

Identifying and Securing Funding for Victim Response Efforts



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Identifying and Securing Funding for Victim Response Efforts

Coordination and Collaboration

Effective victim response requires multilayered strategies to meet crime victims' individual needs. To carry out these strategies, law enforcement agencies and their partners must identify and secure appropriate funding. Funding ensures that victim response and services are consistent, available when needed, and sustainable; by strengthening their abilities to write grant applications and manage funding, law enforcement agencies strengthen their capacities for effective victim response.

Many funding agencies encourage collaborative solutions to identified issues. Securing funding from these sources requires robust and reciprocal relationships with community and partner agencies. Law enforcement agencies can benefit by coordinating with community and partner agencies to establish a plan to pursue funding opportunities.

Agencies should designate a team or individual responsible for researching and identifying available funding. This responsibility may be assigned to agency employees or contracted out. In either case, these personnel should receive appropriate training to ensure they are able to clarify funding logistics, processes, roles, and responsibilities. Investing resources in this area can pay for itself when grant applications are successful.

Grants personnel can continue to build their skills through online training opportunities and other resources for writing and submitting grant applications, such as the following:

- JustGrants Resources (<https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/>). A resource hub for the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office), the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), and the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW)
 - *Note:* OJP includes the following program offices, some of which may offer their own resources: Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA); Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS); National Institute of Justice (NIJ); Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP); Office for Victims of Crime (OVC); and Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking (SMART).
- OJP Grant Application Resource Guide (<https://www.ojp.gov/funding/apply/ojp-grant-application-resource-guide>). A guide to assist OJP grant applicants in preparing and submitting applications for OJP funding
 - *Note:* This guidance does not apply to COPS Office and OVW funding opportunities.
- OJP Funding Resource Center (<https://www.ojp.gov/funding>). Information about OJP funding opportunities and an overview of OJP's grant process
- DOJ Grants Financial Guide (<https://www.ojp.gov/funding/financialguidedoj/overview>). A primary reference manual to assist OJP, OVW, and COPS Office award recipients in fulfilling their fiduciary responsibility to safeguard grant funds and ensure funds are used for the purposes for which they were awarded
 - *Note:* Although this guidance is focused on post-award responsibilities, it is a good reference for understanding parameters around grant requests.

Identifying Appropriate Funding

Once you have established what your agency needs to support victim response and services, you can look for funding to fulfill those needs. Convey the strength of your partnerships when identifying and applying for funding opportunities—for example, by describing partner roles in proposals, detailing how funds will be distributed, or including memoranda of understanding or letters of support with applications. Use available resources to continuously scan the landscape for federal, state, local, and private funding. (This document provides a select number of examples; it is not an exhaustive list of current funding available from the agencies referenced.)

Federal funding is available through multiple agencies. Signing up to receive information from the email lists offered through each agency can keep you aware of new and continuing funding opportunities.

Federal Funding Sources

Grants.gov

<https://www.grants.gov/>

Federal agencies post discretionary funding opportunities here for award recipients to find and apply to. Using the Grants.gov system makes it faster, easier, and more cost effective for applicants to electronically interact with federal grant-making agencies.

Bureau of Justice Assistance

<https://bja.ojp.gov/funding>

The BJA helps state, local, and tribal jurisdictions by providing resources to reduce violent crime, create safer communities, and reform the criminal justice system.

Example of a victim response effort this funding could support:

A law enforcement agency could apply for funding to work closely with community- and school-based partners to conduct outreach on hate crimes and offer training to professionals responsible for investigating and prosecuting hate crimes.

Bureau of Justice Statistics

<https://bjs.ojp.gov/funding>

The BJS collects, analyzes, publishes, and shares information on crime, criminal offenders, victims of crime, and the operation of justice systems. The BJS helps state, local, and tribal governments improve their statistical capabilities and the quality and utility of their criminal history records.

Example of a victim response effort this funding could support:

A campus-based law enforcement agency could apply for funding to expand the statistical infrastructure around victim services, including the availability and use of services to support victims of crime or abuse.

COPS Office

<https://cops.usdoj.gov/grants>

The COPS Office is the component of the U.S. Department of Justice responsible for advancing the practice of community policing by the nation's state, local, territorial, and tribal law enforcement agencies through information and grant resources.

Example of a victim response effort this funding could support:

A law enforcement agency, in partnership with community organizations and victim services personnel, could apply for funding to develop resources that enhance response to crime victims with disabilities.

National Institute of Justice

<https://nij.ojp.gov/funding>

The NIJ provides objective and independent knowledge and tools to inform the decision-making of the criminal and juvenile justice communities to reduce crime and advance justice, particularly at the state and local levels.

Example of a victim response effort this funding could support:

A tribal law enforcement agency, in partnership with a local university, could apply to develop and implement a tool to identify challenges around resource connections for American Indian older women, women, and girls.

**Office of Juvenile Justice
and Delinquency Prevention**
<https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/funding>

The OJJDP supports local and state efforts to prevent and respond to youth delinquency, protect children, and improve juvenile justice systems.

Example of a victim response effort this funding could support:

A state law enforcement agency could apply for funding to deliver coordinated training to regional child advocacy centers to enhance the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and provide services to child victims and their families.

Office for Victims of Crime
<https://ovc.ojp.gov/funding>

The OVC supports partnerships with law enforcement agencies at the state, tribal, and local levels to enhance services to victims and establish collaborations between police and the communities they protect. For more information, visit <https://ovc.ojp.gov/program/law-enforcement/overview>.

Example of a victim response effort this funding could support:

With the support of local hospitals, a sheriff's office could apply for funding to hire a victim services director and two victim services specialists to establish a program for response to gun violence victims. The focus of the victim services program could include encouraging justice system engagement, assisting with victim compensation applications, and connecting victims with services to meet identified needs.

**Office of Sex Offender Sentencing,
Monitoring, Apprehending,
Registering, and Tracking**
<https://smart.ojp.gov/funding>

SMART assists criminal justice professionals across the spectrum of sex offender management to ensure public safety.

Example of a victim response effort this funding could support:

A state law enforcement agency could apply for funding to maintain and operate a sex offender website that enables law enforcement to search existing state, territory, and tribal sex offender registries for public sex offender data and add a public resource repository to the website for individuals impacted by sexually motivated crimes.

Office on Violence Against Women

<https://www.justice.gov/ovw/grant-programs>

The OVW provides federal leadership in developing the national capacity to reduce violence against women and administer justice for and strengthen services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

Example of a victim response effort this funding could support:

A police department, in partnership with a domestic violence agency, could apply for funding to train two officers and a victim advocate in the specialized response to teen victims of dating violence.

State funding is available through **individual government offices**, frequently referred to as the State Administering Agency (SAA).

State Funding Sources**State Administering Agencies**

<https://www.ojp.gov/funding/state-administering-agencies/overview>

Many OJP formula grants are awarded directly to state governments, which set priorities and allocate funds within each state. For more information on how a state intends to distribute formula grant funds, contact the appropriate SAA.

Examples of victim response efforts this funding could support:

- A local rape crisis center, in partnership with two local law enforcement agencies, could apply for funding to develop and implement a comprehensive approach for response to adult immigrant victims of sexual violence.
- A community-based organization, in partnership with a local sheriff's office, could apply for funding to develop, implement, and evaluate community-based response models that identify, assess, and serve children, primarily up to age five, who have been exposed to violence in their homes.
- A law enforcement agency, in partnership with a prosecution office and hospital forensic nursing program, could apply for funding to support personnel costs, contracted counseling services, and equipment costs for a Family Justice Center.

In addition, other resources are available to support agencies and personnel responsible for administering state funding.

Additional Resources

Association of VAWA Administrators

<http://www.avadministrators.org/>

The Association of Violence Against Women Act Administrators (AVA) encourages and facilitates mutual support, awareness, and cooperation among states and territories administering Violence Against Women Act formula grants.

National Association of Victims of Crime Act Assistance Administrators

<https://navaa.org/>

The National Association of Victims of Crime Act Assistance Administrators (NAVAA) fosters communications and networking among Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Assistance Administrators, provides training and technical assistance, and is a voice for victims' rights and services.

Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Training & Technical Assistance

<https://ovc.ojp.gov/training-and-technical-assistance/voca/home>

The OVC VOCA Center provides technical support to victim compensation and assistance administrators by offering expert consultation, peer-to-peer collaboration, problem-solving, training, and innovation opportunities. The OVC VOCA Center strives to build a strong administrator-led support system, broaden victim services to historically underserved communities, and advance promising policies, practices, and programs.

Local funding is available through **municipal and county agencies' websites**. These funding sources can be administered through agency departments and generally have specific budgetary items available for addressing the needs of their communities.

Local Funding Sources

City and county grant opportunities

Many cities and counties provide funding to improve the quality of life in their communities.

Examples of funding provided by cities and counties to improve the quality of life in their communities:

- Budgetary support may be set aside for victim services programs in court-assigned cases, including funds for advocacy, transportation, and temporary housing.
- Community Development Block Grants are state, city, or county grants to develop urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons.
- Emergency Shelter Grant funds are available to eligible nonprofit groups for emergency shelter operations, transitional housing, and housing support services. These services help homeless individuals and families move towards self-sufficiency and permanent housing.

Private funding is available nationally, regionally, or locally. Sources of private financing can include foundations and private citizens. Private funding may consist of both direct funding and in-kind donations.

Private Funding Sources

Private foundations

Private foundations have dedicated grant opportunities for various victim response efforts.

Examples of private foundations:

- MacArthur Foundation: <https://www.macfound.org/>
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation: <https://www.wkkf.org/>

Private businesses or nonprofits

Private businesses sometimes have flexible funds that can be used to provide services for victim response efforts.

Examples of private businesses or nonprofits:

- A landlord who sets aside units or funding (or both) to support rapid rehousing for human trafficking survivors
- A local restaurant that provides meals for victims in need
- A local gas station that provides vouchers for victims in need

Many federal, state, local, and private organizations support **funding programs for special populations**.

Funding for Special Populations

Tribal grants

Federal, state, local, and private organizations support multiple programs for tribal communities that address victim services and related support.

BJA: <https://www.bia.gov/topic/grants>

Americorps: <https://americorps.gov/funding-opportunity/fy-2022-ameri-corps-state-national-tribal-grants>

OVC: <https://ovc.ojp.gov/news/announcement/funding-opportunity-fy-2022-coordinated-tribal-assistance-solicitation>

Accessibility grants

Federal and private organizations fund programs to increase services, training, and access for people with disabilities or limited English proficiency and the Deaf community.

OVC: <https://ovc.ojp.gov/funding/awards/15povc-21-gk-01096-nonf>

OVW: <https://www.justice.gov/ovw/grant-programs>

Human trafficking grants

Federal, state, local, and private organizations provide support and funding for combating human trafficking.

The Office for Victims of Crime provides anti-trafficking funding to the field to support comprehensive victim services, multidisciplinary task forces and statewide system improvement efforts, and training and technical assistance for the anti-trafficking field. More information is available on OVC's Human Trafficking Grants and Funding Page: <https://ovc.ojp.gov/program/human-trafficking/grants-funding>.

The Office on Trafficking in Persons of the Administration of Children & Families provides funding to strengthen prevention, assist with victim identification, and provide services to survivors of human trafficking: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip/grants>.

Addressing Challenges

Many jurisdictions face challenges and gaps in their individual and overall system coordination for identifying and securing critical funding.

Common Challenge	Possible Solutions
Our agency doesn't have a dedicated grant writer.	<p>Before any grant proposals are written, identify one or a few people to attend grant writing training (in person or online).</p> <p>Explore recruiting skilled volunteers to contribute to this effort.</p> <p>Make a request from a federal, state, or local funding agency to see the successful applications by law enforcement agencies in the last three years.</p> <p>Split up the writing tasks and use multiple reviewers.</p> <p>If the proposal is unsuccessful, request feedback from the funder and improve for the next cycle.</p> <p>Establish collaborative relationships with partner agencies that have grantwriting experience.</p>
Our staff doesn't have time to write and manage grants.	<p>Determine if local government agencies (county, city, tribal) have experienced personnel to write or manage grants.</p> <p>Temporarily assign grant-related responsibilities to someone (e.g., on 30- or 60-day time frames) and ensure they have needed training and information.</p>

Our agency isn't familiar with grant processes and how they work.

Ask questions. All funding opportunities have different parameters and processes, and many have online resources to help applicants.

Schedule a meeting with the state administering agency to become familiar with the rules and timelines for grant season.

Connect with community partners who have successfully applied for and managed grants. Learn about their processes and resources.

Contact private foundations to discuss funding priorities, timelines, and processes.

Because we're a government agency, we can't solicit private funding.

Consult with your agency's legal representative to determine policies and practices related to private funding.

There are multiple government-based funding bodies (federal, state, local). If you are unable to seek private funding, focus on government funding.

Determine if private donations are possible even if private funding is not. While this may not provide significant funding, it can help offset other costs.

Some grants don't provide enough funding to cover salaries and other benefits.

Some grants require a percentage match. Consider using agency-budgeted positions or contributed hours of volunteers and interns for the match requirement. While grants may not cover an entire position, they may cover a significant portion. This still allows for cost savings for your agency.

Explore the option of your agency funding a portion of the anticipated costs and increasing that portion each year until grant funding is no longer required.

If we apply for grant funding, we will be competing against some of our partner agencies.

Grant funding at the federal, state, and local level has always been a competitive process. Grant funding is never a “sure thing,” and all agencies—whether law enforcement or community-based—should submit competitive proposals to seek funding.

When appropriate, consider joint proposals with other partners. Notify partners that your agency is exploring options to secure funding.

Without grant funding, our agency can’t provide services needed by crime victims.

Collect data to support gaps in victim response efforts.

Provide a narrative around what is currently taking place and how victims could be served with funding.

Explore ideas for increasing victim response efforts at little to no cost. The IACP Enhancing Law Enforcement Response to Victims (ELERV) training contains many suggestions: <https://www.theiacp.org/projects/enhancing-law-enforcement-response-to-victims-elerv>.

It’s hard to get applicants for grant-funded positions because funding is not guaranteed.

Start planning for sustaining positions even before the grant is received.

When interviewing applicants, share your agency’s plan for continued funding.

When grants are not renewed, ensure personnel know about employment opportunities in your agency and partner agencies.

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COPS
Community Oriented Policing Services
U.S. Department of Justice

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
145 N Street NE
Washington, DC 20530

To obtain details about COPS Office programs,
call the COPS Office
Response Center at 800-421-6770.

Visit the COPS Office online at cops.usdoj.gov.



International Association of Chiefs of Police
44 Canal Center Plaza Ste 200
Alexandria, VA 22314

Call the IACP at 800-THE-IACP
or visit online at theiacp.org.