



STATE OF ARKANSAS

Department of Finance

and Administration

OFFICE OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL SERVICES

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**2021 Victims of Crime Act
(VOCA)**

CFDA# 16.575

Request for Proposals

RFP# VOCA 19-2

Release Date

FEBRUARY 26, 2021

Award Period

October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022

Amount Available

\$13,000,000.00

Contact Information

For assistance with the requirements of this RFP, contact

Email: IGS.Contact@dfa.arkansas.gov

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

Applications must be submitted via IGS Connect by **11:59 p.m., APRIL 9, 2021**

IGS Connect website: <https://igsconnect.arkansas.gov>

**VOCA
Request for Proposals**

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AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS ANNOUNCEMENT

OVERVIEW

The State of Arkansas, Department of Finance and Administration, Office of Intergovernmental Services (DFA-IGS) is pleased to announce the availability of grant funds from the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) program.

Applicants are encouraged to read this entire Application Packet thoroughly before preparing and applying. The Request for Proposals is open to all meeting the eligibility requirements (see Eligibility section).

Applications should be submitted via DFA-IGS grants management system: IGS Connect. All submitted applications must be complete and include all required information and supporting documentation. Applications received with missing information may not be reviewed.

AVAILABLE FUNDING AMOUNT

\$13,000,000

AWARD PERIOD

Awards will be made for a twelve (12) month period from October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022. Awards may be eligible for a one (1) year continuation that is dependent upon available funds and the previous year's performance.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Applications must be received via IGS Connect by 11:59 p.m., April 9, 2021.

Applicants can access IGS Connect at <https://igsconnect.arkansas.gov>. An agency may submit as many applications as it wishes, however, only **one** application is permitted per proposed project. The application is subject to public review by state executive order 12372. Applicants must complete SF-424 and submit it with the application.

Please direct all inquiries concerning this Request for Proposals to: IGS.Contact@dfa.arkansas.gov. All questions will be answered within 24 hours and posted to the *Frequently Asked Questions* (FAQ) document weekly. The FAQ document can be found at: <https://www.dfa.arkansas.gov/intergovernmental-services/grant-programs/request-for-proposals/>

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION

The Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) of 1984 was passed by Congress to assist states in providing high quality services that are ***directly related to the emotional healing and recovery of crime victims***. VOCA funds support a broad array of programs and services that focus on helping victims in the immediate aftermath of a crime and supporting them as they rebuild their lives.

The primary revenue source for VOCA grants is the Crime Victims Fund, which is funded through fines, penalties, and forfeitures collected from persons and companies convicted of offenses against the United States. With this source of income, the Crime Victims Fund is self-sufficient. The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Victims of Crime (OVC) administers these funds at the federal level while DFA-IGS administers VOCA funds at the state level. Applicants are encouraged to submit projects aligned with the Goals & Objectives adopted by the Advisory Board as the State of Arkansas Victim Services Plan.

ALLOWABLE DIRECT SERVICES/ACTIVITIES (28 CFR §94.119)

A) Immediate emotional, psychological, and physical health and safety of a victim.

Services that respond to immediate needs (other than medical care, except where otherwise allowed below); including, but not limited to:

- Crisis Intervention services;
- Accompanying victims to hospitals for medical examinations;
- Hotline Counselling;
- Safety Planning;
- Emergency food, shelter, clothing and transportation;
- Short term (up to 45 days) in-home care and supervision services for children and adults who remain in their homes when the offender/caregiver is removed;
- Short-term (up to 45 days) nursing home, adult foster care, or group-home placement for adults for whom no other safe, short-term residence is available;
- Window, door or lock replacement or repair and other repairs necessary to ensure a victim's safety;
- Costs of the following, on an emergency basis, *i.e.*, when the State's compensation program, the victim's (or in the case of a minor child, the victim's parent's or guardian's) health insurance plan, Medicaid, or other health care funding source, is not reasonably expected to be available quickly enough to meet the emergency needs of a victim (typically within 48 hours of the crime). Non-prescription and prescription medicine, prophylactic or other treatment to prevent HIV/AIDS infection or other infectious disease, durable

medical equipment (such as wheel-chairs, crutches, hearing aids, eyeglasses) and other healthcare items are allowed;

- Emergency legal assistance, such as for filing for restraining or protective orders, and obtaining emergency custody orders and visitation rights.

B) Personal advocacy and emotional support – include, but is not limited to:

- Working with a victim to assess the impact of the crime
- Identification of victim's needs
- Case Management
- Management of practical problems created by the victimization
- Identification of resources available to the victim
- Provision of information, referrals, advocacy and follow-up contact for continued services, as needed
- Traditional, cultural and/or alternative therapy/healing (e.g. art therapy, yoga) etc.

C) Mental health counseling and care –includes, but is not limited to, out-patient therapy/counseling (including, but not limited to substance abuse treatment so long as the treatment is directly related to the victimization provided by a person who meets professional standards to provide the services in the jurisdiction in which the care is administered).

D) Peer support - includes, but not limited to, activities that provide opportunities for victims to meet other victims, share experiences, and provide self-help, information and emotional support.

E) Facilitation of participation in criminal justice and other public proceeding arising from the crime - The provision of services and payment of costs that help victims participate in the criminal justice system and in other public proceedings arising from the crime (e.g., juvenile justice hearings, civil commitment proceedings) including, but not limited to:

- Advocacy on behalf of a victim;
- Accompanying a victim to offices and courts;
- Transportation, meals, and lodging to allow a victim who is not a witness to participate in a proceeding;
- Interpreting for a non-witness victim who is deaf or hard of hearing, or with limited English proficiency;
- Providing child-care and respite care to enable a victim who is a caregiver to attend activities related to the proceeding;
- Notification to victims regarding key proceeding dates (e.g., trial dates, case disposition, incarceration, and parole hearing);
- Assistance with Victim Impact Statements;

- Assistance in recovering property that was retained as evidence;
- Assistance with restitution.

F) Legal Assistance - For those services (including, but not limited to, those provided on an emergency basis) where reasonable and where the need for such services arises as direct result of the victimization. Services include, but not limited to:

- Those (other than criminal defense) that help victims assert their rights as victims in a criminal proceeding directly related to the victimization, or otherwise protect their safety, privacy, or other interest as victims in such a proceeding.
- Motions to vacate or expunge a conviction, or similar actions, where the jurisdiction permits such a legal action based on a person being a crime victim.
- Those actions (other than tort actions) that, in the civil context, are reasonably necessary as a direct result of the victimization.
-

G) Forensic Medical Evidence Collection Examinations - for victims to the extent that other funding sources such as State appropriations are insufficient. Forensic medical evidence collection examiners are encouraged to follow relevant guidelines or protocols issued by the state or local jurisdiction. Forensic medical examiners are encouraged to provide appropriate crisis counseling and/or other types of victim services that are offered to the victim in conjunction with the examination.

H) Forensic Interviews - Victim centered forensic interviews, with the following parameters:

1. Results of the interview will be used not only for law enforcement and prosecution purposes, but also for identification of needs such as social services, personal advocacy, case management, substance abuse treatment and mental health services.
2. Interviews are conducted in the context of a multidisciplinary investigation and diagnostic team, or in a specialized setting such as a child advocacy center.
3. The interviewer is trained to conduct forensic interviews appropriate to the developmental age and abilities of children, or the developmental, cognitive, and physical communication disabilities presented by adults.

I) Transportation - Transporting of victims to receive services and to participate in criminal justice proceedings.

- J) Public Awareness** - presentations (including, but not limited, the development of presentation materials, brochures, newspaper notices, and public service announcements) in schools, community centers, and other public forums that are designed to inform crime victims of specific rights and services and provide them with (or refer them to) services and assistance.

The State of Arkansas is looking to expand the Transitional Housing and Relocation Services provided to victims. Applicants with experience serving survivors of crime within these areas are encouraged to apply for VOCA funding to expand their service delivery.

- K) Transitional Housing Services** for victims (generally, those who have a particular need for such housing, and who cannot safely return to their previous housing, due to circumstances caused by their victimization), including, but not limited to:
- travel
 - rental assistance
 - security deposits
 - utilities
 - other costs incidental to the relocation to such housing
 - as well as voluntary support services such as childcare and counseling
- L) Relocation services** for victims (generally, one-time expenses for those who have a particular need for housing, and who cannot safely return to their previous housing, due to circumstances caused by their victimization), including, but not limited to:
- reasonable moving expenses
 - security deposits on housing;
 - rental expenses
 - utility startup costs

OTHER ALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES

A) Costs to Support Direct Services (28 CFR §94.120)

B) Sub-recipient Administrative Costs (28 CFR §94.121)

MATCH REQUIREMENTS

VOCA regulations require that all recipients of VOCA funding must provide matching funds as follows:

- For a previously funded organization, the organization must contribute no less than 20% of total project cost as match.
 - The formula for calculating VOCA is
Federal Funds Requested x 20 /80 = Required Match.
- For a newly funded organization, the organization must contribute no less than 26% of total project as match.
- Matching contributions must be directly related to the subgrant project and cannot be derived from other federal funds unless specifically allowable by DOJ.
- Applicants are encouraged to keep local match at the minimum needed to meet the federal funds requested. Once budgeted within a subgrant budget, the source of match becomes a part of the subgrant project, which disqualifies its use for any other project.
- Waiver request:
 - Full or partial match waivers are available for request. They must be supported by DFA-IGS and approved by OVC. Waivers are entirely at the OVC Director's discretion, but the Director typically considers factors such as local resources, annual budget changes, past ability to provide match, and whether the funding is for new or additional activities requiring additional match versus continuing activities where match is already provided.
 - OVC does not require match from sub-recipients that are federally recognized American Indian or Alaska Native tribes, or projects that operate on tribal lands.

DEFINITIONS

Crime Victim/victim of crime – a person who has suffered physical or sexual, financial, or emotional harm because of the commission of a crime.

Direct Services –provided with VOCA grant funds are efforts that:

- 1) respond to the emotional and physical needs of crime victims;
- 2) assist primary and secondary victims of crime to stabilize their lives after victimization;
- 3) assist victims to understand and participate in the criminal justice system; and
- 4) provide victims of crime with a measure of safety and security such as boarding-up broken windows and replacing or repairing locks.

Supplanting Federal funds must be used to supplement existing State and local funds for program activities and must not supplant (replace) those funds that have been appropriated for the same purpose.

- Supplanting will be reviewed during post-award monitoring and audit.
- If reviewers think that supplanting may have occurred, then the recipient will be required to supply documentation demonstrating that the reduction in non-Federal resources occurred for reasons other than the receipt or expected receipt of Federal funds.
- For certain programs, a written certification may be requested by the awarding agency or recipient agency stating that Federal funds will not be used to supplant State or local funds.

RESOURCES

VOCA Regulations: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/07/08/2016-16085/victims-of-crime-act-victim-assistance-program>

VOCA Final Program Guidelines: <https://ojp.gov/ovc/voca/vaguide.htm>

DOJ Financial Guide: https://ojp.gov/financialguide/doj/pdfs/DOJ_FinancialGuide.pdf

State of Arkansas Victim Services Plan:

https://www.dfa.arkansas.gov/images/uploads/intergovernmentalServicesOffice/2017_2020ArkansasSTOPImplementationPlan_Approved.pdf

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY & REQUIREMENTS

ELIGIBILITY

VOCA funds are to be awarded to an organization only for the provision of direct services to victims of crime through their staff. Each applicant organization shall meet the following requirements:

- 1. Public or Non-profit Organization** – To be eligible to receive VOCA funds, organizations must be operated by a public or non-profit organization or a combination of such organizations and provide services to victims.
- 2. Must possess an Employer Identification Number (EIN) and a DUNS number** – All applicants under this solicitation must include their EIN and a DUNS (Data Universal Numbering System) number in their application. Applications without these numbers will be considered incomplete and will not be eligible to be considered for funding. The EIN is a unique nine-digit number assigned to an organization by the IRS. A DUNS number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and keeping track of entities receiving Federal funds. The identifier is used for tracking purposes and to validate address and point of contact information for federal assistance applicants, recipients, and sub-recipients. The DUNS number will be used throughout the grant life cycle. Obtaining a DUNS number is a free, simple, onetime activity. Obtain one by calling 1-866-705-5711 or by applying online at www.dnb.com/us/ .
- 3. Acquire or renew registration with the System for Award Management (SAM) database** – In addition to the DUNS number requirement, the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) requires that all applicants for federal financial assistance maintain current registrations in the SAM database. The SAM database is the repository for standard information about federal financial assistance applicants, recipients and sub-recipients. Please note, applicants must update or renew their SAM registration at least once per year to maintain an active status. Information about registration procedures can be accessed at www.sam.gov .
- 4. Record of effective service** – Agencies must demonstrate a record of providing effective services to crime victims. This includes having the support and approval of its services by the community, a history of providing direct services in a cost-effective manner, and financial support from other sources.
- 5. Volunteers** – Subgrantees must use volunteers in the provision of services to receive VOCA funds.

- 6. Promote Community Efforts to Aid Crime Victims** – Promote within the community coordinated public and private efforts to aid crime victims. Coordination may include, but is not limited to, serving on state, federal or local task forces, commissions, working groups, coalitions, and/or multidisciplinary teams. Coordination efforts also include developing written agreements in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that contribute to better and more comprehensive services to victims.
- 7. Comply with Federal rules regulating grants** – Subgrantees must comply with the provisions of VOCA Rule, the Program Guidelines, and the requirements of the OJP Financial Guide current edition, which includes maintaining appropriate programmatic and financial records that fully disclose the amount and disposition of VOCA funds received. This includes: financial documentation for disbursements; daily time and attendance records specifying time devoted to allowable VOCA victim services; client files; the portion of the project supplied by other sources of revenue; job descriptions; contracts for services; and other records which facilitate an effective audit.
- 8. Supplanting** – Funds made available under this application must be used to supplement and not replace (supplant) other federal, state, and/or local funds expended to provide services and activities that promote the purposes of any of the programs in this announcement.
- 9. Maintain Civil Rights Information** – Maintain statutorily required civil rights statistics on victims served by race, national origin, sex, age, and disability by contract period. Permit reasonable access to its books, documents, papers, and records to determine whether the Subgrantee is complying with applicable civil rights laws. This requirement is waived when providing a service, such as telephone counseling, where soliciting the information may be inappropriate or offensive to the victim.
- 10. Services to victims of federal crimes** – Subgrantees must provide services to victims of federal crimes on the same basis as victims of state or local crimes.
- 11. No charge to victims for VOCA-funded services** – Subgrantees must provide services to crime victims at no charge through the VOCA-funded project.

ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS

Eligible organizations are those organizations that are committed to providing services to victims of crime. These can include those public and non-profit organizations that have components which offer services to crime victims. These organizations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ✓ Non-profit organizations established for the sole purpose of providing direct services to crime victims;
- ✓ Non-profit organizations that do not currently provide services to crime victims, but desire an expansion of services that would encompass serving victims of crime;
- ✓ Non-profit organizations that offer a variety of services, including those that address the needs of crime victims;
- ✓ Criminal justice agencies such as law enforcement, Prosecuting Attorney offices, courts, and corrections departments;
- ✓ Faith-based organizations;
- ✓ Hospitals and/or emergency medical facilities;
- ✓ Governmental entities such as mental health organizations, legal service agencies, child and adult protective services, etc.

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ORGANIZATION PREPAREDNESS

Prior to seeking federal support, an organization must carefully weigh whether it is prepared to take on the responsibility of administering a subgrant award. If federal support is provided, the organization will be required to effectively manage and account for activities, as well as financial expenditures related to the project. Managing a subgrant entails a considerable amount of non-federally funded time and resources. If ill-prepared, the experience could prove frustrating, as well as costly, as mismanaged funds are required to be repaid and could result in disqualifying the organization from receiving future awards.

To determine preparedness, the following issues should be taken into consideration:

1. The organization's internal policies and procedures regarding personnel, work protocol, and activity accountability.
2. The organization's internal policies and procedures regarding proper accounting and financial accountability.
3. The professional conduct of the organization and staff and the absence of practices that, if partnered with the state, could discredit the public's perception of government and the integrity of the grant programs.
4. The organization's readiness or ability to become ready to perform subgrant activities and tend to administrative matters involving the subgrant award.
5. The possession of equipment and office materials needed to conduct ordinary business, including access to internet services and email.
6. The support and dedication of the organization's governing body, including its determination to ensure proper administration of the subgrant award.
7. The organization must be accessible to victims. Determination of accessibility includes readiness to service victims with special needs, such as physical handicaps, language barriers etc.
8. The organization's operating hours must be in-line with the service to be delivered. If the nature of the organization's business entails 24-hour crisis intervention to victims, it should have provisions for telephones to be answered by individuals equipped to provide immediate assistance, eliminating the need for the victim to leave a message.
9. Subgrant organizations must be financially prepared to pay for project costs with unrestricted funds. Reimbursement may be sought only after the expenditure has been paid. Reimbursement requests are made on a monthly basis. These requests require supporting documentation that corresponds with the budget line items to be approved.
10. In determining federal investments, an organization's access to alternative financial support and its long-term business plan must be considered.
11. An applicant's sustainability plan becomes a special condition of any sub-award granted. Applicants are therefore encouraged to be specific about their plans and think not only in terms of additional grant funds, but diversified funding, consistent support, etc.
12. It is common for federal grant programs to require subgrant organizations to provide a matching contribution as a means to enhance the impact of the federal funds and to

demonstrate the subgrant organization's ability to someday become self-sufficient. VOCA requires subgrant organizations to provide a cash and/or in-kind match contribution of 20% for renewing organizations and 26% for new organizations.

13. Matching contributions must be directly related to the subgrant project and cannot be derived from other federal funds unless otherwise allowed by DOJ. Once budgeted within a subgrant budget, the source of match becomes a part of the subgrant project, which disqualifies its use for any other project.

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INELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS

Some public and non-profit organizations that offer services to crime victims are not eligible to receive VOCA funds. These organizations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ✘ **Federal Agencies:** This includes U.S. Attorney Offices and FBI Field Offices. Receipt of VOCA funds would constitute an augmentation of the federal budget with money intended for state agencies. However, private non-profit organizations that operate on federal land may be eligible recipients of VOCA victim assistance grant funds.

- ✘ **In-Patient Treatment Facilities:** For example, those designed to provide treatment to individuals with drug, alcohol, and/or mental health related conditions.

- ✘ **Debarred Organizations:** Any organizations that are barred from receiving funding from any federal funding authority.

UNALLOWABLE SERVICES/ACTIVITIES (28 C.F.R. §94.122)

The applicant may not use VOCA grant funds to conduct any of the following services or activities.

- Lobbying
- Research and studies – an exception is made for evaluations of VOCA funded projects
- Active investigation and prosecution of criminal activities
- Fundraising
- Capital Expenses
- Compensation for victims of crime
- Medical care
- Salaries and expenses of management

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

CONFIDENTIALITY

Organizations funded with VOCA funds shall not disclose, reveal or release:

- a) Any personally identifying information or individual information collected with VOCA funded services requested, utilized or denied, regardless of whether such information has been encoded, encrypted, hashed, or otherwise protected; or
- b) Individual client information, without the informed, written, reasonably time-limited consent of the person about whom information is sought, except that consent for release may not be given by the abuser of a minor, incapacitated person, or the abuser of the other parent of the minor. If a minor or a person with a legally appointed guardian is permitted by law to receive services without a parent's (or the guardian's) consent, the minor or person with a guardian may consent to release of information without additional consent from the parent or guardian.

RELEASE – If release of information is compelled by statutory or court mandate, the sub-grant organization shall make reasonable attempts to provide notice to victims affected by the disclosure of the information and take reasonable steps necessary to protect the privacy and safety of the persons affected by the release of information.

INFORMATION SHARING – Sub-grant organizations may share:

- (i) Non-personally identifying data in the aggregate regarding services to their clients and non-personally identifying demographic information to comply with reporting, evaluation, or data collection requirements
- (ii) Court-generated information and law-enforcement-generated information contained in secure governmental registries for protection order enforcement purposes
- (iii) Law enforcement- and prosecution-generated information necessary for law enforcement and prosecution purposes

PERSONALLY IDENTIFYING INFORMATION - In no circumstance may

- a) A crime victim be required to provide a consent to release personally identifying information as a condition of eligibility for VOCA funded services.
- b) Any personal identifying information be shared in order to comply with reporting, evaluation, or data-collection requirements of any program

MANDATORY REPORTING - The VOCA Rule does not prohibit compliance with legally mandated reporting of abuse or neglect.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Subgrant organizations must adhere to the following requirements, regarding conflicts of interest:

- a) No official or employee of a subgrant organization shall participate personally through decisions, approval, disapproval, recommendation, the rendering of advice, investigation, or otherwise in any proceeding, application, request for a ruling or other determination, contract, award, cooperative agreement, claim, controversy, or other particular matter in which sub-award funds are used, where to his or her knowledge, he or she or his or her immediate family, partners, organization other than a public agency in which he or she is serving as an officer, director, trustee, partner, or employee, or any person or organization with whom he or she is negotiating or has any arrangement concerning prospective employment, has a financial interest, or has less than an arms-length transaction.
- b) In the use of project funds, subgrant organizations shall avoid any action which might result in, or create the appearance of:
 - i. Using his or her official position for private gain
 - ii. Giving preferential treatment to any person
 - iii. Losing complete independence or impartiality
 - iv. Making official decisions outside official channels or
 - v. Affecting adversely the confidence of the public in the integrity of the government or the program.

In instances where an actual conflict or an appearance of a conflict of interest exists, the person for whom the actual or apparent conflict of interest exists shall recuse him or herself, not only from reviewing the application for which the conflict exists, but also from the evaluation of all competing applications.

INDIRECT COST RATE AGREEMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Applicants that intend to charge indirect costs through the use of an indirect cost rate must have a federally approved indirect cost rate agreement. Please submit a copy of a current, signed federally-approved indirect cost rate agreement to IGS.Contact@dfa.arkansas.gov . Applicants that have never received a federally approved indirect cost rate may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs which may be used indefinitely. This includes state, local, and tribal governments that have never negotiated an indirect cost rate with the federal government and receive less than \$35 million in direct federal funding per year.

MONITORING

The Department of Finance and Administration will monitor each VOCA funded project in accordance with VOCA Guidelines and Rules:

- a) Regular desk monitoring of all subgrant organizations and
- b) Conduct on-site monitoring of all subgrant organizations at least once every two (2) years unless a different frequency based on risk assessment is set out in monitoring plan.

PERFORMANCE REPORTING

Recipients of VOCA funds will be required to submit quarterly and Annual Performance reports. Failure to submit these reports by their due dates may result in the withholding of funds until the report is received.

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IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES

DATES	
February 26, 2021	SOLICITATION posted on Department of Finance & Administration, Office of Intergovernmental Services (DFA-IGS) website, area newspapers, and emailed to interested applicants
March 8, 2021 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. March 9th and March 10th, 2021 9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	SOLICITATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WORKSHOPS VIA: ZOOM Email IGS.Contact@dfa.arkansas.gov with the email address for attendees and the date of the workshop you plan to attend. A Zoom invitation will be sent to the email address prior to the workshop date.
February 26th thru March 31st, 2021	Written questions regarding the announcement can be submitted by e-mail to the Program Manager. E-mail: IGS.Contact@dfa.arkansas.gov Submitted questions will be posted to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section on the DFA-IGS website https://www.dfa.arkansas.gov/intergovernmental-services/grant-programs/request-for-proposals/
April 9, 2021	APPLICATION SUBMISSION DEADLINE – 11:59 p.m.
April 12th thru June 15th	Proposal Review & Selection
August 16th thru September 24th	Consultations, Appeals, & Award Acceptance
August 16th thru September 24th	MANDATORY GRANT TRAINING VIA: ZOOM
October 1, 2021	Project start date

*Applicant registrations are approved Monday through Friday during regular business hours; please ensure you register your organization in time to receive authorization for IGS Connect

GRANT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Applications for funding must be submitted online via the IGS Connect web-based system at <https://igsconnect.arkansas.gov>. IGS Connect is a web-based computer application that will support the application and administration of grants available from DFA-IGS.

Before an application can be completed, your organization must register with IGS Connect. The **Authorized Official/Highest Ranking Official** may request access to IGS Connect using the **New User** link that is found on the IGS Connect log-in page. A confirmation email will be sent to the provided email address once the request has been approved.

Once a request has been approved, the authorized official will have the ability to add additional users to the account under the **Acting Authorized Official** role. See IGS Grantee User Manual (<https://igsconnect.arkansas.gov>) for instructions on setting up users.

A recorded introductory presentation of IGS Connect can also be found at <https://igsconnect.arkansas.gov>.

APPLICATION FORMS

Authorized Official/Highest Ranking Official Contact Information

- A. Time-Sensitive Communication: Provide contact information for the Authorized Official/Highest Ranking Official in the event that an issue arises that need his or her immediate attention. Press the **Save** button after any changes are made.

Project Summary

Questions 1 – 7

These sections will be auto populated with the information provided by the Authorized Official when he or she signs up for IGS Connect.

8) Applicant Type

Select the type of organization that best describes your agency. Please specify in the space provided if “Other” is selected.

9) Grant Type

Select the type of grant for which you are applying (e.g. STOP, VOCA, FVPSA, etc.)

10) Amount of Request

This section will be auto populated after you have completed the Project Budget & Budget Narrative section.

11) Primary Purpose of the Project

This question will appear once a grant type has been selected.

12) Contact Information

Provide the contact information for the person that will be able to answer questions pertaining to the application.

13) Federal Debt

Applicants cannot be delinquent on or have any Federal Debt.

14) Project Location

Enter the city, county, and congressional district in which the project will be housed.

15) Areas Served by the Project

Indicate all counties and congressional districts where victim's services will be performed.

16) Number of Volunteers

Enter the anticipated number of people that will volunteer with the project.

17) Project Type

Choose one from the drop-down menu.

a) **NEW PROJECT** – All projects funded under this RFP will be considered new projects.

b) **EXPAND/ENHANCE EXISTING PROJECT** –The project is an existing one funded by another source and the applicant is requesting additional funding to expand/enhance the project.

18) Number of Unduplicated Victims to be Served

Estimate the number of primary victims to be served by the proposed project.

19) Victims to be Served

This question will appear once a grant type has been selected. Indicate the type of victimizations and the approximate number of victims to be served by the project for each selected category.

20) Services to be Provided

This question will appear once a grant type has been selected. Be sure to indicate all services/activities to be provided by the proposed project. Be sure that the services to be provided assist in the accomplishment of stated goals and objectives. Also, ensure that staff designated to provide the services are qualified to do so.

ATTACHMENTS

The following attachments must be submitted with your application. If an application is missing any of the attachments, you will not be able to submit an application

- 21) Form SF-424:** Pursuant to Executive Order 12372 which requires the coordination of review of proposed federal financial assistance by state and local governments, applicants are required to complete form SF-424. Since the form will need to be signed by the Authorized Official, the forms will need to be scanned to your computer and uploaded to IGS Connect.

Instructions for completion of the form are included in the form and are self-explanatory, with the following exceptions:

5. APPLICANT INFORMATION

All applicants must have a DUNS number;

8. TYPE OF APPLICATIONS

All applicants should check **New**;

9. NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY

VOCA – Department of Justice

10. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE NUMBER (CFDA)

16.575

16. IS APPLICANT SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY SATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS?

All applicants must answer “Yes”. The date will be the date the application was submitted.

17. IS APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT?

If yes, please attach an explanation.

- 22) Program Policies & Procedures:** Upload the organization’s internal policies and procedures regarding personnel, work protocol, and activity accountability.

- 23) Financial Policies & Procedures:** Upload the organization’s internal policies and procedures regarding proper accounting and financial accountability.

After you have completed this section, make sure you save your work by pressing the **Save** button located in the top right corner of the page.

Project Narrative

Be sure to address each category in this section. The entire project narrative contains eight (8) sections and **EACH SECTION** cannot exceed **4,000 characters including spaces**.

You are encouraged to complete each section in Microsoft Word or another word processing program prior to inputting the narrative into IGS Connect. This will allow you the opportunity to utilize tools available through MS Word such as spell check and to format the proposal as you choose. Once you are ready to enter the narrative into IGS Connect, there is no need to retype the information.

The Narrative can be copied from MS Word and pasted into IGS Connect and still maintain any formatting completed in MS Word. **Please make sure that you copy and paste each section into its corresponding text box in IGS Connect.** Select the **Save** button after each section is completed.

PROJECT SUMMARY

The project summary is the abstract of your proposed project. It should briefly tell what the project is, why the project is needed, who the project will serve, and how the project will be delivered to the people that are in need. Think of this section as your “elevator speech” – if you only had less than two minutes to tell someone about your project, what would you say?

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The needs assessment establishes the problem and is the foundation upon which the rest of the proposal is built. List a maximum of five (5) reasons specific to your **community** as to why there is a need for this project. Reasons should be short simple statements based on supportive data that substantiate a lack of services, a steady or rising need for services, an identified gap in services, and/or an identified problem that the project will address.

In addition to clearly defining the problem, include a description of the population to be served, current services, and obstacles faced by the proposed victim population. Be sure to include relevant **local** data to support the need for the project.

APPLICANTS CAPABILITY

In this section, you will describe your agency’s ability to provide the services in the proposed project. Be sure to include historical information, community partnerships, and the scope of services that are currently being provided.

Provide a **brief** history of your organization (i.e. year established, notable events, scope of activities currently performed, etc.). Be sure to address the agency’s ability to carry out the proposed project, including financial capability and staff qualification. *For governmental*

entities: please limit your history to the department under which the proposed project will operate.

POPULATION TO BE SERVED

Describe how the proposed project addresses federal program priorities, including the type of victims to be served (i.e. child abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, etc.).

Identify any underserved populations (elderly, disabled, non-English speakers, rural, LGBTQ etc.) that will be served by the project and address the methods to ensure their inclusion in services.

Indicate the percentage of underserved populations to be served by the project (ex. 76% of the unduplicated victims to be served by this project will be non-English speakers). Include any special accommodations needed to serve the identified underserved populations (ex. Bi-lingual interpreters, etc.).

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Identify all services and/or activities to be provided by the project. BE SPECIFIC.

Clearly demonstrate how the activities identified will benefit victims, produce the intended goals, and are consistent with and assist in meeting federal and local purposes.

Briefly describe best practices or evidence-based activities that will be used for this project.

Project activities should be clearly reflected in the proposed budget.

COLLABORATION

Provide evidence of community support and Board participation in the planning and implementation process.

Describe collaboration of community partners for the purposes of resource sharing, coordination of efforts, case management, and to avoid the duplication of services.

EVALUATION PLAN

It is of the utmost importance that these grant-funded projects demonstrate an achievement of the purpose for which the funds were requested. It is equally important to be able to determine that if the project is unable to achieve its intended purpose, what necessary changes need be made to the project design to ensure its success. To accomplish this, all proposals must contain a clearly written evaluation plan. Good evaluation plans are closely tied to the program's proposed goals and objectives and should answer the following questions:

- Did the project accomplish its projected outcomes?
- How do we know this? What data supports this claim?
- Did we achieve the objectives in an efficient and measurable manner?

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Federal funds are provided as a **temporary** means to accomplish specific goals. These federal funds should therefore be administered in a manner that ensures long-term sustainable activities. Applicants must devise a plan to continue services in the absence of federal funds.

This section provides the applicant an opportunity to “sell” their project as a wise investment. A complete response will describe the organization's sustenance, a plan to continue its benefits without the need for continual federal support, and the time frame needed to achieve sustainability. Be sure to describe any modifications in the project which may be needed as a result of decreased funds.

The organization's submitted sustainability plan will be reviewed and included in the Special Conditions section of the sub-grant agreement if the project is funded.

Financial Overview

Project Title: List the name to the project/program for which you are requesting funding.

Organizational Fiscal Year End: List the month and day in which the applicant's fiscal year ends.

Questions 1 – 5: Answer the questions about the applicant's financial practices.

Funding Source: List all revenue sources and amounts for the entire organization during the proposed project's fiscal year (October – September). Governmental entities provide a listing of revenues for the department under which the proposed project will operate. If additional lines are needed, click the **Save** button.

Click the **Save** button after all questions on this page have been answered.

Goals & Objectives

Project goals should define the overall direction of a program and state what is to be accomplished by the program. Goals are measurable statements of the desired impact of the program and typically address changes in actual behaviors, such as decreased victimization, increased community involvement, or improved well-being.

Objectives are specific measurable statements of the desired immediate or direct outcome of a program which support the accomplishment of the goal. Well-formatted objectives reflect changes in knowledge, attitudes, skills, and/or behaviors that are the direct result of specific activities.

Applicant Organization: Information will be auto-populated with information provided by the Authorized Official.

Project Title: Information will be auto-populated with the title provided in the Financial Overview section.

Goal: List the project's goals. Applicants will be able to enter up to five (5) separate goals. Goals are limited to 150 characters. Each goal will be accompanied by at least one objective and one measurement.

Objective: List the objectives that go with each goal. Each goal is limited to three (3) objectives. Each objective must be entered in a separate box. Objectives are limited to 300 characters. Objectives must be accompanied by a measurement.

Measurement: Each objective must include a measurement that will detail how each objective will be obtained. Measurements for determining the success or failure of an objective can include: number of clients seen during a time period, number of protective orders filed, number of support classes provided, etc. Measurements are limited to 300 characters.

Employee Detail Form

The Employee Detail Form is where the applicant lists all employees that will have a role in carrying out the project. The project's employees can include those that are paid either in whole or part by grant funds to those employees that are in a supportive role for the project and their salary is utilized as part of the applicant's match funds. All information provided in the Employee Detail Form will be auto populated into the Project Budget & Budget Narrative Form.

PAY INFORMATION

List each position associated with the project, those to be funded by federal dollars as well as those to be used as match. Include the hourly rate of pay, the number of hours devoted to the

project, and a brief description of the job duties to be performed by each position. A breakdown of the annual amount of the employee's salary that is dedicated to either Federal or Match will be shown.

Independent contractors should be entered as Professional/Contract Services, not salaried employees.

MANDATED BENEFITS

Mandated benefits are those benefits that an employer is required by law to provide for every employee. Mandated benefits include FICA, Worker's Compensation, and State Unemployment Insurance (SUI). Mandated benefits are to be calculated for all salaries that are associated with the grant, including those that are used as match.

FICA and Worker's Compensation are calculated using the established rates for each benefit times the employee's total salary. For all applicants, FICA is calculated at 7.65%.

The rate for Worker's Compensation is unique for each organization and will be established by the organization's Worker's Compensation carrier. The maximum allowed rate to be allocated to federal funds is 5%. The maximum is based on the limit for state agencies.

An organization's SUI rate is also unique. The SUI rate is established by the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services. The maximum allowed rate to be allocated to federal funds is 3% of the first \$10,000 of an employee's salary. The maximum is based on the limit for state agencies.

EMPLOYER PROVIDED BENEFITS

Like mandated benefits, the amount of federal funds requested for employer provided benefits may not exceed the percentage of salary paid by federal funds. Employer benefits include all other benefits such as health insurance, retirement, life insurance, etc. offered to employees through policies held by the applicant.

Payments made directly to employees are not an allowable expenditure. Arrangements made between the applicant and an employee to provide reimbursement for the cost of an insurance policy that is personally held by the employee or a relative of the employee cannot be supported with federal funds.

The maximum monthly health insurance premium reimbursed with federal funds is \$450 per month per employee. Applicants should indicate the actual premium rates; however, the federal funds requested may not exceed \$450 with anything above being eligible to be used as match.

Retirement benefits are normally calculated as a percentage of the total salary. Applicants should indicate the actual percentage paid; however, the federal funds requested may not exceed 15.32% with anything above being eligible to be used as match.

Project Budget & Budget Narrative

An applicant's Project Budget & Budget Narrative should be reflective of what was outlined in the Project Narrative section of the proposal. This is the opportunity for the applicant to clearly define what will be needed to successfully carry out the project. Do not request funding for any items that will not directly impact the proposed project.

Allowable Costs – Federal funds are governed by the “cost principle” of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Cost principles are the federal rules that determine the extent of reimbursement of grant expenses. Generally, allowable costs include costs that are reasonable and necessary for the successful completion of the project. These may include salaries, rental of staff offices, recording or translation services, postage, telephone charges, travel expenses, printing, duplication, etc.

Non-Allowable Costs – Any costs that are incurred either before the start of the project period or after the expiration of the project period are not allowable. Costs that are deemed not reasonable and/or necessary for the successful completion of the project are not allowable. Other unallowable costs include, but are not limited to: land acquisition, bonuses or commissions, lobbying, fund raising, corporate formation, entertainment, sporting events, credit card fees, tips, bar charges/alcoholic beverages, laundry services, etc.

Match Requirements – Match is a specified amount of non-federal funds designated to be used for the proposed project in addition to the federal award amount. Match may either be cash or in-kind. Cash match includes cash spent for project-related costs. In-kind match includes, but is not limited to, the valuation of non-cash contributions. In-kind may be in the form of services, supplies, real property, and equipment.

Volunteers –As previously mentioned, organizations may utilize volunteers in the delivery of the proposed project. Volunteer hours are a good source of in-kind income that can be used to help fulfill the proposed project's match requirement. Volunteers must be working in support of the proposed project. The dollar value assigned to volunteers has been established by DFA-IGs as \$25.43 per hour.

The Project Budget & Budget Narrative is divided into eight (8) sections: Salary, Employer Mandated Benefits; Employer Provided Benefits; Maintenance & Operations, Professional/Contract Services, Travel/Training, Capital Outlay, and Other Expenses.

Other Expenses: Any additional expenses that do not fall into one of the previously mentioned categories can go into the Other Expenses category. Expenses within this category will be

reviewed by DFA-IGS to ensure they are properly categorized and are in-line with the scope of the project and do not violate any of the funding source's rules.

If additional lines are needed, press **Save** and additional lines will appear.

Submitting the Application

After you have completed all of the application's forms and uploaded the attachments, you are ready to submit the applications via IGS Connect. Prior to submitting the application, you can double check to make sure all forms have been completed properly by pressing the **View Global Errors** button on any form. It will highlight any missing information and provide you with a link to the correct form.

When you are ready to submit the application, you can click on the **Status Change** button that is located near the top of the screen. In the next box, you will select the **Application Submitted** button to submit your application to IGS Connect. This will alert the IGS Connect Administrator that your application has been submitted and ready for review.

Applications must be submitted via IGS Connect no later than 11:59 p.m., APRIL 9, 2021. Proposals cannot be submitted after this date and time. Applicants are encouraged to begin the process of submitting the applications at least one week early to ensure they are able to meet the application deadline. Applications submitted through any means other than IGS Connect will not be considered for funding.

NOTE: If the applicant experiences unforeseen **IGS Connect technical issues** beyond the applicant's control that prevent submission of its application by the deadline, the applicant must contact DFA-IGS staff by email **within 24 hours after the deadline** and request approval to submit the application. In that email, the applicant must include **a description of the technical difficulties, a timeline of submission efforts, screen shot of the error code that was received, and any other information.** DFA-IGS will then consider all submitted information to **determine if the application will be accepted.** Please send emails to IGS.Contact@dfa.arkansas.gov.

The applicant shall submit all data as requested and required within the application forms. Failure to submit all required data could disqualify the proposal from further consideration. Applicants will not be contacted if they fail to submit all required data.

APPLICATION REVIEW AND DETERMINATION PROCESS

REVIEW

Applications are subject to several reviews. These reviews assist DFA-IGS in making funding recommendations which enhance the State of Arkansas' service delivery system to victims. The process for review and determination of a subgrant award is as follows:

- 1) **ELIGIBILITY REVIEW:** Applications will be reviewed to ensure that minimum eligibility requirements have been met. If the organization or its proposal does not meet the minimum eligibility requirements, the applicant will be notified that it is not eligible to receive funding.
- 2) **ADVISORY BOARD:** Pursuant to state law, DFA-IGS' advisory board will be provided an opportunity to review and comment on all applications.
- 3) **ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW:** The DFA-IGS Administration will make final determination on which applications will be funded based on recommendations from DFA-IGS staff, the Advisory Board, and the Review Committee.

DETERMINATION NOTIFICATION

Upon completion of the application review process, DFA-IGS will send notice to all applicants indicating if their application(s) has been approved and at what level of support. Applications approved for funding will be finalized in a grant award document to the sub-grantee.

APPEALS

Denied applicants may request reconsideration by sending a request to appeal to igs.contact@dfa.arkansas.gov within five (5) working days following their receipt of the denial notification. Reconsideration requests are limited to the reason documented in the denial letter. DFA-IGS will issue a final determination after appeals are reviewed. Final determinations are not subject to further appeal.

ACCEPTANCE OF SUBGRANT AWARD

A subgrant award packet will be sent to the applicant for signature by the authorized official. All required documents must be returned to DFA-IGS within five (5) working days following the receipt of the award notification.

By accepting a subgrant award, the authorized official:

- a) Assures that the project(s) for which federal funds are to be provided will be performed according to the stated purpose and will perform to specification.
- b) Certifies that the organization will comply with all federal requirements regarding the specific grant program under which the subgrant is funded, as well as any state requirements that apply.
- c) Accepts **ALL** terms and conditions of the award(s).

The award acceptance is complete upon the execution of the award document by both the subgrantee and the DFA-IGS Administrator.

QUESTIONS

Prospective applicants should feel free to make inquiries to: IGS.Contact@dfa.arkansas.gov