

SIX STEPS TO A STRONG GRANT APPLICATION



U.S. Department of Justice
OVW
Office on Violence Against Women
Working Together to End the Violence

Grant programs authorized by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) help communities serve victims of domestic/dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, and hold offenders accountable for their crimes.

Here are six strategies to help you prepare a competitive grant application:



1. ASSEMBLE A TEAM

Coordinated community response--meaning collaboration across justice system components, victim services providers, culturally specific organizations, and others--is the cornerstone of all VAWA grant programs. With or without grant funding, communities benefit when people work together.



2. IDENTIFY GAPS

What does your team need to better serve victims and hold offenders accountable? Training for police? Legal assistance for victims? Transitional housing? Explore [justice.gov/ovw/grant-programs](https://www.justice.gov/ovw/grant-programs) to determine which OVW grant program(s) fund what you need.



3. PREPARE

Review past years' solicitations to get a handle on the program's eligibility, scope, and requirements to apply. Read an OVW report to Congress to learn what grantees accomplish with their funds. Identify resources and strategies that can help your team better respond to domestic and sexual violence.



4. MAKE THE CASE

Use data and anecdotes to describe your community and the challenges it faces in combating domestic and sexual violence. Avoid jargon, write clearly, and use concrete examples. Speculate realistically about the potential impact of grant funding.



5. FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS

Be sure to follow **all** of the instructions in the solicitation. Contact OVW if anything is unclear. Failure to follow seemingly minor steps can result in an application being removed from consideration before it even goes to peer review.



6. HAVE A PLAN B

Grant funding isn't guaranteed, and it doesn't last forever. How will your team work toward greater safety and justice in your community if you don't receive a grant? And if you do obtain funding, what will your team do to sustain its efforts beyond the funding period?