Violence Intervention and Prevention Program (VIPP) Implementation and Outcome Evaluation VIPP-EVAL

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Is this funding opportunity only available to organizations in the state of Maryland?**
    a. No, organizations do not have to be in the state of Maryland to apply, but they do have to be able to travel to Maryland for in-person site visits and meetings.
2. **Is the $300,000 annual evaluation budget specified within the legislative requirement for the external evaluation?**
    a. Yes, the legislation states that up to 10% of the total VIPP annual fund amount ($3 million) will be set aside for the evaluation , which is $300,000.00 per year for three years.
3. **Is there a reason that the SFY 27 funding was delayed until December 1?**
    a. The evaluation was placed on a delayed start in comparison to the general VIPP fund to ensure potential applicants would know how many programs, and specifically which programs, would be part of the evaluation cohort.
4. **The NOFA sections and word limits don't completely align with those in the GMS. Which should we follow?**
    a. Please follow the NOFA requirements.
5. **Who should/can submit a letter of support for our application?**
    a. If you will have partners or subcontractors on this work, they would be a strong pick. Otherwise, any entity that has close knowledge of your organizational and evaluation capacity is fine.
6. **If our organization has a relationship with a VIPP-funded program, can we still apply?**
    a. Yes, you may still apply. That being said, please make note of any relationships or conflicts of interest in the application where asked.
7. **What evaluation related requirements, if any, have the funded agencies committed to? What time were they required to allocate to support evaluation related activities?**
    a. The VIPP NOFA states that all VIPP awardees are required to participate in this evaluation, to include participating in statewide evaluation efforts coordinated by GOCPP and working with third-party evaluators, where applicable.
    b. Additionally, one of the special conditions associated with the grant that all awardees have signed requires that the subrecipient agrees to participate in the activities associated with the GOCPP acquiring an independent evaluator to evaluate the effectiveness of each grant funded program. Some of the activities may include in-person meeting, conference calls, site visits, and other necessary activities decided by the GOCPP and evaluator. The grantees understand that if they do not comply, their funding can, and will, be withheld.

8. **What communication can the evaluator have with each program? What evaluation reporting, if any, can go directly to funded sites?**
    a. The selected evaluator will be expected to maintain direct, ongoing communication with designated contacts at each funded program; to include intro and planning meetings, site visits, interviews, data quality discussions, coordination of participant data collection, review of program records, and follow-up regarding emerging questions or findings – as seen fit.
    b. The evaluator must propose a program engagement schedule that provides meaningful coverage to all funded programs. The specific communication protocols and schedule will be finalized after awarding.
    c. Direct site-level feedback is also anticipated as part of the evaluation; to include data-quality feedback, implementation observations, preliminary findings, dashboards, site summaries, or other audience-appropriate products. Interim findings must be clearly identified as preliminary and appropriately qualified. The process for reviewing and distributing formal written products will be established with GOCPP after award, and all reporting must comply with applicable privacy, confidentiality, consent, and data-use requirements.
9. **Is there an expectation that the evaluation will commence in Year 1? If so, is there an expectation that participant and community outcomes are reported in the Year 1 Annual Evaluation Report?**
    a. Yes, quarterly reports, as well as the annual evaluation update report will need to be completed for year one. We expect that a large portion of the activity in this first year will be finalizing the evaluation plan, getting acquainted with the programs, and having initial meetings. All other deliverables are expected to be completed by year 3, but there will be routine checking in with the Research, Analysis, and Evaluation Division to monitor project progress.
10. **When you said fidelity measurement is a priority for you, what specifically are you interested in measuring (e.g., adherence, dosage/exposure, quality of delivery, etc.)?**
    a. Fidelity should be assessed in a manner appropriate to the specific program model, its stage of development, approved design, etc.
    b. Relevant dimensions may include:
    c. Adherence to the models core components or the programs approved design
    d. Reach and participation
    e. Dosage, intensity, frequency, or duration of services
    f. Participant exposure and completion
    g. Quality and consistency of service delivery
    h. Staff training, qualifications, or supervision, where applicable
    i. Planned and unplanned adaptations
    j. The reasons for adaptations or variation across sites
    k. Contextual factors that support or impede implementation.

For programs using established models, applicants should identify established standards or instruments where available/appropriate. For evidence-informed approaches fidelity may be assessed against the program's logic model, approved scope, defined core components, and intended service-delivery processes.

The purpose is not just to determine whether a program checked off the markers. Fidelity info should help explain outcome findings, distinguish intentional adaptation (e.g., adapting a national model for rural jurisdictions) from implementation drift, and clarify whether limited results may reflect the underlying approach, implementation challenges, insufficient dosage, or other contextual factors. Applicants are responsible for proposing the specific fidelity measures and methods appropriate to the funded program models.