

## **Notices regarding the solicitation “Research and Development in Forensic Science for Criminal Justice Purposes”**

February 25, 2019: The link to the DOJ Grants Financial Management Online Training under “Financial Management and System of Internal Controls” was updated.

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February 19, 2019: Information regarding submission of information pertaining to disclosure and justification for DOJ High Risk Grantees was redacted.

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February 19, 2019: The year and link contained within the “Limitation on use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation; Waiver” section was updated.

The original solicitation document begins on the next page.



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The [U.S. Department of Justice](#) (DOJ), [Office of Justice Programs](#) (OJP), [National Institute of Justice](#) (NIJ) is seeking applications for funding of basic or applied research and development in forensic science for criminal justice purposes. This program furthers the Department's mission by sponsoring research to provide objective, independent, evidence-based knowledge and tools to meet the challenges of criminal justice, particularly at the state and local levels. [NIJ's Forensic Science Technology Working Group \(TWG\)](#) identifies current technology challenges encountered in operational forensic science laboratories. Research based knowledge and newly developed tools that work towards resolving these identified challenges facilitate the criminal justice community to enforce the law, promote public safety, prevent and reduce crime, and ensure fair and impartial administration of justice.

## **Research and Development in Forensic Science for Criminal Justice Purposes**

**Applications Due: April 11, 2019**

### **Eligibility**

In general, NIJ is authorized to make grants to, or enter into contracts or cooperative agreements with, States (including territories), units of local government, federally recognized Indian tribal governments that perform law enforcement functions (as determined by the Secretary of the Interior), nonprofit and for-profit organizations (including tribal nonprofit and for-profit organizations), institutions of higher education (including tribal institutions of higher education), and certain qualified individuals. Federal agencies are eligible to apply. (Any award made to a federal agency will be made as an inter-agency reimbursable agreement.) Foreign governments, foreign organizations, and foreign colleges and universities are not eligible to apply.

All recipients and subrecipients (including any for-profit organization) must forgo any profit or management fee.

NIJ welcomes applications under which two or more entities would carry out the federal award; however, only one entity may be the applicant. Any others must be proposed as subrecipients (subgrantees)<sup>1</sup>. The applicant must be the entity that would have primary responsibility for carrying out the award, including administering funding, managing the entire research project, and monitoring and appropriately managing any subawards ("subgrants").

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<sup>1</sup> For additional information on subawards, see "Budget and Associated Documentation" under [Section D. Application and Submission Information](#).

Under this solicitation, any particular applicant entity may submit more than one application, as long as each application proposes a different project in response to the solicitation. Also, an entity may be proposed as a subrecipient (subgrantee) in more than one application.

NIJ may elect to fund applications submitted under this FY 2019 solicitation in future fiscal years, dependent on, among other considerations, the merit of the applications and on the availability of appropriations.

## Deadline

Applicants must register with Grants.gov at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html> prior to submitting an application. All applications are due by 11:59 p.m. eastern time on April 11, 2019.

To be considered timely, an application must be submitted by the application deadline using Grants.gov, and the applicant must have received a validation message from Grants.gov that indicates successful and timely submission. OJP urges applicants to submit applications at least 72 hours prior to the application due date, to allow time for the applicant to receive validation messages or rejection notifications from Grants.gov, and to correct in a timely fashion any problems that may have caused a rejection notification.

OJP encourages all applicants to read this [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#).

For additional information, see [How to Apply](#) in [Section D. Application and Submission Information](#).

## Contact Information

For technical assistance with submitting an application, contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726, 606-545-5035, at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html>, or via email to [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). The [Grants.gov](#) Support Hotline operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays.

An applicant that experiences unforeseen Grants.gov technical issues beyond its control that prevent it from submitting its application by the deadline may email the NIJ contact identified below **within 24 hours after the application deadline** to request approval to submit its application. Additional information on reporting technical issues appears under Experiencing Unforeseen Grants.gov Technical Issues in the [How to Apply](#) section.

For assistance with any other requirements of this solicitation, contact the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) Response Center: toll-free at 1-800-851-3420; via TTY at 301-240-6310 (hearing impaired only); email [grants@ncjrs.gov](mailto:grants@ncjrs.gov); fax to 301-240-5830; or web chat at <https://webcontact.ncjrs.gov/ncjchat/chat.jsp>. The NCJRS Response Center hours of operation are 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. eastern time, Monday through Friday, and 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. eastern time on the solicitation close date. General information on applying for NIJ awards can be found at [www.nij.gov/funding/Pages/welcome.aspx](http://www.nij.gov/funding/Pages/welcome.aspx). Answers to frequently asked questions that may assist applicants are posted at [www.nij.gov/funding/pages/faqs.aspx](http://www.nij.gov/funding/pages/faqs.aspx).

Grants.gov number assigned to this solicitation: NIJ-2019-15387

Release date: January 17, 2019

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# Research and Development in Forensic Science for Criminal Justice Purposes

(CFDA no. 16.560)

## A. Program Description

### Overview

With this solicitation, NIJ seeks proposals for basic or applied research and development projects. An NIJ forensic science research and development grant supports a discrete, specified, circumscribed project that will: 1.) increase the body of knowledge to guide and inform forensic science policy and practice; or 2.) lead to the production of useful material(s), device(s), system(s), or method(s) that have the potential for forensic application.

The intent of this program is to direct the findings of basic scientific research; foster research and development in broader scientific fields applicable to forensic science; and support ongoing forensic science research toward the development of highly-discriminating, accurate, reliable, cost-effective, and rapid methods for the identification, analysis, and interpretation of physical evidence for criminal justice purposes. Projects should address the challenges and needs of the forensic science community, including, but not limited to, the operational needs discussed at [NIJ's FY 2019 Forensic Science TWG](#) meeting, which may be found on [NIJ.gov](#). Additional research needs of the forensic science community can be found at the Organization of Scientific Area Committees [website](#). While the goals and deliverables of proposed projects are not required to result in immediate solutions to the posted challenges and needs, proposals should at a minimum address the foundational work that will lead to eventual solutions.

Applications proposing research involving partnerships with criminal justice or other agencies, are to include a strong letter of support, signed by an appropriate decision-making authority from each proposed, partnering agency. A letter of support must include the partnering agency's acknowledgement that de-identified data provided through this project will be archived at the conclusion of the award — for example, and as appropriate, in the [National Archive of Criminal Justice Data \(NACJD\)](#) — (please see [Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Expected Scholarly Products](#) section below). If selected for award, applicants will be expected to have a formal agreement in place with partnering agencies by January 1, 2020. That agreement must include provisions to meet the data archiving requirements of the award. In rare circumstances, for example, where law prohibits the archiving of agency data, NIJ may agree to a successful applicant creating and archiving an appropriate synthetic dataset. Those circumstances will be rare, decided by NIJ on a case-by-case basis, and will require extensive documentation and justification for exceptions to be made.

**Statutory Authority:** Any awards under this solicitation would be made under statutory authority provided by a full-year appropriations act for FY 2019. As of the writing of this solicitation, the Department of Justice is operating under a short-term "Continuing Resolution"; no full-year appropriation for the Department has been enacted for FY 2019.

## Program-Specific Information

This solicitation seeks applications for funding to support basic or applied research and development forensic science projects for criminal justice purposes. For the purposes of this solicitation, the following definitions apply:

- Forensic — Of, relating to, or used in legal proceedings or argumentation.<sup>2</sup>
- Science — The observation, identification, description, experimental investigations, and theoretical explanation of natural phenomena.<sup>3</sup>
- Basic research — A systematic study directed toward fuller knowledge or understanding of the fundamental aspects of phenomena and of observable facts without specific applications towards processes or products in mind. Basic research may include activities with broad applications in mind.<sup>4</sup> For the purposes of this solicitation, basic research must include activities with broad application to forensic sciences related to the criminal justice system.
- Applied research — A systematic study to gain knowledge or understanding necessary to determine the means by which a recognized and specific need may be met.<sup>5</sup> For the purposes of this solicitation, the specific need(s) being met must relate to the improvement of forensic science services for criminal justice purposes.
- Development — The systematic application of knowledge or understanding, directed toward the production of useful materials, devices, and systems or methods, including design, development, and improvement of prototypes and new processes to meet specific requirements.<sup>6</sup> For the purposes of this solicitation, the development of forensic technologies and methods should assist in answering questions posed in criminal investigations or increase crime laboratory capacity to meet the demand for forensic science services.

Funding priorities for this program are expected to align with the Department of Justice's mission. Proposed projects should address the current technology challenges encountered by forensic scientists, by generating new knowledge or tools that will lead to better methods, move the state-of-the-art forward, or otherwise resolve identified issues; so as to assist law enforcement, enhance public safety, prevent and reduce crime, and ensure fair and impartial administration of justice. While the goals and deliverables of proposed projects are not required to result in immediate solutions to the posted challenges and needs, proposals should, at a minimum, address the foundational work that will lead to eventual solutions.

Proposals are expected to identify the focus areas (e.g., forensic science discipline(s)) intended to benefit from the project. **The focus areas should be listed in the keywords on the title page.** Some examples are listed below (where available, links have also been provided to sites containing additional information).

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<sup>2</sup> The definition of "forensic" is taken from *Webster's II New Riverside University Dictionary*.

<sup>3</sup> The definition of "science" is taken from *Webster's II New Riverside University Dictionary*.

<sup>4</sup> Definition is taken from: OMB Circular A-11, Preparation, Submission, and Execution of the Budget, Section 84—Character Classification (Schedule C).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

- DNA and forensic biology (<http://strbase.nist.gov>, <http://www.swgdam.org>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/biologydna-scientific-area-committee>).
- Forensic crime scene analysis (<https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/crime-scenedeath-investigation-scientific-area-committee>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/crime-scene-investigation-subcommittee>).
- Forensic anthropology and forensic odontology (<https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/anthropology-subcommittee>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/odontology-subcommittee>).
- Bloodstain pattern analysis (<http://www.swgstain.org>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/bloodstain-pattern-analysis-subcommittee>).
- Controlled substances (<http://www.swgdrug.org>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/seized-drugs-subcommittee>).
- Fire debris analysis and arson scene investigations (<http://www.swgfex.com>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/fire-and-explosion-investigation-subcommittee>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/fire-debris-and-explosives-subcommittee>).
- Firearms and toolmark identification (<https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/firearms-and-toolmarks-subcommittee>).
- Latent print (<http://www.swqfast.org>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/friction-ridge-subcommittee>).
- Shoeprint/tire tread examination (<https://treadforensics.com/>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/footwear-and-tire-subcommittee>).
- Questioned documents (<http://www.swgdoc.org>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/forensic-document-examination-subcommittee>).
- Trace evidence (<http://www.asteetrace.org>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/sac-chemistryinstrumental-analysis>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/materials-trace-subcommittee>).
- Forensic toxicology (<https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/toxicology-subcommittee>).
- Medicolegal death investigations, including forensic pathology (<http://www.swgmdi.org>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/crime-scenedeath-investigation-scientific-area-committee>, <https://www.nist.gov/topics/forensic-science/medicolegal-death-investigation-subcommittee>).

Indicators of successful proposals may include relationships/collaborations with operational, accredited crime laboratories, and demonstrated abilities to produce scholarly products. See the next section on Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Expected Scholarly Products for more details.

## Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Expected Scholarly Products

Proposals should address at least one of the goals specified below. Proposed projects that address more than one goal should be separated into discrete phases that clearly identify the goal to be addressed by each phase (additional information regarding the phasing of proposals can be found in [Section B. Federal Award Information](#)). Proposed projects should include goals that speak to specific forensic science needs and challenges which, if resolved, will aid the criminal justice community to enforce the law, enhance public safety, prevent and reduce crime, and ensure fair and impartial administration of justice. While some late-stage applied research and development projects may be able to propose tangible or direct solutions, early-stage research projects are not required to result in immediate solutions. However, these early-stage research projects should clearly explain how the proposed objectives, once achieved, will produce knowledge that contributes to eventual solutions.

- **Fundamental/Basic Research Goal:** Improve the understanding of the accuracy, reliability, and measurement validity of forensic science disciplines. Applicants may refer to [Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward](#) by the National Research Council of the National Academies to review historical material relevant to this goal. If addressing this goal, projects should meet at least one of the following objectives:
  - Conduct basic scientific research in the physical, life, and cognitive sciences that is designed to increase the knowledge underlying forensic science disciplines intended for use in the criminal justice system. For the purposes of this objective, basic research studies proposed must include activities with broad application to forensic sciences related to the criminal justice system. Proposals should describe the anticipated impact of the study on one or more forensic science disciplines.
  - Perform studies that examine the degree of accuracy and reliability of methods used by forensic scientists to achieve a more complete understanding of the scientific basis of forensic evidence and the interpretation of that evidence. Studies may also examine various processes within forensic methods, from the initial acceptance and examination of evidence for its probative value and quality, to the final interpretation of forensic results, including assessment of error rate.
  - Conduct research studies designed to further the understanding of quantifiable measures of uncertainty in the conclusions of forensic analyses, regardless of the sources of uncertainty. Studies should seek to establish limits of reliability and accuracy that forensic methods can achieve with respect to varying conditions of forensic evidence.
  - Develop new approaches to forensic analysis, including quantitation of analyses that are currently qualitative in nature (e.g., in the development of quantitative studies related to friction ridge analysis or other impression and pattern evidence).
- **Applied Research Goal:** Increase knowledge or understanding necessary to guide criminal justice policy and practice related to the forensic sciences. To achieve this goal, projects should meet at least one of the following objectives:
  - Perform applied research to increase knowledge of physical evidence and/or its behavior. Examples include, but are not limited to, the study of fluid transfer and fluid

dynamics of certain biological fluids (e.g., blood) to increase understanding of patterns deposited at crime scenes; the examination of chemical properties of evidence for the purpose of identifying source materials; studies of the behavior of chemical compounds of forensic interest in biological systems; research to better understand aged, degraded, limited, damaged, inhibited, or otherwise compromised physical evidence (e.g., studies on the effect of environmental factors on physical evidence; studies to increase the overall understanding of the processes and mechanisms that result in the inability to obtain analytical results from evidence).

- Perform evaluation studies of technologies that are expected to have application to forensic sciences in criminal justice settings. The purpose of an evaluation must be to test a new, modified, or previously untested technology to determine whether it is effective for forensic science application. Proposals for evaluation studies should systematically use scientific methods to measure efficiency, implementation, and utility of the technology being evaluated. The primary intent of a proposed evaluation study must be to generate new knowledge, or contribute to the knowledge in forensic scientific literature. Furthermore, knowledge gained from an evaluation study should be applicable to sites other than the one(s) being evaluated. An evaluation study should result in a report suitable for publication and dissemination to guide criminal justice policy and/or practice related to the forensic sciences. The results of an evaluation study should contribute to **generalizable knowledge that can be applied beyond a particular program/geography, and can inform other researchers, practitioners, and/or policymakers.**
- **Development Goal:** Produce novel and useful materials, devices, systems, or methods that have the potential for forensic application for criminal justice purposes. For development projects, proposals should demonstrate potential for increased quality of result and/or decreased time/cost for forensic analyses as compared to current standard practices. In order to achieve this goal, projects should meet at least one of the following objectives:
  - Improve the “front end” of the forensic analysis processes. Examples include, but are not limited to, the development of improved methods for detection and identification of evidence at crime scenes; the development of improved screening methods to help assess the probative value of physical evidence (i.e., onsite presumptive and/or confirmatory analysis of evidence); the development of improved means to remotely detect forensic evidence at a crime scene in order to overcome scene hazards and prevent evidence contamination; the development of nondestructive or minimally destructive methods for evidentiary sample identification and/or collection; the development of improved tools or methods for evidence preservation and/or storage.
  - Develop instrumental systems to improve analysis throughput and the reliability, reproducibility, selectivity, and/or sensitivity of current methods used in crime laboratories for forensic analysis.
  - Develop tools or methods that can separate the various components of a mixture. The separation method must be successful on typical forensic samples (limited in yield, etc.) and must not reduce the efficiency of downstream forensic methods. Examples of mixtures include, but are not limited to, cells from different sources (e.g., sperm cells from female epithelial cells, epithelial cells from different sources), products of DNA processes (e.g., polymerase chain reaction [PCR] products in mixtures from two or more individuals), and trace materials.

- Develop improved tools for examining aged, degraded, limited, damaged, inhibited, or otherwise compromised physical evidence. Examples include, but are not limited to, the development of tools to determine the condition of the evidence to assist crime laboratory analysts in selecting the appropriate analytical approach, the development of methods to repair damaged evidence (without compromising sample integrity) to increase the likelihood of obtaining an analytical result, improvements to the methods for detection and/or removal or remediation of substances that inhibit the success of analysis, or other methods that will maximize the success rate of the analysis of compromised evidence.
- Develop novel approaches to forensic science methods for analysis and interpretation. Examples include streamlined, portable, high-throughput, more informative, more sensitive, less susceptible to inhibition, and other novel methods for analysis of physical evidence for criminal justice purposes.
- Develop novel approaches and/or enhance current approaches to interpret forensic data derived from physical evidence, including an assessment of the significance of association. This may include development of databases (comprehensive, searchable, easily accessible, secure databases for use in determining the statistical strength of analytical results obtained from evidence found at crime scenes) and/or analyses that provide quantitative measures and statistical evaluation of forensic evidence.

Final Research Report. Any recipient of an award under this solicitation will be expected to submit a final research report. Additional information on the final research report requirement for the solicitation is posted on the [Post Award Reporting Requirements Page](#) on NIJ's website.

In addition to these deliverables (and the required reports and data on performance measures described in [Section F. Federal Award Administration Information](#)), NIJ expects scholarly products to result from each award under this solicitation, taking the form of one or more published, peer-reviewed, scientific journal articles, and/or (if appropriate) law review journal articles, book chapter(s) or book(s) in the academic press, technological prototypes, patented inventions, or similar scientific products.

Some projects may be chosen for technology evaluation or technology transition activities. More information, including examples of previous workshops and evaluations, can be found through the following links: <http://www.nij.gov/topics/forensics/lab-operations/Pages/workshops.aspx> and <http://www.forensiccoe.org>.

NIJ encourages researchers to seek guidance from, or partner with, crime laboratories. Such associations foster a greater understanding of the issues unique to the field of forensic science, and may strengthen the scope of the proposed research plan.

Information on NIJ's forensic science research and development programs (including previously funded projects) can be found at: <http://www.nij.gov/topics/forensics/pages/welcome.aspx>.

## Priority Areas of Research Opportunities

NIJ is interested in funding innovative research that aligns with Administration priorities.<sup>7</sup> Proposals that advance the following national priorities may be given special consideration in award decisions. **If submitting a research proposal that contributes to one of the following national priorities, the applicant should state this on the title page of the proposal.**

- **Supporting Innovative Early-Stage Research**: NIJ continues to support basic and early-stage research which has the potential to advance the forensic science disciplines. Due to the increased uncertainty inherent in early-stage research, priority consideration may be given to those basic or early-stage applied research proposals that partner with the private sector for committed later-stage financing of commercial products or services, or demonstrate the ability to create such partnerships.
- **Maximizing Interagency Coordination**: NIJ may give priority consideration to proposals which are strengthened by other agency funding, and can leverage such inter-agency support to yield greater impact than from solely NIJ-funded activities. Other agency funding may include any federal research funding agency, or larger U.S. government research and development initiatives such as the [National Nanotechnology Initiative](#). If submitting a proposal under the Maximizing Interagency Coordination priority area, applicants should indicate if non-NIJ support is past, current, or pending funding agency decision, as well as explain how such projects and activities will be managed to avoid duplicative efforts.
- **Developing a Future-Focused Workforce**: NIJ supports the improvement of technical training of future forensic scientists through science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) training through hands-on laboratory and research experience. NIJ encourages applicants to include the employment of students in their research proposals. Priority consideration may be given to projects that emphasize the participation of student researchers. Applications submitted under this priority consideration area should include in their management plans how students will be recruited, what laboratory/research activities they will perform, what training/education they will receive through the research, and how their post-graduation/-project activities will be tracked and reported to NIJ.
- **Modernizing and Managing Research Infrastructure**: NIJ continues to support growing the research infrastructure in the public forensic science laboratories of the United States. NIJ will give priority consideration to research proposals from state and local governments that incorporate innovative partnership models involving other research agencies, the private sector, and/or academia. Proposals to this priority area should focus on the production of practical knowledge that will have a direct and immediate impact on laboratory processes and/or policy related specifically to the examination and interpretation of physical evidence in forensic science laboratories.

## New Investigator Opportunities

NIJ is interested in funding new investigators in forensic science research as it pertains to NIJ's mission. Proposals whose principal investigator and any co-investigator(s) are defined as "new investigators" may, in appropriate circumstances, be given special consideration in award decisions.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/ostp/fy2019-administration-research-development-budget-priorities.pdf>.

To be considered a “new investigator” for the purposes of this solicitation, one of the two sets of criteria below must be demonstrated. **If submitting a proposal as a “new investigator”, the applicant should identify the principal investigator(s) and any co-investigators, as “new investigator(s)” on the title page of the proposal.**

- The investigator must have received — no earlier than April 1, 2015 — an initial appointment in the United States to a full-time junior faculty position<sup>8</sup> at a university or to an equivalent full-time staff scientist position in a research institution; hold such a full-time appointment at the time of application submission; and must never have received NIJ funding for a research project — other than a Graduate Research Fellowship program grant; or
- The investigator must be an established researcher who has not successfully competed for NIJ funding as a principal investigator, co-principal investigator, or collaborative researcher in the past 10 years. The investigator must hold a full-time appointment in the United States to a faculty position at a university or an equivalent position as a scientist on the staff of a research institution at the time of application submission.

In the case of a grant application that involves more than one investigator, **all co-investigators must meet the definition of “new investigator” in order for the application to be considered as one from a “new investigator.”**

The Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Expected Scholarly Products are directly related to the performance measures that demonstrate the results of the work completed.

### **Performance Measures**

OJP will require each successful applicant to submit regular performance data that demonstrate the results of the work carried out under the award (see “[General Information about Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements](#)” in [Section F. Federal Award Administration Information](#)).

Applicants should visit OJP’s performance measurement page at [www.ojp.gov/performance](http://www.ojp.gov/performance) for an overview of performance measurement activities at OJP.

The application should demonstrate the applicant’s understanding of the performance data reporting requirements for this grant program and detail how the applicant will gather the required data should it receive funding.

Please note that applicants are **not** required to submit performance data with the application. Performance measures information is included as an alert that successful applicants will be required to submit performance data as part of the reporting requirements under an award.

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<sup>8</sup> Typically, the appropriate faculty rank is that of “Assistant Professor,” although some institutions may use a different title to designate junior faculty status.

Objective	Performance Measure(s)	Data Recipient Provides
<p>Conduct research in science, technology, engineering, and/or mathematics having clear implications for criminal justice policy and practice in the United States.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Relevance to the needs of the field as measured by whether the project's substantive scope did not deviate from the funded project or any subsequent agency-approved modifications to the scope.</li> <li>2. Quality of the research as demonstrated by the scholarly products that result in whole or in part from work funded under the NIJ award, such as published, peer-reviewed, scientific journal articles, and/or (as appropriate for the funded project) law review journal articles, book chapter(s) or book(s) in the academic press, technological prototypes, patented inventions, or similar scientific products.</li> <li>3. Quality of management as measured by such factors as whether significant project milestones were achieved, reporting and other deadlines were met, and costs remained within approved limits.</li> <li>4. If applicable, the number of technologies fielded as a result (in whole or in part) of work funded under the NIJ award.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Quarterly financial reports, semi-annual and final progress reports, and products of the work performed under the NIJ award (including, at minimum, a final research report).</li> <li>If applicable, an annual audit report</li> <li>2. List of citation(s) to all scholarly products that resulted in whole or in part from work funded under the NIJ award.</li> <li>3. If applicable, each data set that resulted in whole or in part from work funded under the NIJ award.</li> <li>4. If applicable, description of all technologies fielded as a result (in whole or in part) of work funded under the NIJ award.</li> </ol>

## B. Federal Award Information

Total funding for this solicitation and the number of awards made will depend on the availability of funds, the quality of the applications, and other pertinent factors. In FY 2018, NIJ provided approximately \$24 million to fund research and development projects related to forensic science, including DNA. NIJ funding for an individual research or development project rarely exceeds \$500,000 annually, although total funding for some projects requiring multiple years to complete has exceeded \$1 million in previous years. In FY 2018, the average forensic science research and development award was approximately \$230,000 per year. The average project period was two years. Information on previous years' [awards](#) is provided for reference. Applicants should propose costs using calculations based on the specific activities proposed in the narratives. Costs estimates should be focused on maximizing the potential for success of the proposed project, rather than past averages.

An applicant should base its federal funding request and period of performance on the actual requirements of the research, and not necessarily on the anticipated amount of funding available in FY 2019 for awards under this solicitation. However, to expedite the budget approval process, applicants are encouraged to break out their budgets by project year or by phases in the event that NIJ chooses to fund the project partially or incrementally.

To allow time for (among other things) any necessary post-award review and financial clearance by OJP of the proposed budget and for any associated responses or other action(s) that may be required of the recipient, applicants should propose an award start date of January 1, 2020.

If the applicant is proposing a project that reasonably could be conducted in discrete phases, with each phase resulting in completion of one or more significant, defined milestones, then NIJ strongly recommends that the applicant structure the application—specifically including the narrative, expected scholarly products, timelines/milestones, and budget detail worksheet and budget narrative—to clearly define each phase. (This is particularly the case if the applicant proposes a project that will exceed—in cost or the length of the period of performance—the amount or length of time anticipated for an individual award (or awards) under this solicitation.) Given limitations on the availability to NIJ of funds for awards for research, development, and evaluation, this information will assist NIJ in considering whether partial funding of applications would be productive. (If, in FY 2019, NIJ elects to fund only certain phases of a proposed project, the expected scholarly products from the partial-funding award may, in some cases, vary from those described above.)

All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and to any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law.

### **Type of Award**

NIJ expects to make any award under this solicitation in the form of a grant. See [Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements](#), under [Section F. Federal Award Administration Information](#), for a brief discussion of important statutes, regulations, and award conditions that apply to many (or in some cases, all) OJP grants. As stated in the Eligibility section of this solicitation, awards to federal agencies will be in the form of an interagency reimbursable agreement.

However, on a case-by-case basis, NIJ may elect to make an award to non-federal recipients under this solicitation in the form of a cooperative agreement, which is a type of award that provides for OJP to have substantial involvement in carrying out of activities under the award. See [Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements](#), under [Section F. Federal Award Administration Information](#), for a brief discussion of what may constitute substantial federal involvement. As discussed later in the solicitation, important rules (including limitations) apply to any conference/meeting/training costs under cooperative agreements.

**Please note:** Any recipient of an award under this solicitation will be required to comply with DOJ regulations on confidentiality and protection of human subjects. See “Requirements related to Research” under [“Overview of Legal Requirements Generally Applicable to OJP Grants and Cooperative Agreements – FY 2018 Awards”](#) in the OJP Funding Resource Center at <https://ojp.gov/funding/index.htm>.

## Financial Management and System of Internal Controls

Award recipients and subrecipients (including recipients or subrecipients that are pass-through entities<sup>9</sup>) must, as described in the Part 200 Uniform Requirements<sup>10</sup> as set out at 2 C.F.R. 200.303:

- (a) Establish and maintain effective internal control over the Federal award that provides reasonable assurance that [the recipient (and any subrecipient)] is managing the Federal award in compliance with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award. These internal controls should be in compliance with guidance in “Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government” issued by the Comptroller General of the United States and the “Internal Control Integrated Framework”, issued by the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO).
- (b) Comply with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the Federal awards.
- (c) Evaluate and monitor [the recipient’s (and any subrecipient’s)] compliance with statutes, regulations and the terms and conditions of Federal awards.
- (d) Take prompt action when instances of noncompliance are identified including noncompliance identified in audit findings.
- (e) Take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other information the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity designates as sensitive or [the recipient (or any subrecipient)] considers sensitive consistent with applicable Federal, state, local, and tribal laws regarding privacy and obligations of confidentiality.

To help ensure that applicants understand applicable administrative requirements and cost principles, OJP encourages prospective applicants to enroll, at no charge, in the DOJ Grants Financial Management Online Training, available at <https://onlinegfmt.training.ojp.gov/>. (This training is required for all OJP recipients.)

Also, applicants should be aware that OJP collects information from applicants on their financial management and systems of internal controls (among other information) which is used to make award decisions. Under [Section D. Application and Submission Information](#), applicants may access and review the OJP Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (<https://ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/FinancialCapability.pdf>) that OJP requires **all** applicants (other than an individual applying in his/her personal capacity) to download, complete, and submit as part of the application.

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<sup>9</sup> For purposes of this solicitation, the phrase “pass-through entity” includes any recipient or subrecipient that provides a subaward (“subgrant”) to carry out part of the funded award or program.

<sup>10</sup> The “Part 200 Uniform Requirements” means the DOJ regulation at 2 C.F.R. Part 2800, which adopts (with certain modifications) the provisions of 2 C.F.R. Part 200.

## Budget Information

### What will not be funded:

- Applications that are not responsive to this specific solicitation. This includes:
  - Proposals that do not contain a research component or do not respond to the specific goals of this solicitation.
  - Proposals that do not clearly address criminal justice concerns in the United States.
- Proposals primarily to purchase equipment, materials, or supplies. (A budget may include these items if they are necessary to conduct research, development, demonstration, evaluation, or analysis. Proposals that include equipment purchases should include a discussion of how federally-funded equipment is proposed to be used after the funded work has been completed and/or the project period has ended. Note that OJP may issue specific equipment disposition instructions in appropriate circumstances.)
- Proposals primarily to provide training.
- Proposals that provide direct criminal/forensic laboratory services.
- Proposals in the area of digital evidence or digital forensics. Digital evidence includes information stored or transmitted in binary form that may be relied on in court. It is typically found on computer hard drives, mobile phones, personal digital assistants, CDs/DVDs, flash memory equipment and other electronic devices. Digital evidence is commonly associated with electronic crime (e.g., child pornography or credit card fraud); however, digital evidence can also be used as forensic evidence in other types of crimes.
- Proposals that focus primarily on crimes directly related to nonhuman animals. (A project may include nonhuman animals, if: (a.) they are necessary to conduct the proposed research [e.g., the use of animals or other organisms for experimental modeling], or (b.) the nonhuman biological components are analogous to the physical evidence that would be examined in criminal investigations involving human suspects and victims.)
- Proposals focusing on the estimation of postmortem interval (i.e., time since death) whose research design is not novel nor applicable across the geography of the United States. The primary intent of these studies must be to generate new knowledge or contribute to the knowledge in the forensic scientific literature that is applicable to locations other than the one(s) being evaluated.
- Proposals that focus on predicting the behavior of criminal offenders or indicators that result in victimization.
- Proposals that seek to administer surveys on the perceptions of physical evidence collection policies among evidence examiners.
- Proposals that focus on legal factors involved in how physical evidence is processed.

- Proposals for social science research whose primary focus is not identification, collection, testing and interpretation of physical evidence.
- Proposals focused on criminal psychology.
- Proposals involving the use of canines, (e.g. detector dogs).
- Proposals on voice authentication.
- Proposals on deception detection.
- Costs associated with conducting conferences. A conference is a symposium, seminar, workshop, or any other organized and formal meeting, whether conducted face-to-face or via the Internet, where individuals assemble (or meet virtually) to exchange information and views or explore or clarify a defined subject, problem, or area of knowledge, whether or not a published report results from such meeting. A meeting where a gathering discusses general matters as part of a normal course of doing business is not considered a conference. Funds may be used to attend conferences for the purposes of dissemination of research findings.

### **Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement**

See “Cofunding” paragraph under item 4 (“Budget and Associated Documentation”) under [What an Application Should Include](#) in [Section D. Application and Submission Information](#).

### **Pre-agreement Costs (also known as Pre-award Costs)**

Pre-agreement costs are costs incurred by the applicant prior to the start date of the period of performance of the federal award.

OJP does **not** typically approve pre-agreement costs; an applicant must request and obtain the prior written approval of OJP for all such costs. All such costs incurred prior to award and prior to approval of the costs are incurred at the sole risk of the applicant. (Generally, no applicant should incur project costs *before* submitting an application requesting federal funding for those costs.) Should there be extenuating circumstances that make it appropriate for OJP to consider approving pre-agreement costs, the applicant may contact the point of contact listed on the title page of this solicitation for the requirements concerning written requests for approval. If approved in advance by OJP, award funds may be used for pre-agreement costs, consistent with the recipient’s approved budget and applicable cost principles. See the section on “Costs Requiring Prior Approval” in the DOJ Grants Financial Guide at <https://ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/index.htm> for more information.

### **Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation; Waiver**

With respect to any award of more than \$250,000 made under this solicitation, a recipient may not use federal funds to pay total cash compensation (salary plus cash bonuses) to any employee of the recipient at a rate that exceeds 110 percent of the maximum annual salary payable to a member of the Federal Government’s Senior Executive Service (SES) at an

agency with a Certified SES Performance Appraisal System for that year.<sup>11</sup> The 2019 salary table for SES employees is available at the Office of Personnel Management website at <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/salary-tables/19Tables/exec/html/ES.aspx>. Note: A recipient may compensate an employee at a greater rate, provided the amount in excess of this compensation limitation is paid with non-federal funds. (Non-federal funds used for any such additional compensation will not be considered matching funds, where match requirements apply.) If only a portion of an employee's time is charged to an OJP award, the maximum allowable compensation is equal to the percentage of time worked times the maximum salary limitation.

The Director of the National Institute of Justice may exercise discretion to waive, on an individual basis, this limitation on compensation rates allowable under an award. An applicant that requests a waiver should include a detailed justification in the budget narrative of its application. An applicant that does not submit a waiver request and justification with its application should anticipate that OJP will require the applicant to adjust and resubmit the budget.

The justification should address, in the context of the work the individual would do under the award, the particular qualifications and expertise of the individual, the uniqueness of a service the individual will provide, the individual's specific knowledge of the proposed program or project, and a statement that explains whether and how the individual's salary under the award would be commensurate with the regular and customary rate for an individual with his/her qualifications and expertise, and for the work he/she would do under the award.

### **Prior Approval, Planning, and Reporting of Conference/Meeting/Training Costs**

OJP strongly encourages every applicant that proposes to use award funds for any conference-, meeting-, or training-related activity (or similar event) to review carefully—before submitting an application—the OJP policy and guidance on approval, planning, and reporting of such events, available at [www.ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/PostawardRequirements/chapter3.10a.htm](http://www.ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/PostawardRequirements/chapter3.10a.htm). OJP policy and guidance (1) encourage minimization of conference, meeting, and training costs; (2) require prior written approval (which may affect project timelines) of most conference, meeting, and training costs for cooperative agreement recipients and of some conference, meeting, and training costs for grant recipients; and (3) set cost limits, which include a general prohibition of all food and beverage costs.

### **Costs Associated with Language Assistance (if applicable)**

If an applicant proposes a program or activity that would deliver services or benefits to individuals, the costs of taking reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to those services or benefits for individuals with limited English proficiency may be allowable. Reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to services or benefits may include interpretation or translation services, where appropriate.

For additional information, see the "Civil Rights Compliance" section under "[Overview of Legal Requirements Generally Applicable to OJP Grants and Cooperative Agreements – FY 2018 Awards](https://www.ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/PostawardRequirements/chapter3.10a.htm)" in the OJP Funding Resource Center at <https://ojp.gov/funding/index.htm>.

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<sup>11</sup> OJP does not apply this limitation on the use of award funds to the nonprofit organizations listed in Appendix VIII to 2 C.F.R. Part 200.

## C. Eligibility Information

For eligibility information, see title page.

For information on cost sharing or match requirements, see [“What an Application Should Include”](#) in [Section D. Application and Submission Information](#).

## D. Application and Submission Information

### What an Application Should Include

This section describes in detail what an application should include. An applicant should anticipate that if it fails to submit an application that contains all of the specified elements, it may negatively affect the review of its application; and, should a decision be made to make an award, it may result in the inclusion of award conditions that preclude the recipient from accessing or using award funds until the recipient satisfies the conditions and OJP makes the funds available.

Moreover, an applicant should anticipate that an application that OJP determines is nonresponsive to the scope of the solicitation, or that OJP determines does not include the application elements that NIJ has designated to be critical, will neither proceed to peer review nor receive further consideration. For this solicitation, NIJ has designated the following application elements as critical: Program Narrative, Budget Detail Worksheet, Budget Narrative, and resumes/curriculum vitae of key personnel. (For purposes of this solicitation, “key personnel” means the principal investigator, and any and all co-principal investigators.)

**NOTE:** OJP has combined the Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative in a single document collectively referred to as the Budget Detail Worksheet. See “Budget Information and Associated Documentation” below for more information about the Budget Detail Worksheet and where it can be accessed.

OJP strongly recommends that applicants use appropriately descriptive file names (e.g., “Program Narrative,” “Budget Detail Worksheet,” “Timelines,” “Memoranda of Understanding,” “Resumes”) for all attachments. Also, OJP recommends that applicants include resumes in a single file.

Please review the “Note on File Names and File Types” under [How to Apply](#) to be sure applications are submitted in permitted formats.

### 1. Information to Complete the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)

The SF-424 is a required standard form used as a cover sheet for submission of pre-applications, applications, and related information. Grants.gov and OJP’s Grants Management System (GMS) take information from the applicant’s profile to populate the fields on this form. When selecting “type of applicant,” if the applicant is a for-profit entity, select “For-Profit Organization” or “Small Business” (as applicable).

To avoid processing delays, an applicant must include an accurate legal name on its SF-424. On the SF-424, current OJP award recipients, when completing the field for “Legal Name” (box 8a), should use the same legal name that appears on the prior year award

document (which is also the legal name stored in OJP's financial system.) Also, current recipients should enter the Employer Identification Number (EIN) in box 8b exactly as it appears on the prior year award document. An applicant with a current, active award(s) must ensure that its GMS profile is current. If the profile is not current, the applicant should submit a Grant Adjustment Notice updating the information on its GMS profile prior to applying under this solicitation.

A new applicant entity should enter its official legal name in box 8a, its address in box 8d, its EIN in box 8b, and its Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number in box 8c of the SF-424. A new applicant entity should attach official legal documents to the application (e.g., articles of incorporation, 501(c)(3) status documentation, organizational letterhead) to confirm the legal name, address, and EIN entered into the SF-424. OJP will use the System for Award Management (SAM) to confirm the legal name and DUNS number entered in the SF-424; therefore, an applicant should ensure that the information entered in the SF-424 matches its current registration in SAM. See the [How to Apply](#) section for more information on SAM and DUNS numbers.

**Intergovernmental Review:** This solicitation ("funding opportunity") **is not** subject to [Executive Order 12372](#). (In completing the SF-424, an applicant is to answer question 19 by selecting the response that the "Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.")

## 2. Project Abstract

The project abstract is a very important part of the application, and serves as an introduction to the proposed project. NIJ uses the project abstract for a number of purposes, including assignment of the application to an appropriate review panel. If the application is funded, the project abstract typically will become public information and be used to describe the project.

Applications should include a high-quality project abstract that summarizes the proposed project in 250-400 words. Project abstracts not submitted in the template below should be—

- Written for a general public audience.
- Submitted as a separate attachment with "Project Abstract" as part of its file name.
- Single-spaced, using the form's standard 12-point font (with 1-inch margins).

As a separate attachment, the project abstract will **not** count against the page limit for the program narrative.

Project abstracts should follow the detailed template (including the detailed instructions as to content) available at [www.nij.gov/funding/documents/nij-project-abstract-template.pdf](http://www.nij.gov/funding/documents/nij-project-abstract-template.pdf).

## 3. Program Narrative

The program narrative section of the application should not exceed 18 single-spaced pages in 12-point font with 1-inch margins, of which a minimum of nine (9) pages should be dedicated to Project Design and Implementation. If included in the main body of the program narrative, tables, charts, figures, and other illustrations count toward the 18-page limit for the narrative section. The project abstract, table of contents, appendices, and government forms do not count toward the 18-page limit.

If the program narrative fails to comply with these length-related restrictions, NIJ may consider such noncompliance in peer review and in final award decisions.

The following sections should be included as part of the program narrative.<sup>12</sup>

Program Narrative Guidelines:

**a. Title Page** (not counted against the 18-page program narrative limit).

The title page should include the title of the project, submission date, funding opportunity number, and the name and complete contact information (that is, address, telephone number, and e-mail address) for both the applicant and the principal investigator. Additional information such as key words, including forensic science focus areas, and requests for consideration under “new investigator” and/or “priority areas of research” areas, should also be included on the title page.

**b. Resubmit Response** (if applicable) (not counted against the 18-page program narrative limit).

If an applicant is resubmitting an application presented previously to NIJ, but not funded, the applicant should indicate this. A statement should be provided, no more than two pages, addressing: (1) the title, submission date, and NIJ-assigned application number of the previous application, and (2) a brief summary of revisions to the application, including responses to previous feedback received from NIJ. See additional information regarding revision applications under Project Design and Implementation section below.

**c. Table of Contents and Figures** (not counted against the 18-page program narrative limit).

**d. Main Body**

The main body of the program narrative should describe the proposed project in depth. The following sections should be included as part of the program narrative:

- Statement of the Problem and Research Questions. The statement of the problem should address the need for research in this area. Applicants should discuss current gaps in data, research, and knowledge, including those for particular justice sectors, for certain populations, and to answer questions relevant to current policy and practice needs and public interests. It is not uncommon for multiple problems to exist simultaneously (for example, there may be a criminal justice problem affecting public safety, a current technical

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<sup>12</sup> As noted earlier, if the proposed program or project reasonably could be conducted in discrete phases, with each phase resulting in completion of one or more significant, defined milestones, then NIJ strongly recommends that the applicant structure the application – specifically including the narrative, expected scholarly products, timelines/milestones, and budget detail worksheet and budget narrative – to set out each phase clearly. (In appropriate cases, the expected scholarly product(s) from a particular phase may vary from those described above.) See generally “Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Expected Scholarly Products” under “Program-Specific Information,” above.

challenge/need identified by forensic practitioners, as well as a scientific/technology gap between the current state of the art and a desired solution) and applicants should discuss each of these clearly and justify the importance of the separate issues. As part of this discussion, applicants should present a review of previous literature and discuss previous research related to these problems.

This section should also identify the proposed research questions and introduce the purpose, goals, and objectives of the proposed project.

The Statement of the Problem and Research Questions section should do the following:

- Explain the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress in the field that the proposed project addresses.
- Explain the criminal justice significance of the problem.
- Describe the scientific premise for the proposed project, including consideration of the strengths and weaknesses of published research or preliminary data crucial to the support of your application.
- Describe the current state of the art and technologies, both in practice and in past/current research, directed at the described problem. If this request is a direct follow-up of an earlier study, describe those results.
- Explain how the proposed project will improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or forensic practice. Describe how concepts, methods, technologies, or services that drive the forensic science field will be changed if the proposed aims are achieved.
- Include a review of relevant literature.
- Project Design and Implementation. (This section should account for a minimum of nine (9) pages of the main body of the narrative.) Applicants should provide a detailed description of the strategies to implement this research project and address the research questions. Design elements should follow directly from the research project's goals and objectives and address the program-specific information noted under **Error! Reference source not found.** Applicants should describe the research methodology in detail and demonstrate the validity and usefulness of the data they will collect. Applicants should consider the rigor and soundness of the methodology and analytical and technical approaches for the proposed research and address the feasibility of the proposed project and potential challenges or problems in carrying out the activities.

The Project Design and Implementation section should include the following:

- Describe the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Describe the experimental design and methods proposed and how they will achieve robust and unbiased

results. Include how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted as well as any data archiving plans, as appropriate.

- Human subjects/study population: If the project will involve human subjects, clearly describe the study population. Include detailed information about how subjects were or will be identified and sampled and the method(s) of characterization. For case-control studies, provide inclusion and exclusion criteria and any matching done between cases and controls. Describe relevant environmental factors and how they were measured. If the subjects provided for this study are a subset of a family population, explain which individuals were included and how they were selected. Highlight special features of the study population that would enhance success.
- Sample information: In table form, provide: sample description such as case/control status and/or collection site; number of samples included in the study; subsample source (e.g., tissue source of the DNA). If data from other subjects will be included in the analysis, add row(s) to describe those samples. Three examples are provided here:

Sample Set	Target no. of Samples	Source	Service	Previous Service
Known controls	500	Buccal	Targeted sequencing	STR base genotyping
Forensic samples	500	Buccal	Targeted sequencing	STR base genotyping

Sample Set	Target no. of Samples	Source	Subsample Set	Service
Crania	300	Modern Donated Collection	300 individuals of known Hispanic Ancestry; 150 Male, 150 Female	Morphometric sex estimation
Pelvis	300	Modern Donated Collection	300 individuals of known Hispanic Ancestry; 150 Male, 150 Female	Morphometric sex estimation

Subject Description	Target no. of Samples	Collection Site
Patients at drug rehab facilities	100	Scalp, cut (not plucked)
Controls – subjects donating hair for wigs	100	Scalp, cut (not plucked)

- Provide supporting text that justifies the choice of samples. Describe other relevant information (e.g., the extraction methods used for each DNA source and the approximate DNA concentrations). Describe previous analyses done on these subjects.
- Power and effect size: Use power analyses to describe the range of effect sizes detectable by the study. Address relevant features of the analytic plan, such as the model(s) to be tested, the extent of multiple testing, and what significance level would be used for testing. Include all appropriate parameters. If the study design requires separate analysis of subject groups, provide power analyses for each category. If there is a plan to test for environment effects, address the power for detection of these effects.

- Data analyses: Provide a thorough plan for data analyses. Include: analytical approaches to be used and their justification; plans for quality control analyses; methods to control for possible confounding effects; how false positive rates will be controlled in light of multiple testing; etc. If there is a plan to analyze the data obtained with earlier data, or to perform comparisons to determine success, describe your strategy for that process.
- Describe the role of each team member in the analysis process, and summarize the team's experience with the approaches proposed.
- Discuss potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success anticipated to achieve the aims.
- If the project is in the early stages of development, describe any strategy to establish feasibility, and address the management of any high risk aspects of the proposed work.
- Explain how relevant variables are factored into research designs and analyses.
- Data management: Describe the institutional computing resources available for this study, the type of database that will be used (if applicable), and how the data will be managed. Highlight the team's experience with management of data sets (especially those similar to the proposed project). Also describe strategies for data sustainability beyond the proposed funded work.
  - Preliminary Data: For new lines of research, include preliminary results, if available. Discuss the PI's preliminary studies, data, and or experience pertinent to this application. Preliminary data can be an essential part of a research grant application, and help to establish the likelihood of success of the proposed project. New Investigators should include preliminary data.
- Potential Impact. Applicants should describe the potential impact of the research and how it may inform or improve criminal or juvenile justice-related policy, practice, or theory in the United States.

The Potential Impact section should do the following:

- Explain the criminal justice significance of the proposed study.
- Explain how the application challenges and seeks to shift current research or forensic practice paradigms.
- Describe any novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions to be developed or used, and any advantage over existing methodologies, instrumentation, or inventions.
- Explain any refinements, improvements, or new applications of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, or instrumentation.

- Describe planned scholarly products (See [Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Expected Scholarly Products](#) for a discussion of expected scholarly products.)
- Describe implications for criminal justice policy and practice in the United States.
- Describe the plan for dissemination to appropriate audiences. Applicants should also identify plans to broader interested practitioners and policy makers in a form that is designed to be readily accessible and useful to them.
- Capabilities/Competencies. This section should describe the experience and capability of the applicant organization, key staff, and any proposed subgrantees (including consultants) that the applicant will use to implement and manage this effort and the federal funds under this award, highlighting any previous experience implementing projects of similar scope, design, and magnitude. Applicants should address:
  - Experience and capacity to work with the proposed data sources in the conduct of similar research efforts.
  - Experience and capacity to design and implement rigorous research and data analysis projects.
  - Experience producing and disseminating meaningful deliverables.

Applicants should also outline the management plan and organization that connects to the goals and objectives of the project.

The Capabilities/Competencies section should include the following:

- Facilities and other resources: Describe how the scientific environment in which the research will be done contributes to the probability of success (e.g., institutional support, physical resources, and intellectual rapport). In describing the scientific environment in which the work will be done, discuss ways in which the proposed studies will benefit from unique features of the scientific environment or subject populations or will employ useful collaborative arrangements. If there are multiple performance sites, describe the resources available at each site.
- Equipment: List major items of equipment already available for this project and, if appropriate identify location and pertinent capabilities.
- Senior/key personnel profile: Describe each senior/key personnel's role in the project, and why the individual is well-suited for that role. The relevant factors may include: aspects of past training; previous experimental work on this specific topic or related topics; technical expertise; collaborators or scientific environment; and/or past performance in this or related fields. Senior/key personnel are defined as all individuals who contribute in a substantive, meaningful way to the scientific development or execution of the project,

whether or not salaries are requested. Consultants should be included if they meet this definition.

- Principal investigator (PI) profile should be listed first.
- The remaining senior/key personnel profiles should be listed in alphabetical order. While alphabetical order is preferred, it is not required. However, be aware that these profiles will appear in the application in the order provided by the applicant. Therefore, peer reviewers will see them in the order presented. Those with a postdoctoral role should be included if they meet the definition of senior/key personnel.
- Other significant contributors (OSCs): OSCs are those individuals who commit to contribute to the scientific development or execution of the project, but do not commit any specified measurable effort (i.e., person months) to the project. These individuals are typically presented at effort of “zero person months” or “as needed.” Individuals with measurable effort may not be listed as OSCs. Consultants should be included if they meet the OSC definition. OSCs should be listed after all senior/key persons.

**e. Appendices** (not counted against the 18-page program narrative limit) include:

- Bibliography/references. Provide a bibliography of any references cited in the Project Narrative. Each reference must include the names of all authors (in the same sequence in which they appear in the publication), the article and journal title, book title, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication. Include only bibliographic citations. While there is not a page limitation, it is important to be concise, and to select only those literature references pertinent to the proposed research. Attach this information as a separate PDF file titled “Bibliography and References Cited.”
- Any tools/instruments, questionnaires, tables/charts/graphs, or maps pertaining to the proposed project that are supplemental to such items included in the main body of the narrative. (Tables, charts, graphs, or other relevant illustrations that are essential for comprehension of the project/program design should be included in the main body of the narrative.)
- Curriculum vitae, resumes or biosketches of senior/key personnel. For the purposes of this solicitation, “senior/key personnel” means the principal investigator, any and all co-principal investigators, and other significant contributors. Reviewers use these pages in part to address the “Capabilities/Competencies” selection criterion. Attach this information as a separate PDF file titled “CVs of Key Personnel.” In addition, curriculum vitae, resumes, or biographical sketches of all other individuals (regardless of “investigator” status) who will be significantly involved in substantive aspects of the proposed project (including, for example, individuals such as statisticians used to conduct proposed data analysis should be provided).

- Documentation of “new investigator” status, if applicable.
- Progress report for renewal and revision applications, if applicable. For renewal/revision applications, provide a progress report. Provide the beginning and ending dates for the period covered since the last competitive review. Summarize the specific aims of the previous project period and the importance of the findings, and emphasize the progress made toward their achievement. Explain any significant changes to the specific aims and any new directions, including changes to the specific aims resulting from significant budget reductions. For any studies meeting the NIJ definition for research involving human subjects (<http://www.nij.gov/funding/humansubjects/pages/welcome.aspx>), discuss previous participant enrollment (e.g., recruitment, retention, inclusion of women, minorities, children, etc.) as part of the progress report, particularly if relevant to studies proposed in the renewal or revision application. If applicable, Reviewers use these pages in part to address the “Project Design and Implementation” selection criterion. Attach this information as a separate PDF file titled “Progress Report for Renewal”.
- Progress report publication list (renewal applications only). List the titles and complete references to all appropriate publications, manuscripts accepted for publication, patents, and other printed materials that have resulted from the project since it was last reviewed competitively. This list should be included with the “Progress Report for Renewal” PDF file attachment noted above.
- Multiple PI leadership plan. For applications designating multiple PIs, a leadership plan must be included. For applications designating multiple PIs, all such individuals must be assigned the PI role on the Senior/Key Personnel Profile form, even those at organizations other than the applicant organization. A rationale for choosing a multiple PI approach should be described. The governance and organizational structure of the leadership team and the research project should be described, including communication plans, process for making decisions on scientific direction, and procedures for resolving conflicts. The roles and administrative, technical, and scientific responsibilities for the project or program should be delineated for the PIs and other collaborators. Do not submit a leadership plan if you are not submitting a multiple PI application. Reviewers use these pages in part to address the “Capabilities/Competencies” selection criterion. Attach this information as a separate PDF file titled “Multiple PI Leadership Plan.”
- Consortium/contractual arrangements. Explain the programmatic, fiscal, and administrative arrangements to be made between the applicant organization and the consortium organization(s). If consortium/contractual activities represent a significant portion of the overall project, explain why the applicant organization, rather than the ultimate performer of the activities, should be the grantee. Reviewers use these pages in part to address the “Project Design and Implementation” selection criterion. Attach this information as a separate PDF file titled “Consortium/Contractual Arrangements”
- Letters of support. Attach all appropriate letters of support, including any letters necessary to demonstrate the support of consortium participants and

collaborators such as senior/key personnel and other significant contributors included in the grant application. Letters are not required for personnel (such as research assistants) not contributing in a substantive, measurable way to the scientific development or execution of the project. Letters should stipulate expectations for co-authorship, and whether samples, data, or other resources promised in the letter are freely available to other investigators in the scientific community or will be provided to the particular investigators only. For consultants, letters should include rate/charge for consulting services and level of effort/number of hours per year anticipated. In addition, letters ensuring access to core facilities and resources should stipulate whether access will be provided as a fee-for-service. Combine and attach this information as one separate PDF file titled "Letters of Support".

- Data archiving plan(s). NIJ considers the archiving and sharing of unique research resources developed through NIJ-sponsored research an important means to enhance the value and further the advancement of the research. When resources have been developed with NIJ funds and the associated research findings published or provided to NIJ, it is important that they be made readily available for research purposes to qualified individuals within the scientific community. Applications should include as an appendix a brief plan about proposed data management and archiving, including submission to NIJ of all files and documentation necessary to allow for future efforts by others to reproduce the project's findings and/or to extend the scientific value of the data set through secondary analysis. Pertinent files and documentation include, among other things, qualitative and quantitative data produced, instrumentation and data collection forms, codebook(s), any specialized programming code necessary to reproduce all constructed measures and the original data analysis, description of necessary de-identification procedures, and (when required) a copy of the privacy certificate and informed consent protocols. Attach this information as a separate PDF file titled "Data Archiving Plan(s)."
- List of proposed project staff, affiliation, and roles. To assist OJP in assessing actual or apparent conflicts of interest (including such conflicts on the part of prospective reviewers of the application), a complete list of the individuals named or otherwise identified anywhere in the application (including in the budget or in any other attachment) who will or may work (or advise or consult) on the proposed research, development, or evaluation project. This applies to all such individuals, including, for example, individuals who are or would be employees of the applicant or employees of any proposed subrecipient entity, any individuals who themselves may be a subrecipient, and individuals who may (or will) work without compensation (such as advisory board members). This appendix to the program narrative is to include, for each listed individual: name, title, employer, any other potentially-pertinent organizational affiliation(s), and the individual's proposed roles and responsibilities in carrying out the proposed project. If the application identifies any specific entities or organizations (other than the applicant) that will or may work (or advise or consult) on the proposed project, without also naming any associated individuals, the name of each such organization also should be included on this list. Applicants should use the "Proposed Project Staff, Affiliation, and Roles" form available at <https://www.nij.gov/funding/documents/nij-project-staff-template.xlsx> to provide this list.

If the application (including the budget) identifies any proposed non-competitive agreements that are or may be considered procurement "contracts" (rather than subawards) for purposes of federal grants administrative requirements the applicant also must list the entities with which the applicant proposes to contract. Applicants should provide this list as a separate sheet entitled "Proposed non-competitive procurement contracts."

For information on distinctions -- for purposes of federal grants administrative requirements -- between subawards and procurement contracts under awards, see "Budget and Associated Documentation," below.

- Proposed project timeline and expected milestones.
- Human Subjects Protection paperwork (documentation and forms related to Institutional Review Board (IRB) review). (See [nij.gov/funding/humansubjects/Pages/welcome.aspx](https://www.nij.gov/funding/humansubjects/Pages/welcome.aspx)). **Note:** Final IRB approval is not required at the time an application is submitted.
- Privacy Certificate (for further guidance go to [nij.gov/funding/humansubjects/pages/confidentiality.aspx](https://www.nij.gov/funding/humansubjects/pages/confidentiality.aspx)).
- List of any previous and current NIJ awards to the applicant and investigator(s), including the NIJ assigned award numbers and a brief description of any scholarly products that resulted in whole or in part from work funded under the NIJ award(s). (See "Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Expected Scholarly Products" under "Program-Specific Information," above, for definition of "scholarly products.")
- List of other agencies, organizations, or funding sources to which this application has been submitted (if applicable).
- Applicants proposing to use incentives or stipends payments as part of their research project design, must submit an incentive or stipend approval request, as a separate document, according to the requirements set forth at <https://www.nij.gov/funding/Pages/research-participant-costs-and-incentives.aspx>.

#### 4. Budget and Associated Documentation

The Budget Detail Worksheet and the Budget Narrative are now combined in a single document collectively referred to as the Budget Detail Worksheet. The Budget Detail Worksheet is a user-friendly, fillable, Microsoft Excel-based document designed to calculate totals. Additionally, the Excel workbook contains worksheets for multiple budget years that can be completed as necessary. **All applicants should use the Excel version when completing the proposed budget in an application, except in cases where the applicant does not have access to Microsoft Excel or experiences technical difficulties.** If an applicant does not have access to Microsoft Excel or experiences technical difficulties with the Excel version, then the applicant should use the 508-compliant accessible Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) version.

Both versions of the Budget Detail Worksheet can be accessed at <https://ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Forms/BudgetDetailWorksheet.htm>.

#### **a. Budget Detail Worksheet**

The Budget Detail Worksheet should provide the detailed computation for each budget line item, listing the total cost of each and showing how it was calculated by the applicant. For example, costs for personnel should show the annual salary rate and the percentage of time devoted to the project for each employee paid with grant funds. The Budget Detail Worksheet should present a complete itemization of all proposed costs.

For questions pertaining to budget and examples of allowable and unallowable costs, see the DOJ Grants Financial Guide at <https://ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/index.htm>.

#### **b. Budget Narrative**

The budget narrative should thoroughly and clearly describe every category of expense listed in the Budget Detail Worksheet. OJP expects proposed budgets to be complete, cost effective, and allowable (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities).

An applicant should demonstrate in its budget narrative how it will maximize cost effectiveness of award expenditures. Budget narratives should generally describe cost effectiveness in relation to potential alternatives and the goals of the project. For example, a budget narrative should detail why planned in-person meetings are necessary, or how technology and collaboration with outside organizations could be used to reduce costs, without compromising quality.

The budget narrative should be mathematically sound and correspond clearly with the information and figures provided in the Budget Detail Worksheet. The narrative should explain how the applicant estimated and calculated all costs, and how those costs are necessary to the completion of the proposed project. The narrative may include tables for clarification purposes, but need not be in a spreadsheet format. As with the Budget Detail Worksheet, the budget narrative should describe costs by year.

#### **c. Cofunding**

An award made by NIJ under this solicitation may account for up to 100 percent of the total cost of the project. The application should indicate whether it is feasible for the applicant to contribute cash, facilities, or services as non-federal support for the project. The application should identify generally any such contributions that the applicant expects to make and the proposed budget should indicate in detail which items, if any, will be supported with non-federal contributions.

For additional match information, see the [Cost Sharing or Match Requirement](#) section under [Section B. Federal Award Information](#).

If a successful application proposes a voluntary match amount, and OJP approves the budget, the total match amount incorporated into the approved budget becomes mandatory and subject to audit.

**d. Information on Proposed Subawards (if any), as well as on Proposed Procurement Contracts (if any)**

Applicants for OJP awards typically may propose to make *subawards*. Applicants also may propose to enter into procurement *contracts* under the award.

Whether an action – for federal grants administrative purposes – is a subaward or procurement contract is a critical distinction as significantly different rules apply to subawards and procurement contracts. If a recipient enters into an agreement that is a subaward of an OJP award, specific rules apply – many of which are set by federal statutes and DOJ regulations; others by award conditions. These rules place particular responsibilities on an OJP recipient for any subawards the OJP recipient may make. The rules determine much of what the written subaward agreement itself must require or provide. The rules also determine much of what an OJP recipient must do both before and after it makes a subaward. If a recipient enters into an agreement that is a procurement contract under an OJP award, a substantially different set of federal rules applies.

OJP has developed the following guidance documents to help clarify the differences between subawards and procurement contracts under an OJP award and outline the compliance and reporting requirements for each. This information can be accessed online at <https://ojp.gov/training/training.htm>.

- [Subawards under OJP Awards and Procurement Contracts under Awards: A Toolkit for OJP Recipients.](#)
- [Checklist to Determine Subrecipient or Contractor Classification.](#)
- [Sole Source Justification Fact Sheet and Sole Source Review Checklist.](#)

In general, the central question is the relationship between what the third-party will do under its agreement with the recipient and what the recipient has committed (to OJP) to do under its award to further a public purpose (e.g., services the recipient will provide, products it will develop or modify, research or evaluation it will conduct). If a third party will provide some of the services the recipient has committed (to OJP) to provide, will develop or modify all or part of a product the recipient has committed (to OJP) to develop or modify, or will conduct part of the research or evaluation the recipient has committed (to OJP) to conduct, OJP will consider the agreement with the third party a *subaward* for purposes of federal grants administrative requirements.

This will be true **even if** the recipient, for internal or other non-federal purposes, labels or treats its agreement as a procurement, a contract, or a procurement contract. Neither the title nor the structure of an agreement determines whether the agreement -- for purposes of federal grants administrative requirements -- is a *subaward* or is instead a procurement *contract* under an award. The substance of the relationship should be given greater consideration than the form of agreement between the recipient and the outside entity.

## 1. Information on proposed subawards

A recipient of an OJP award may not make subawards ("subgrants") unless the recipient has specific federal authorization to do so. Unless an applicable statute or DOJ regulation specifically authorizes (or requires) subawards, a recipient must have authorization from OJP before it may make a subaward.

A particular subaward may be authorized by OJP because the recipient included a sufficiently-detailed description and justification of the proposed subaward in the Program Narrative, Budget Detail Worksheet, and Budget Narrative as approved by OJP. If, however, a particular subaward is not authorized by federal statute or regulation, and is not approved by OJP, the recipient will be required, post-award, to request and obtain written authorization from OJP before it may make the subaward.

If an applicant proposes to make one or more subawards to carry out the federal award and program, the applicant should-- (1) identify (if known) the proposed subrecipient(s), (2) describe in detail what each subrecipient will do to carry out the federal award and federal program, and (3) provide a justification for the subaward(s), with details on pertinent matters such as special qualifications and areas of expertise. Pertinent information on subawards should appear not only in the Program Narrative, but also in the Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative.

## 2. Information on proposed procurement contracts (with specific justification for proposed noncompetitive contracts over \$250,000)

Unlike a recipient contemplating a subaward, a recipient of an OJP award generally does not need specific prior federal authorization to enter into an agreement that -- for purposes of federal grants administrative requirements -- is considered a procurement contract, **provided that** (1) the recipient uses its own documented procurement procedures and (2) those procedures conform to applicable federal law, including the Procurement Standards of the (DOJ) Part 200 Uniform Requirements (as set out at 2 C.F.R. 200.317 - 200.326). The Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative should identify proposed procurement contracts. (As discussed above, subawards must be identified and described separately from procurement contracts.)

The Procurement Standards in the Part 200 Uniform Requirements, however, reflect a general expectation that agreements that (for purposes of federal grants administrative requirements) constitute procurement "contracts" under awards will be entered into on the basis of full and open competition. All noncompetitive (sole source) procurement contracts must meet the OJP requirements outlined at <https://ojp.gov/training/subawards-procurement.htm>. If a proposed procurement contract would exceed the simplified acquisition threshold -- currently, \$250,000 -- a recipient of an OJP award may not proceed without competition unless and until the recipient receives specific advance authorization from OJP to use a non-competitive approach for the procurement. An applicant that (at the time of its application) intends -- without competition -- to enter into a procurement contract that would exceed \$250,000 should include a detailed justification that explains to OJP why, in the particular circumstances, it is appropriate to proceed without competition.

If the applicant receives an award, sole source procurements that do not exceed the Simplified Acquisition Threshold (currently \$250,000) must have written justification

for the noncompetitive procurement action maintained in the procurement file. If a procurement file does not have the documentation that meets the criteria outlined in 2 C.F.R. 200, the procurement expenditures may not be allowable. Sole source procurement over the \$250,000 Simplified Acquisition Threshold must have prior approval from OJP using a Sole Source Grant Adjustment Notice (GAN). Written documentation justifying the noncompetitive procurement must be submitted with the GAN and maintained in the procurement file.

#### **e. Pre-Agreement Costs**

For information on preagreement costs, see [Section B. Federal Award Information](#).

### **5. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)**

Indirect costs may be charged to an award only if:

- (a) The recipient has a current (unexpired), federally approved indirect cost rate; or
- (b) The recipient is eligible to use, and elects to use, the “de minimis” indirect cost rate described in the Part 200 Uniform Requirements, as set out at 2 C.F.R. 200.414(f).

An applicant with a current (unexpired) federally-approved indirect cost rate is to attach a copy of the indirect cost rate agreement to the application. An applicant that does not have a current federally-approved rate may request one through its cognizant federal agency, which will review all documentation and approve a rate for the applicant entity, or, if the applicant’s accounting system permits, applicants may propose to allocate costs in the direct cost categories.

For assistance with identifying the appropriate cognizant federal agency for indirect costs, please contact the Office of the Chief Financial Officer Customer Service Center at 1-800-458-0786 or at [ask.ocfo@usdoj.gov](mailto:ask.ocfo@usdoj.gov). If DOJ is the cognizant federal agency, an applicant may obtain information needed to submit an indirect cost rate proposal at <https://www.ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/IndirectCosts.pdf>.

Certain OJP recipients have the option of electing to use the “de minimis” indirect cost rate. An applicant that is eligible to use the “de minimis” rate that wishes to use the “de minimis” rate should attach written documentation to the application that advises OJP of both-- (1) the applicant’s eligibility to use the “de minimis” rate, and (2) its election to do so. If an eligible applicant elects the “de minimis” rate, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. The “de minimis” rate may no longer be used once an approved federally-negotiated indirect cost rate is in place. (No entity that ever has had a federally-approved negotiated indirect cost rate is eligible to use the “de minimis” rate.) For the “de minimis” rate requirements (including information on eligibility to elect to use the rate), see the Part 200 Uniform Requirements, at 2 C.F.R. 200.414(f).

### **6. Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable)**

A tribe, tribal organization, or third party that proposes to provide direct services or assistance to residents on tribal lands should include in its application a resolution, letter, affidavit, or other documentation, as appropriate, that demonstrates (as a legal matter) that

the applicant has the requisite authorization from the tribe(s) to implement the proposed project on tribal lands. In those instances when an organization or consortium of tribes applies for an award on behalf of a tribe or multiple specific tribes, the application should include appropriate legal documentation, as described above, from all tribes that would receive services or assistance under the award. A consortium of tribes for which existing consortium bylaws allow action without support from all tribes in the consortium (i.e., without an authorizing resolution or comparable legal documentation from each tribal governing body) may submit, instead, a copy of its consortium bylaws with the application.

## **7. Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (including applicant disclosure of high-risk status)**

Every OJP applicant (other than an individual applying in his or her personal capacity) is required to download, complete, and submit the OJP Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (Questionnaire) at <https://ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/FinancialCapability.pdf> as part of its application. The Questionnaire helps OJP assess the financial management and internal control systems, and the associated potential risks of an applicant as part of the pre-award risk assessment process.

The Questionnaire should only be completed by financial staff most familiar with the applicant's systems, policies, and procedures in order to ensure that the correct responses are recorded and submitted to OJP. The responses on the Questionnaire directly impact the pre-award risk assessment and should accurately reflect the applicant's financial management and internal control system at the time of the application. The pre-award risk assessment is only one of multiple factors and criteria used in determining funding. However, a pre-award risk assessment that indicates that an applicant poses a higher risk to OJP may affect the funding decision and/or result in additional reporting requirements, monitoring, special conditions, withholding of award funds, or other additional award requirements.

Among other things, the form requires each applicant to disclose whether it currently is designated "high risk" by a federal grant-making agency outside of DOJ. For purposes of this disclosure, high risk includes any status under which a federal awarding agency provides additional oversight due to the applicant's past performance, or other programmatic or financial concerns with the applicant. If an applicant is designated high risk by another federal awarding agency, the applicant must provide the following information:

- The federal awarding agency that currently designates the applicant high-risk.
- The date the applicant was designated high-risk.
- The high-risk point of contact at that federal awarding agency (name, phone number, and email address).
- The reasons for the high-risk status, as set out by the federal awarding agency.

OJP seeks this information to help ensure appropriate federal oversight of OJP awards. An applicant that is considered "high-risk" by another federal awarding agency is not automatically disqualified from receiving an OJP award. OJP may, however, consider the

information in award decisions, and may impose additional OJP oversight of any award under this solicitation (including through the conditions that accompany the award document).

## 8. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

Each applicant must complete and submit this information. An applicant that expends any funds for lobbying activities is to provide all of the information requested on the form Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) posted at <https://ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/Disclosure.pdf>. An applicant that does not expend any funds for lobbying activities is to enter “N/A” in the text boxes for item 10 (“a. Name and Address of Lobbying Registrant” and “b. Individuals Performing Services”).

## 9. Additional Attachments

### a. Potential Environmental Impact Coversheet and Checklist

Each applicant is to submit an NIJ Programmatic Coversheet and Checklist with its application to assist NIJ in assessing the potential environmental impacts of the activities proposed for funding by the applicant. Specifically, the applicant is expected to:

- Carefully read the [Programmatic Environmental Assessment](#);
- Complete the [Cover Sheet and the attached the Programmatic Checklist](#); and
- Attach the completed documents to the grant application.

The applicant should also submit a Cover Sheet and NIJ Programmatic Checklist for any organization identified in the Budget Detail Worksheet that will receive grant funds through a sub-award or procurement contract to perform any of the following activities: new construction or renovations that change the basic prior use of a facility or significantly change the size; research and/or technology development that could be expected to have an effect on the environment; or implementation of programs involving the use of chemicals.

### b. Applicant disclosure of pending applications<sup>13</sup>

Each applicant is to disclose whether it has (or is proposed as a subrecipient under) any pending applications for federally-funded grants or cooperative agreements that (1) include requests for funding to support the same project being proposed in the application under this solicitation, and (2) would cover the identical cost items outlined in the budget submitted to OJP under this solicitation. The applicant is to disclose both applications made directly to federal awarding agencies, and also applications for subawards of federal funds (e.g., applications to State agencies that will subaward (“subgrant”) federal funds).

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<sup>13</sup> Typically, the applicant is **not** the principal investigator. Rather, the applicant, most frequently, is the institution, organization, or company in which the principal investigator is employed.

OJP seeks this information to help avoid inappropriate duplication of funding. Leveraging multiple funding sources in a complementary manner to implement comprehensive programs or projects is encouraged and is not seen as inappropriate duplication.

Each applicant that has one or more pending applications as described above is to provide the following information about pending applications submitted within the last 12 months:

- The federal or State funding agency.
- The solicitation name/project name.
- The point of contact information at the applicable federal or State funding agency.

<b>Federal or State Funding Agency</b>	<b>Solicitation Name/Project Name</b>	<b>Name/Phone/E-mail for Point of Contact at Federal or State Funding Agency</b>
DOJ/Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office)	COPS Hiring Program	Jane Doe, 202/000-0000; jane.doe@usdoj.gov
Health and Human Services/ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration	Drug-Free Communities Mentoring Program/North County Youth Mentoring Program	John Doe, 202/000-0000; john.doe@hhs.gov

Each applicant should include the table as a separate attachment to its application. The file should be named "Disclosure of Pending Applications." The applicant's Legal Name on the application must match the entity named on the disclosure of pending applications statement.

Any applicant that does not have any pending applications as described above is to submit, as a separate attachment, a statement to this effect: "[Applicant Name on SF-424] does not have (and is not proposed as a subrecipient under) any pending applications submitted within the last 12 months for federally-funded grants or cooperative agreements or for subawards under federal grants or cooperative agreements that request funding to support the same project being proposed in this application to OJP and that would cover the identical cost items outlined in the budget submitted as part of this application."

**c. Applicant Disclosure and Justification – DOJ High Risk Grantees<sup>14</sup> (if applicable)**

An applicant that is designated as a DOJ High Risk Grantee is to submit [REDACTED], as a separate attachment to its application, information that OJP will use, among other pertinent information, to determine whether it will consider or select the application for an award under this solicitation. The file should be named “DOJ High Risk Grantee Applicant Disclosure and Justification.” (See, also, “Review Process,” below, under Section E. Application Review Information, for a brief discussion of how such information may be considered in the application review process.)

OJP constantly seeks to optimize its investments in criminal- and juvenile justice-focused programs and activities, increase program effectiveness, and maximize the return — and program impact — from limited programmatic resources. Therefore, OJP may remove from consideration or not select for award a “DOJ High Risk Grantee” applicant that is determined to pose a substantial risk of program implementation failure. In making such determinations, OJP will consider one or more of the following factors: the applicant’s lack of sufficient progress in addressing required corrective actions necessary for removal of the DOJ High Risk Grantee designation; the nature and severity of the issues leading to or accompanying the applicant’s DOJ High Risk Grantee designation; or the applicant’s expected ability to manage grant funds and achieve grant goals and objectives.

In this attachment, the applicant is to provide any additional information or justification — especially with regard to corrective actions yet to be implemented (as of the application date) — that may help demonstrate how the applicant has addressed or otherwise mitigated such uncorrected matters, such that any negative impact on the proposed program and its implementation would be immaterial or would be significantly reduced or eliminated. (To the extent that the applicant believes that any of the information provided pursuant to this disclosure may be confidential in nature, the applicant should specifically identify it.)

**d. Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity**

When an application proposes research (including research and development) and/or evaluation, the applicant must demonstrate research/evaluation independence and integrity, including appropriate safeguards, before it may receive award funds. The applicant must demonstrate independence and integrity regarding both this proposed research and/or evaluation, and any current or prior related projects.

Each application should include an attachment that addresses **both** i. and ii. below. Attach this information as a separate PDF file titled “Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity.”

- i. For purposes of this solicitation, each applicant is to document research and evaluation independence and integrity by including one of the following two items:

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<sup>14</sup> A “DOJ High Risk Grantee” is a recipient that has received a DOJ High-Risk designation based on a documented history of unsatisfactory performance, financial instability, management system or other internal control deficiencies, or noncompliance with award terms and conditions on prior awards, or that is otherwise not responsible.

- a. A specific assurance that the applicant has reviewed its application to identify any actual or potential apparent conflicts of interest (including through review of pertinent information on the principal investigator, any co-principal investigators, and any subrecipients), and that the applicant has identified no such conflicts of interest – whether personal or financial or organizational (including on the part of the applicant entity or on the part of staff, investigators, or subrecipients) – that could affect the independence or integrity of the research, including the design, conduct, and reporting of the research.

OR

- b. A specific description of actual or potential apparent conflicts of interest that the applicant has identified – including through review of pertinent information on the principal investigator, any co-principal investigators, and any subrecipients – that could affect the independence or integrity of the research, including the design, conduct, or reporting of the research. These conflicts may be personal (e.g., on the part of investigators or other staff), financial, or organizational (related to the applicant or any subrecipient entity). Some examples of potential investigator (or other personal) conflict situations are those in which an investigator would be in a position to evaluate a spouse's work product (actual conflict), or an investigator would be in a position to evaluate the work of a former or current colleague (potential apparent conflict). With regard to potential organizational conflicts of interest, as one example, generally an organization would not be given an award to evaluate a project, if that organization had itself provided substantial prior technical assistance to that specific project or a location implementing the project (whether funded by OJP or other sources), because the organization in such an instance might appear to be evaluating the effectiveness of its own prior work. The key is whether a reasonable person understanding all of the facts would be able to have confidence that the results of any research or evaluation project are objective and reliable. Any outside personal or financial interest that casts doubt on that objectivity and reliability of an evaluation or research product is a problem and must be disclosed.
- ii. In addition, for purposes of this solicitation, each applicant is to address possible mitigation of research integrity concerns by including, at a minimum, one of the following two items:
    - a. If an applicant reasonably believes that no actual or potential apparent conflicts of interest (personal, financial, or organizational) exist, then the applicant should provide a brief narrative explanation of how and why it reached that conclusion. The applicant also is to include an explanation of the specific processes and procedures that the applicant has in place, or will put in place, to identify and prevent (or, at the very least, mitigate) any such conflicts of interest pertinent to the funded project during the period of performance. Documentation that may be helpful in this regard may include organizational codes of ethics/conduct and policies regarding organizational, personal, and financial conflicts of interest. There is no guarantee that the plan, if any, will be accepted as proposed.

OR

- b. If the applicant has identified actual or potential apparent conflicts of interest (personal, financial, or organizational) that could affect the independence and integrity of the research, including the design, conduct, or reporting of the research, the applicant is to provide a specific and robust mitigation plan to address each of those conflicts. At a minimum, the applicant is expected to explain the specific processes and procedures that the applicant has in place, or will put in place, to identify and eliminate (or, at the very least, mitigate) any such conflicts of interest pertinent to the funded project during the period of performance. Documentation that may be helpful in this regard may include organizational codes of ethics/conduct and policies regarding organizational, personal, and financial conflicts of interest. There is no guarantee that the plan, if any, will be accepted as proposed.

OJP will assess research and evaluation independence and integrity based on considerations such as the adequacy of the applicant's efforts to identify factors that could affect the objectivity or integrity of the proposed staff and/or the applicant entity (and any subrecipients) in carrying out the research, development, or evaluation activity; and the adequacy of the applicant's existing or proposed remedies to control any such factors.

## How to Apply

Applicants must register in and submit applications through Grants.gov, a primary source to find federal funding opportunities and apply for funding. Find complete instructions on how to register and submit an application at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html>. Applicants that experience technical difficulties during this process should call the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at **800-518-4726** or **606-545-5035**, which operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays.

**Important Grants.gov update.** Grants.gov has updated its application tool. The legacy PDF application package has been phased out and was retired on December 31, 2017. Grants.gov Workspace is now the standard application method for applying for grants. OJP applicants should familiarize themselves with the Workspace option now. For complete information and instructions on using Workspace (and other changes), go to the Workspace Overview page at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>.

Registering with Grants.gov is a one-time process; however, **processing delays may occur, and it can take several weeks** for first-time registrants to receive confirmation of registration and a user password. OJP encourages applicants to **register several weeks before** the application submission deadline. In addition, OJP urges applicants to submit applications at least 72 hours prior to the application due date, in order to allow time for the applicant to receive validation messages or rejection notifications from Grants.gov, and to correct in a timely fashion any problems that may have caused a rejection notification.

OJP strongly encourages all prospective applicants to sign up for Grants.gov email notifications regarding this solicitation at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/manage-subscriptions.html>. If this solicitation is cancelled or modified, individuals who sign up with Grants.gov for updates will be automatically notified.

**Browser Information:** Grants.gov was built to be compatible with Internet Explorer. For technical assistance with Google Chrome, or another browser, contact Grants.gov Customer Support.

**Note on Attachments.** Grants.gov has two categories of files for attachments: “mandatory” and “optional.” OJP receives all files attached in both categories. Attachments are also labeled to describe the file being attached (e.g., Project Narrative, Budget Narrative, Other, etc.) Please ensure that all required documents are attached in the correct Grants.gov category and are labeled correctly. Do not embed “mandatory” attachments within another file.

**Note on File Names and File Types:** Grants.gov only permits the use of certain specific characters in file names of attachments. Valid file names may include only the characters shown in the table below. Grants.gov rejects any application that includes an attachment(s) with a file name that contains any characters not shown in the table below. Grants.gov forwards successfully-submitted applications to the OJP Grants Management System (GMS).

Characters	Special Characters		
Upper case (A – Z)	Parenthesis ( )	Curly braces { }	Square brackets [ ]
Lower case (a – z)	Ampersand (&)*	Tilde (~)	Exclamation point (!)
Underscore ( _ )	Comma ( , )	Semicolon ( ; )	Apostrophe ( ‘ )
Hyphen ( - )	At sign ( @ )	Number sign ( # )	Dollar sign ( \$ )
Space	Percent sign ( % )	Plus sign ( + )	Equal sign ( = )
Period ( . )			

\*When using the ampersand (&) in XML, applicants must use the “&amp;” format.

**GMS does not accept executable file types as application attachments.** These disallowed file types include, but are not limited to, the following extensions: “.com,” “.bat,” “.exe,” “.vbs,” “.cfg,” “.dat,” “.db,” “.dbf,” “.dll,” “.ini,” “.log,” “.ora,” “.sys,” and “.zip.” GMS may reject applications with files that use these extensions. It is important to allow time to change the type of file(s) if the application is rejected.

All applicants are required to complete the following steps:

**Unique Entity Identifier (DUNS Number) and System for Award Management (SAM)**

Every applicant entity must comply with all applicable System for Award Management (SAM) and unique entity identifier (currently, a Data Universal Numbering System [DUNS] number) requirements. SAM is the repository for certain standard information about federal financial assistance applicants, recipients, and subrecipients. A DUNS number is a unique nine-digit identification number provided by the commercial company Dun and Bradstreet. More detailed information about SAM and the DUNS number is in the numbered sections below.

If an applicant entity has not fully complied with the applicable SAM and unique identifier requirements by the time OJP makes award decisions, OJP may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and may use that determination as a basis for making the award to a different applicant.

## Applying as an Individual

An individual who wishes to apply in his/her personal capacity should search Grants.gov for funding opportunities for which individuals are eligible to apply. Use the Funding Opportunity Number (FON) to register. (An applicant applying as an individual must comply with all applicable Grants.gov individual registration requirements.)

Enter the FON at <https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/IndCPRegister> to complete the registration form and create a username and password for Grants.gov. (An applicant applying as an individual should complete all steps except 1, 2, and 4.)

## Registration and Submission Steps

- 1. Acquire a unique entity identifier (currently, a DUNS number).** In general, the Office of Management and Budget requires every applicant for a federal award (other than an individual) to include a "unique entity identifier" in each application, including an application for a supplemental award. Currently, a DUNS number is the required unique entity identifier.

This unique entity identifier is used for tracking purposes, and to validate address and point of contact information for applicants, recipients, and subrecipients. It will be used throughout the life cycle of an OJP award. Obtaining a DUNS number is a free, one-time activity. Call Dun and Bradstreet at 866-705-5711 to obtain a DUNS number or apply online at [www.dnb.com](http://www.dnb.com). A DUNS number is usually received within 1-2 business days.

- 2. Acquire or maintain registration with SAM.** Any applicant for an OJP award creating a new entity registration (or updating or renewing a registration) in SAM.gov must submit an original, signed notarized letter appointing the authorized Entity Administrator within thirty (30) days of the registration activation. **Notarized letters must be submitted via U.S. Postal Service Mail.** Read the Alert at [sam.gov/SAM/](http://sam.gov/SAM/) to learn more about what is required in the notarized letter, and read the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) at [www.gsa.gov/samupdate](http://www.gsa.gov/samupdate) to learn more about this process change. All applicants for OJP awards (other than individuals) must maintain current registrations in the SAM database. Applicants will need the authorizing official of the organization and an Employer Identification Number (EIN). Information about SAM registration procedures can be accessed at [sam.gov/SAM/](http://sam.gov/SAM/).

An application cannot be successfully submitted in Grants.gov until Grants.gov receives the SAM registration information. Once the SAM registration/renewal is complete, **the information transfer from SAM to Grants.gov can take as long as 48 hours.** OJP recommends that the applicant register or renew registration with SAM as early as possible.

- 3. Acquire an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and a Grants.gov username and password.** Complete the AOR profile on Grants.gov and create a username and password. An applicant entity's "unique entity identifier" (DUNS number) must be used to complete this step. For more information about the registration process for organizations and other entities, go to <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>. Individuals registering with Grants.gov should go to <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>.
- 4. Acquire confirmation for the AOR from the E-Business Point of Contact (E-Biz POC).** The E-Biz POC at the applicant organization must log into Grants.gov to "confirm" the

applicant organization's AOR. The E-Biz POC will need the Marketing Partner Identification Number (MPIN) password obtained when registering with SAM to complete this step. Note that an organization can have more than one AOR.

5. **Search for the funding opportunity on Grants.gov.** Use the following identifying information when searching for the funding opportunity on Grants.gov. The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number for this solicitation is 16.560; and the funding opportunity number is NIJ-2019-15387.
6. **Access Funding Opportunity and Application Package from Grants.gov.** Select "Apply for Grants" under the "Applicants" column. Enter your email address to be notified of any changes to the opportunity package before the closing date. Click the Workspace icon to use Grants.gov Workspace.
7. **Submit a valid application consistent with this solicitation by following the directions in Grants.gov.** Within 24-48 hours after submitting the electronic application, the applicant should receive two notifications from Grants.gov. The first will confirm the receipt of the application. The second will state whether the application has been validated and successfully submitted, or whether it has been rejected due to errors, with an explanation. It is possible to first receive a message indicating that the application is received, and then receive a rejection notice a few minutes or hours later. Submitting an application well ahead of the deadline provides time to correct the problem(s) that caused the rejection. **Important:** OJP urges each applicant to submit its application **at least 72 hours prior** to the application due date, to allow time to receive validation messages or rejection notifications from Grants.gov, and to correct in a timely fashion any problems that may have caused a rejection notification. Applications must be successfully submitted through Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. eastern time on April 11, 2019.

Click <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html> for further details on DUNS numbers, SAM, and Grants.gov registration steps and timeframes.

### **Note: Application Versions**

If an applicant submits multiple versions of the same application, OJP will review only the most recent system-validated version submitted.

### **Experiencing Unforeseen Grants.gov Technical Issues**

An applicant that experiences unforeseen Grants.gov technical issues beyond its control that prevent it from submitting its application by the deadline must contact the [Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline](https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html) at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html> or the [SAM Help Desk](https://www.fsd.gov/fsd-gov/home.do) (Federal Service Desk) at <https://www.fsd.gov/fsd-gov/home.do> to report the technical issue and receive a tracking number. The applicant must e-mail the NIJ contact identified in the Contact Information section on the title page **within 24 hours after the application deadline** to request approval to submit its application after the deadline. The applicant's e-mail must describe the technical difficulties, and must include a timeline of the applicant's submission efforts, the complete grant application, the applicant's DUNS number, and any Grants.gov Help Desk or SAM tracking number(s).

**Note: OJP does not automatically approve requests to submit a late application.** After OJP reviews the applicant's request, and contacts the Grants.gov or SAM Help Desks to verify

the reported technical issues, OJP will inform the applicant whether the request to submit a late application has been approved or denied. If OJP determines that the untimely application submission was due to the applicant's failure to follow all required procedures, OJP will deny the applicant's request to submit its application.

The following conditions generally are insufficient to justify late submissions:

- Failure to register in SAM or Grants.gov in sufficient time (SAM registration and renewal can take as long as 10 business days to complete. The information transfer from SAM to Grants.gov can take up to 48 hours.)
- Failure to follow Grants.gov instructions on how to register and apply as posted on its Website.
- Failure to follow each instruction in the OJP solicitation.
- Technical issues with the applicant's computer or information technology environment, such as issues with firewalls or browser incompatibility.

**Notifications regarding known technical problems with Grants.gov, if any, are posted at the top of the OJP Funding Resource Center at <https://ojp.gov/funding/index.htm>.**

## **E. Application Review Information**

### **Review Criteria**

Depending on the number of applications received, applications may be categorized by scientific discipline into discrete groups for purposes of peer review and/or selection of award.

Applications that meet basic minimum requirements will be evaluated by peer reviewers using the following review criteria. Each individual criterion is assigned a different weight based on the percentage value listed. For example, the first criterion, Statement of the Problem, is worth 10 percent of the score in the assessment of the application's technical merit.

**Statement of the Problem and Research Questions** (Understanding of the problem, research questions, and their importance) – 10%

1. Demonstrated understanding of the problem(s) that exist in an identified forensic science field/discipline.
2. Demonstrated understanding of the technology needs of the forensic science practitioners.
3. Demonstrated awareness of the current state of the art and technologies, both in practice and in past/current research, directed at the described problem(s).
4. Demonstrated importance of research questions, goals and objectives, including alignment with the aims of the solicitation.
5. Demonstrated awareness of the state of current research.

## **Project Design and Implementation (Quality and technical merit) – 50%**

1. Soundness of methods and analytic and technical approach to addressing the stated aim(s) of the proposed project. The overall strategy, methodology, and analyses should be well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project.
2. Feasibility of proposed project and the strength of supporting data. The proof-of-principle of the proposed technology or methodology should be established and supported by preliminary data presented in or referenced in the proposal. More innovative plans and/or plans with a higher potential for failure should be counterbalanced to manage the inherent risk; e.g., by firm theoretical basis, reasonable preliminary data (depending on the mechanism), the track record of the principal investigator and any co-principal investigator(s), and an outstanding scientific and management plan.
3. Detailed description and justification of the sample type and sample size to be tested and approaches for data analysis are thorough and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project.
4. Awareness of potential pitfalls of proposed project design and feasibility of proposed actions to minimize and/or mitigate them.
5. Feasibility of completing the deliverables noted in the solicitation (which include datasets, peer-reviewed journal articles, technological prototypes and patented inventions, as appropriate).

## **Potential Impact – 20%**

Potential for a significant scientific or technical advance(s) that will improve criminal/juvenile justice in the United States, such as:

1. Potential for significantly improved understanding of the stated forensic science problem.
  - If the goals of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or forensic science practice in the criminal justice system be improved?
  - What is the likelihood that the project will exert a sustained, powerful influence on the forensic science field(s) related to criminal justice?
2. Potential for innovative solution to address (all or a significant part of) the stated forensic science problem.
  - How will successful completion change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, or services that drive the forensic science field as it relates to criminal justice?
  - How will a successful project address the identified criminal justice or forensic science problem and associated critical barriers to progress?

**Capabilities/Competencies** (Capabilities, demonstrated productivity, and experience of the applicant organization and proposed project staff) – 20%

1. Qualifications and experience of proposed project staff (that is, the principal investigator, any and all co-principal investigators, and all other individuals (and organizations) identified in the application (regardless of “investigator” status) who will be significantly involved in substantive aspects of the proposed project).
2. Demonstrated ability of the applicant organization to implement the proposed strategies and manage the effort.
3. Relationship between the capabilities/competencies of the proposed project staff (including the applicant organization) and the scope and strategies of the proposed project.
4. Strength of the scientific environment (e.g., institutional support, equipment and other physical resources, or collaborative arrangements) in which the work will be done and its contribution to the probability of success.
5. Demonstrated ability to produce scholarly products.

### **Budget**

In addition, peer reviewers will consider and may comment on the following additional items in the context of scientific and technical merit.

1. Total cost of the project relative to the perceived benefit (cost effectiveness).
2. Appropriateness of the budget relative to the level of effort.
3. Use of existing resources to conserve costs.
4. Alignment of the proposed budget with proposed project activities.

### **Plan for Dissemination to Broader Audiences (if applicable to the proposed project)**

Peer reviewers may comment—in the context of scientific and technical merit—on the proposed plan (if any) to produce or to make available to broader interested audiences, such as forensic science practitioners or policymakers, summary information from the planned scholarly products of the project.

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### **Review Process**

OJP is committed to ensuring a fair and open process for making awards. NIJ reviews the application to make sure that the information presented is reasonable, understandable, measurable, and achievable, as well as consistent with the solicitation.

Peer reviewers will review the applications submitted under this solicitation that meet basic minimum requirements. For purposes of assessing whether an application meets basic minimum requirements and should proceed to further consideration, OJP screens applications

for compliance with those requirements. Although specific requirements may vary, the following are common requirements applicable to all solicitations for funding under OJP programs:

- The application must be submitted by an eligible type of applicant.
- The application must request funding within programmatic funding constraints (if applicable).
- The application must be responsive to the scope of the solicitation.
- The application must include all items designated as “critical elements.”
- The application, if submitted by an applicant that is a DOJ High Risk Grantee,<sup>15</sup> or is designated “high risk” by a federal grant-making agency outside of DOJ, must not have been determined by the Director/Administrator to pose a substantial risk of program implementation failure, based on 1) the applicant’s lack of sufficient progress in addressing required corrective actions necessary for removal of the DOJ High Risk Grantee (or non-DOJ high risk) designation, 2) the nature and severity of the issues leading to or accompanying the DOJ High Risk Grantee (or non-DOJ high risk) designation, and/or 3) the applicant’s expected ability to manage grant funds and achieve grant goals and objectives.
- The applicant must not be identified in SAM as excluded from receiving federal awards.

For a list of the critical elements for this solicitation, see “What an Application Should Include” under [Section D. Application and Submission Information](#).

Peer review panels will evaluate, score, and rate applications that meet basic minimum requirements. NIJ may use external peer reviewers, internal peer reviewers, or a combination, to assess applications on technical merit using the solicitation’s review criteria. An external peer reviewer is an expert in the subject matter of a given solicitation who is not a current DOJ employee. An internal reviewer is a current DOJ employee who is well-versed or has expertise in the subject matter of this solicitation. Peer reviewers’ ratings and any resulting recommendations are advisory only, although reviewer views are considered carefully. Other important considerations for NIJ include priority consideration areas as described previously, geographic diversity, strategic priorities, past performance, and available funding, as well as the planned scholarly products and the extent to which the Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative accurately explain project costs that are reasonable, necessary, and otherwise allowable under federal law and applicable federal cost principles.

Pursuant to the Part 200 Uniform Requirements, before award decisions are made, OJP also reviews information related to the degree of risk posed by applicants. Among other things to help assess whether an applicant that has one or more prior federal awards has a satisfactory record with respect to performance, integrity, and business ethics, OJP checks whether the applicant is listed in SAM as excluded from receiving a federal award. In addition, if OJP anticipates that an award will exceed \$250,000 in federal funds, OJP also must review and consider any information about the applicant that appears in the non-public segment of the

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<sup>15</sup> See “Applicant Disclosure and Justification – DOJ High Risk Grantees” under “What an Application Should Include,” above, for a definition of “DOJ High Risk Grantee.”

integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently, the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System; "FAPIS").

**Important note on FAPIS:** An applicant, at its option, may review and comment on any information about itself that currently appears in FAPIS and was entered by a federal awarding agency. OJP will consider any such comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in FAPIS, in its assessment of the risk posed by the applicant.

The evaluation of risks goes beyond information in SAM, however. OJP itself has in place a framework for evaluating risks posed by applicants for competitive awards. OJP takes into account information pertinent to matters such as —

1. Applicant financial stability and fiscal integrity.
2. Quality of the applicant's management systems, and applicant's ability to meet prescribed management standards, including those outlined in the DOJ Grants Financial Guide.
3. Applicant's history of performance under OJP and other DOJ awards (including scholarly products, and compliance with reporting requirements and award conditions), as well as awards from other federal agencies.
4. Reports and findings from audits of the applicant, including audits under the Part 200 Uniform Requirements.
5. Applicant's ability to comply with statutory and regulatory requirements, and to effectively implement other award requirements.

Note on applicants with a "high risk" designation: Risks associated with DOJ High Risk Grantees, or applicants designated as "high risk" by a federal grant-making agency outside of DOJ, are taken into account during the review process, and each applicant with such "high risk" designations will be considered for funding on a case-by-case basis, depending on the nature and severity of the issues that led to the DOJ High Risk Grantee (or non-DOJ high risk) designation, status of progress in addressing corrective actions, and expected ability to manage grant funds and achieve grant goals and objectives. A "high risk" designated applicant is to submit disclosure and justification documentation consistent with the requirements specified, above, under "What an Application Should Include" in Section C. Application and Submission Information.

All final award decisions will be made by the Director of the National Institute of Justice, who may take into account not only peer review ratings and NIJ recommendations, but also other factors as indicated in this section.

## **F. Federal Award Administration Information**

### **Federal Award Notices**

Award notifications will be made by September 30, 2019. OJP sends award notifications by email through GMS to the individuals listed in the application as the point of contact and the authorizing official (E-Biz POC and AOR). The email notification includes detailed instructions

on how to access and view the award documents, and steps to take in GMS to start the award acceptance process. GMS automatically issues the notifications at 9:00 p.m. eastern time on the award date.

For each successful applicant, an individual with the necessary authority to bind the applicant will be required to login; execute a set of legal certifications and a set of legal assurances; designate a financial point of contact; thoroughly review the award, including all award conditions; and sign and accept the award. The award acceptance process requires physical signature of the award document by the authorized representative and the scanning and submission of the fully-executed award document to OJP.

### **Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements**

If selected for funding, in addition to implementing the funded project consistent with the OJP-approved application, the recipient must comply with all award conditions, as well as all applicable requirements of federal statutes and regulations (including applicable requirements referred to in the assurances and certifications executed in connection with award acceptance). OJP strongly encourages prospective applicants to review information on post-award legal requirements and common OJP award conditions **prior** to submitting an application.

Applicants should consult the “[Overview of Legal Requirements Generally Applicable to OJP Grants and Cooperative Agreements - FY 2018 Awards](#),” available in the OJP Funding Resource Center at <https://ojp.gov/funding/index.htm>. In addition, applicants should examine the following two legal documents, as each successful applicant must execute both documents before it may receive any award funds. (An applicant is not required to submit these documents as part of an application.)

- [Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements.](#)
- [Certified Standard Assurances.](#)

The webpages accessible through the “[Overview of Legal Requirements Generally Applicable to OJP Grants and Cooperative Agreements - FY 2018 Awards](#)” are intended to give applicants for OJP awards a general overview of important statutes, regulations, and award conditions that apply to many (or in some cases, all) OJP grants and cooperative agreements awarded in FY 2019. Individual OJP awards typically also will include additional award conditions. Those additional conditions may relate to the particular statute, program, or solicitation under which the award is made; to the substance of the funded application; to the recipient’s performance under other federal awards; to the recipient’s legal status (e.g., as a for-profit entity); or to other pertinent considerations.

As stated above, NIJ expects that it will make any award under this solicitation in the form of a grant, or in the case of a federal agency, an inter-agency reimbursable agreement. NIJ may, on a case-by-case basis, elect to make an award under this solicitation in the form of a cooperative agreement. Cooperative agreements include a condition in the award document that sets out the nature of the “substantial federal involvement” in carrying out the award and program. Generally stated, under OJP cooperative agreement awards, responsibility for the day-to-day conduct of the funded project rests with the recipient. OJP, however, may have substantial involvement in matters such as substantive coordination of technical efforts and site selection,

as well as review and approval of project work plans, research designs, data collection instruments, and major project-generated materials. In addition, OJP often indicates in the award terms and conditions that it may redirect the project if necessary.

In addition to an award condition that sets out the nature of the anticipated “substantial federal involvement” in the award, cooperative agreements awarded by OJP include an award condition that requires specific reporting in connection with conferences, meetings, retreats, seminars, symposium, training activities, or similar events funded under the award.

Awards under this solicitation will include a condition (the specific terms of which will govern the award) related to verification of employment eligibility. The condition will, generally speaking, require the recipient (and any subrecipient) that accepts the award to verify the employment eligibility of any individual hired under the award, consonant with 8 U.S.C. § 1324a(1).

Awards under this solicitation will include a condition (the specific terms of which will govern the award) related to competition requirements set forth at 2 C.F.R. § 200.319. The condition will, generally speaking, prohibit recipients (and any subrecipients) from procuring goods and services with award funds by means of any competition that disadvantages or excludes vendors on the basis of their having (or their having had) a prior or existing contractual relationship with the federal government.

### **General Information about Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements**

As indicated earlier in this solicitation, NIJ expects scholarly products to result from any award under this solicitation. Please review the [Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Expected Scholarly Products](#) of this solicitation, as well as the [Performance Measures](#). In addition to the deliverables and expected scholarly products, any recipient of an award under this solicitation will be required to submit the following reports and data.

Required reports. Recipients typically must submit quarterly financial reports, semi-annual progress reports, final financial and progress reports, and, if applicable, an annual audit report in accordance with the Part 200 Uniform Requirements or specific award conditions. Applicants should anticipate that progress reports will be required to follow the non-budgetary components of the Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR) template/format. General information on RPPRs may be found at [www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/rppr/](http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/rppr/). Future awards and fund drawdowns may be withheld if reports are delinquent. (In appropriate cases, OJP may require additional reports.)

Awards that exceed \$500,000 will include an additional condition that, under specific circumstances, will require the recipient to report (to FAPIIS) information on civil, criminal, and administrative proceedings connected with (or connected to the performance of) either the OJP award or any other grant, cooperative agreement, or procurement contract from the federal government. Additional information on this reporting requirement appears in the text of the award condition posted on the OJP webpage at <https://ojp.gov/funding/FAPIIS.htm>.

Data on performance measures. In addition to required reports, an award recipient under this solicitation also must provide data that measure the results of the work done under the award. To demonstrate program progress and success, as well as to assist DOJ with fulfilling its responsibilities under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA), Public Law 103-62, and the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010, Public Law 111-352, OJP will require any award recipient, post award, to provide performance data listed as part of regular progress

reporting. Successful applicants will be required to access OJP's performance measurement page at [www.ojp.gov/performance](http://www.ojp.gov/performance) for an overview of performance measurement activities at OJP.

## **G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)**

For OJP contact(s), see the title page.

For contact information for Grants.gov, see the title page.

## **H. Other Information**

### **Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552 and 5 U.S.C. 552a)**

All applications submitted to OJP (including all attachments to applications) are subject to the federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and to the Privacy Act. By law, DOJ may withhold information that is responsive to a request pursuant to FOIA if DOJ determines that the responsive information either is protected under the Privacy Act or falls within the scope of one of nine statutory exemptions under FOIA. DOJ cannot agree in advance of a request pursuant to FOIA not to release some or all portions of an application.

In its review of records that are responsive to a FOIA request, OJP will withhold information in those records that plainly falls within the scope of the Privacy Act or one of the statutory exemptions under FOIA. (Some examples include certain types of information in budgets, and names and contact information for project staff other than certain key personnel.) In appropriate circumstances, OJP will request the views of the applicant/recipient that submitted a responsive document.

For example, if OJP receives a request pursuant to FOIA for an application submitted by a nonprofit or for-profit organization or an institution of higher education, or for an application that involves research, OJP typically will contact the applicant/recipient that submitted the application and ask it to identify -- quite precisely -- any particular information in the application that the applicant/recipient believes falls under a FOIA exemption, the specific exemption it believes applies, and why. After considering the submission by the applicant/recipient, OJP makes an independent assessment regarding withholding information. OJP generally follows a similar process for requests pursuant to FOIA for applications that may contain law-enforcement sensitive information.

### **Provide Feedback to OJP**

To assist OJP in improving its application and award processes, OJP encourages applicants to provide feedback on this solicitation, the application submission process, and/or the application review process. Provide feedback to [OJPSolicitationFeedback@usdoj.gov](mailto:OJPSolicitationFeedback@usdoj.gov).

**IMPORTANT:** This e-mail is for feedback and suggestions only. OJP does not send replies from this mailbox to messages it receives in this mailbox. Any prospective applicant that has specific questions on any program or technical aspect of the solicitation **must** use the appropriate telephone number or e-mail listed on the front of this solicitation document to obtain information. These contacts are provided to help ensure that prospective applicants can directly reach an individual who can address specific questions in a timely manner.

If you are interested in being a reviewer for other OJP grant applications, please e-mail your resume to [ojpprsupport@usdoj.gov](mailto:ojpprsupport@usdoj.gov). (Do not send your resume to the OJP Solicitation Feedback email account.) **Note:** Neither you nor anyone else from your organization or entity can be a peer reviewer in a competition in which you or your organization/entity has submitted an application.

## Application Checklist

### Research and Development in Forensic Science for Criminal Justice Purposes

This application checklist has been created as an aid in developing an application.

#### What an Applicant Should Do:

##### *Prior to Registering in Grants.gov:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Acquire a DUNS Number (see page 40)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Acquire or renew registration with SAM (see page 40)

##### *To Register with Grants.gov:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Acquire AOR and Grants.gov username/password (see page 40)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Biz POC (see page 40)

##### *To Find Funding Opportunity:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Search for the funding opportunity on Grants.gov (see page 41)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Access Funding Opportunity and Application Package (see page 41)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sign up for Grants.gov [email](#) notifications (optional) (see page 38)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Read [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Read OJP policy and guidance on conference approval, planning, and reporting available at [ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/PostawardRequirements/chapter3.10a.htm](http://ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/PostawardRequirements/chapter3.10a.htm) (see page 17)

##### *After Application Submission, Receive Grants.gov Email Notifications That:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ (1) application has been received
- \_\_\_\_\_ (2) application has either been successfully validated or rejected with errors (see page 41)

##### *If no Grants.gov receipt, and validation or error notifications are received:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Contact NIJ regarding experiencing technical difficulties (see page 2)

#### Overview of Post-Award Legal Requirements:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Review the "[Overview of Legal Requirements Generally Applicable to OJP Grants and Cooperative Agreements – FY 2018 Awards](#)" in the OJP Funding Resource Center at <https://ojp.gov/funding/index.htm>.

**Eligibility Requirement:** See cover page.

#### What an Application Should Include:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) (see page 18)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Project Abstract (if applicable) (see page 19)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Program Narrative (critical element) (see page 19)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Appendices (see page 25)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Bibliography/references
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Any tools/instruments, questionnaires, tables/charts/graphs, or maps pertaining to the proposed study that supplement those in the narrative
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Curriculum vitae, resumes, or biosketches of the principal investigator, and any and all co-principal investigators (critical element)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Documentation of "new investigator" status (if applicable)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Proposed project timeline and expected milestones
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Progress report for renewal and revision applications (if applicable)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Progress report publication list
- \_\_\_\_\_ Multiple PI leadership plan
- \_\_\_\_\_ Consortium/contractual arrangements
- \_\_\_\_\_ Letters of support
- \_\_\_\_\_ Data archiving plan
- \_\_\_\_\_ List of proposed project staff, affiliation, and roles
- \_\_\_\_\_ Human subjects protection paperwork
- \_\_\_\_\_ Privacy Certificate
- \_\_\_\_\_ List of any previous and current NIJ awards to applicant organization and investigator(s) (if applicable)
- \_\_\_\_\_ List of other agencies, organizations, or funding sources to which this proposal has been submitted (if applicable)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Incentive or stipend approval request (if applicable)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Budget Detail Worksheet (critical element) (see page 29)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Budget Narrative (critical element) (see page 29)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable) (see page 32)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable) (see page 32)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (see page 33)
- \_\_\_\_\_ [Disclosure of Lobbying Activities \(SF-LLL\)](#) (see page 34)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Attachments
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Potential Environmental Impact Coversheet and Checklist (see page 34)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant Disclosure of Pending Applications (see page 34)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant Disclosure and Justification – DOJ High Risk Grantees (if applicable) (see page 36)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity (see page 36)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Request and Justification for Employee Compensation; Waiver (if applicable) (see page 16)