

Victim Services Training Grant, Questions and Answers, as of 4/11/19

Q: How soon after completing an application would we be notified of our award?

A: It is our goal to respond to requests in approximately ten business days.

Q: I am having difficulty accessing the grant application forms and instructions.

A: All documents are available on COMMBUYS www.commbuys.com/bsa. Click on 'Contract & Bid Search', search for 'bids', using 'any of the search criteria', select '1111-Victim and Witness Assistance Board' as the organization, and click 'find it'. The bid number is BD-16-1111-1111C-1111L-00000008375. All of the forms are also available for download on our website: <http://www.mass.gov/mova/grants/>.

Q: Where can applicants find information on GSA rates for lodging?

A: The GSA website is <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/26429>.

Q: Is a law enforcement agency with a victim services unit eligible to apply for this grant?

A: Yes.

Q: Is a public school district considered to be an eligible applicant? We would like to send staff to training to obtain the skills necessary to work with students who are victims of crime.

A: Yes.

Q: Are per-diem food costs allowable when staff are attending training?

A: Yes – at the allowable GSA rate.

Q: What is required to obtain MOVA approval for a trainer/consultant who has a fee of \$2,000.00 per day, which exceeds the maximum allowable rate?

A: As this request exceeds the maximum allowable rate, this would be unallowable and not approved.

Q: We have already paid some expenses for sending staff to a conference at the end of July. Can we request support for these expenses?

A: This would be unallowable under this grant.

Q: We would like to organize a training for 12 police departments. Can we get technical assistance in writing the proposal?

A: Applicants may submit questions to the procurement team leader as they prepare an application. However, we are unable to directly support an applicant in developing a proposal at this time. MOVA will be tracking requests and will consider hosting a proposal development training in the future.

Q: We are looking to train a domestic violence advocate in the SAFEPLAN program – would this be allowable under this grant?

A: No. SAFEPLAN Trainings are hosted twice a year by MOVA, and while victim service providers are welcome to attend for free, completion of the training does not certify an advocate or authorize agencies to provide SAFEPLAN services.

Q: If an organization is applying to host a training that is a series, does it have to be a series for the same people or could it be a series with different days for different people? For example, if we want to do workshops for people in various disciplines - healthcare, law enforcement, clergy and develop specialized training workshops for each within the series, with the overall theme of how to handle disclosures and support survivors. Would you consider this one project?

A: This scenario would be allowable if the training focused on the same topic and had the same trainer, but allowed separate trainings for different disciplines (eg: one day for clergy; one day for law enforcement) or different locations (eg: one day for Western MA; one day for Eastern MA).

Q: Are development and presentation of webinars considered “conferences” or “workshops”? The RGA hosting costs provision defines “conferences” broadly but, does not specifically list webinars except to provide that rental or use costs related to conducting webinars/web broadcast are allowable which could be taken to mean costs associated with a web product to be used in the context of an event, not necessarily THE event.

A: Applicants can not apply for development costs under this grant at this time. Any materials “developed” would be owned by OVC and any plan to develop requires prior OVC approval. If this changes, MOVA will release an announcement and more information.

Q: May individual staff members apply to attend a professional development training?

A: No. Individuals may not apply to this grant. The individual’s employer would need to apply for them.

Q: Has the deadline passed to submit an application?

A: No. The victim services training grant is open and receiving applications on a rolling basis.

Q: Can costs for 'developing the training' be included in the grant application? For example, would 5 days of prep time to prepare PowerPoints, outlines, collecting reference materials, etc. be allowed? Will 'prep' time for hosting trainings be an allowable cost?

A: Yes, an applicant can request the costs of **prep time** for the training. Please keep in mind that applicants can not apply for development costs under this grant at this time. Any materials “developed” would be owned by OVC and any plan to develop requires prior OVC approval. If this changes, we will release an announcement and more information.

Q: If an organization wants to host 12 monthly trainings, can it submit one request?

A: Yes.

Q: Would 'self-advocates' who conduct sexual abuse and physical abuse trainings for other survivors be eligible for their agency to apply for professional development opportunities?

A: Yes, we would consider an application.

Q: Would sending a victim advocate to a training on batterer intervention be an allowable cost under this grant?

A: At this time, while we can’t specifically say ‘yes or no’ to a proposed training without a formal application, we can say that we would consider an application for that topic.

Q: Would sending a staff member to a class at a college/university be an allowable cost under this grant?

A: While we can’t specifically say “yes or no” to a proposed class without a formal application, we can say as long as you are not applying for a degree program, we would consider the application.

Q: We are looking to offer trainings to sexual assault and domestic violence organizations to help them more effectively support victims with intellectual disabilities. Would MOVA consider a grant that would enable us to travel to up to 10 organizations throughout the state rather than proposing a single, centralized conference?

A: We would consider applications for remote sites for the training (eg: we will hold trainings in Boston, Worcester, Plymouth...), but not for specific agencies (eg: we will travel to agency X, agency Y, and agency Z..). The idea behind ‘hosting’ a training is that it would be open to a group (eg: DV providers...).

Q: When preparing our application - I don’t want to book flights until we are confirmed, but as you know flight fares change daily. How should this be handled? Should we estimate?

A: Budget based on fare at time of application, and you can round up. However, flights should not be booked until application is approved.

Q: Would the following topics be eligible for staff professional development under this grant? (growing a culture of inclusion (at both the staff and Board level); and increase the cultural competency of staff which would inform their work with the various constituencies that we serve.)

A: We cannot formally approve without a formal application and more details. However, yes, those areas would be appropriate to submit a training grant application for.

Q: For professional development training, can non-VOCA staff attend a training funded under this grant, or is it for VOCA staff only? And related, can non-VOCA staff attend a conference with these funds or is this for VOCA staff only?

A: With this grant, you can request to send any of your staff (both VOCA funded and non-VOCA funded) to a training/conference.

Q: What is the maximum allowed for meals/incidental expenses?

A: The maximum per diem would be the appropriate GSA rate, which can be calculated here:

<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/100120>

Q: The RGA states travel is not to exceed \$600. Can you please clarify whether that is \$600 per person, or whether \$600 is the total amount that MOVA can provide to an agency for travel, regardless of the number of people attending the conference?

A: The \$600 noted in the RGA, is the max airfare cost, *per person*. Not all travel costs per person.

Q: Many of the trainings we would like to apply for have not been announced yet for the upcoming year. Will you accept a budget per advocate just for the purpose of offsite trainings (i.e., \$150 per advocate per year dedicated to relevant off-site trainings)?

A: No unless a specific anticipated training (named) is identified.

Q: If we have more than one invited presenter, can we add lines? The grant application is designed for only one speaker and their corollary expenses.

A: Please list the totals for all speakers, and then note (in a separate document if necessary) that it is for "X" amount of speakers. Our goal is to revisit the forms for necessary changes in the fall.

Q: If we have a current webinar, it would be eligible for funding under this grant; but development of a training curriculum would not be?

A: Yes.

Q: Should we submit an application sooner than later? Is there no deadline (until funds run out) or timeline for which we have to submit? It is an open application process based on need?

A: We suggest that you consider the timing requirements outlined in the RGA for submission of an application (page 5).

Applications to host trainings must be submitted 90 calendar days prior to the event or the request will be denied.

Applications to provide staff professional development must be submitted 60 calendar days prior to the event or the request will be denied.

An intent to apply for funding must be submitted at least 5 days prior to an application being submitted.

Yes, as of now, this grant is accepting applications on a rolling basis.

Q: Can a series of related training activities (e.g. A series of perhaps 3 one or two-day workshops) can count as a single event?

A: Yes.

Q: Can training activities identified in a grant application be offered to victims and survivors as well as to clinicians, counsellors and advocates?

A: Yes. Applications which include victims/survivors as a target audience will be reviewed.

Q: Can the budget for a specific grant include equipment (e.g. Computer, camera, monitor) for purchase and/or rental?

A: Rental costs would be allowable, however equipment purchase would be unallowable.

Q: If hosting a training, does that encompass putting on a training ourselves for others or does it mean that we host an external speaker or conference that our staff and staff of other organizations can attend?

A: Under this grant, hosting a conference would be intended for external attendees. Yes, internal staff may attend, but the focus and intent should be on training those outside the agency. If you were proposing to bring in an outside trainer for your staff, we'd consider that professional development.

Q: Under Award Criteria on page 5, it says "any training materials utilized via funded projects may be subject to prior approval at the discretion of MOVA or the VWAB." Does this mean anything we create under this grant, or anything that we or an external trainer might use as a handout or part of training curriculum?

A: Both

Q: We have a trainer in mind whose fees exceed \$450/day. The P&P says prior approval is needed from MOVA for training fees that exceed this amount, which suggests that such costs are allowable with prior approval, but the Q&A from 5/16 says a request for a trainer/consultant with a fee of \$2,000 exceeds the maximum allowable rate and would not be approved. Can you clarify? (And as a follow-up, if fees that exceed this limit are not allowable, is this a federal or state requirement?)

A: The current allowable maximum federal consultant rate for VOCA is \$650/day or \$81.25/hour. MOVA set the threshold at \$450/day, \$56.25/hour. To exceed this level, ample justification must be provided.

Q: Would applications for international conferences/trainings be considered?

A: Yes.

Q: If our agency were to host a training conference, how would we determine the cost to others who would register and attend? Would it be OK to use MOVA funds + some of our own to carry out a conference?

A: Budgeting for the costs associated with the conference is up to the applicant. Yes, supplemental funding via MOVA is allowable (see pages 5-6 of the RGA).

Q: Is there a recording of the webinar available?

A: No. We will announce any upcoming webinars on our website www.mass.gov and via our listservs. Additionally, we have a questions and answers list on COMMBUYS, and any questions can be sent to kristen.tavano@mass.gov.

Q: When applying to host a training, can we submit the application more than 90 days prior to the training? Or does it have to be exactly at 90 days?

A: You can certainly submit more than 90 days before the training, but the application MUST be submitted no less than 90 days prior to the training.

Q: When applying for professional development, can we submit the application more than 60 days prior to the training? Or does it have to be exactly at 60 days?

A: You can certainly submit more than 60 days before the training, but the application MUST be submitted no less than 60 days prior to the training.

Q: Is an indirect rate allowable under the training grant?

A: An indirect rate would not be allowable under this grant.

Q: Can a host agency apply to deliver a multi-day training?

A: Yes.

Q: Can a host agency apply to deliver a training series?

A: Yes.

Q: Can prorated trainer salary be requested for preparation time, or only for the day(s) directly involved in delivering the training?

A: Yes, prep and coordination time (such as time to prepare PowerPoints, outlines, making copies, etc) would be allowable. Please keep in mind that applicants can not apply for development costs under this grant at this time.

Q: The RGA states advertising costs are allowed. Does this include the time involved for a training coordinator to prepare and distribute announcements, answer questions about the training, facilitate training registration, and prepare paperwork/forms required to continuing education credits, etc.

A: Yes.

Q: Can post training consultations be included in our hosting training proposal?

A: At this time, any mentoring/consult outside of the training itself would not be allowable under this grant. We certainly encourage you to still apply to MOVA for the training itself, and other funding sources may be used to cover the mentoring/consult costs.

Q: I am unable to add an electronic signature to the training grant application.

A: Typing in the signer's name will be accepted.

Q: We plan to use our own salaried staff to conduct the trainings. The cost of their time is similar to the state consultant rates. Would you like us to use the salary cost (including fringe and preparation time) or should we just use the state rate?

A: You can apply for staff salary for the time conducting prep related to the training.

Q: When completing the forms who should sign as the applicant? Should it be a fiscal person or a program contact?

A: We'll allow the agency to decide who they would like to name as the applicant. Anyone identified in the application (both agency leadership and applicant) will be notified of award.

Q: We are a state agency, do we need to complete the vendor documents?

A: If awarded funding, we will execute an ISA for the award. You will not need to complete the vendor documents as payments will be made via MMARS.

Q: We are requesting to send nine staff to a conference. How do we complete the budget?

A: List the total for each line item in the budget. You can attach a separate sheet which details the costs for all 9 staff members.

Q: Is food/snacks an allowable cost if we are requesting training funds for staff professional development training which we intend to host at our facility?

A: Food/snacks for a training (outside of M&IE when traveling) are unallowable under the training grant (both professional development and hosting). However, if the agency was going to be contributing to the costs of the training, food/snacks could be included in that contribution.

Q: What does OVC stand for?

A: OVC stands for Office for Victims of Crime.

Q: If a training is for parents/caregivers of child victims, are costs to decrease barriers to attending the training allowable (e.g., childcare/transportation stipends)?

A: Typically, that would be an unallowable cost.

Q: How many staff could we send to a conference under the training funds?

A: Right now there is no cap on how many staff could be covered under one professional development application. It is permissible to request to send a number of staff to a national conference, and both VOCA funded and non-VOCA funded staff are eligible. Keep in mind, applicants are limited to a maximum award total of \$5,000 per year.

Q: Is there a match requirement for this grant?

A: Match is not a requirement of the training grant. It's encouraged, but not required. See page 7 of the RGA.

Q: How much is allowable for lunch during an all day training, per person?

A: Here is a link to the GSA rate tool - <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates> - it will calculate the meals and incidental rates by location. A reminder that the rates are not to exceed your agency policy.

Q: If applying only for training materials, would the application still require Page 6, the Chief Executive Attestation?

A: No. While we are viewing training material applications as professional development, we won't require the Chief Executive Attestation.

Q: For a coalition applying to host a training, is the Training Supervisor Attestation form required?

A: No.

Q: There does not appear to be a place for an applicant to sign on the assurances form – is this an error?

A: No, this is the correct form. We'd ask that you sign and date in the blank space at the bottom of the form.

Q: On the top of the Office for Civil Rights Certification Form, there is a field for the grant title and grant number. What is the correct information?

A: Victim Services Training Grant and VSTGVWA

Q: If only applying to purchase training materials for our staff, what should we apply under?

A: Apply for training materials as training/professional development. When you select 'professional development' in Section II, a narrative Section III will appear. In that box, you'd need to give a brief overview of your request. The instructions indicate you should: *If only requesting the purchase of developed training materials, describe how these materials will be used, identify the skills and abilities to be acquired, and how direct victim services will be improved.* In the budget section, you can include your funding request in the 'tuition/registration fee' category.

Q: The budget format doesn't allow for a narrative. We've used the lines in "additional" expense area to share the rationale behind the travel (meals and lodging) numbers. Is that an appropriate use of the budget form and if not is there an alternative way to share the rationale?

A: Applicants can add an additional document with this information.

Q: We understand that these funds cannot be used for attendee meals. We will not be charging a fee for the training itself. If we end up offering box lunches for a fee, do we need to indicate that on this application?

A: Yes, but indicate that the fee will be used for lunches (or anything else it may be used for).

Q: Could our organization host the training and provide the training using our staff as the speakers/presenters? or can we just be hosts if we contract outside speakers?

A: Professional development trainings are only for the applicant's staff to attend, and hosting is for the attendance of external parties/agencies. Hosting can include either your staff as speakers/presenters or contracted outside speakers/presenters. If using existing staff members to speak/present, training grant award funding should be supplemental, not exceed any current salary, and not supplant existing funding.

Q: Can we request funds for the time that our salaried staff would spend preparing presentation materials, coordinating the training logistics and delivering the training., etc?

A: Yes. It would also be an allowable cost to request staff time to coordinate the event. From the RGA, under allowable costs - hosting: Costs specific to the event such as pro-rated salaries of personnel coordinating events ; pro-rated rental space for personnel work space; postage; pro-rated phone and internet; reproduction of training materials.

Q: Do you need a signed contract between the trainer and our agency at time of application?

A: We do not require a signed contract with the application, however we will need one if funding is awarded. We also reserve the right to request more information, or a copy of the draft contract during the application review process.

Q: The version of the application I am using does not include sections III and IV, it goes from II to V. I cannot find them in another document... can you please advise where I would find the section for hosting, section IV?

A: When you select from the three options (professional development, hosting, coalition hosting) the appropriate pages for you to complete will appear, and all others will be hidden. If you are hosting a training, section IV and V will open.

Q: We made a video about 7 years ago that will now be outdated. Could the training grant be used to update the video and other education/outreach materials about these changes?

A: This is unallowable under the current VOCA training grant. Development of print, video, and multimedia products for re-use, re-broadcasting is unallowable. (page 6 in RGA)

Q: The new limit on professional development applications is \$5,000 per year (Oct 1 – Sept 30). Could we submit multiple applications without exceeding the \$5,000 limit?

A: Yes. For example, you could ask for \$2,500 for one training, and \$2,500 for another.

Q: Could we apply for both up to \$5,000 in professional development AND up to \$7,500 in hosting costs in one year (Oct 1 – Sept 30)?

A: Yes.

Q: Would an individual at an agency who is attending a training/conference pay out of pocket and then be reimbursed by their agency?

A: The training grant is a reimbursement grant. It is up to your agency how they would like to run the reimbursement process, but we will contract with and reimburse directly to your agency.

Q: The VOCA training grant application isn't downloading correctly.

A: Please try to save it to your desktop and open it from there. That should correct the error.

Q: Could you please clarify if there are any changes to the current training grant RGA as compared to past training grant RGAs?

A: Yes, there have been revisions to the current RGA (as of March 2019).

Q: Will the 4-11-19 webinar be available after it's over?

A: We are not recording the webinar, but we will be posting the slides on COMMBUYS and the MOVA website.

Q: What's the difference between conference/training costs for victims (unallowable) vs. hosting training for survivors of crime (allowable)?

A: The unallowable cost (conference/training costs for victims) refers to requesting funding to send a victim to an external training/conference (professional development), while the allowable cost (hosting training for victims of crime) refers to hosting a training/conference for victims.

Q: is a half-day training conference acceptable?

A: While we will review each application for allowability when it is received, it is otherwise allowable to apply for a half day training conference.

Q: Can external speaker fees be billed to the grant?

A: If you are referring to hosting, please see page 10 of the RGA - conference trainer/instructor/presenter/facilitator costs are allowable within the rates noted in that section of the RGA.

Q: The RGA states that you cannot pay for federal employees to attend trainings/conferences. What if the employee is paid partially by a federal grant (VAWA), and partially by a town match - would that person not be eligible? They are a town employee with a town ID.

A: It does not appear that this person is a federal employee, therefore they would be eligible.

Q: Can we apply well before 60 or 90 days - i.e. 6-12 months in advance?

A: Yes, you can.

Q: To clarify - we are NOT to develop our own training materials as part of this grant under - rather we can only use existing materials? Should these materials have been developed by OVC?

A: Correct - that is unallowable. Applicants can not apply for development costs under this grant at this time. Development of print, video and multimedia products is unallowable. Any existing materials do not have to have been developed by OVC.

Q: Could the "existing materials" have been developed by us already?

A: We would review the specifics at the time of hosting application, but this would be otherwise allowable.

Q: Do we need to know the exact date of the training?

A: You would need to submit an approximate date with your intent to apply form. However, we would need a specific date by the time your application is submitted.

Q: For currently funded VOCA programs, while we will first look at our current budget when determining if we will apply for a training grant - when will MOVA decide if unused VOCA funds from FY19 can be rolled into FY20?

A: We will be reaching out soon with more information about the FY19 year end/FY20 year begin, but anticipate that unspent dollars will roll into FY20.

Q: Can we pay an outside speaker to come to our event and charge those costs to the grant?

A: In the event consultant services are necessary for the conference trainer/instructor/presenter/facilitator, express approval is required for any costs in excess of \$450/day or \$56.25/hour.

Q: Are international conferences allowable?

A: Currently they are unallowable.

Q: Is there an end date for submitting questions?

A: No, there is not. E-mail any questions to kristen.tavano@mass.gov for the duration of the grant.

Q: Are certificate programs allowable (not degree programs)?

A: We will review specifics and extent of program at time of application, however, certificate programs (not degree programs) would be considered.

Q: Could you clarify "public education events" vs. "direct service focused and targeted events?"

A: Federal VOCA funding is intended to focus on direct client services including supportive costs. Therefore, we look for applicants to these grants to focus on enhancing the skill level of those providing services. We do allow programs to conduct outreach regarding available services, but not to conduct "public trainings" regarding the dynamics of victimization.

Q: If dependent on volunteer staff members to staff our Center, can professional development be for unpaid staff?

A: Yes, volunteer training if they are gaining skills to work within the organization i.e. serve victims is generally allowable.