

Questions and Answers

BJS FY25 State Justice Statistics Program for Statistical Analysis Centers

O-BJS-2025-172526

Q1. What types of conferences will BJS approve for travel?

A1. Conferences likely to be approved include anything for the Justice Information Resource Network (JIRN) and anything for SEARCH. Sometimes the SAA and the SAC work together on a project, or a SAC staffer might attend SEARCH to get more information about important subject areas related to work being done by the SAC. On a case-by-case basis, travel to attend any other criminal justice-related conference where we can see the connection to the SAC's work may be approved. Also, conferences that relate to any of the software platforms that the SACs use, such as SPSS and R.

Q2. The Core Capacity opportunity mentions funding up to \$75,000, and Special Emphasis projects mention \$150,000. Are those caps per year, or per project award?

A2. Those caps are per award with a 12-, 24-, or 36-month project period. No matter the project period length, the maximum funding for a Core Capacity project is \$75,000, and the maximum for a Special Emphasis project is \$150,000. Note: an applicant can submit a proposal that has both a Core Capacity project and a Special Emphasis project, but the combined total request should not exceed \$225,000.

Q3. Can one proposal include multiple Core Capacity projects?

A3. Yes, but the maximum award for those projects combined should not exceed \$75,000. For example, the cost of one Core Capacity project might be \$45,000 and the other Core Capacity project might cost \$30,000. The total project cost would equal \$75,000.

Q4. Can the proposal include a different start date than the one mentioned in the NOFO, April 1? Could you propose to start on September 1?

A4. Yes, BJS will entertain an applicant proposing a different start date than April 1. Note: BJS still anticipates releasing a FY26 SJS NOFO, with a presumed start date sometime this fall. This is one reason why the current NOFO has a presumed start

date of April 1. An applicant could propose a start date as late as September 1, but BJS does not recommend anything later because any FY26 NOFO will probably have a start date of October 1st.

Q5. If someone has multiple projects in mind, would it be appropriate to put one project in this solicitation and the second project in the next solicitation?

A5. Yes.

Q6. Is there any possibility that a SAC's receipt of funding under the FY25 solicitation would affect the SAC's eligibility or prospects for the FY26 solicitation? Or are they unrelated?

A6. The FY25 and FY26 programs are separate funding opportunities and applying for one should not affect your ability to apply for the other. There is no decision to combine the FY25 and FY26 funding, so they should be treated as separate. The FY26 solicitation is anticipated to be published later this fiscal year, but no firm date is set for release.

Q7. Can you say more about the summary paragraph required for each project? What does BJS mean regarding the theme which is then tied to a deliverable?

A7. This is a restatement of the requirement that proposals identify which category and subcategory the project falls under. There are 4 themes listed for Core Capacity and 2 for Special Emphasis. When stated clearly in a proposal, BJS reviewers will not have to guess which theme(s) best fits the project(s) in the proposal.

Additionally, the amount of funding proposed for each project should be clearly detailed, such as \$10,000 for Project A., and then \$40,000 for Project B. Each budget line item should clearly identify whether it is funding for Project A, Project B, etc. For example, Project A's budget includes personnel, equipment, and contractual costs; Project B's budget includes personnel and fringe. This will allow reviewers to match the budget costs to each proposed project.

Q8. The NOFO indicates BJS is estimating 38 awards and up to 15 Special Emphasis projects. Does that mean that 15 of the 38 awards will include Special Emphasis projects?

A8. It is hard to say for certain, because it depends on the proposals received. Many proposals could include both a Core Capacity and a Special Emphasis project. This is simply stating that BJS anticipates funding, at most, 15 Special Emphasis projects.

Q9. Can a proposal include funds for membership dues in other criminal justice research organizations?

A9. No, membership dues cannot be included in project budgets under this funding opportunity.

Q10. Previously, SJS funds could be used for travel to two conferences per year, but this NOFO states that it can be used for one conference per year. Is that true? Is that a change?

A10. Yes, this is a change, and it is due to overall reduced funding for this program. However, if your proposal includes clear justification showing the need to attend a second conference, BJS will review and make a determination based on the availability of funds and relevance of the conference. Travel funds are separate from the funding cap on Core Capacity-building or Special Emphasis projects.

Q11. Will there be an in-person JIRN or SEARCH conference in 2026?

A11. JIRN's 2026 conference will be virtual; the SEARCH Summer conference is tentatively scheduled to be in-person in July.

Q12. What will the fees be for the JIRN conference?

A12. While not finalized, it will likely be \$250 for members, more for nonmembers. There could be an early registration and late registration price.

Q13. How many pages are project narratives and budget narratives on average for this solicitation?

A13. It varies. The important factor is a well-written proposal and a clear connection to the goals and objectives outlined in the NOFO. Submitting a one-page proposal is unacceptable. Applicants must clearly describe what's being proposed and include all required elements. The proposal should not exceed the page limit outlined in the NOFO.

Applications should be written in plain language that anyone can understand despite knowing nothing about SACs or BJS programs, and it should be easy to understand what is being proposed.

Additionally, if an applicant is seeking funding for the second year of a project that they have already started with SJS funding, then the applicant should thoroughly explain the activities that occurred in year one. In other words, this is the research that was done and the project results from year one. In year two, the next phase of the project is being proposed, resulting in this final deliverable.

All projects should have a deliverable that must be submitted as part of the final performance report.

Regarding budget narratives, remember that proposal budgets are web-based and the format includes the narrative for each budget section. The top section requires the applicant to fill in the details, with information about how the costs are calculated (name of item, cost per item, number of items, etc.). Under that is a narrative box, where the applicant should clearly describe what they are requesting. For example, if the applicant requests personnel costs, the budget narrative must include a description of the person's duties related to the proposed project.

Q16. If a state has an existing dashboard, can the proposal center around incorporating new sources of data? Not simply one more year of the same data, but a new source of data. Would that be considered an enhancement that fits within this solicitation?

A16. Yes.