access to crime victims. The Program funds two distinct projects, one of which is this Project.

### III. PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of the Project is to help fill the gap in rural victim legal services using innovative,

#### NON-BINDING LETTER OF INTENT

If you plan to apply, please send a non-binding letter of intent no later than **April 11, 2018**. It should include the following information regarding the anticipated lead applicant organization: contact person name, postal address, email address and telephone number. The letter should clearly identify the rural community in which the proposed program would operate. Send the letter to [ncvli@lclark.edu](mailto:ncvli@lclark.edu), regarding "Increasing Legal Services".

#### OPTIONAL PRE-APPLICATION INFORMATION WEBINAR

NCVLI will conduct a pre-application information webinar on **April 12, 2018** at 12:00pm (Pacific). Participation is optional.

APPLICATION DEADLINE  
5pm (pacific) on **May 30, 2018**.

STAY UP-TO-DATE  
Sign up to receive updates on this Project at [www.ncvli.org](http://www.ncvli.org). Awards anticipated by **June 30, 2018**.

technological approaches combined with training, outreach and community partnerships. To achieve this, with OVC funding, NCVLI seeks to fund three programs that will leverage technology to provide holistic legal assistance and services to crime victims in rural communities, including rights enforcement. The development of innovative technology to expand access to legal services could be a one-time investment in computer hardware and software development that is institutionalized within the designated community. NCVLI, together with Project Partners Pro Bono Net and the National Network to End Domestic Violence's Safety Net Project, will provide training and technical assistance to the selected programs.

#### **IV. APPLICATION CONTENT**

The following items must be submitted in the application:

##### **A. PROGRAM ABSTRACT**

Each application must include a program abstract that highlights the purposes, goals, and objectives of the proposed program. The abstract should not exceed one side of one double-spaced, 8½ x 11-inch page with 1 inch margins.

##### **B. PROGRAM NARRATIVE**

The program narrative may not exceed 12 pages and must be submitted on one side only of 8½ x 11-inch paper using double spacing, a minimum of 1-inch margins on all four sides, and a type no smaller than standard 12-point Times New Roman font. Single-spaced and 1½-spaced narratives will not be accepted. Applications that do not conform to these requirements will not be reviewed. The narrative page limit does not include the Abstract, Capabilities & Competencies, TimeTask Plan, Budget or any Appendices. Appendices are optional and may include key staff resumes, organizational resumes, and letters of support/memoranda of understanding.

The narrative must include the following sections in the sequence listed below.

1. **Specific Community Need.** This section must discuss the need for the Program in the identified community, and articulate how leveraging technology to increase legal services to crime victims in the community is responsive to that need. Specifically, Applicants must:
  - Provide their definition of “rural area” or “rural community” and explain why the targeted area meets this definition; and
  - Show a demonstrated need for legal services in the targeted area. Such need may be demonstrated in various ways. For instance, if a formal legal needs and/or legal services capacity assessment has been completed, any of its findings regarding present and future need for legal services in the proposed service area might be included. If no recent formal legal needs and/or legal services capacity assessment has been completed, the Applicant can articulate need through other means and may include a plan for crafting, deploying, reviewing and integrating such an assessment into the Program.

2. Project Design. The Project Design must include a detailed description of project goals, objectives, activities, and deliverables, together with an identification of who will be responsible for each item. Included in this section should be discussion of:
  - Technology & Technology Readiness
    - The Application should address the technology-readiness (*e.g.*, cultural acceptance of technological benefits to service provision) of the targeted area.
    - The Application should identify any existing technology being used or that may be leveraged to increase access to legal services in the targeted area.
    - While the initial phase of the Program will be identification and crafting of technology plans, the Application should identify any hoped for technology outcomes.
    - If a local needs and capacity assessment has been completed, the Application should articulate any outcomes from that assessment that impact specific technology strategies that will be used to achieve program goals and objectives. If a recent assessment has not been completed that speaks to technology strategies, the Applicant might articulate a concrete plan for crafting, deploying, reviewing and integrating such an assessment into the Program.
  - Victim Privacy & Safety
    - Victim privacy and safety are critical to effective legal advocacy. Technology is a powerful tool that can aid privacy and safety but it also presents risks. The Application should discuss the lead applicant's experience protecting victim privacy and safety, particularly in the context of using technology, and discuss any existing or planned policies and/or procedures to ensure any technology used or leveraged to increase access to legal services will not compromise victim privacy or safety.
  - Law Strength
    - Holistic legal services for crime victims require that the jurisdiction in which services are provided has legal protections for victims that can be leveraged by lawyers. Among these legal protections must be victims' rights in criminal cases. All states and the District of Columbia have enacted state constitutional amendments and/or statutes establishing victims' rights. The nature of these rights differs from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, with the strongest laws being those that are substantially similar to the federal crime victims' rights act, 18 U.S.C. § 3771. The Application should detail the legal protections, including the enforceability of such protections, available to victims in the targeted area.
3. Time-Task Plan. The Application must include a time-task plan that clearly identifies goals, objectives, major activities and products, and the time line for accomplishing each. The plan should provide for the submission of written progress reports which will be required quarterly and semi-annually. Programs are generally expected to have developed their strategic plans and begin executing their strategic plans within approximately 12 months of being selected.
4. Evaluation Methods. Each successful applicant will be expected to participate in the evaluation that NCVLI will be conducting over the entire Project. In addition, each applicant must identify procedures for evaluating the program-specific services or products and for obtaining feedback about the program's value to the crime victim

community. Plans for participating in the large evaluation as well as local program should be discussed. Specifically:

- Describe the criteria and units of measurement that will be used to evaluate the program's effectiveness. Examples of these units of measure include:
  - (1) number of victims who received legal services;
  - (2) types of legal issues attorneys work on;
  - (3) the number of attorneys trained;
  - (4) the number of hours provided by pro or low bono attorneys; and
  - (5) cost-effectiveness of the program and services, such as cost per victim for services provided by the site.
- Performance measures must do more than describe the delivered activity, service or product; instead they must measure the impact of the project. Examples of these measures include:
  - (1) new capacities or improved responses to victims;
  - (2) knowledge gained;
  - (3) satisfaction data;
  - (4) new policies and protocols for serving victims in the community;
  - (5) impact on the victims' well-being; and
  - (6) other measures of the project's benefit to the field of victim legal services.

### **C. CAPABILITIES AND COMPETENCIES**

The Application should detail the lead applicant's capacity and capability to implement the program, including any expertise in managing issue-specific federal grants. The capabilities and competencies of the any proposed partners should also be included.

Areas to consider discussing:

- Experience providing trauma- and culturally-informed victim legal assistance;
- Experience leveraging pro bono or low bono attorneys, community partners, and other legal service organizations to achieve goals;
- Experience serving victims who live in rural communities generally and the targeted community specifically; and
- Experience leveraging technology to provide victim services.

### **D. PROGRAM BUDGET**

The subaward funds are to be used to provide holistic legal services to crime victims in rural communities. The Application's budget must show an efficient use of these subaward funds. Greater weight will be given to applications that dedicate the largest portion of their budget to ensure evidence-based, direct programmatic activities, and evaluation those same efforts. The Application must include budgetary allocations and explanations for any proposed technology (*e.g.*, for subscription cost to a technology platform to offset hosting/operational costs and/or for technology training and development to ensure project viability).

For each year of the project, the lead applicant will enter the budgeted items and their costs on a budget detail worksheet with a thorough justification for all costs, including the basis for computing the costs. The budget must be complete, reasonable, and directly related to the activities proposed in the Application. A sample Budget Detail

Worksheet is available. Applicants must justify the costs of individual items, such as personnel and travel, showing how the costs were computed. In addition, applications containing contracts must include detailed budgets for each organization's proposed expenditures. (Whether a particular agreement between a subaward recipient is considered a procurement "contract" as opposed to a "subaward" is determined by federal rules and applicable OJP guidance. For more information, visit the [OJP Part 200 Uniform Requirements](#) web page and the [OJP Subaward/Contract Toolkit](#).)

A budget narrative that justifies all costs must also be included, explaining why the costs are vital and clearly relating the items to identified tasks described in the narrative. Applicants must show cost effective and efficient use of subaward resources, demonstrating that all subaward-related expenses are necessary for project completion. Tasks and activities described in the narrative should parallel the budget.

## **V. SELECTION PROCEDURE**

### **A. GENERAL**

NCVLI staff will review applications for completeness and basic responsiveness to the individual solicitation. Responsive applications will then be reviewed by NCVLI and its Project Partners. Recommendations will then be made to OVC who retains final selection authority.

### **B. SELECTION CRITERIA**

- Program Abstract (5%)
- Program Narrative (75%)
- Capabilities and Competencies (10%)
- Program Budget (10%)

## **VI. HOW TO APPLY**

**Completed applications must be received by 5pm (Pacific) on May 30, 2018.** Online submissions are accepted. Details at [www.ncvli.org](http://www.ncvli.org). Alternatively, please submit application by email to: [ncvli@lclark.edu](mailto:ncvli@lclark.edu) with a re: line of "Application for Subgrant Funding to Increase Legal Services". You may also mail a completed application to National Crime Victim Law Institute, Attn: Increasing Access Grant, at 1130 SW Morrison St., Suite 200, Portland, Oregon 97205. Regardless of method of delivery, all applications must be received by 5pm (Pacific) on **May 30, 2018**.

## **VII. GRANT SUBAWARD NOTIFICATION**

NCVLI plans to make the subaward selections by June 30, 2018. The selected sites will enter into a subaward contract with NCVLI.

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