

TECHNOLOGY & LAW PROJECT'S RURAL VICTIM LEGAL ASSISTANCE EVALUATOR 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 of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), award number 2017-VF-GX-K130, is soliciting proposals for an external evaluator on the Increase Legal Access in Rural Areas (Project). This Project is intended to encourage innovative ideas and methods to increase legal services to crime victims in rural areas. The Project will fund up to three sites that will leverage technology to provide holistic legal services, including enforcement of victims' rights, to crime victims in rural communities. These sites are anticipated to operate summer 2018 through summer 2020. This Solicitation is for a Project Evaluator to design and conduct an overall evaluation plan for the Project and report on evaluation outcomes. NCVLI anticipates one award in the amount of \$50,000 starting summer 2018 and ending September 15, 2020.

APPLICATION DEADLINE
5:00 pm (pacific) on July 15, 2018.

STAY UP-TO-DATE
Sign up to receive updates on this
Project at www.ncvli.org.

II. PROJECT 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 and 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, technological approaches combined with training, outreach and community partnerships. To achieve these goals, with OVC support, NCVLI will fund three competitively selected sites that will leverage technology to provide holistic legal assistance and services to crime victims in rural communities, including victims' rights enforcement. The sites are generally expected to have

developed their strategic plans and begin executing those plans within 12 months of being selected. Throughout the life of the Project 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 sites. An external evaluation of this Project will ensure an evidence-based assessment of the impact and efficacy of this Project's innovative technological interventions to provide holistic legal assistance and services to crime victims in rural communities.

IV. SCOPE OF WORK

Scope of Work

The purpose of this Solicitation is to identify and obtain the services of a qualified Evaluator to: (a) create and implement a comprehensive evaluation plan; (b) assist with data collection; and (c) evaluate the Project with findings documented in progress reports a Final Report. The following are potential areas of interest in an evaluation for this Project:

- Impacts of technology on crime victims' access to legal services
- Impacts of technology-assisted legal services on victim-client outcomes
- Impacts of technology on a community's capacity to provide legal services to crime victims
- Intersection of accessibility and technology in crime victim legal services

The identification of these areas is not intended to be proscriptive. A successful proposal may articulate any relevant research inquiry.

Exhibit A to this Solicitation details the language provided in the Site Solicitation regarding considerations for evaluation as well as performance metrics necessary for NCVLI's reporting to OVC.

Applicants should take care to include evaluation plans that include the most rigorous evaluation design appropriate for the research questions to be addressed. The evaluation designs may include random selection and assignment of participants (or other appropriate units of analysis) to experimental and control conditions. In cases where randomization is not feasible, Applicants should propose a strong quasi-experimental design.

Throughout the Project, the Evaluator will stay in regular contact with key NCVLI staff and, as appropriate, partners and other subgrantees, including regular, monthly check-ins, anticipated to include the status of evaluation progress.

Deliverables

The deliverables under the Solicitation are:

- Quarterly Progress Reports
- Semi-Annual Reports
- Final Report
- Dissemination Plan
- Final data set made available to NCVLI

The Quarterly and Semi-Annual Reports will include methodology, progress of the evaluation, any appropriate interim data analyses and recommendations, and plans for the remainder of the Project. Semi-Annual Reports will be shared with OVC. The Final Report will include methodology, findings, and recommendations. The Dissemination Plan will describe efforts to disseminate research findings to the field (e.g. presentations, publications). The final data set will include all raw data – de-identified -- collected for the Project.

Timeline

The period of the Project will coincide with the activities of the rural sites, anticipated to be summer 2018 through August 31, 2020.

V. GENERAL OBLIGATIONS

Confidentiality

The Evaluator agrees to keep the information related to all contracts under this Project in strict confidence. Other than the reports submitted to NCVLI, the Evaluator agrees not to publish, reproduce or otherwise divulge such information in whole or in part, in any manner or form or authorize or permit others to do so, taking such reasonable measures as are necessary to restrict access to the information, while in the Evaluator's possession, to those employees on the Evaluator's staff who must have the information on a "need-to-know" basis. The Evaluator agrees to immediately notify, in writing, an NCVLI authorized representative in the event the Evaluator determines or has reason to suspect a breach of this requirement.

Human Subjects Research

NCVLI does not anticipate that the activities undertaken as part of the evaluation will constitute human subjects research. If, however, the Evaluator proposes a plan that will include human subjects research the Department of Justice's human subjects' protection regulations will apply and the Evaluator must articulate a plan and demonstrate the ability to abide by such regulations.

Evaluation Integrity

NCVLI enforces strict policies guiding ethical conduct and avoiding conflicts of interest for employees, volunteers, board members and partners. The Evaluator must agree to protect the integrity of the data collected as part of the evaluation and report results objectively and honestly. As part of this effort, Evaluator must identify any actual or potential apparent conflict of interest—whether personal, financial or organizational (including review of all staff, investigators, and sub-recipients)—that could affect the independence or integrity of the research, including the design, conduct, and reporting of the research. Because this Solicitation is occurring prior to selection of Project sites, this duty of disclosure is explicitly ongoing and the selected Evaluator will be asked to disclose any identified actual or potential apparent conflict upon presentation of a list of selected sites.

VI. APPLICATION CONTENT

The following items must be submitted in the application:

A. ABSTRACT

Each Application must include an 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. NARRATIVE

The Narrative may not exceed 10 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, 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:

1. Proposed Evaluation Plan. Each Applicant should submit a detailed Proposed Evaluation Plan. This Plan should include proposed research questions, evaluation design, data collection procedures, and a data analytic plan. The Proposed Evaluation Plan should include plans for collecting data that are both qualitative and quantitative in nature. The final evaluation plan will be agreed upon by NCVLI, OVC and the Evaluator. NOTE: Because the rural sites are being solicited and selected coincident with this evaluation solicitation, even research questions may need to be re-visited.
2. Privacy and Data Retention Plan. The Applicant should describe its ability to secure and prevent unauthorized dissemination of all data collected during the Project. Additionally, Applicant should describe how they will ensure data set availability to NCVLI and OVC at the conclusion of the Project.
3. Applicant Capabilities and Competencies. The Applicant, whether an individual or an organization, should describe the experience and capability of the Applicant, highlighting any previous experience implementing projects of similar scope, design, and magnitude and detailing any relevant management plan. Applicants are encouraged to address:
 - Experience conducting victim and/or legal services evaluation
 - Experience working with rural communities and/or conducting research in rural areas
 - Experience and capacity to work with the proposed data sources
 - Experience and capacity to design and implement rigorous research and data analysis projects
 - Experience producing and disseminating meaningful deliverables
 - Any complementary resources or support available for the proposed Evaluation
4. Time-Task Plan. The Time-task plan must clearly identify 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.

C. PROGRAM BUDGET

The Solicitation funds are to be used to evaluate the provision of holistic legal services to crime

victims in rural communities. The Application's budget must show an efficient use of these funds. The Budget must be detailed and cover the full term of the Project. The Budget must be complete, reasonable, and directly related to the activities proposed in the Application. A sample Budget Detail Worksheet is available.

A Budget narrative that justifies all costs must be included, showing how the costs were computed and explaining why the costs are vital and clearly relating the items to identified tasks described in the narrative. Tasks and activities described in the narrative should parallel the Budget.

D. EVALUATION INTEGRITY

Evaluator shall submit a letter describing its processes and capacity to maintain the integrity of the data collected as part of the evaluation and how the Evaluator will identify any actual or potential apparent conflict of interest—whether personal, financial or organizational (including review of all staff, investigators, and sub-recipients)—that could affect the independence or integrity of the research, including the design, conduct, and reporting of the research.

VII. SELECTION PROCEDURE

A. GENERAL

NCVLI staff will review applications for completeness and basic responsiveness to the solicitation. Responsive applications will then be further reviewed by NCVLI in partnership with OVC.

B. SELECTION CRITERIA

- Program Abstract (5%)
- Program Narrative (80%)
- Program Budget (15%)

VIII. HOW TO APPLY

Completed applications must be received by 5pm (pacific) on July 15, 2018. Online submissions are the preferred method of submission. Alternatively, please submit application by email to: ncvli@lclark.edu with a re: line of "Application for Evaluator Subgrant." 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 June 15, 2018.

IX. GRANT SUBAWARD NOTIFICATION

NCVLI plans to make the subaward selections by August 2018. The selected Evaluator will then enter into a Subaward contract with NCVLI.

EXHIBIT A

The information that follows was contained in the Rural Site Solicitation.

Evaluation Methods. Successful Applicant(s) will be expected to participate in the evaluation that NCVLI will be conducting over the entire Project. In addition, Applicants 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 programs should be discussed. Specifically:

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

The information that follows is information being collected under the Prime Contract for PMT quarterly reporting to OVC.

A. Training

1. *Baseline* - Number of hours of training delivered in the six months prior to the start of the grant period
2. Number of trainings that were scheduled for the reporting period
3. Number of trainings that were conducted during the reporting period
4. Number of participants that registered for training scheduled during the reporting period
5. Number and types of participants that attended or completed training during the reporting period
6. Number of hours of training delivered to participants during the reporting period
7. Number of participants who identify an increase in knowledge up to 6 months post-training
8. Number of participants who reported planning to implement training knowledge and objectives post-training

B. Technical Assistance

1. Number of technical assistance requests received during the reporting period
2. Number of technical assistance requests completed during the reporting period
3. Number of recipients who received technical assistance under Vision 21 funding

4. Number of recipients reporting that policy or program changes will be implemented based on training and technical assistance delivered using Vision 21 funding
5. Number of recipients that did implement policy or program changes based on technical assistance delivered using Vision 21 funding within six months

C. Technology Developments

1. Type(s) of technology for which this grant is funding development or improvement
2. *Baseline:* Number of contacts received via current/previous technology in the six months prior to the start of the grant (web, text, IM-chat, phone)
3. *Baseline:* Number of dropped calls in the six months prior to the start of grant implementation
4. *Baseline:* The average length of wait time or response time for a contact during the six months prior to the start of the grant program
5. Number of system-level IT improvements begun during the reporting period
6. Number of system-level IT improvements or developments completed during the reporting period
7. Number of program staff who participated in training on the technology improvement
8. Total number of staff to use the technology improvement
9. Number of victim intakes and applications completed after the implementation of the technology improvements during the reporting period
10. Number and demographics of contacts received during the reporting period
11. Number of dropped calls in the current reporting period
12. The average length of wait or response time for this reporting period

D. Data Gathering

1. *Baseline:* Number of data gathering initiatives planned for the project (grant) period
2. Number of data gathering initiatives completed during the reporting period
3. Number of information resources disseminated as a result of the data gathering activity

E. Multijurisdictional Linkages

1. *Baseline:* Number of groups/organizations/agencies participating in the initiative prior to Vision 21 funding
2. Number of victims served by the multijurisdictional initiative in the six months prior to the start of the grant
3. Number of groups/organizations/agencies participating in the multijurisdictional initiative as a result of Vision 21 funding during the reporting period
4. Total number of agencies involved in the initiative & Of this group, provide the number that utilize an evidence-based program or practice in the delivery of services
5. Number of victims served as a result of the work of this initiative during the reporting period

F. Strategic Planning

1. *Baseline:* Number of improvement initiatives planned for the duration of the current grant
2. *Baseline:* Number of project deliverables planned for the length of the current grant
3. Number of planned improvement initiatives implemented this reporting period
4. Number of planned project deliverables completed during the reporting period
5. Identify the planning documents that were completed during this reporting period

G. Training & Technical Assistance Activities

1. *Baseline:* Number of ALL new Training and/or Technical Assistance (TT&A) materials to be developed as a result of Vision 21 funding for the current grant

2. Number of NEW training and/or technical assistance (TT&A) materials that were completed during the reporting period
3. Types of training and/or technical assistance materials completed during the reporting period
4. Number of participants that completed a satisfaction survey for trainings during the reporting period
5. Number of those participants who reported satisfaction with training during the reporting period

H. Partnerships

1. Number of NEW formalized collaboration agreements developed
2. Number of NEW letters of support secured
3. Rating of group partners based on statement “this partner is actively involved in the program”

I. Planning Activities

1. Number of planning activities undertaken during the reporting period
2. Number of agency policies or procedures created, amended or rescinded during the reporting period