



Department of Public Safety  
Minnesota Office of Justice Programs

## Sex Trafficking Investigation (STI) Grants 2025

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

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## Request for Proposals (RFP) Part 1: Overview

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### 1.1 General Information

- Grants to support multijurisdictional entities to investigate sex trafficking crimes.
- Source of Grant funds: Minnesota Chapter 65; Article 1, Subd 6 (g)
- [Minnesota Office of Justice Programs \(OJP\) Website](#)
- Open for Applications: September 4, 2024
- Application Due Date: September 30, 2024 at 4:00 PM

### 1.2 Program Description

The purpose of this request for proposals is to fund one-year grants with local, state and Tribal governments to support multijurisdictional task forces to investigate sex trafficking crimes.

### 1.3 Minnesota's Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion.

It is State of Minnesota policy to ensure equity, diversity and inclusion in making competitive grant awards. See Executive Order [19.01](#).

The Policy on Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review establishes the expectation that grant programs intentionally identify how the grant serves diverse populations, especially populations experiencing inequities and/or disparities. See [OGM Policy 08-02](#).

### 1.4 Funding and Project Dates

#### Funding

\$1,093,361 is available for grant awards. While there is not a cap on grant requests, awards are expected to be around \$175,000. These are cost reimbursement grants.

#### Project Dates

These grants will have a one-year grant period. With a start date of approximately January 1, 2025. Grants will need to begin operating within 90 days of award notice.

### 1.5 Eligible Applicants

State and local units of government including cities, counties, townships; and Tribal governments are eligible to apply. Agencies working together need to identify one agency as applicant and official grant recipient; budgets can include contracts with partner agencies.

### 1.6 Questions, Technical Assistance and Information Session

Please submit any questions regarding this RFP by email to [claire.cambridge@state.mn.us](mailto:claire.cambridge@state.mn.us) . Within seven business days, all answers will be posted on the RFP Questions and Answers page on the grants page of the [OJP website](#).

## RFP Information Sessions

OJP will offer an online webinar with a questions and answers session. In the webinar staff will provide background on the Sex Trafficking Investigation Grants, walk through the RFP and application requirements and give an overview of the application review process. At the end of the session, staff will open it up for questions. However, not required, prospective applicants are encouraged to participate in the information session. Questions and answers from the session will be posted on the Frequently Asked Questions' page on the OJP Website.

STI Grants RFP Information Session- September 10, 2024, 1:00 PM- 2:00 PM- [Register Here](#)

## RFP Part 2: Eligible Activities

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### 2.1 Multi-Jurisdictional Sex Trafficking Investigations Task Forces

A Sex Trafficking Investigations Task Force (STITF) is a multi-jurisdictional entity, comprised of federal, state, county, city and/or tribal agencies working together to identify and investigate sex trafficking crimes in their jurisdictional area. STITFs include local law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies and victim services providers partnered with tribal, state and federal investigative, enforcement, and regulatory agencies. "Effective, multidisciplinary partnerships have long been essential to the success of the "3P" framework of prosecution, protection, and prevention in global anti-trafficking efforts. A comprehensive approach to human trafficking requires governments to prioritize multiple layers of cooperation, including internally between government agencies and externally with other governments, international organizations, the private sector, academia, media, community leaders, NGOs, and survivors and survivor-led organizations."<sup>1</sup>

The investigation of sex trafficking cases is a complex undertaking, having a STITF will allow for a coordinated effort to identify victims and traffickers through proactive investigations as well as a centralized source of expertise for reactive investigations. A task force provides the opportunity for information sharing and leveraging of resources across partner agencies for a more efficient and effective response to sex trafficking investigations.

A multi-jurisdictional sex trafficking investigations task force should be structured in a way that incorporates elements that have been proven to be successful. STITFs should:

1. employ a victim-centered collaborative approach that reflects patience, empathy, and compassion for victims while responding to their needs. When law enforcement, prosecution, service providers, or others are involved in a sex trafficking case, advocacy for victims must remain central in the process;
2. include at least two separate law enforcement agencies;

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<sup>1</sup> [2023 Trafficking in Persons Report](#)

3. have at least two fulltime investigators assigned for at least a two year period; there can be additional fulltime and part-time officers assigned;
4. have a designated analyst(s);
5. operate with an identified team leader or commander;
6. have a sufficient oversight structure that engages partner agency leadership; which includes holding at a minimum, quarterly oversight meetings;
7. have designated prosecutorial buy-in from the county(ies) where proactive operations are occurring;
8. have a crime victim's advocate to ensure the provision of protection and delivery of specialized services to victims;
9. have a Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) in place with all partner agencies;
10. agree to statewide coordination of best practice guidelines
11. agree to communicate with other STI task forces especially for deconfliction operations purposes.

## RFP Part 3: Application Process and Instructions

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### 3.1 Application Deadline

**All applications must be submitted using the [e-grants](#) web-based system by 4:00 pm on September 30, 2024.** Applications cannot be submitted after this time. No paper submissions will be accepted.

### 3.2 Application Submission Instructions

Applications must be submitted via e-grants, the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) online grants management system. [e-grants](#) can also be accessed via the Office of Justice Programs [website](#). If you have never applied for a grant with the Office of Justice Programs, create a user account by clicking on the purple "New User" option in the login box in the upper right corner of the e-grants website and follow instructions to fill out the profile. Contact the e-grants Helpdesk at 1-800-820-1890 if you have login issues.

### 3.3 Terms and Conditions, Grant Program Guidelines, OJP Grant Manual

As part of submitting this application in e-grants the applicant agency agrees to the Terms and Conditions of OJP Grantees for applicants as well as the Sex Trafficking Investigations Grant Guidelines. By agreeing to these in e-grants the applicant is confirming that they have the ability to make these commitments. Applicants are encouraged to print and review these documents with the appropriate agency staff prior to submitting the application in e-grants. Grantees agree to follow the OJP [Grant Manual](#), which provides basic information on policies and procedures for grant administration. These documents become, by reference, part of the formal grant contract agreement.

### 3.4 Application Content

The application consists of the following required parts; any missing part will prevent the application from submission. **Applications that do not answer all questions will not score well in the review process.**

#### 1. Project Information Form

Input this information directly into the form in e-grants and it will be used as the cover sheet for the application. You will need:

- Contact information for the Fiscal/Applicant Agency (this is the agency named in the grant contract and responsible for the administration of the grant)
- The fiscal agent's federal and state identification numbers
- Contact information for the person/s responsible for programming, financials and contracts
- Brief project description and project's geographic information

#### 2. Narrative (75 Points)

Address the following in a six page maximum Word document with ¾" margins, single-spaced and with a 12-point font size. When ready to submit, **upload the narrative as an attachment in e-grants.** The narrative should address the following issues (please number responses):

##### A. Organizational Capacity (5 Points)

- Understaffing in law enforcement- describe how partner agencies are prepared to dedicate fulltime officer/s, other staff and resources to exclusively work on sex trafficking task force related work.
- Geographic coverage - what areas of the state will your investigations cover?

##### B. Needs Statement (10 Points)

- Describe the need/s for your task force; what are the investigative targets? Why did you choose these targets?
- Include relevant quantitative and qualitative data to support the need statement.
- Describe the current response to the problem: what is working, what is not, identify existing gaps.

##### C. Partnerships and Staffing (10 Points)

The purpose of these funds are not to supplant existing fulltime positions that do not currently investigate sex trafficking cases. All fulltime grant funded staff are required to only work on grant activity. If existing staff that are not currently fulltime taskforce members are being included in budget request, you will be required to describe how that position will be backfilled.

- Describe the roles, responsibilities and grant experience of grant staff, oversight committee and taskforce partners (both paid and not paid by STI grant funds). Specifically state who will be responsible for grant monitoring and reporting.

- Describe the task force structure; including oversight.
- Describe how taskforce members are trained to serve diverse populations, specifically communities who have been historically oppressed and excluded.
- State whether or not current staff that are not funded by grant funds will be included in the grant budget. If proposing to supplant current non-grant funded staff, please describe the plan to backfill the position.

**D. Project Description (40 Points)**

**1) If applying as a new task force:**

- Describe how you are going to address the 11 STITF elements (please number each element).
- Describe how you have and will share intelligence/information and coordinate efforts with others who are not members of your task force in furtherance of your goals. To include: local, state and federal agencies; other task/strike forces; and community agencies and businesses.
- Describe how you will identify targets by analyzing relevant data and information and engage the community to establish criminal enforcement and prosecution priorities.

**2) If you have a currently active STITF:**

- Describe the highlights of the past two years for your task force.
- Describe how you have and will continue to address the required 11 STITF elements.
- Describe the lessons learned and what will change because of those lessons.
- Describe the impact your taskforce has made in the task force partners' jurisdictions, as well as statewide if applies.

**3. Budget (20 Points)**

All budget items must be reasonable and critical to your proposed activities. The budget should be consistent with your narrative, making it clear how each of the activities will be funded. The budget will cover the one-year period and all expenses must be listed and directly related to the grant. When estimating costs, please show your calculations by including quantities, unit costs and other details. Only include grant funded expenses in the budget descriptions.

**NOTE: If reimbursed expenses are later found to be ineligible, the grantee will be asked to repay those funds.**

**Enter the budget directly into e-grants.** Directions for entering the budget are available in the [Application Guide](#). The [Budget Detail Requirements](#) will show you examples and specific requirements for each of the line items.

**Budget line items include:**

Personnel, Payroll Taxes & Fringe, Contract Services, Travel, Training, Office Expenses, Program Expenses, Indirect Costs and Other Expenses. Not all line items need to be used.

**Staffing considerations:**

If grant funded staff are unable to dedicate their fulltime to grant activity they will be required to track and only be reimbursed for their grant hours.

**4. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (5 points)**

A Memorandum of Understanding is required as part of the application. This MOU needs to describe how all partner agencies will work together to demonstrate effective collaboration in investigating sex trafficking cases. Describe each partner's role in the STITF and evidence of their willingness to leverage and redeploy existing resources and create new sources of support. (A separate Joint Powers Agreement for law enforcement agency partners will also be a post award requirement. Upload the **signed MOU** with your application.

**5. Indirect Rate Documentation (if applicable)**

Indirect costs, often referred to as overhead, are costs shared by the organization as a whole and most often are not able to be broken down within each program of the organization. Indirect costs can be requested in one of the following ways:

1. Budget expenses directly in the applicable budget categories.
2. Use the federally allowed de minimus rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC). MTDC calculation **excludes** equipment, rental costs, participant support costs (Direct Client Assistance), and the portion of each subcontract in excess of \$25,000.
3. Use your federally approved indirect cost rate. If the federally approved indirect cost rate has expired then indirect costs must be directly charged in appropriate budget categories.

Using the Indirect Rate Documentation form in the application, you will calculate and request the indirect costs amount entered in your application's budget. **Complete either the MTDC or federal rate request form and if using a federally approved rate upload a current copy of a current indirect costs agreement.**

**6. Organizational Financial Information Form**

This information is entered into an e-grants form:

1. Organization Entity Type
2. Fiscal Information
3. Financial Documents



4. Administrative Systems

5. Grant Management Experience

**WHAT AN APPLICATION MUST INCLUDE TO BE FORWARDED FOR REVIEW:**

**(e-grants will not let the application be submitted if any of these are missing)**

- **Project Information form** must be completed
- **Narrative** addressing questions listed above in 2 must be uploaded
- **Budget** with calculations included
- **Signed Memorandum of Understanding** must be uploaded
- **Indirect Documentation Form** (if including indirect costs in budget)
- **Organization Financial Information Form**

## RFP Part 4: Application Review Process

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This is a competitive application process. A review committee made up of community and systems members will read and rate applications using a 100-point scale. The reviewers will meet and discuss the proposals and then put forth their recommendations. Please see OJP website for the review sheet that reviewers will be using to score.

A final staff review will consider geographic locations, coordination with other federal, state, and local funding and past grantee performance. Timeliness and completeness of past grant financial and progress reporting is also considered. The Commissioner of Public Safety will make the final funding decisions and award notification will be by email to applicants.

## RFP Part 5: Post Award Requirements

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- **Pre Award Risk Assessment and Financial Review.** In accordance with state and federal grant management policies it is required to consider a grant applicant's risk of noncompliance with grant requirements. State policy requires states to conduct a financial review prior to a grant award made of \$25,000 and higher to any organization. The necessary information for this is provided in the Organizational Financial Information form in the application.
- **Minnesota's Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion in Procurement**  
The State of Minnesota is committed to diversity and inclusion in its public procurement process. The goal is to ensure that those providing goods and services to the State are representative of our Minnesota communities and include businesses owned by minorities, women, veterans, and those with substantial physical disabilities. Creating broader opportunities for historically under-represented groups provides for additional options and greater competition in the marketplace, creates stronger relationships and engagement within our communities, and fosters economic

development and equality.

To further this commitment, the Department of Administration operates a program for Minnesota-based small businesses owned by minorities, women, veterans, and those with substantial physical disabilities. For additional information on this program, or to determine eligibility, please call 651-296- 2600 or go to the [OEP website](#).

- **Grant Contract Process.** After being selected for funding, OJP staff will work with the applicant to negotiate a final budget. The formal grant contract consists of the Grant Agreement, the Terms and Conditions, the Program Guidelines, as well as the work plan and budget. The Grant Agreement will be initiated, signed by grantee and OJP, and once fully executed it is then a legally binding agreement. Grant agreements not signed within 30 days of receipt may be canceled.
- **Progress Reporting.** Grantees will be required to submit regular narrative reports and data in a prescribed manner.
- **Grant Payments.** This is a cost reimbursement grant. Grantees will only be paid for eligible expenses (after the grant contract is fully executed) that are incurred and are consistent with the negotiated budget.
- **OJP Grant Manual.** Grantees, grantee subgrants and contracts agree to follow the OJP Grant Manual as part of the application process. The manual is a resource for how our office manages grants and covers topics such as grant administration policies, program modification policies, general accounting requirements, etc. [OJP Grant Manual](#)

## RIGHT OF CANCELLATION

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The State reserves the right to cancel this solicitation if it is considered to be in its best interest. The State reserves the right to negotiate modifications to the application or to reject any and all applications received as a result of this Request for Proposals. The State does not intend to award a grant contract solely on the basis of any response made to this request, or pay for information solicited or obtained.