



National Institute of Justice

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National Impact Evaluation of Victim Service Programs Funded Through the S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women Formula Grants Program

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

July 1, 1999

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Department of Justice Response Center:
800-421-6770

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World Wide Web Site:
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National Institute of Justice
World Wide Web Site:
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>

Impact Evaluation of Victim Service Programs funded through the S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women Formula Grants Program

I. Introduction

Proposals are solicited for an impact evaluation of victim programs and services funded under the S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women Formula Grants Program, administered by the Office of Justice Programs, Violence Against Women Office (VAWO). Specifically, the evaluation should address impact issues regarding nonprofit, nongovernmental victim service programs funded through the S.T.O.P. Program. One grant of up to \$800,000 will be awarded in Fiscal Year 1999. The duration of the impact evaluation is up to 36 months with reports of evaluation results to be submitted annually. Applicants should include with their proposal a statement on the additional work that would be completed, the time period for completion of this work, and the funds requested, if the project were to be extended beyond 36 months and additional financial support provided.

NIJ is streamlining its process to accommodate the volume of proposals anticipated under the various Crime Act solicitations. Researchers can help in a significant way by sending NIJ a nonbinding letter of intent by May 28, 1999. The Institute will use these letters to forecast the size of the peer panel needed and to identify conflicts of interest among potential reviewers. You can send this letter to NIJ via Internet by sending e-mail to tellnij@ncjrs.org and identifying the solicitation.

Decisions regarding project extension and supplemental funding will be made prior to the close of the 36-month project period. Continuation funding beyond an initial grant is contingent upon NIJ's receipt of funding.

II. Background

The S.T.O.P. (Services•Training•Officers•Prosecutors) Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program is authorized through the Violence Against Women Act, set out in Title IV of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, Pub. L. 103-322, 108 Stat. 1796. The S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program, hereinafter referred to as the S.T.O.P. Program, promotes a coordinated, multi-disciplinary approach to improving the criminal justice system's response to violence against women. This approach envisions a partnership among law enforcement, prosecution, the courts, victim advocates, and service providers to ensure victim safety and offender accountability. States and localities are encouraged to restructure and strengthen the criminal justice system response to addressing violence against women, drawing upon all the participants in the system, including the advocacy community.

Eligibility for the S.T.O.P. formula grants is limited to the States, Territories, and the District of Columbia. Funds granted to qualified States may be further subgranted by the State to agencies and programs including State offices and agencies; public or private nonprofit organizations; units of local government; Indian tribal governments; nonprofit, nongovernmental victim service programs; and legal services programs.

Each State must allocate 25 percent of the S.T.O.P. Program funds it receives to law enforcement, 25 percent to prosecution, and 25 percent to nonprofit, non governmental victim services. The remaining 25 percent may be

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allocated at the State's discretion, within the parameters of the Act.

The Violence Against Women Office is now in the fifth year of administering the S.T.O.P. Program. Over 5,000 subgrants have been awarded by the States, territories, and the District of Columbia. Programmatic funding for FY95 through FY98 totaled \$473 million, and FY99 funding in the amount of \$138, 406,950 which was awarded on February 26, 1999.

There are seven purpose areas for which S.T.O.P. grant funds may be used. The one that directly relates to this solicited impact evaluation of victim service programs is:

- Developing, enlarging, or strengthening victim service programs; developing or improving delivery of victim services to racial, cultural, ethnic, and language minorities, and the disabled; providing specialized domestic violence advocates in courts where a significant number of protection orders are granted; and increasing reporting and reducing attrition rates for cases involving violent crimes against women.

Additional information about the purposes for which S.T.O.P. funds may be used is available on VAWO's web page. The Office's web page address is: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/vawgo>. Information regarding the program can also be obtained from the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 800-421-6770, or in the Washington, D.C. area at 202-307-1480.

NIJ's Program with the Violence Against Women Office

Over the past four years of the S.T.O.P. Program, NIJ has managed a research and evaluation program that includes a host of projects undertaken in collaboration with the Violence Against Women Office. NIJ's program provides

for a National evaluation of the S.T.O.P. Program, impact evaluations of the various purpose areas for which S.T.O.P. funds may be used, several State and local evaluations, and a variety of research and evaluation projects pertinent to the VAWA.

The national evaluation of the S.T.O.P. Program is being conducted by the Urban Institute, located in Washington, D.C. The purpose of the National evaluation is to document S.T.O.P. Program outcomes based on measurable goals and objectives, and determine the impact of the State-level coordinating mechanism on the development of an integrated criminal justice system response to the needs of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking victims. As part of the national evaluation, the Urban Institute maintains a database of all Federal reporting forms (Subgrant Award Reports) filed with the Violence Against Women Office. Among other things, this database provides information on subgrants awarded to victim service programs. Therefore, the impact evaluator of victim service programs funded through S.T.O.P. will need to coordinate with the Urban Institute to obtain this data.

The S.T.O.P. purpose area evaluation projects currently underway are concentrated on assessing program impact. These include:

- *Impact Evaluation of S.T.O.P. Grants: Law Enforcement and Prosecution* is being conducted by the Institute for Law and Justice.
- *Data Collection and Communication Systems: The Impact of the S.T.O.P. Program* is being conducted by the National Center for State Courts.
- *Impact Evaluation of S.T.O.P. Grants for Reducing Violence Against Indian Women* is being conducted by the

University of Arizona, Tribal Law and Public Policy Program.

In addition, the American Bar Association has recently completed a study on criminal justice based victim services programs supported under the S.T.O.P. Program.

III. NIJ's S.T.O.P. Victim Service Programs Impact Evaluation Solicitation

This announcement solicits proposals for an Impact Evaluation of the S.T.O.P. nonprofit, nongovernmental victim service programs funded from FY95 to FY98. A multi-method evaluation including both quantitative and qualitative approaches is required. Evaluating impact and also capturing the voices of the victims served will both be essential components. One grant of up to \$800,000 will be awarded in FY99. The duration of the project will be up to 36 months.

Objectives of the S.T.O.P. Victim Service Programs Impact Evaluation

- To provide a process and impact evaluation of the FY95 to FY98 nonprofit, nongovernmental victim service programs
- To inform policy and practice in order to enhance victim service programs and models of service delivery

Key Phases of the S.T.O.P. Victim Service Programs Impact Evaluation

- *Planning Phase* - The first two or three months of the project period should be devoted to further refinement of the impact evaluation plan. Evaluators will work closely with NIJ and VAWO to further develop their evaluative approach; obtain copies of the Urban Institute's database providing information on all subgrants

awarded to nonprofit; nongovernmental victim service programs, and coordinate with the other three purpose area impact evaluations and related activities such as the S.T.O.P. Technical Assistance project and the Urban Institute's evaluation of the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) State Compensation and Assistance Programs.

- *Descriptive Phase* - This phase will involve a thorough descriptive analysis of the nonprofit, nongovernmental victim service projects funded under the S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women Formula Grants Program. This phase may involve developing a typology or a categorization scheme to compare and contrast projects and devising a sampling plan for more intensive measurement of outcomes. Applicants should be familiar with the work completed by the Urban Institute for the S.T.O.P. National evaluation in order to avoid duplication.

Questions applicants should address in their proposals for this phase include, but are not limited to: Who is being served by these programs—numbers and types of victims served (e.g. domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking)? What types of services are provided? What are the sources of referrals to the programs, and to whom do programs then refer clients? What is the waiting period for victims to receive services? Do clients receive adequate amounts of staff time? What are the client-staff ratios? Is the duration of services adequate to the individual client's restoration process? If relevant, does the program inform clients about all phases of the criminal justice system process? What type of training do program staff receive? What type of educational and/or professional credentials are required for staff? How much S.T.O.P. funding has the program received? Were the programs

implemented as planned? Did S.T.O.P. funds create new programs or services, expand existing programs or services, or enhance outreach aimed at increasing awareness about resources available to address violence against women? How do the programs attempt to reach victims? How effective are these efforts? Is non-awareness a barrier to service utilization? Are there victim populations that are not being reached? Do the programs conduct assessments to measure victim needs, identify gaps in services? And develop strategies to fill these gaps? How are new or unmet needs identified and innovative solutions developed? Do the programs survey victims to learn how well they are meeting the needs of their clients? Do programs address safety and protection concerns for women?

- *Impact Assessment Phase* - Planning for this phase would start early in the project and the work on the impact phase would begin as soon as feasible. Applicants should present a timetable of the anticipated phases and key events.

Questions applicants should address in this phase include, but are not limited to: To what extent have the goals of the S.T.O.P. program been attained? Has the program/have the programs had an impact on the larger community? How have victims been served and how have their lives been affected by the services? Were victims' needs met? If relevant, what evidence is there of the effect of receipt of services on the client's willingness to cooperate with the criminal justice system? Which types of victims (in terms of race, age, type of victimization, etc.) appear to benefit most and least from the program activities? Did the program initiate or lead to better coordination among the relevant community agencies and organizations?

What program changes have been brought about as a result of the S.T.O.P. funds? Have there been any unintended consequences resulting from the programs?

Methodological Issues

NIJ recognizes the challenge of conducting an evaluation of nonprofit, nongovernmental victim service programs. Thus, applicants should present a thorough plan for how the evaluation will be rigorously conducted. Proposals should address contextual factors, sources of data and collection methods, sampling procedures, evaluation design and measurement issues, analysis plans, and report writing and other feedback mechanisms.

The use of multiple methods is seen as critical in conducting the evaluation. Qualitative approaches should capture the voices of the victims as well as the views of service providers. Applicants should consider the ways in which victims/clients and service providers will be brought into the evaluation process.

Context of the Program. Applicants for the victim service programs impact evaluation should have an understanding of the resource context in which the S.T.O.P. programs operate. Other governmental or private programs may exist in the same jurisdiction as the S.T.O.P. program being assessed. The S.T.O.P. victim service programs evaluator will need to take these related programs, with similar goals, into account. Among the governmental programs that may be of relevance are: the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act Programs, Programs under the Victims of Crime Act, other programs funded by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and other ongoing State and local programs.

Data Sources and Collection. Applicants are encouraged to be comprehensive and innovative in the collection and use of data for the

evaluation. Various types of data should be considered, including interviews, surveys or focus groups with key populations of relevance to the S.T.O.P. Program, observation, and official data such as police and court records.

Sampling. Sampling should be thoroughly discussed. The initial phase of the impact evaluation would be descriptive and include all FY95 to FY98 grants involving nonprofit, nongovernmental victim service programs supported under the S.T.O.P. Formula Grant Program, and a sample of the grants or types of grants that would be selected for more intensive evaluation and to assess impact. Applicants will be required to submit a detailed plan for impact evaluation at the end of the descriptive phase.

Evaluation Design and Measurement.

Applicants should thoroughly describe and justify the particular design proposed for this process and impact evaluation. What design will be used to best estimate the impact of the intervention? How will change be measured and attributed to the program? How will terms be defined and measurement instruments selected or developed? Will measures in the community prior to implementation and post implementation be obtained? If so, what is expected to be available? Will comparison groups be used? If so, how will they be obtained? Do the different types of grants under the S.T.O.P. Program suggest different types of designs to assess outcomes? How will the evaluation account for all the possible reasons for change?

Analysis. Applicants should provide detailed information on a plan for data analysis, explaining how the various types of data will be analyzed and integrated and how they will be presented.

Report Writing. Annual reports are required of the S.T.O.P. nonprofit, nongovernmental victim service programs evaluator, and applicants should, given their anticipated schedule, state

what is expected to be included in each of three annual reports. An Executive Summary will be required at the conclusion of the project, and applicants may propose any other products seen as useful for purposes of informing the local projects, the field at large, and Federal program managers.

Coordination. The proposed budget for the project should include travel for the Principal Investigator to attend three coordination meetings in Washington, D.C. These meetings will provide for the coordination of Violence Against Women Act evaluation activities and field work and presentations and discussions of evaluation techniques and measures.

Organizational Capacity

Applicants must demonstrate organizational capacity to conduct a large-scale National evaluation of this nature. This capacity would be reflected in the staffing plan, effective and efficient use of consultants and subcontracts, and experience with large-scale evaluation efforts.

IV. How to Apply

Those interested in submitting proposals in response to this solicitation must complete the required application forms and submit related required documents. (See below for how to obtain application forms and guides for completing proposals.) Applicants must include the following information/forms to qualify for consideration:

- Standard Form (SF) 424—application for Federal assistance. **The budget amount for the entire length of the project must be placed in box 15 of the SF 424.**
- Assurances
- Certifications Regarding Lobbying, Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (one form)

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- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
- Budget Detail Worksheet
- Budget Narrative
- Negotiated indirect rate agreement (if appropriate)
- Names and affiliations of all key persons from applicant and subcontractor(s), advisors, consultants, and advisory board members. Include name of principal investigator, title, organizational affiliation (if any), department (if institution of higher education), address, phone, and fax
- Proposal abstract
- Table of contents
- Program narrative or technical proposal
- Privacy certificate
- References
- Letters of cooperation from organizations collaborating in the research project
- Résumés
- Appendixes, if any (e.g., list of previous NIJ awards, their status, and products [in NIJ or other publications])

Proposal abstract. The proposal abstract, when read separately from the rest of the application, is meant to serve as a succinct and accurate description of the proposed work. Applicants must concisely describe the research goals and objectives, research approach, and methods for achieving the goals and objectives. Summaries of past accomplishments are to be avoided, and proprietary/confidential information is not to be included. Length is not to exceed 400 words. Use the following two headers:

Project Goals and Objectives:

Proposed Research Design and Methodology:

Page limit. For grants exceeding \$50,000 the limit is 30 double-spaced pages. Note this limit applies only to the “Program Narrative” part of the application, but not to the other components listed above.

Due date. Completed proposals **must be received** at the National Institute of Justice by the close of business on July 1, 1999. Extensions of this deadline will not be permitted.

Award period. In general, NIJ limits its grants and cooperative agreements to a maximum period of 12 or 24 months. However, a budget period of 36 months is anticipated for this project. Supplemental funding in subsequent years may be made available given continued program appropriations and NIJ’s receipt of funding. A decision to supplement the grant will be made prior to the end of the initial grant award period.

Number of awards. NIJ anticipates supporting one grant under this solicitation.

Award amount. An award totaling up to \$800,000 will be made available for this NIJ solicitation.

Applying. Two packets need to be obtained: (1) application forms (including a sample budget worksheet) and (2) guidelines for submitting proposals (including requirements for proposal writers and requirements for grant recipients). To receive them, applicants can:

- Access the Justice Information Center on the web:

<http://www.ncjrs.org/fedgrant.htm#NIJ>

or the NIJ web site:

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/NIJ/funding.htm>

These web sites offer the NIJ application forms and guidelines as electronic files that may be downloaded to a personal computer.

- Request hard copies of the forms and guidelines by mail from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service at 800–851–3420 or from the Department of Justice Response Center at 800–421–6770

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(in the Washington, D.C. area, at 202-307-1480).

- Request copies by fax. Call 800-851-3420 and select option 1, then option 1 again for NIJ. Code is 1023.

Guidance and information. Applicants who wish to receive additional guidance and information may contact the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 800-421-6770. Center staff can provide assistance or refer applicants to an appropriate NIJ professional.

Applicants may, for example, wish to discuss their prospective research topics with the NIJ professional staff.

Send 3 copies (one with original signatures) of completed forms to:

National Impact Evaluation of Victim Service Programs Under the S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women Formula Grants Program
National Institute of Justice
810 Seventh Street NW
Washington, DC 20531
[overnight courier ZIP code 20001]

SL 000351

To find out more information about the National Institute of Justice, please contact:

National Criminal Justice Reference Service

Box 6000

Rockville, MD 20849-6000

800-851-3420

e-mail: askncjrs@ncjrs.org

To obtain an electronic version of this document, access
the NIJ web site (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>).

If you have any questions, call or e-mail NCJRS.