

CalVIP Frequently Asked Questions

Posted: March 17, 2020

(Re-posted March 20, 2020 with correction to Question 5)

Please note that the answers provided at the Bidders' Conference to Questions 1-3 were incorrect or misleading. Please review the correct answers provided here:

1. Can a portion of the match be met during the last six months, as long as it is related to the evaluation or audit?

Answer: The correct answer is "no;" match may not be incurred during the last six months of the contract term. All match contributions must be incurred by June 30, 2023 in order to count toward the grant.

2. Are letters of agreement required only for in-kind partners and not for formal subcontractors who will be receiving grant funds?

*Answer: On the video, staff stated that letters of agreement were required only for in-kind partners and not for formal subcontractors. That answer was misleading. In fact, when determining whether or not to include a Letter of Agreement for an outside entity, applicants should refer back to the "Organizational Capacity and Coordination" section on page 14 of the RFP which states: "**If the success of the proposed strategy relies on the participation of an outside agency or organization – that is, if an entity other than the applicant is to play a necessary or critical role in project implementation** – the applicant must include a Letter of Agreement, Letter of Commitment or other signed written agreement to demonstrate that the outside agency is aware of the proposed partnership and agrees to participate."*

3. Does the application email have to come from the lead applicant, or can it come from a subcontractor, e.g. a grant writing consultant?

Answer: The proposal may be submitted by a grant writing consultant, but the applicant must be authorized by the eligible applicant and the requisite signature(s) and from the applicant must be part of the application.

RFP Requirements

4. Does BSCC require "inked" signatures for the Advisory Council membership included in Appendix H?

Answer: The RFP does not specify that the signatures for the Advisory Council document be "inked," so e-signatures will be accepted.

5. We understand we can include a 1-page bibliography in our proposal. My question is does it have to conform to the formatting guidelines for the narrative (Arial Times New Roman, 12-point font, 1.5 spacing), or can we do something different, like single spacing and 10- or 11-point font?

Answer: The RFP does not specify that the formatting for the 1-page bibliography, so applicants may use a smaller font or margin.

Eligibility

6. Can a community-based organization (CBO) be a direct applicant and also be included as a subgrantee on separate application?

*Answer: Yes. From page 5 of the RFP: "Eligible applicants **may not** submit more than one proposal. However, any applicant may apply as a direct grantee and may also be listed as a subgrantee on a different proposal. If an applicant intends to apply directly and is also a subgrantee on another proposal, the proposals **cannot** be duplicative and must fund separate and unique activities." Services cannot be duplicated and double billing (i.e., charging for the same services for identical program participants) is strictly prohibited.*

7. Can a CBO apply for both Category 2 and 3 funding?

Answer: No, CBOs are not eligible to apply for Category 3 funding. That funding is set-aside for small cities only.

8. Can hospitals apply for the grants? Our hospital is a level 2 trauma center and is very interested in mitigating gun violence.

Answer: As long as your hospital is a private and not public hospital, you are eligible to apply as a community-based organization.

9. Our organization just applied for the Youth Reinvestment Grant. Are we still eligible to apply for this RFP?

Answer: Yes. However, the CalVIP project must be separate and distinct from the YRG project. Services cannot be duplicated and double billing (i.e., charging for the same services for identical program participants) is strictly prohibited.

10. Our organization currently has a CalVIP grant. Are we still eligible to apply for this RFP?

Answer: Yes. However, the new CalVIP project must be separate and distinct from the current CalVIP project. Services cannot be duplicated and double billing (i.e., charging for the same services for identical program participants) is strictly prohibited.

11. Will CBOs that are currently receiving CalVIP funds be considered separately in the application process?

Answer: No, current grantees will not be given priority consideration nor will they be penalized.

12. Will you confirm that cities NOT listed in either Table 1 or Table 2 of the RFP are not eligible to apply?

Answer: Yes, that is correct. Only cities listed in Table 1 (page 6) or Table 2 (page 7) of the RFP are eligible to apply.

13. If a community-based organization (CBO) is meeting the criteria of serving residents within one or more of the 29 cities that are disproportionately impacted by violence (per Table 1 of

the RFP), could they also serve residents outside those cities, e.g. in the unincorporated areas of the county?

Answer: CBOs must use grant funds to serve residents of the 29 cities disproportionately impacted by violence, listed on page 6 of the RFP. However, if a grantee encounters an individual who lives outside the city but is identified as contributing to the violence in the impacted city, services may be provided to that individual on a case-by-case basis and with prior approval from the BSCC.

14. Can a city and a CBO within that city both apply for CalVIP funds?

Answer: Yes. The BSCC will accept only one proposal per applicant, therefore cities are restricted to one application per city (note that the application may come from the city itself or from a department that the city authorized to apply within that city). There are no restrictions on the number of CBOs that can apply from within one city.

15. Who can apply on behalf of the city for CalVIP? Does the application need to come from the Mayor/ Administration? Can any city department including the police department apply on behalf of the city?

Answer: Please see page 5 of the RFP, under Eligibility to Apply: “Either the city itself or a department within the city may serve as the applicant.”

16. Are only the 66 cities with population of 40,000 or less listed in Table 2 eligible to apply, or are CBOs that serve residents in these 66 cities also eligible to apply?

Answer: The State Budget Act sets aside \$3 million for “competitive grants to cities with populations of 40,000 or less.” Only cities will be eligible to apply for these funds, CBOs that serve these cities are not eligible to apply directly, though they can receive funds as a partner to the city.

Audit Requirement

17. Will BSCC provide an audit guide that grantees can use to solicit bids for the required audit?

Answer: No, BSCC does not provide an audit guide. Grantees should plan for a standard financial audit of the three-year grant period, conducted by a Certified Public Accountant according to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

18. How much may an applicant budget for audit costs?

Answer: Applicants may budget for up to \$25,000 in grant funds for the required financial audit. Applicants may also use match funds, or a combination of both.

19. The project period ends June 30, 2023 and grantees will submit the invoice by August 15, 2020 and then 30 to 60 days get paid – does all of that have to be included as part of the audit? That is, the auditor would be working October through December and they would be looking at the reimbursement up to that last payment, correct?

Answer: The financial audit must cover all project expenditures (grant-funded and match) during the period of July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2023. The auditor does not need to wait until that

last invoice clears to start work on the audit. BSCC provided the six-month closeout period for the audit and evaluation to be done.

20. I want to confirm that, if awarded, grantees are required to provide an audit only of the funded program from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2023 and the audit must be conducted by an independent certified CPA?

Answer: Both of those statements are correct.

Match Contributions

21. If an organization serves multiple cities, could match funds that pay for services in another city (different than the one we apply for) be counted?

Answer: Yes, but that city should be included in the proposal and must also be one of the eligible cities listed on Table 1 of the RFP.

22. Are county agencies such as probation or the sheriff's department eligible to contribute to the match requirement?

Answer: Yes. Any type of partnering agency may contribute match to the project, although the grantee is ultimately responsible for fulfilling the match requirement.

23. May subcontractors contribute toward the match requirement?

Answer: Yes, however the grantee is ultimately responsible for fulfilling the match requirement.

24. Do you have general written guidelines for in-kind match for our use in discussions with our fiscal department?

Answer: Yes, please see page 41 of the 2016 BSCC [Grant Administration Guide](#), available on the BSCC website. The general rule is that match contributions must be documented, tracked and reported in the same way as are grant funds. The rules that apply to grant expenditures also apply to match contributions, i.e. only ACTUAL expenditures may be counted as match, not estimates or percentages.

25. What if an applicant commits a 200% match, for example there is a case manager and in the course of the three years the grantee did not just match at a 100%, they matched at 200% and by the time the three years ends the grantee is over-matched, is that okay?

Answer: BSCC strongly recommends that applicants not commit more than the 100% match in the proposed budget; proposals will not be scored higher for additional match and grantees will be required to provide that amount. If a grantee in fact contributes more than the required 100% match during the project period, that information can be included as a part of the Final Evaluation Report but should not be included on financial invoices to BSCC. Anything reported on the financial invoices is subject to an audit.

26. Can office space be used for a match?

Answer: Yes, donated office space can be used as match as long as the grantee uses a sound and reasonable methodology to calculate the value of the donated space using fair-market value.

27. How do grantees typically meet the 100% match requirement?

Answer: BSCC has seen grantees use any combination of the following to meet the match requirement: salaries and benefits for staff that are working on the grant project, but funded by another source (other than BSCC grant funds) or donated by a partner agency; volunteers and interns; donated meeting space; donated supplies; indirect costs (above that which the RFP allows be claimed in grant funds); food or meals provided to staff at grant-related meetings or training classes; evaluator time; etc. In all cases, the grantee must be able to demonstrate how the match contribution directly impacts, enhances or complements the grant-funded project and track actual contributions only.

28. I wanted to confirm that the 100% matching funds requirement was not negotiable (as it is statute). A 100% match may not be feasible for our organization. We could probably match a smaller percentage.

Answer: You are correct that the 100% match appears in statute and is therefore non-negotiable. However, I want to remind you that a grantee may count either cash or in-kind contributions toward the match requirement. Also, partner agencies and subcontractors may contribute toward the match; all of it does not have to come from the grantee itself (though the grantee is ultimately responsible). And finally, remember that you do not have to apply for the maximum amount; you may apply for any amount up to that cap. Applicants are encouraged to apply for only what they can reasonably match and spend. For example, you could apply for \$200k, \$300k, \$500k, etc.

Six-Month Closeout Period

29. Can applicants budget grant funds for staff time used in assisting auditors and evaluators during the last six months of the contract term (i.e., not used as match but paid for by CalVIP funds)?

Answer: Yes. Please refer to Exhibit B (Budget Detail and Payment Provisions) of the Sample Grant Agreement, included in the RFP as Appendix J, which states (in part): "Expenditures related to the completion of the Final Evaluation Report and financial audit may be incurred during the last six months, i.e. July 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023."

30. For the final six months of the contract term, does the match contribution have to be limited to the audit or evaluation or can we use match to sustain the program?

Answer: Please see the answer to the preceding question: "All project expenditures and match must be incurred by the end of the project period, i.e. June 30, 2023..." All CalVIP-supported project activities (either grant-funded or match) must end on June 30, 2023.

Eligible Expenses

31. What are your thoughts on the use of Cognitive Behavioral Treatment (CBT) without a certified clinician?

Answer: BSCC cannot provide technical assistance related to the substance of a proposal.

32. Are stipends for any violence prevention programs, such as peer mentoring, allowable?

Answer: Yes, stipends are allowable. However, applicants should have a plan for how and when they distribute the stipends. The plan should be based on achieving milestones, progress against case plan, hours worked, etc. Also, applicants must have a plan in place for tracking the distribution and oversight of those stipends. The use of stipends will require prior approval from BSCC after award, even if included in the proposed budget.

33. In terms of participant support items, are things as safety relocation, safe passage, youth stipends be allowed? I did not see it in the BSCC Grant Guide.

Answer: Yes, we are updating our policies and procedures to be more specific and will make these updates to the BSCC Grant Guide. Yes, we do allow these items. You do need prior approval for any purchase of these items listed above or for participant travel that exceeds \$100 per day.

34. Part of what the city wants to do is to use part of the funds for a police officer's salary that is part of a street outreach team, is there anything that prohibits paying law enforcement personnel with grant funds?

Answer: There is nothing in the RFP that prohibits using CalVIP funds for a police officer's salary and benefits. Keep in mind, however, that a law enforcement agency may not retain more than 50% of the funds because of the pass-through requirement.

35. Do staff trainings have to be approved ahead of time and is there a cap on training costs?

Answer: If it is included in the proposed budget, grantees do not need to seek separate approval for staff training, unless it is out-of-state travel. All out-of-state travel requires prior approval. There is no cap on training costs imposed by the RFP.

36. Some states limit consultant rates to \$81.25 per hour or something close. Are there certain evaluator or auditor rates that are acceptable?

Answer: Please refer to the 2016 BSCC Grant Administration Guide, Section 7. Contracts and Procurements, G. Rates: "The rate [for an independent contractor/consultant] is to be negotiated by the Grantee in accordance with the agency's consultant hiring policies. The rate is the total amount payable including any and all benefit. Grantee must ensure that the per-day rate (excluding travel and per diem cost) paid to independent contractors is reasonable. An eight-hour day may include preparation, evaluation and travel time in addition to the time required for actual performance.

37. Can funding be used to hire a police officer in a rural community to do a project where we pair an SRO with a mental health professional?

Answer: There is nothing in the RFP that prohibits the hiring of a police officer as an eligible grant expense, but please read page 11 of the RFP and take all other requirements into consideration: "AB 1603 requires that CalVIP grants be used to support, expand and replicate evidence-based violence reduction strategies 'that seek to interrupt cycles of violence and retaliation in order to reduce the incidence of homicides, shootings, and aggravated assaults.' Within that definition, applicants have some discretion in selecting a strategy or strategies that best fit the scope of the problem and the needs of the target community... Applicants may choose to incorporate components from several strategies to best fit the needs of the individuals targeted for services. See Appendix E, Glossary of Terms, for descriptions of these strategies and other resources." The only activities called out as ineligible are the acquisition

of real property/real estate; guns, weapons, weapons systems or ammunition; and high-tech surveillance or monitoring systems.

38. Is it permissible to use some of the funding for leadership development (e.g., creation of a youth council) and advocacy / community organizing to press for improved school disciplinary policies and procedures (e.g., to respond to bullying, or to reduce suspensions and expulsions)?

Answer: There is nothing in the RFP that prohibits leadership development as an eligible grant expense, but please read page 11 of the RFP: "AB 1603 requires that CalVIP grants be used to support, expand and replicate evidence-based violence reduction strategies 'that seek to interrupt cycles of violence and retaliation in order to reduce the incidence of homicides, shootings, and aggravated assaults.' Within that definition, applicants have some discretion in selecting a strategy or strategies that best fit the scope of the problem and the needs of the target community... Applicants may choose to incorporate components from several strategies to best fit the needs of the individuals targeted for services. See Appendix E, Glossary of Terms, for descriptions of these strategies and other resources." The only activities called out as ineligible are the acquisition of real property/real estate; guns, weapons, weapons systems or ammunition; and high-tech surveillance or monitoring systems. In addition, while "advocacy" groups may be allowed, BSCC grant funds cannot be used for "lobbying." Please see pp. 21-23 of the BSCC grant guide.

39. Is it permissible to implement an early intervention / prevention program targeting groups of youth who are most likely to become perpetrators or victims of violent crime?

Answer: There is nothing in the RFP that prohibits early intervention / prevention as an eligible grant expense but see additional language above.

Indirect Costs

40. Is there a cap on indirect costs that can be claimed by the grantee and funded by CalVIP?

Answer: Yes, there are two options for indirect costs: Applicants may request either (1) 5 percent of total project costs (excluding equipment) or (2) 10 percent of salaries & benefits (applicant salaries and benefits). However, if your organization has an approved federally negotiated indirect cost rate or Board approved cost allocation plan that provides for a higher indirect cost rate, you can apply the difference as a match contribution.

41. My question is regarding indirect costs for subcontractors – are subcontractors allowed indirect within the funds that are directed to them should it be included as a part of the 5% or 10% allotted to grantees?

Answer: Any and all costs associated with your subcontractors (including indirect costs) must be included in the appropriate line item (either Professional Services & Public Agency Subcontracts or Non-Governmental Organization Subcontracts). Indirect costs incurred by the subcontractors do not count toward the grantee's restriction on indirect costs. Subcontractors may claim indirect costs according to the grantee's own policies.

Evaluation Requirement

42. If we are planning to use an outside consultant (in addition to our evaluation department) as part of our evaluation plan, should we include this cost under the Professional Services budget line item?

Answer: No, all costs associated with your evaluation should go under the Project Evaluation budget line item (line 6).

43. For the final evaluation, are comparison groups a prioritized or required element of the evaluation methodology?

Answer: No, they are not a prioritized or required element of the evaluation methodology for CalVIP. The use of a comparison group in an evaluation was provided as an example only.

44. Part of our proposed initiative is to build internal capacity for evaluation, and we have internal evaluation staff who plan to work on this project. Is it mandatory for grantees to hire an outside evaluator? And, are you asking grantees to use a quasi-experimental design like a comparison group? The comparison group itself is a whole project and requires a lot of resources.

Answer: Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to hire an outside evaluator. No, a quasi-experimental design is not required.

45. We are in the process of internally setting ourselves up, which includes determining our data management system. Can CalVIP funds be used to support us in our salesforce management onboarding?

Answer: Grantees may use grant funds to support a new data or case management system. However, if the new system will be used by the entire agency and not just the grant project, then only that portion of the cost relative to the grant's portion of the agency's total budget may be funded by the grant. In that scenario, a grantee would need to document the methodology used to support the costs charged to the grant.

Page Limits

46. Is the bibliography limited to one page?

Answer: Yes, but it does not count toward the 12-page limit imposed on the Proposal Narrative.

47. The page limitations for budget and workplan seem too restrictive for the scope of both budget and program activities with partnerships and integrated strategies. Why have these page limits been imposed?

Answer: This was an Executive Steering Committee (ESC) decision. The ESC will have many proposals to read and score, so it is important that the amount of information be manageable so that equal consideration can be given to all proposals.

Budget

48. Am I correct that we should budget for staff to attend three events in Sacramento (the Grantee Orientation and up to two meetings to work with the evaluator)? If so, how many days will these meetings take place?

Answer: Yes, the RFP instructs applicants to budget for three trips to Sacramento. One is the Grantee Orientation, which will be a one-day event. The other events are preliminary at this point but will likely also be one-day meetings. Note: given recent outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19), these meetings may be cancelled or will occur via teleconference. At this time, please continue to budget for these meetings.)

49. We understand that the CalVIP grant amount has tripled. Is this a one-time injection of cash or is it an ongoing revenue source?

Answer: The increased funding this fiscal year was a one-time infusion of General Fund dollars.

50. Should the CalVIP grant revert to \$9 million, will the small city set-aside essentially be done away with?

Answer: This set-aside appeared in the Budget Act and not in the Penal Code, as enacted by Assembly Bill 1603. Therefore, BSCC cannot answer that question until the enactment of next year's State Budget.

50% Pass-Through Requirement for Cities

51. If a city police agency was seeking funding to be able to give to a community-based organization to provide services to high-risk populations would this meet the pass-through requirements?

Answer: Please see page 10 of the RFP, under Mandatory Pass-Through Requirement for City Applicants:

Authorizing statute requires that all city grantees (including cities with populations of 40,000 or less) pass through at least 50 percent of the grant funds they receive to one or more of the following:

- *Non-governmental, community-based organizations and/or*
- *Public agencies that are not law enforcement whose primary mission is violence prevention or community safety (e.g. Office of Violence Prevention, Office of Neighborhood Safety, etc.). (Note: if the city designates this type of department or agency as the applicant entity, this requirement will be automatically met.)*

Professional grants management organizations, consulting firms, auditors and evaluators may not count toward meeting this pass-through obligation.”

Please note that all community-based organizations and non-governmental organizations that receive grant funds either as a direct grantee or as a subgrantee must also meet the criteria listed on page 8.

52. In the scenario described in the preceding question, would the applicant still meet the pass-through requirement if (a) the lead city applicant was a non-law enforcement agency within the city government (i.e., a Department of Violence Prevention) (b) which split the grant award with a police department (c) *who then* passed the bulk of its portion to a CBO?

Answer: The practical effect of the pass-through requirement is that a law enforcement agency may not keep more than 50 percent of the grant funds and the other 50 percent must go directly to one or more of the entities defined in the bullets above. The scenario you present would meet the pass-through requirement as long as the city office of violence prevention retained at least 50 percent of the funds.

53. Can a tribal governmental entity be considered a CBO partner for purposes of meeting the 50% pass-through requirement?

Answer: No, because a tribal government is neither a nongovernmental, community-based organization nor a public agency whose primary mission is violence prevention or community safety. However, an affiliated tribal entity/business/non-profit could be the pass-through entity.

54. Would a non-profit catholic school be considered a viable pass-through entity for purposes of meeting the 50% pass-through requirement?

Answer: Yes, as long as the school is a non-profit and as long as the funds are used for a secular purpose.

55. For purposes of meeting the 50% pass-through requirement, can you opine on whether a City Prosecutor's Office would be considered a law enforcement agency, per PC 14130(h)(2)?

Answer: Yes, the city prosecutor is considered a law enforcement agency for purposes of CalVIP.

56. Can a small city partner with a school district or individual school? If so, could they be considered a CBO partner? Or would that come out of the city's non-CBO 50%?

Answer: There are no restrictions on the number or type of organizations with which a CalVIP grantee may partner. However, school districts are not considered to be community-based organizations and would not count toward the 50% pass-through requirement. Only non-governmental organizations may count as CBOs.