

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Bureau of Justice Statistics



FY 2023 Firearm Inquiry Statistics (FIST) program, 2023–2026

Assistance Listing Number # 16.734

Grants.gov Opportunity Number: O-BJS-2023-171654

Solicitation Release Date: April 04, 2023

Step 1: Application Grants.gov Deadline: June 05, 2023, 8:59 PM ET

Step 2: Application JustGrants Deadline: June 12, 2023, 8:59 PM ET

Overview

The [U.S. Department of Justice](#) (DOJ), [Office of Justice Programs](#) (OJP), [Bureau of Justice Statistics](#) (BJS) seeks applications for funding to administer the 2023–2026 Firearm Inquiry Statistics (FIST) program. This program furthers the DOJ’s mission by providing a comprehensive summary of firearm background check data and national estimates of the total number of firearm purchase applications received and denied as well as reasons for denial.

This solicitation incorporates guidance provided in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) which provides additional information for applicants to prepare and submit applications to OJP for funding. **If this solicitation expressly modifies any provision in the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide, the applicant is to follow the guidelines in this solicitation as to that provision.**

Solicitation Categories

This solicitation does not include Solicitation Categories.

Eligible Applicants:

City or township governments, County governments, For profit organizations other than small businesses, Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education, Nonprofits that do not have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education, Private institutions of higher education, Public and State controlled institutions of higher education, Small businesses, Special district governments, State governments

An applicant entity may submit more than one application, if 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.

BJS will consider 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). For additional information on subawards, see the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

BJS may elect to fund applications submitted under this FY 2023 solicitation in future fiscal years, dependent on, among other considerations, the merit of the applications and the availability of appropriations.

Contact Information

For assistance with the requirements of this solicitation, contact Elizabeth Davis, BJS Statistician, at 202-307-0765 or at AskBJS@usdoj.gov with FY2023FIST in the subject line.

Submission Information

Registration: Before submitting an application, all applicants must register with the System for Award Management (SAM). You must renew and validate your registration every 12 months. If you do not renew your SAM registration, it will expire. An expired registration can delay or prevent application submission in Grants.gov and JustGrants. Registration and renewal can take up to 10 business days to complete.

Submission: Applications must be submitted to DOJ electronically through a two-step process via Grants.gov and JustGrants.

Step 1: The applicant must submit by the Grants.gov deadline the required **Application for Federal Assistance standard form (SF-424)** and a **Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)** form when they register in Grants.gov at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>. **Submit the SF-424 and SF-LLL as early as possible, but no later than 48 hours before the Grants.gov deadline.** If an applicant fails to submit in Grants.gov, they will be unable to apply in JustGrants.

For technical assistance with submitting the SF-424 and a SF-LLL in Grants.gov, contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726, 606-545-5035, Grants.gov Customer Support, or support@grants.gov. The Grants.gov Support Hotline operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays.

Step 2: The applicant must submit the **full application**, including attachments, in JustGrants at JustGrants.usdoj.gov by the JustGrants application deadline.

For technical assistance with submitting the **full application** in JustGrants, contact the JustGrants Service Desk at 833-872-5175 or JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov. The JustGrants Service Desk operates 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. ET Monday–Friday and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET on Saturday, Sunday, and federal holidays.

OJP encourages applicants to review the “[How To Apply](#)” section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) and the [JustGrants website](#) for more information, resources, and training. Applicants should maintain all receipts and confirmations received from SAM.gov, Grants.gov, JustGrants systems.

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Program Description

Overview

OJP is committed to advancing work that promotes civil rights and racial equity, increases access to justice, supports crime victims and individuals impacted by the justice system, strengthens community safety and protects the public from crime and evolving threats, and builds trust between law enforcement and the community.

With this solicitation, BJS seeks applications for the administration of the fiscal year (FY) 2023 Firearm Inquiry Statistics (FIST) program which will cover the 2023–2026 calendar years as reference years. The aim of the FIST program is to provide national estimates of the total number of firearm purchase applications received and denied pursuant to the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act of 1993 (Brady Act) and state laws. FIST collects counts of firearm transfer applications and permit checks conducted by state and local agencies and combines them with transaction data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS).

Statutory Authority

34 U.S.C. § 10132

Specific Information

BJS began the FIST program in 1995 with the goal of providing national estimates of the total number of purchase applications and denials following federal prohibitions outlined in the Brady Act and state laws. Approximately 1,400 federal, state, and local agencies conduct background checks on persons who apply to purchase a firearm or permits that may be used to purchase firearms.

Brady Act

The Brady Act mandates a criminal history background check on any person who attempts to purchase a firearm from a Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL). The Brady Act prohibits transfer of a firearm to a person who—

- is under indictment for, or has been convicted of, a crime punishable by imprisonment for more than 1 year
- is a fugitive from justice
- is an unlawful user of, or addicted to, a controlled substance
- has been adjudicated as mentally defective or committed to a mental institution
- is in the United States illegally or unlawfully or has been admitted under a nonimmigrant visa
- has been dishonorably discharged from the U.S. Armed Forces
- has renounced U.S. citizenship
- is subject to a court order restraining him or her from harassing, stalking, or

- threatening an intimate partner or child
- has been convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence
- is under age 18 for long guns or under age 21 for handguns.

The Brady Act took effect on February 28, 1994, with interim provisions that required FFLs to obtain background checks from state and local checking agencies and to wait 5 days before transferring a firearm. The permanent provisions of the Brady Act went into effect on November 30, 1998, and established NICS, which the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services Division administers and which contains data on persons who are prohibited by federal and state laws from purchasing or possessing a firearm. States may have prohibiting categories in addition to the prohibitions outlined in the Brady Act.

NICS and Procedures for Background Checks and Permits

A prospective firearm purchaser or permit applicant must undergo a NICS check that has been requested by a dealer or FFL. The FFL then contacts either the FBI or a state point of contact (POC) to conduct the check. Alternatively, the applicant may present a state permit that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) has qualified as an alternative to a point-of-transfer check.

Each state determines its involvement in the NICS process. There are three levels of participation:

- Full POC State—the state POC directly queries NICS for a background check on all firearms transfers originating in the state.
- Partial POC State—the state POC conducts NICS checks on all handgun transfer applicants, but FFLs are required to contact the FBI for NICS checks for long gun transfers.
- Non-POC State—FFLs contact the FBI directly for NICS checks on all firearm transfers originating in the state as there is no state POC to conduct background checks.

NICS checks search several databases for records on persons prohibited from having a firearm:

- The FBI's Interstate Identification Index (III).
- The FBI's National Crime Information Center (NCIC).
- The NICS Indices, which contain information contributed by federal, state, local, and tribal agencies that are generally otherwise not in the III or NCIC.
- U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement databases containing information on non-U.S. citizens.

State and local agencies may also access records in their own state and search records that are not electronically available to the FBI. A checking agency may also request a paper record from a court, mental health facility, or law enforcement agency.

After reviewing the relevant records, the FBI or state POC informs the FFL that the transaction may proceed, is denied, or is delayed for further review. An applicant who is denied a firearm transfer or permit may appeal to the FBI or a state POC, depending on

the state and type of permit or check. Some jurisdictions allow a further appeal to a court. A denied person who submitted a false application or has an outstanding warrant may be subject to arrest and prosecution under federal or state laws.

Permit Types

In addition to determining their involvement in NICS, states may use one or more methods to approve the transfer of a firearm to a prospective firearm purchaser:

- Purchase permits require a prospective firearm purchaser to undergo a background check to obtain a government issued document (i.e., permit, license, or identification card) that is presented to the FFL or seller to receive a firearm.
- Instant checks require a seller or FFL to transmit a purchaser's application to a checking agency by telephone or computer, after which the agency is required to respond as quickly as possible.
- Exempt carry permits are permits that are qualified by ATF to exempt the holder from undergoing a new background check at the time of purchase or transfer. These permits are issued after a state or local checking agency has conducted a NICS check and verified that the applicant's possession of a firearm would not violate state or federal law. These permits may be used to purchase more than one firearm and are valid for a maximum of 5 years from their date of issuance.
- Other approval systems require a seller to transmit a purchaser's application or information to a checking agency. The transfer of the firearm is delayed until a statutory waiting period expires or the agency completes a background check.

As part of the work of the project, the award recipient will be expected to monitor changes in federal and state laws, including participation in NICS, changes in prohibitions, the agencies that actually conduct the checks, and the types of permits or checks used by states.

Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables

Goals

The goal of FIST is to provide reliable national and state estimates of the total number of purchase applications and denials resulting from the Brady Act and relevant state laws. The award recipient for this project will assist BJS in executing this project for the 2023, 2024, 2025, and 2026 reference years.

Objectives

An applicant should address all the objectives listed below in the Goals, Objectives, Deliverables and Timeline web-based form.

To achieve the goal of successfully administering FIST across multiple collection years, the award recipient will work closely with BJS on the following main objectives:

1. Update and maintain a universe of all eligible checking agencies that should be included in the data collection. This universe should describe the level of NICS participation used by the state, the type of permits or checks conducted in the

- state, and whether local or state checking agencies conduct the check.
2. Produce an updated survey customized to each state that reflects relevant laws and check types and minimizes respondent burden while obtaining desired data points from respondents.
 3. Field the FIST survey for the 2023, 2024, 2025, and 2026 reference years, with efforts taken to maximize response rates.
 4. Evaluate the feasibility of supplementing the data collections with administrative and other publicly available data.

Support BJS efforts to report timely, accurate statistics by providing clean, final datasets within 3 months of the closing date of each data collection. The award recipient may also assist BJS efforts to produce timely statistics by providing draft tables for BJS publication.

Deliverables

Consistent with the use of a cooperative agreement, BJS will be substantially involved in the project. This includes direct oversight and involvement in implementing the program, but does not involve day-to-day program management. The deliverables included below describe the scope of work necessary for the successful applicant to prepare, design, and carry out FIST.

Applicants should briefly describe how they would accomplish each deliverable in the time frame specified. This should include a description of the specific strategies, approaches, and staffing the applicant will use to produce each deliverable, a description of the capabilities and expertise that enable the applicant to successfully achieve objectives and deliverables, and cost estimates for performing the work. The application should describe the applicant's knowledge of the challenges and complexities associated with developing and testing a national administrative data collection; achieving high response rates that minimize bias in national estimates; and collecting, cleaning, and analyzing data to provide national estimates.

Task 1. Project Management. The award recipient will be responsible for establishing and maintaining the project schedule and budget; keeping BJS informed of progress, setbacks, and changes to the schedule; and other administrative duties.

A. Project Schedule. Within 3 weeks of the award start date, the award recipient will meet with BJS to discuss the proposed project, tasks, and schedule. The award recipient will develop and propose for BJS approval a detailed timeline outlining the dates for completing each task, deliverable, and status report.

B. Communications. The award recipient will be responsible for maintaining communications with BJS. This includes meetings, minutes, and progress reports.

i. **Meetings.** The award recipient should prepare meeting agendas and meeting minutes to document any decisions and actions items resulting from meetings. They will include—

a. A project kickoff meeting to be held in person at BJS, as events allow, to

discuss plans and schedule activities for the project period.

- b. Biweekly check-in meetings throughout the award.
- c. Ad-hoc meetings as necessary.
- d. A wrap-up meeting at the end of the project period to present findings and recommendations to BJS.

ii. **Progress Reports.** Award recipients will provide the following progress reports:

- a. Monthly progress reports to the BJS program manager detailing project status, expenditures, response rates, collection issues, and any items of importance to the projects, due 15 days after the end of each month or at a time mutually determined between BJS and the award recipient.
- b. Weekly progress reports to the BJS program manager during the data collection, with response rates, nonresponse follow-up, data quality follow-up, and other related metrics.
- c. Quarterly financial reports, uploaded to JustGrants.
- d. Semi-annual reports on the status of the award, deliverables, and expenditures, uploaded to JustGrants.

C. Decision Memos. The award recipient will provide decision memos to BJS regarding major decisions in awards (such as when a sample design is finalized) or when changes to planned work are required. The recipient of funds will also be expected to keep an active log of all decision memos indicating their status (e.g., in preparation, under review, or approved).

D. Data Management Plan. The recipient of funds is required to develop and maintain a BJS-approved data management plan (DMP). The DMP should provide general program information and describe the specific procedures by which data collected under BJS's authority for the program will be collected or acquired, received, handled, processed, stored, transferred, and disposed during the award period. For programs including information identifiable to a private person or personally identifiable information (PII), the DMP should complement the information provided in the Privacy Certificate (28 C.F.R. § 22.23) to describe data security and confidentiality controls. The recipient of funds will complete the DMP in collaboration with the BJS Program Manager and must submit it to BJS for review and approval no later than 60 days after the award start date. The award recipient must maintain an updated version of its DMP throughout the program period and receive written BJS approval before changing the approved plan. The award recipient must submit, as applicable, an updated copy of the DMP for review with its semi-annual performance reports and at any time upon BJS's request. A model DMP is available on the BJS website at [Human Subjects Protection, Confidentiality, and Data Management Plan Requirements | Bureau of Justice Statistics](#).

Required Deliverables Under Task 1: (1) A written project schedule for the entire program (all tasks) with the design and program tasks fully specified; (2) meeting agendas and minutes to document decisions and action items (biweekly during active

data collection); (3) monthly progress reports; (4) weekly progress reports during active data collection; (5) quarterly financial reports as required by OJP; (6) semi-annual reports as required by OJP; (7) decision memos for major project milestones, deliverables, and changes; and (8) a DMP due within 60 days of the award start date.

Task 2. Universe and Frame Development. The award recipient will update and maintain a complete directory of all relevant checking agencies that conduct background checks for firearm transfers. The award recipient will update the current FIST directory to include all eligible state and local checking agencies. This directory should reflect which agencies do the checking in each state, the types of permits issued or checks done by the agencies, and the relevant state laws and prohibitions for firearm transfers.

In addition to maintaining a complete universe or directory of checking agencies, the award recipient will develop any sampling plan deemed necessary to obtain both national- and state-level estimates. BJS is open to discussing enumeration and sampling strategies for this project. If a sample frame is used, the award recipient should reassess the sample for each data collection year.

Applicants should discuss how they propose to create and maintain the universe of eligible checking agencies and how they would develop a sample. (A discussion of approaches the applicant would take to draw a sample, not an actual sampling plan, is required.)

Required Deliverables Under Task 2: (1) A report or memo fully documenting the universe and sampling frame creation, including verification activities, data sources, and notes on agency inclusion or exclusion; (2) draft materials for Office of Management and Budget (OMB) clearance if required; (3) sampling plans; and (4) iterative and final frame files.

Task 3. Instrument Development and Stakeholder Engagement. The award recipient will develop a multimode survey form, which should include testing and feedback from stakeholders and practitioners.

A. Data Quality Assessment. The award recipient will review 2022 FIST forms and data to assess how the questionnaire performed, including item and unit nonresponse. This assessment should be repeated at the end of each data collection cycle.

B. Stakeholder Engagement. The award recipient will identify and engage with subject matter experts (SMEs) to review the survey forms and gather suggestions for changes, particularly if the award recipient plans to make any changes to the current forms. This input should help inform whether the questions are easily understood, appropriate for the type of checking agency, and answerable.

C. Final Survey Forms. Following any testing and feedback collection, the award recipient will work with BJS to construct a multimode questionnaire.

This web form should—

- Have a user-friendly interface that minimizes respondent burden with less than a 2-second response time and that supports the expected load of concurrent users.
- Work across browsers.
- Provide clear instructions.
- Allow respondents to download a printable copy of the form to be completed by hand and returned via mail.
- Allow respondents to easily save progress and return to where they left off in the survey at a later time.
- Support users in different roles and manage permissions by role, such as administrators, staff, testers (including BJS staff), and respondents.
- Provide respondents with a summary of answers for verification before final submission.
- Provide respondents a filled form for their records.
- Ensure the confidentiality of submitted questionnaires and provide respondents with secure and private sign-in.
- Be able to handle validation and cross-check logic.

The award recipient will provide user-testing documentation and specifications including validation logic of questions) of the web survey prior to fielding it and allow BJS to fully test and provide feedback on the survey.

Required Deliverables Under Task 3: (1) Data quality assessments of the prior FIST data collection year; (2) plans for testing the draft questionnaire, including SME outreach; (3) draft materials for OMB clearance if required for testing; (4) iterative drafts of survey forms; and (5) the final version of the survey, including web specifications and logic.

Task 4. OMB Clearance. The award recipient will provide BJS with draft materials for OMB clearance for FIST. These materials include, but are not limited to, the 30- and 60-day notices; Form 83-I; supporting statements; and copies of all survey documents, including questionnaires, instructions, follow-up correspondence, and telephone scripts. BJS will provide sample documents as needed. Over the course of this award, OMB clearance materials will be needed twice. Additionally, this task may include generic clearance materials as addressed in Task 2 or Task 3.

Required Deliverable Under Task 4: Draft materials for OMB clearance for administering FIST and any other activities requiring clearance.

Task 5. Survey Administration. The award recipient will field the 2023, 2024, 2025, and 2026 FIST surveys, making all reasonable efforts to maximize participation. For each data collection year, the award recipient will provide a detailed plan on survey data collection protocols, including contact and follow-up procedures and timelines, quality control processes, and efforts to minimize nonresponse. This plan should be delivered

well ahead of the administration of each year of the data collection to allow for BJS's review.

The plans will discuss how the award recipient will encourage participation. They will also discuss efforts to minimize bias and propose nonresponse bias analyses and weighting methods. The plans should include processes to document how follow-up efforts are being monitored and tracked. As the data collection is fielded, the plans should detail which nonresponse adjustments are used and document all data edits. Data edits and processing procedures should be thoroughly documented for verification and replication.

BJS aims to have a nationally representative dataset with minimal bias in unit and item response rates, subject to cost and time restraints. As such, the plans should discuss approaches to identify and minimize bias, including a discussion of nonresponse bias assessment options. The award recipient should plan on providing BJS data files when 50% and 75% survey response rates have been achieved. Applicants should discuss how they propose to carry out the FIST surveys, including efforts to identify and minimize bias and what measures can be taken if response rates fall below 80%.

In addition to collecting information from checking agencies, FIST program publications have traditionally included other external resources to produce national estimates. This includes FBI NICS transaction data and data from the ATF Denial Enforcement and NICS Intelligence (DENI) Branch. Contingent on BJS securing a data-sharing agreement or memorandum of understanding with DENI, the recipient of funds will obtain, summarize, and present findings on data regarding FBI denials that are screened by DENI and referred to ATF field offices for investigation.

Required Deliverables Under Task 5: (1) Survey administration plans for each collection year, which can be regarded as an iterative, living document that includes at a minimum data collection protocols, procedures and a timeline for contact and follow-up, data quality control procedures, nonresponse adjustment procedures, nonresponse bias analyses as necessary, and data processing and cleaning documentation; and (2) preliminary data files when 50% and 75% response rates have been achieved.

Task 6. Final Verification and Dataset. The award recipient will provide a final, clean dataset and an end-of-study technical report.

A. Final Dataset. The award recipient will provide raw datasets to BJS at the close of each year of data collection. The award recipient will then conduct final verification procedures prior to delivering final datasets to BJS. Any data issues must be reported to BJS for resolution prior to delivering this file. The award recipient will provide a justified approach to addressing item-specific missing or incomplete data, including any proposed data allocations, imputations, or other nonresponse adjustments.

The delivery of the final dataset should include a codebook that details the variables

contained in the dataset, including item response rates and any weighting adjustments necessary for analyses. The data file should include flags to clearly identify any data that were imputed. The dataset should be ready for archiving, with logical variable names and types, labels assigned to those variables, and values assigned to variable levels as needed. The final dataset should be provided no later than 3 months after the close of the data collection.

B. Nonresponse Bias Study. If needed, the recipient of funds will conduct and report on a bias assessment for unit and item nonresponse. This analysis will include recommendations for any weighting or imputation procedures used in compiling the final dataset.

C. End-of-study Report. At the end of the project period, the award recipient will provide an end-of-study technical report that includes, at a minimum, an overview of the program with an actual project timeline, lessons learned, challenges encountered in the data collection, and an assessment of unit and item response rates and nonresponse error.

Required Deliverables Under Task 6: (1) Final datasets and codebooks, along with any documentation for data cleaning, weighting, and adjustments; (2) nonresponse bias studies as needed; and (3) an end-of-study technical report.

Task 7. Research on Supplementing FIST With Other Data Sources. Per objective number 4, the award recipient will conduct research into the feasibility of using other sources of data to supplement the FIST program. FIST has traditionally used data collected from local and state background checking agencies to generate estimates of the number of applications and denials of background checks for firearm transfers. These data are combined with FBI data for the states in which the FBI conducts all background checks for firearm transfers. Additional data are obtained from ATF to produce estimates on the denials referred to ATF field divisions by the FBI for further investigation.

The award recipient will research the possibility of finding other sources of data to enhance FIST. Topics may include the investigation or prosecution of lie-and-try or lie-and-buy firearm transactions (i.e., transactions in which applicants lie on a background check form or attempt to buy a firearm for someone else), or additional information about delayed denials (i.e., denials issued after a firearm was transferred to an applicant, where the FBI needed more than 3 business days to complete the background check). The award recipient will work with BJS to assess the feasibility of gathering, analyzing, and presenting findings from these data. Depending on the results, BJS may choose to carry out additional data collection activities following the feasibility study, subject to funds and capacity to do so.

Applicants should discuss possible topic areas for consideration to address this objective in their applications.

Required Deliverables Under Task 7: A report describing the results of the feasibility study for the incorporation of external data sources to supplement the existing FIST

reporting. The report should also include recommendations for how to utilize the results to enhance the program.

This solicitation outlines the major project goals, objectives, and expected deliverables. Applicants are encouraged to detail how they will successfully address the scope of work. This includes describing activities such as designing a survey to encourage maximum participation, identifying the entire universe of eligible checking agencies, devising a survey administration plan that engages the field to achieve a high response rate, and ensuring that data quality will meet BJS standards.

BJS award recipients that serve as data collection agents may need to pass an OJP background check. They may also be required to complete some of their work on the OJP network using OJP-hosted applications. OJP may request copies of the codebook, database, and related documentation for any applications developed using BJS funds. Required documentation includes functional specifications and installation instructions.

The goals, objectives, and deliverables are directly related to the performance measures that show the completed work's results, as discussed in the "Application and Submission Information" section.

Evidence-Based Programs or Practices

OJP strongly encourages the use of data and evidence in policymaking and program development for criminal justice, juvenile justice, and crime victim services. For additional information and resources on evidence-based programs or practices, see the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Information Regarding Potential Evaluation of Programs and Activities

OJP may conduct or support an evaluation of the projects and activities funded under this solicitation. For additional information and applicable documentation to be included in the application, see the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) section entitled "Information Regarding Potential Evaluation of Programs and Activities."

Federal Award Information

Solicitation Categories

This solicitation does not include Solicitation Categories.

Awards, Amounts and Durations

Anticipated Number of Awards

1

Anticipated Maximum Dollar Amount of Awards

\$1,600,000

Period of Performance Start Date
10/1/23

Period of Performance Duration (Months)
48

**Anticipated Total Amount to be
Awarded Under Solicitation**
\$1,600,000

Continuation Funding Intent

BJS may, in certain cases, provide additional funding in future years to awards made under this solicitation through continuation awards. OJP will consider, among other factors, OJP's strategic priorities, a recipient's overall management of the award, and the award-funded work's progress, when making continuation award decisions.

Availability of Funds

This solicitation, and awards under this solicitation, are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and to any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by the agency or by law. In addition, nothing in this solicitation is intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

Type of Award

BJS expects to make awards under this solicitation as cooperative agreements, which provide for OJP to have substantial involvement in carrying out award activities. See the "Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements" section of the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Financial Management and System of Internal Controls

Award recipients and subrecipients (including recipients or subrecipients that are pass-through entities) must, as described in the Part 200 Uniform Requirements as set out at 2 C.F.R. 200.303, comply with standards for financial and program management. See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for additional information.

Budget Information

The applicant should identify within their budget which items, services, etc., will/would be covered by matching sources and explain what type of match will be provided.

Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

This solicitation does not require a match.

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

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on pre-agreement costs (also known as pre-award costs).

Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation: Waiver

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on the Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation; Waiver.

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

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on Prior Approval, Planning, and Reporting of Conference/Meeting/Training Costs.

Costs Associated with Language Assistance (if applicable)

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on Costs Associated with Language Assistance.

Information System Security and Privacy Requirements

Award recipients and subrecipients that serve as BJS data collection agents to collect, receive, process, analyze, store, transfer, or disseminate information under BJS's authority in conjunction with the funded activities must maintain the appropriate administrative, physical, and technical safeguards to ensure that the appropriate data management processes are followed. Award recipients must operate information systems that are adequately secured and protected against unauthorized disclosure, in accordance with applicable federal laws, regulations, and other authorities.

BJS requires special-data handling controls and procedures to protect confidential BJS data, which includes information identifiable to a private person (as defined in 28 C.F.R. Part 22.2), direct PII, e.g., names, Social Security numbers, last-known addresses, or FBI, state, or department of corrections (DOC) ID numbers), and other non-public data.

Specifically, BJS award recipients and subrecipients are required to do the following, as applicable:

- Comply with the data security and confidentiality provisions detailed in 28 C.F.R. Part 22.
- Follow the DOJ Cybersecurity and Privacy Rules of Behavior for General Users, which pertain to the use, security, and acceptable level of risk for DOJ systems and applications.
- Adhere to National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) guidelines and

Office of Management and Budget guidance to categorize the sensitivity of all data collected or maintained on behalf of BJS.

- Once the system has been categorized, secure data in accordance with the most updated Risk Management Framework specified by NIST guidelines.
- Employ adequate controls to ensure data are not comingled with any other data set or product without the express written consent of BJS.
- Reduce the volume of PII collected, used, or retained to the minimum necessary.
- Restrict access to identifiable data to individuals who must have such access.
- Restrict use of identifiable data to approved purposes.
- Follow BJS's established security incident notification procedures, including notifying BJS and the appropriate DOJ officials, within 1 hour of discovery, of all security incidents involving PII or other sensitive information collected or maintained in conjunction with BJS-funded activities.
- Log all computer-readable data extracts from databases holding sensitive information and ensure that each extract including sensitive data has been erased within 90 days or that its use is still required.
- Ensure all contracts involving the processing and storage of PII comply with DOJ policies on remote access and security incident reporting.
- Complete data security and confidentiality trainings, as applicable.
- Employ formal sanctions for anyone failing to comply with DOJ policy and procedures, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Further, award recipients that receive funding for projects that involve collecting, receiving, acquiring, using, storing, storing, or transferring data under BJS's authority are required to develop and maintain a BJS-approved DMP that describes how the data collected under BJS's authority for the program will be collected or acquired, received, handled, processed, stored, transferred, and disposed. A model DMP template is available on the BJS website at [Human Subjects Protection, Confidentiality, and Data Management Plan Requirements | Bureau of Justice Statistics](#).

Applicants are advised that OJP may audit the information systems that are used by award recipients during the performance period, to assess compliance with federal laws, regulations, and policies related to data management, confidentiality, and security.

BJS encourages prospective applicants to review the relevant data security, confidentiality, and privacy provisions of the BJS Data Protection Guidelines, which summarize the federal statutes, regulations, and other authorities that govern data collected and maintained under BJS's authority. The guidelines are available at https://bjs.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh236/files/media/document/bjs_data_protection_guidelines.pdf.

Standards for Providing Information Technology and Publishing Support to BJS

The following sections describe BJS standards Grantees and Contractors should take into consideration when proposing and pricing information technology and publishing support to BJS, and in associated project planning and project management.

1. Ownership and Hosting of BJS-Funded Data Systems and Applications

All BJS-funded systems or applications built for managing, processing or publishing data are considered by the OJP Office of General Counsel (OGC) to be owned by BJS. Master databases of record shall be located on, or regularly replicated to, the OJP network. Public-facing applications shall be deployed and hosted on the OJP network and accessed via a .gov domain. The grantee should plan for these outcomes from the start of projects. For example, application developers will need to have access to the OJP network to participate in the configuration and deployment of public-facing applications.

2. Use of OJP Systems and Platforms by Grantees and Contractors

BJS grantees and contractors will often need to work on the OJP network using OJP tools and systems. The OJP network is accessed using the OJP virtual desktop interface (VDI), a PIV card, and the contractor's hardware (e.g. laptop or desktop computer and mobile devices) unless other conditions have been stipulated in this agreement. To obtain this access, contractors will need to fill out a personnel onboarding form soon after award that will be forwarded onward by BJS contracting officer representatives (CORs) and cooperative agreement monitors to OJP security personnel. This access should be requested soon after award for everyone doing work for BJS unless it's very clear that they will never need to do work on the OJP network.

Grantee and contractor-owned systems and platforms may also be used at times, but the architecture and configuration of those resources should align with OJP requirements and be approved in advance. Compatibility and compliance with OJP systems and policies must be accounted for in budgets and planned for from the start of the performance period.

Any projects or tasks that will involve the OJP network and/or coordination with OJP support teams should be described in detail as soon as possible and submitted to the chief of the BJS technology and data management unit to ensure arrangements are made that support the milestones and deliverables of the contract or agreement.

3. Adherence to federal standards

All systems and applications developed for BJS must adhere to federal, DOJ, OJP, and BJS processes, practices, standards, policies, and mandates. Grantees and contractors

must collaborate with, and regularly update BJS technology staff on the progress of application and system development.

4. 21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act

Any website that is developed, modernized, enhanced, maintained, or otherwise delivered as a result of this agreement shall be in compliance with the website standards of the Technology Transformation Services of the General Services Administration at <https://designsystem.digital.gov/website-standards/>. The U.S. Web Design System (USWDS) shall be adopted incrementally over the life of the requirement and the awardee shall prioritize implementation to align with the priorities identified within the agreement.

Additional key BJS information technology policies, practices and standards may be found at: <https://bjs.ojp.gov/technology-and-publishing-requirements-bjs-contractors-and-grantees>.

Eligibility Information

For eligibility information, see the solicitation cover page.

For information on cost sharing or match requirements, see the “Federal Award Information” section.

For the purposes of this solicitation, “state” means any state of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Notice regarding law enforcement agencies: State, local, and university or college law enforcement agencies must be certified by an approved independent credentialing body or have started the certification process to be eligible for FY 2023 DOJ discretionary grant funding. To become certified, the law enforcement agency must meet two mandatory conditions: (1) the agency’s use-of-force policies adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, and (2) the agency’s use-of-force policies prohibit chokeholds except in situations where use of deadly force is allowed by law. The certification requirement also applies to law enforcement agencies receiving DOJ discretionary grant funding through a subaward. For detailed information on this certification requirement, please visit <https://cops.usdoj.gov/SafePolicingEO> to access the Standards for Certification on Safe Policing for Safe Communities, the Implementation Fact Sheet, and the List of Designated Independent Credentialing Bodies. All recipients and subrecipients (including any for-profit organization) must forgo any profit or management fee.

Application and Submission Information

Content of Application Submission

The following application elements **must** be included in the application to meet the basic minimum requirements to advance to peer review and receive consideration for funding:

- Proposal Abstract
- Proposal Narrative
- Budget Web-Based Form (The web-based form includes the budget details and the budget narrative.)

If OJP determines that an application does not include these elements, it will neither proceed to peer review, nor receive further consideration.

Information to Complete the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) in Grants.gov

The SF-424 must be submitted in Grants.gov. It is a required standard form used as a cover sheet for submission of pre-applications, applications, and related information. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information on completing the SF-424.

In Section 8F of the SF-424, please include the name and contact information of the individual **who will complete the application in JustGrants**. JustGrants will use this information (*email address*) to assign the application to this user in JustGrants.

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

Standard Applicant Information (JustGrants 424 and General Agency Information)

The “Standard Applicant Information” section of the JustGrants application is pre-populated with the SF-424 data submitted in Grants.gov. The applicant will need to review the Standard Applicant Information in JustGrants and make edits as needed. Within this section, the applicant will need to add ZIP codes for areas affected by the project; confirm their Authorized Representative; and verify and confirm the organization’s unique entity identifier, legal name, and address.

Proposal Abstract

A Proposal Abstract (no more than 400 words) summarizing the proposed project — including its purpose, primary activities, expected outcomes, the service area, intended beneficiaries, and subrecipients (if known) — must be completed in the JustGrants web-based form. This abstract should be in paragraph form without bullets or tables, written in the third person, and exclude personally identifiable information. Abstracts will be made

publicly available on the OJP and USASpending.gov websites if the project is awarded. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for an example of a proposal abstract.

Proposal Narrative

The Proposal Narrative should be submitted as an attachment in JustGrants. The attached document should be double-spaced, using a standard 12-point font; have no less than 1-inch margins; and should not exceed 30 numbered pages. If the Proposal Narrative fails to comply with these length restrictions, BJS may consider such noncompliance in peer review and in final award decision. Tables, charts, and graphs can use fonts smaller than 12-point but must be included within the page limit.

The Proposal Narrative must include the following sections:

a. Description of the Issue

This section should describe the purpose, goals, and objectives of FIST. Applicants should demonstrate their knowledge about BJS's FIST work; firearm transfer laws, policies, and procedures; and how those vary by state. Any changes in laws or background check procedures that may impact FIST should also be discussed.

b. Project Design and Implementation

Applicants should describe how they will achieve the goals, objectives, and deliverables outlined in this solicitation. This includes all tasks and their deliverables: project management, universe and sample development, instrument development, administration of the surveys, and data delivery. Applicants should provide a detailed description of how they will produce deliverables, staff responsibilities related to the tasks and deliverables, and costs associated with the tasks. This should include discussion of how the applicant will maintain the directory of checking agencies.

c. Capabilities and Competencies

Applicants should demonstrate their (1) capabilities and competencies to carry out a national-level data collection and (2) experience and expertise with survey statistics and the topic of firearm laws. This section should demonstrate that the applicant has the capacity to conduct data-quality and nonresponse follow-up with respondents and to meet BJS data quality guidelines, including the use of a DMP.

d. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures

Applicants should briefly describe how they will track project performance and how deliverables will be met on time and in a manner consistent with BJS expectations. This may include who will monitor delivery status, the schedule, reports, and other project management tasks.

Note: An applicant is **not** required to submit performance data with the application. Rather, performance measure information is included as a notification that award recipients will be required to submit performance data as part of each award's reporting requirements. Some measures are presented as examples, while others are the exact measures that every recipient will be expected to address.

BJS will require each award recipient to submit regular performance data that show the completed work's results. The performance data directly relate to the goals, objectives, and deliverables identified in the "Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables" discussion. Applicants can visit OJP's performance measurement page at www.ojp.gov/performance for an overview of performance measurement activities at OJP.

BJS will require award recipients to submit performance measure data and performance reports in JustGrants. BJS will provide further guidance on the post-award submission process, if the applicant is selected for award.

Note on Project Evaluations

An applicant that proposes to use award funds through this solicitation to conduct project evaluations must follow the guidance in the "Note on Project Evaluations" section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Goal, Objective and Deliverables

The applicant will submit the project's goals, objectives, deliverables and timeline in the JustGrants web-based form. The applicant will also enter the projected fiscal year and quarter that each objective and deliverable will be completed. Please refer to the [Application Submission Job Aid](#) for step-by-step directions.

Goals

The applicant should describe the project's intent to change, reduce, or eliminate the problem noted in the previous section and outline the project's goals.

Objectives

The applicant should explain how the program will accomplish its goals. Objectives are specific, quantifiable statements of the project's desired results. They should be measurable and clearly linked to the goal.

Deliverables

Project deliverables refer to outputs—tangible or intangible—that are submitted within the scope of a project.

Budget and Associated Documentation

Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative (Web-based Form)

The applicant will complete the JustGrants web-based budget form. For additional information, see the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) and the [Complete the Application in JustGrants – Budget](#) training.

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

See the section on Costs Requiring Prior Approval in the [DOJ Grants Financial Guide Post Award Requirements](#) for more information.

Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)

If applicable, the applicant will upload their indirect cost rate agreement as an attachment in JustGrants. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for more information on indirect costs.

Consultant Rate

See the [DOJ Grants Financial Guide](#) for information on the consultant rates which require prior approval from OJP.

Limitation on Employee Compensation; Waiver

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on the Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation for Awards over \$250,000; Waiver.

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

The applicant will download the questionnaire, complete it, and upload it as an attachment in JustGrants. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for the link to the questionnaire and additional information.

Disclosure of Process Related to Executive Compensation

If applicable, the applicant will upload a description of the process used to determine executive compensation as an attachment in JustGrants. See the “Application Attachments” section of the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information.

Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and Other Supportive Documents

Applicants should include for each named partner, a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Letter of Intent, or subcontract that confirms the partner's agreement to support the project through commitments of staff time, space, services, or other project needs. For applications submitted from two or more entities, applicants are encouraged to develop and submit signed MOUs or signed Letters of Intent that provide a detailed description of how the agencies will work together to meet project requirements.

Each MOU or Letter of Intent should include the following: (1) names of the organizations involved in the agreement; (2) scope of the direct service(s) and other work to be performed under the agreement; (3) duration of the agreement. Subcontracts, MOUs, or Letters of Intent should be submitted as one separate attachment to the application.

Additional Application Components

The applicant will attach the additional requested documentation in JustGrants.

Curriculum Vitae or Resumes

Provide resumes of key personnel.

Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity Statement

If 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 will upload documentation of its research and evaluation independence and integrity as an attachment in JustGrants. For additional information, see the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Human Subjects Protection

BJS requires the funding recipient to submit proper documentation certifying that the research project meets the federal requirements for human subjects protections set forth in DOJ regulations at 28 CFR Part 46. DOJ is not a signatory on the Revised Common Rule (45 CFR Part 46). BJS-funded projects must be reviewed in accordance with 28 CFR Part 46 requirements. Applicants should complete the Human Subjects Protection Certification of Compliance form, available at [Human Subjects Protection, Confidentiality, and Data Management Plan Requirements | Bureau of Justice Statistics](#). Applicants should attach the completed certification form in JustGrants.

Privacy Certificate

The Privacy Certificate is a funding recipient's certification of compliance with federal regulations requiring confidentiality of information identifiable to a private person, which is

collected, analyzed, or otherwise used in connection with an OJP-funded research or statistical activity. The funding recipient's Privacy Certificate includes a description of its policies and procedures to be followed to protect identifiable information. Applicants must specify in the Privacy Certificate the specific controls used to safeguard directly identifiable information against unauthorized disclosure. All project staff, including information technology personnel, subcontractors, and/or consultants, with access to identifiable data collected in conjunction with the BJS-funded activities are required to sign a Privacy Certificate to affirm their understanding of and agreement to comply with the terms of access and privacy requirements. Award recipients are responsible for maintaining an updated list of individuals with access to identifiable information and for ensuring that new staff who gain access to such information during the project period sign a Privacy Certificate. Additional information about BJS's privacy certification requirements, including a model Privacy Certificate, are available at [Human Subjects Protection, Confidentiality, and Data Management Plan Requirements | Bureau of Justice Statistics](#). Applicants should attach the completed Privacy Certificate in JustGrants.

Disclosures and Assurances

The applicant will address the following disclosures and assurances.

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

Complete and submit the SF-LLL in Grants.gov. Once the applicant submits in Grants.gov, this information will pre-pend into JustGrants. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

DOJ Certified Standard Assurances

Review and accept the DOJ Certified Standard Assurances in JustGrants. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Applicant Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items

Complete the JustGrants web-based Applicant Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items form. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

DOJ Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; Drug-Free Workplace Requirements; Law Enforcement and Community Policing

Review and accept the DOJ Certified Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; Drug-Free Workplace Requirements; Law Enforcement and Community Policing. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Applicant Disclosure and Justification - DOJ High Risk Grantees

If applicable, submit the DOJ High Risk Disclosure and Justification as an attachment in JustGrants. A DOJ High Risk Grantee is an award 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; noncompliance with award terms and conditions on prior awards or is otherwise not responsible. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

How to Apply

Registration: Before submitting an application, all applicants must register with the System for Award Management (SAM). You must renew and validate your registration every 12 months. If you do not renew your SAM registration, it will expire. An expired registration can delay or prevent application submission in Grants.gov and JustGrants. Registration and renewal can take up to 10 business days to complete.

Submission: Applications must be submitted to DOJ electronically through a two-step process via Grants.gov and JustGrants.

Step 1: After registering with SAM, the applicant must submit the **SF-424** and **SF-LLL** in Grants.gov at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html> by the Grants.gov deadline. **Submit the SF-424 and SF-LLL as early as possible, but no later than 48 hours before the Grants.gov deadline.** If an applicant fails to submit in Grants.gov, they will be unable to apply in JustGrants.

Step 2: The applicant must then submit the **full application**, including attachments, in JustGrants at [JustGrants.usdoj.gov](https://www.justgrants.usdoj.gov) by the JustGrants deadline.

Within 24 hours after receipt of confirmation emails from Grants.gov, the individual in Section 8F of the SF-424 will receive an email from DIAMD-NoReply@usdoj.gov with instructions on how to create a JustGrants account. Register the Entity Administrator and the Application Submitter with JustGrants as early as possible but no later than 48-72 hours before the JustGrants deadline. Once registered in JustGrants, the Application Submitter will receive an emailed link to complete the rest of the application in JustGrants. The Entity Administrator also will need to log into JustGrants to review and invite the applicant's Authorized Representative(s) before an application can be submitted.

Submit the complete application package in JustGrants at least 24–48 hours prior to the JustGrants deadline. Some of the application components will be entered directly into JustGrants, and others will require uploading attached documents. Therefore, applicants will need to allow ample time before the JustGrants deadline to prepare each component. Applicants may save their progress in the system and revise the application as needed prior to hitting the Submit button at the end of the application in JustGrants.

For additional information, see the “How to Apply” section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) and the [DOJ Application Submission Checklist](#).

Submission Dates and Time

The **SF-424** and the **SF-LLL** must be submitted in Grants.gov by **June 5, 2023, 8:59 PM ET**.

The **full application** must be submitted in JustGrants by **June 12, 2023, 8:59 PM ET**.

OJP urges applicants to submit their Grants.gov and JustGrants submissions prior to the due dates with sufficient time to correct any errors and resubmit by the submission deadlines if a rejection notification is received. To be considered timely, the **full application** must be submitted in JustGrants by the JustGrants application deadline. Failure to begin the SAM.gov, Grants.gov, or JustGrants registration process in sufficient time (i.e., waiting until the date identified in this solicitation) is not an acceptable reason for late submission.

Experiencing Unforeseen Technical Issues Preventing Submission of an Application

OJP will only consider requests to submit an application after the deadline when the applicant can document that a technical issue with a government system prevented application submission.

If an applicant misses a deadline due to unforeseen technical issues with SAM.gov, Grants.gov, or JustGrants, the applicant may request a waiver to submit an application after the deadline. However, the waiver request will not be considered unless it includes a tracking number generated when the applicant contacts the applicable service desks to report technical difficulties. Tracking numbers are generated automatically when an applicant emails the applicable service desks; and for this reason applicants are encouraged to email the appropriate service desk, even if they also intend to call the service desk for phone support. Experiencing wait times for phone support does not relieve the applicant of the responsibility of getting a tracking number.

An applicant experiencing technical difficulties must contact the associated service desk indicated below to report the technical issue and receive a tracking number:

- SAM.gov - contact the [SAM Help Desk \(Federal Service Desk\)](#), Monday–Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET at 866-606-8220.
- Grants.gov - contact the [Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline](#), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays, at 800-518-4726, 606-545-5035, or support@grants.gov.

- JustGrants - contact the JustGrants Service Desk at JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov or 833-872-5175, Monday–Friday from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. ET and Saturday, Sunday, and Federal holidays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET.

If an applicant has technical issues with SAM.gov or Grants.gov, the applicant must contact the OJP Response Center at grants@ncjrs.gov within **24 hours of the Grants.gov deadline** to request approval to submit after the deadline.

If an applicant has technical issues with JustGrants that prevent application submission by the deadline, the applicant must contact the OJP Response Center at grants@ncjrs.gov within 24 hours of the JustGrants deadline to request approval to submit after the deadline.

Waiver requests sent to the OJP Response Center must—

- describe the technical difficulties experienced,
- include a timeline of the applicant's submission efforts (e.g., date and time the error occurred, date and time of actions taken to resolve the issue and resubmit; and date and time support representatives responded),
- include an attachment of the complete grant application and all the required documentation and materials,
- include the applicant's Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), and
- include any SAM.gov, Grants.gov, and JustGrants Service Desk tracking numbers documenting the technical issue.

OJP will review each waiver request and the required supporting documentation and notify the applicant whether the request for late submission has been approved or denied. An applicant that does not provide documentation of a technical issue or that does not submit a waiver request within the required time period will be denied.

For more details on the waiver process, OJP encourages applicants to review the “Experiencing Unforeseen Technical Issues” section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Application Review Information

Review Criteria

Merit Review Criteria

Applications that meet the basic minimum requirements will be evaluated by peer reviewers on how the proposed project/program addresses the following criteria:

1. Statement of the Problem/Description of the Issue (10%) - evaluate the applicant's understanding of the program/issue to be addressed.

2. Project Design and Implementation (40%) - evaluate the adequacy of the proposal, including the goals, objectives, timelines, milestones, and deliverables.
3. Capabilities and Competencies (35%) - evaluate the administrative and technical capacity of the applicant to successfully accomplish the goals and objectives.
4. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures (5%) - evaluate the applicant's understanding of the performance data reporting requirements and the plan for collecting the required data.
5. Budget (10%) - evaluate for completeness, cost effectiveness, and allowability (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities).

Other Review Criteria/Factors

Other important considerations for BJS include geographic diversity, strategic priorities (specifically including, but not limited to, those priority areas already mentioned, if applicable), available funding, past performance, and the extent to which the Budget Web-Based form accurately explains project costs that are reasonable, necessary, and otherwise allowable under federal law and applicable federal cost principles.

Review Process

Applications submitted under this solicitation that meet the basic minimum requirements will be evaluated for technical merit by a peer review panel(s) in accordance with OJP peer review policy and procedures using the review criteria listed above.

OJP screens applications to ensure they meet the basic minimum requirements prior to conducting the peer review. Although specific requirements may vary, the following are common requirements applicable to all OJP solicitations:

- 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 necessary to meet the basic minimum requirements.

Pursuant to the Part 200 Uniform Requirements, before award decisions are made, OJP also reviews information related to the degree of risk posed by the applicant entity. Among other things to help assess whether an applicant with one or more prior federal awards has a satisfactory record of performance, integrity, and business ethics, OJP checks whether the applicant entity 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 entity that appears in the non-public segment of the integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently, the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System, FAPIIS).

Important Note on FAPIIS: An applicant may review and comment on any information about its organization that currently appears in FAPIIS and was entered by a federal awarding agency. OJP will consider such comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in FAPIIS, in its assessment of the risk posed by the applicant entity.

Absent explicit statutory authorization or written delegation of authority to the contrary, all final award decisions will be made by the Assistant Attorney General, who may consider not only peer review ratings and BJS recommendations, but also other factors as indicated in this section.

Federal Award Administration Information

Federal Award Notices

Generally, award notifications are made by the end of the current Federal fiscal year, September 30th. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on award notifications and instructions.

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 and all applicable requirements of federal statutes and regulations, including the applicable requirements referred to in the assurances and certifications executed in connection with award acceptance. For additional information on these legal requirements, see the “Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements” section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Information Technology Security Clauses

An application in response to this solicitation may require inclusion of information related to information technology security. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for more information.

General Information about Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements

In addition to the deliverables described in the “Program Description” section, all award recipients under this solicitation will be required to submit certain reports and data.

Required reports

Award recipients typically must submit quarterly financial reports, semi-annual performance reports, final financial and performance reports, and, if applicable, an annual audit report in accordance with the Part 200 Uniform Requirements or specific award conditions. Future awards and fund drawdowns may be withheld if reports are delinquent. (In appropriate cases, OJP may require additional reports.)

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information on specific post-award reporting requirements, including performance measure data.

Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

For OJP contact(s), contact information for Grants.gov, and contact information for JustGrants, see page 2 of the solicitation.

Other Information

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

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552 and 5 U.S.C. 552a).

Provide Feedback to OJP

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on how to provide feedback to OJP.

Performance Measures

Objective	Performance Measure s)	Data Recipient Provides
Update and maintain a directory of all eligible checking agencies that conduct background checks for firearm transfers according to state and federal law.	Percentage of deliverables completed on time. Percentage of deliverables that meet expectations.	As described in Task 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A report or memo documenting universe and sample frame creation, data sources, and notes on checking agency eligibility.• Any draft materials for OMB clearance as required.• Sampling plans.• Iterative and final frame files.

Objective	Performance Measure s)	Data Recipient Provides
<p>Produce an updated survey that is customized to states, reflects relevant laws and check types, and minimizes respondent burden while obtaining desired data points from respondents.</p>	<p>Percentage of deliverables completed on time.</p> <p>Percentage of deliverables that meet expectations.</p> <p>Develop and maintain a web-based reporting system that meets BJS's standard for effectiveness and efficiency.</p>	<p>As described in Task 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A data quality assessment for each prior year's collection. • Plans to test the questionnaire, including SME outreach. • Draft materials needed for any OMB clearance. • Iterative drafts of survey forms. • A final version of the multi-mode survey form, including web specifications.

Objective	Performance Measure(s)	Data Recipient Provides
Administer the 2023, 2024, 2025, and 2026 FIST surveys.	<p>Percentage of deliverables completed on time.</p> <p>Percentage of deliverables that meet expectations.</p> <p>Amount of effort to increase response rate.</p> <p>Percent increase in response rate year-over-year</p>	<p>As described in Task 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey administration plans for each collection year. • Preliminary data files when 50% and 75% response rates for the surveys have been achieved. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide documentation of effort put forth to increase response rate <p>Provide the response rate upon availability for each year of the FIST survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY2023 response rate • FY2024 response rate • FY2025 response rate • FY2026 response rate

Objective	Performance Measure(s)	Data Recipient Provides
<p>Support BJS efforts to report timely, accurate statistics.</p>	<p>Percentage of deliverables completed on time.</p> <p>Percentage of deliverables that meet expectations.</p> <p>Effective management as measured by whether significant interim project milestones were achieved, final deadlines were met, and costs remained within approved limits.</p> <p>Percentage of datasets that are comprehensive and accurate as determined by BJS.</p> <p>Percentage of nonresponse elements for which an estimate is developed.</p>	<p>As described in Task 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A written project schedule for the entire program. • Meeting agendas and minutes to document decisions and action items (biweekly during active data collection). • Monthly progress reports during project periods other than active collection. • Weekly progress reports during active data collection. • Quarterly financial reports required by OJP. • Semi-annual reports required by OJP. • Decision memos for major project milestones, deliverables, and changes. • A DMP within 60 days of the award start date. <p>As described in Task 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft materials for any activity requiring OMB clearance. <p>As described in Task 6:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Final, clean datasets delivered no more than 3 months after the close of each year's data collection, including documentation for weights and other adjustments.• Nonresponse bias analyses for each collection year, as needed.• An end-of-project technical report.
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Application Checklist

FY 2023 Firearm Inquiry Statistics (FIST) program, 2023–2026

This application checklist has been created as an aid in developing an application. For more information, reference [the OJP Application Submission Steps in the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) and the [DOJ Application Submission Checklist](#).

Pre-Application

Before Registering in Grants.gov:

- Acquire or renew your Entity's [System Award Management \(SAM\) Registration Information](#) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

Register in Grants.gov

- Acquire an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and a Grants.gov username and password (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Business Point of Contact (E-Biz POC) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

Find the Funding Opportunity

- Search for the funding opportunity in Grants.gov using the opportunity number, assistance listing number, or keyword(s)
- Access the funding opportunity and application package (see Step 7 in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Sign up for Grants.gov email [notifications](#) (optional) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Read [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#)
- Read OJP policy and guidance on conference approval, planning, and reporting available at <https://www.ojp.gov/funding/financialguidedoj/iii-postaward-requirements#6g3y8> (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

Review the Overview of Post-Award Legal Requirements

- Review the “[Overview of Legal Requirements Generally Applicable to OJP Grants and Cooperative Agreements - FY 2023 Awards](#)” in the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#).

Review the Scope Requirement

- The federal amount requested is within the allowable limit(s) of 1,600,000.

Review Eligibility Requirement:

- Review the Eligibility section on the cover page and Eligibility Information section in the solicitation.

Application Step 1

Submit the **SF-424** and **SF-LLL** in Grants.gov

- In Section 8F of the SF-424, include the name and contact information of the individual **who will complete the application in JustGrants and the SF-LLL in Grants.gov**
- Submit Intergovernmental Review (if applicable).

Within 48 hours after the SF-424 and SF-LLL submission in Grants.gov, receive four (4) Grants.gov email notifications:

- a submission receipt
- a validation receipt
- a grantor agency retrieval receipt
- an agency tracking number assignment

If no Grants.gov receipt and validation email is received, or if error notifications are received:

- Contact BJS Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726, 606-545-5035, [Grants.gov customer support](#), or support@grants.gov regarding technical difficulties (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

Within 24 hours after receipt of confirmation emails from Grants.gov, the individual in Section 8F of the SF-424 will receive an email from JustGrants with login instructions.

- Proceed to Application Step 2 and complete application in JustGrants

Application Step 2

Submit the following information in JustGrants:

Application Components

- Standard Applicant information (SF-424 information from Grants.gov)
- **Proposal Abstract***
- **Proposal Narrative***

Budget and Associated Documentation

- **Budget Web-Based form***
- Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

- Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Disclosure of Process related to Executive Compensation (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

Additional Application Components

- Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Certification of Human Subjects Protection (see <https://bjs.ojp.gov/funding/human-subjects-and-confidentiality-requirements>)
- Privacy Certification (see <https://bjs.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh236/files/media/document/bjsmpc.pdf>)
- Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Request and Justification for Employee Compensation; Waiver (if applicable) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Timeline
- Memorandum of understanding (if applicable)
- Résumés of key personnel (if applicable)
- List of procurement contracts (if applicable)
- Organizational chart (if applicable)

Disclosures and Assurances

- [Disclosure of Lobbying Activities \(SF-LLL\)](#) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Applicant Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- DOJ Certified Standard Assurances (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- DOJ Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Applicant Disclosure and Justification – DOJ High Risk Grantees (if applicable) see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#)

Note: Items designated with an asterisk must be submitted for an application to meet the basic minimum requirements review. If OJP determines that an application does not include the designated items, it will neither proceed to peer review, nor receive further consideration.

Review, Certify and Submit Application in JustGrants

- Any validation errors will immediately display on screen after submission.
- Correct validation errors, if necessary, and then return to the “Certify and Submit” screen to submit the application. Access the [Application Submission Validation Errors Quick Reference Guide](#) for step-by-step instructions to resolve errors prior to submission.
- Once the application is submitted and validated, a confirmation message will appear at the top of the page. Users will also receive a notification in the “bell” alerts confirming submission.

If no JustGrants application submission confirmation email or validation is received, or if error notification is received:

- Contact the JustGrants Service Desk at 833-872-5175 or JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov regarding technical difficulties. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Standard Solicitation Resources

[OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) provides guidance to assist OJP grant applicants in preparing and submitting applications for OJP funding.

[DOJ Grants Financial Guide](#) serves as the primary reference manual to assist award recipients in fulfilling their fiduciary responsibility to safeguard grant funds and to ensure funds are used for the purposes for which they were awarded. It compiles a variety of laws, rules and regulations that affect the financial and administrative management of DOJ awards. This guide serves as a starting point for all award recipients and subrecipients of DOJ grants and cooperative agreements in ensuring the effective day-to-day management of awards.

[JustGrants Resources Website](#) is an entryway into information about JustGrants and the grants management system itself. Through this portal both award recipients and applicants can access training resource and user support options, find frequently asked questions and sign-up for the [JustGrants Update e-newsletter](#).

[JustGrants Application Submission Training Page](#) offers helpful information and resources on the application process. This training page includes e-learning videos, reference guides, checklists and other resources to help applicants complete an application.

[Virtual Q&A Sessions](#) are advertised here and provide opportunities for users to receive topic-specific training, direct technical assistance and support on JustGrants system functionality.