



The [U.S. Department of Justice](#) (DOJ), [Office of Justice Programs](#) (OJP), [Bureau of Justice Statistics](#) (BJS), is seeking applications to support the 2015 Criminal History Record Assessment and Research Program (CHRARP). As the principal statistical agency of the DOJ, BJS is responsible for the collection, analysis, publication, and dissemination of statistical information on crime, criminal offenders, victims of crime, and the operations of criminal justice systems at all levels of government. This data collection program furthers the Department's mission by working in partnership with the justice community to identify the most pressing challenges confronting the justice system and to provide information in support of innovative strategies and approaches for dealing with these challenges.

2015 Criminal History Record Assessment and Research Program (CHRARP)

Eligibility

Eligible applicants are national, regional, state, or local public and private entities, including for-profit (commercial) and nonprofit organizations (including tribal nonprofit or for-profit organizations), faith-based and community organizations, institutions of higher education (including tribal institutions of higher education), federally recognized Indian tribal governments as determined by the Secretary of the Interior, and units of local government that support initiatives to improve the functioning of the criminal justice system. For-profit organizations must agree to forgo any profit or management fee.

BJS may elect to make awards for applications submitted under this solicitation in future fiscal years, dependent on the merit of the applications and on the availability of appropriations.

Deadline

Applicants must register with [Grants.gov](#) prior to submitting an application. (See "How to Apply," page 28.) All applications are due by 11:59 p.m. eastern time on June 30, 2014. (See "Deadlines: Registration and Application," page 4.)

All applicants are encouraged to read this [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#).

Contact Information

For technical assistance with submitting an application, contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726 or 606-545-5035, or via e-mail to support@grants.gov. The Grants.gov Support Hotline hours of operation are 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except federal holidays.

Applicants that experience unforeseen Grants.gov technical issues beyond their control that prevent them from submitting their application by the deadline must e-mail the BJS contact identified below **within 24 hours after the application deadline** and request approval to submit their application.

For assistance with any other requirements of this solicitation, contact Matthew Durose, BJS Statistician, by telephone at 202-307-0765, or by e-mail at askbjs@usdoj.gov. Include "2015 CHRARP" in the subject line.

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2015 Criminal History Record Assessment and Research Program (CHRARP) (CFDA # 16.734)

Overview

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) is seeking proposals to support the Criminal History Record Assessment and Research Program (CHRARP). This statistical program furthers BJS's mission to produce accurate and timely information on the criminal histories of offenders. The recipient of funds will transform automated criminal history records into databases that support statistical research and studies of the criminal behaviors for various cohorts of individuals. The recipient of funds will 1) prepare and maintain a software system that converts the contents of automated criminal history records into research databases; 2) generate a set of at least three research databases, including technical assistance in the design of sampling frames and sampling weights; 3) design and implement a quality assurance system to validate the conversion of raw criminal history information into these research databases; 4) provide BJS with a set of analyses of each research database based on BJS's specifications; 5) work with BJS to determine how variations in the quality, completeness, and variability of the computerized criminal history information maintained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and state repositories affect the content of the research databases; and 6) prepare technical reports detailing these findings and proposing methods to compensate for these attributes when analyzing these administrative records.

BJS anticipates making one award of up to \$1,000,000 for the 18-month program described herein. The program includes an option to continue the work for an additional 42 months. Funding in subsequent years will be based on the selected applicant's performance during the initial 18 months, the availability of funds, and the scope of work developed by BJS following the first 18 months. This award may be supplemented in the future at BJS discretion, depending on the selected applicant's performance and the availability of appropriations.

BJS is authorized to issue this solicitation under the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, Section 302. It is also authorized under the Department of Justice Appropriations Act of 2014, Pub. L. No. 113-76.

Deadlines: Registration and Application

Applicants must register with Grants.gov prior to submitting an application. OJP encourages applicants to **register several weeks before** the application submission deadline. In addition, OJP urges applicants to submit applications 72 hours prior to the application due date. The deadline to apply for funding under this announcement is 11:59 p.m. eastern time on June 30, 2014. See "How to Apply" on page 28 for details.

Eligibility

Refer to the title page for eligibility under this program.

Project-Specific Information

Background

Understanding criminal history records

A criminal history record (also known as a rap sheet) contains information identifying a particular subject (e.g., name, date of birth, and physical characteristics) and a summary of his or her involvement with the criminal justice system (e.g., arrests and prosecutions). These records are used by a variety of entities in their daily operations, including the police to determine the supervision status of criminal suspects, the courts to determine sentencing outcomes, employers to make hiring decisions, and the FBI to process background checks for firearm purchases. Each state has a central repository that collects and maintains criminal history records and operates a system for disseminating those records for criminal and non-criminal justice purposes. The FBI maintains an automated pointer system—the Interstate Identification Index (III)—that allows authorized agencies to determine whether any state has criminal history records on an individual. The FBI also maintains a repository of records from the federal justice system and U.S. territories, as well as records from state and local agencies that the FBI is solely responsible for disseminating. The federal government and states have laws regarding the dissemination of criminal history records to authorized users.

Since the mid-1970s, Nlets (the International Justice and Public Safety Network) has been a central component of the nation's criminal history record system. This nonprofit organization operates an international computer-based message switching system that facilitates the exchange of information among criminal justice agencies (24 hours a day, 7 days a week). The state repositories automatically respond over the Nlets network to requests for criminal history records.

The actual responses to a request for criminal history information varies widely by state in structure and content, often making the information difficult to interpret at the national level. To address this issue, the National Task Force on Increasing the Utility of the Criminal History Record developed a set of recommendations in 1995 to improve the readability of rap sheets across the states, including the creation of a standardized format to support interstate sharing of criminal history information. In response, the Joint Task Force (JTF) on Rap Sheet Standardization was formed to develop an XML-based standardized transmission format for criminal history records. The JTF has implemented several versions of the transmission format in recent years based on the Global Justice XML Data Model (GJXDM) and the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM).

Parsing rap sheet fields into a uniform record layout

Between 2008 and 2013, BJS partnered with the FBI, state criminal history repositories, and Nlets to build a data processing infrastructure to collect, consolidate, and standardize criminal history records (i.e., rap sheets) of large samples of study subjects into research databases able to support statistical analyses. This infrastructure has greatly enhanced BJS's capacity to inform evidence-based policies aimed at reducing criminal recidivism and evaluate the effectiveness of funding directed towards the improvement of the nation's criminal history records. Applicants are encouraged to review previous BJS studies on recidivism at www.bjs.gov.

In 2008, BJS entered into a data-sharing agreement with the FBI and Nlets that provided BJS direct access to criminal history records through the FBI's III and defined the security protocols to protect the confidentiality of the data. Since then, BJS has funded Nlets through the Criminal History Records Information Sharing (CHRIS) Project to facilitate the first stage of this data processing infrastructure. Nlets has produced and continues to maintain a software system that requests and retrieves electronic rap sheets from all 50 states, the FBI, and the District of Columbia. The structure of these rap sheets varies greatly from state to state, as do the content of the various information fields. For example, while somewhere on all rap sheets there is text that contains the individual's first arrest offense, the position of this text within each state's rap sheet structure varies, and the text itself is often unique (e.g., the offense text may be a state statute, a state-defined offense code, or both). To partially deal with these rap sheet variations, the system produced by BJS and Nlets identifies and extracts (or parses) key fields character-for-character from each requested rap sheet using a family of software programs customized to each state's rap sheet structure. The parsed, state-specific fields are then written into a relational database with a uniform record layout. This standardizes the structure of the rap sheets obtained from all 50 states, the FBI, and the District of Columbia but not the contents, with each field holding the character-for-character text found on the original rap sheet. The resulting database produced by Nlets is labeled the *parsed relational database*.

The database model developed by BJS and Nlets accumulates the results of the record requests to the FBI and state repositories and documents the multi-state criminal history record of each individual in a cohort of research subjects. The current layout of the parsed relational database includes six types of records:

1. The *identifier table* contains subject information including names, dates of birth, and various types of identification numbers.
2. The *demographic table* contains subject information as including sex, race, Hispanic origin, place of birth, and country of citizenship.
3. The *arrest table* contains arrest information including the date of offense, date of arrest, arrest offenses, arresting agency name, Origination Agency Identification (ORI) number, and arrest disposition.
4. The *prosecution table* contains charge information including the date of prosecution action, offense charges, and disposition.
5. The *court table* contains court disposition information including the court offenses, court agency name or ORI, adjudication outcome, date of disposition, and sentence.
6. The *supervision table* contains subject information including the date of entry or release from a correctional facility and the ORI or name of the facility.

Each arrest and the criminal justice outcomes that arise from an arrest form an arrest cycle. A cycle number is used to connect sentencing and custody dates to adjudication dates and arrest dates. Most criminal history records reflect detailed information on the offender's adjudicated guilt or innocence and, if convicted, on the sentence imposed (e.g., prison, jail, or probation). However, the proportion of arrests with a court disposition varies across the states. These variations can be caused by several factors, including the reporting practices of local law enforcement agencies or the courts or the inability of the state's central repository to connect a reported disposition to a specific arrest.

Within an arrest cycle, a person can be charged with multiple offenses and the person can be convicted and sentenced for multiple offenses. A charge sequence number is assigned to an individual charge within an arrest cycle. The sequence number links together an individual

charge in the arrest table with the prosecution or court disposition(s) and custody record(s) associated with that arrest offense.

BJS developed a systematic process to verify the accuracy of the rap sheet parsing programs by comparing the contents of the parsed relational database to the information found on the original rap sheets transmitted to Nlets by the FBI and state repositories. When an error was found in the parsed files, Nlets corrected the parsing program and provided BJS with a revised parsed relational database.

Nlets continues to provide BJS with a secure, automated process to request, receive, and collate multi-state criminal history information in parsed relational databases. Nlets is also responsible for maintaining the software to parse data elements from the rap sheets for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the FBI into a layout that provides a complete and accurate extract of records. Nlets is frequently required to update the parsing logic when states migrate to the nationally standardized XML format or change the structure or contents of their rap sheets.

Enhancing the research potential of the parsed databases with a national coding structure

For decades, BJS has used criminal history records from the FBI and the state repositories to study criminal recidivism patterns. The BJS prisoner recidivism studies have been a valuable source of statistics on the number and types of crimes former inmates commit both before and after their release. The first inmate recidivism study followed a sample of released prisoners selected to represent all those released from prison in 1983 in the study's 11 states *Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 1983* (NCJ 116261). A second study tracked a cohort of state prisoners released from prison in 15 states in 1994 *Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 1994* (NCJ 193427). Tasks related to collecting, processing, and analyzing criminal history records for these studies required several years to complete. Through manual requests to individual state repositories, BJS provided identifying information on study subjects and received various types of criminal history data sets requiring significant processing time to translate into a common format.

Building on the CHRIS Project, BJS developed the capacity to conduct multi-state recidivism research in a more efficient manner. In 2009, BJS initiated the Conversion of Criminal History Records into Research Databases (CCHRRD) Project. This project was awarded to NORC at the University of Chicago through a public solicitation and peer review process. BJS and NORC developed a software system that transformed the parsed relational database produced by Nlets into a database with a standardized coding structure. BJS first used the systems developed under the CHRIS and CCHRRD projects to conduct a recidivism study of a sample of 70,000 former prisoners from the more than 400,000 state inmates released in 2005 in 30 states. The prisoner records were obtained from the state departments of corrections through the National Corrections Reporting Program (NCRP).

During the development of the CCHRRD software, BJS conducted a series of data quality checks on the criminal history records to assess the accuracy and completeness of the information of the parsed rap sheets. For example, to ensure that the correct records were received on the released prisoners using fingerprint-based identification numbers, BJS compared other individual identifiers (e.g., date of birth and sex) in the NCRP data to those reported in the criminal history records.

The CCHRRD software was built to standardize the arrest, court, and demographic tables in the Nlets' parsed relational database. The resulting *standardized relational database* holds much of the detailed information found on the original rap sheet, but in a database with a coding structure common across all jurisdictions. For example, all state offense fields (whether they were originally state statutes or free text fields) are recoded into nationally standardized offense codes. Court disposition fields (which were often long text strings on the raw rap sheet) are each converted into one of a small number of codes that represent whether the offender was acquitted or convicted, and if convicted, whether the sentence was probation, jail, or imprisonment. In other words, the fields from the parsed relational database were coupled with a standardized version of the field containing national recodes that are common across states.

The rap sheet conversion process developed through the CCHRRD Project integrates a series of business rules developed using Python programming language and other readily available software tools into a single system that can be modified and enhanced to produce customized analytic files. A key component of the CCHRRD software is the set of *crosswalk tables* that hold BJS's national recode of tens of thousands of state-specific data fields found in the arrest, court, and demographic tables of the parsed relational database. Many of the coding rules within the crosswalks rely on multiple fields in the parsed database to arrive at the appropriate BJS offense. The CCHRRD software reads a parsed rap sheet and checks to see if the crosswalk tables contain the needed recode. If it does, the recode is written onto the standardized relational database. When appropriate recodes are not found, new lines of code are entered into the appropriate crosswalk tables capturing the recode decisions of the analysts, and the program is run again to complete the standardization process.

The CCHRRD software also extracts from the standardized relational database a set of research databases—including a relational research database, demographic flat file, criminal history flat file, and criminal history summary file—that support BJS's research and are analyzable with basic statistical software such as SPSS or SAS. This component of the software was designed with built-in flexibility to accommodate a variety of likely attributes of the research extracts, including the inclusion or exclusion of certain offense or disposition events. For example, for the BJS report *Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 30 States in 2005: Patterns from 2005 to 2010*, (NCJ 244205) the extraction software excluded traffic violations (with the exception of vehicular manslaughter, driving while intoxicated, and hit-and-run) from the research database because the coverage of these events in the criminal history records varied widely by state. The extraction software also offers an automated method of identifying and excluding administrative (e.g., a criminal registration or the issuance of a warrant) and procedural (e.g., transferring a suspect to another jurisdiction) records embedded in the arrest table that do not refer to an actual arrest so that they could be excluded from the research databases.

After completing the first study using the new software infrastructure, BJS passed a second and third cohort of rap sheets through the CCHRRD software to generate the standardized relational databases and the research extract files. Because the first study involved a large sample of rap sheets, BJS found that a large majority of state statutes and criminal justice codes found in the second and third parsed databases were already in the CCHRRD crosswalks. To date, the crosswalk libraries hold recodes of all the unique fields found in over 150,000 national rap sheets.

At the conclusion of the CCHRRD Project in 2013, and as required by the original solicitation, NORC transferred the source code of the conversion software (including the programming syntax and crosswalk libraries developed from the three studies) and the software to generate

the BJS-defined research extracts to the BJS computer network. BJS also received a software user manual and training sessions on how to install and operate the software system. In addition, NORC provided BJS with resource materials that documented the methods used to process the data and the input received from state and federal agencies on their criminal history reporting practices.

Goals and Objectives

The primary goals and objectives of the FY2015 CHRARP are to—

- 1) validate the accuracy of the electronically-parsed criminal history records provided to the applicant by BJS
- 2) expand the crosswalk libraries and standardize the electronically-parsed criminal history records for at least three large cohorts of offenders
- 3) generate high-quality data analysis files for each cohort based on a design provided by BJS and knowledge gained about the qualities of the data
provide BJS with statistical support to analyze the research extract files and produce specified analyses to be used in BJS reports
- 4) expand BJS's conversion software capabilities to more efficiently process parsed rap sheets
- 5) assess and report on the quality, variability, and completeness of the state and federal criminal history records in terms of their ability to support recidivism research.

The selected applicant will be required to implement quality control checks at each data processing stage of this project to ensure the databases conform to BJS's specifications. The research files will allow BJS to produce a wide range of statistical information on the criminal careers of various types of offenders.

All applicants can access 1) the layout of the parsed (non-standardized) rap sheet relational database produced by Nlets, 2) the user manual for the CCHRRD software (including the hardware and software requirements for operating the system), 3) a copy of the Python programming code developed during the CCHRRD Project, 4) examples of the crosswalk libraries, 5) the output specifications for the standardized relational database (including a description of the variables and value codes), and 6) the output specifications for the research extracts (including a description of the variables and value codes). Applicants can download these files at http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/sheets/chrarp15_sol.zip. Given the sensitive nature of some of the data fields stored in the crosswalk libraries, BJS cannot disseminate the complete set of tables.

The selected applicant will receive the complete crosswalk libraries for the FY2015 CHRARP. In addition, the successful applicant may choose to use and build upon the existing software code developed by the CCHRRD project or may choose to create its own software system that duplicates and enhances the functionality of the CCHRRD software.

Scope of Work

Under the FY2015 CHRARP, BJS expects the selected applicant to—

- 1) Meet with BJS within a month after accepting the award to discuss the project tasks, deliverables, and timeline. During the kick-off meeting, BJS and the project staff will also review the data security protocols that will be required to protect the confidentiality and integrity of the

criminal history record information during exchange, processing, and storage. The selected applicant must be able to guarantee the confidentiality of the data and that all human subject concerns will be addressed. It is likely that the FBI will require criminal background checks on all project personnel with access to raw rap sheets or to data obtained from rap sheets. BJS will work with the selected applicant to establish the data transfer and security agreements needed to obtain access to the criminal history record information and any other data needed for this project. This process is expected to take approximately 2 months to complete after the start of the project.

2) Develop a detailed plan for completing the project within 18 months or less. The plan should include a timeline for completing each of the project activities. BJS expects to receive the plan 2 weeks after the kick-off meeting. BJS will provide the recipient of funds with comments on the plan within 2 weeks of receiving it. After BJS and the recipient of funds have agreed to the plan, all work must be completed as scheduled. The project is expected to be completed by June 30, 2016.

3) Verify the accuracy and reliability of the coding rules within the crosswalk tables developed for the CCHRRD Project. After the necessary data transfer and security protocols are established between all entities involved in the handling and processing of the data, the selected applicant will receive a copy of the existing crosswalk libraries. The selected applicant will be required to review and validate the current recoding rules in the crosswalk tables with BJS and other criminal justice agencies across the country to confirm the data are being interpreted correctly and given the appropriate classifications within BJS's nationally standardized coding structure.

4) Implement a statistically sound process to verify the accuracy of each parsed relational database received from Nlets by comparing its contents to the information found on the original rap sheets. If apparent errors or abnormalities are identified in the parsed records, the selected applicant will report the issues in writing to BJS. Based on confirmed errors, Nlets will revise the parsing programs and return a revised parsed database. In the application, the applicant should provide a detailed proposal for carrying out this parser validation task. Once the process is approved by BJS, the work to validate the parsed relational databases can begin. The selected applicant should expect to receive the first of at least three parsed relational databases in March 2015. The second and third parsed relational databases are expected to be delivered to the selected applicant in September 2015.

5) Thoroughly examine the content and attributes of the criminal history data and document differences in the composition of the arrest, disposition, sentencing, and custody information within (i.e., over time) and across state jurisdictions. The selected applicant will be required to provide subject matter expertise and targeted analyses to uncover variations in rap sheet content. The information found on the criminal history records can vary from state to state. For instance, while state laws generally require that the fingerprints of all persons arrested for felonies and serious misdemeanors are to be forwarded to the central repository, some states also maintain records on arrests for petty crimes and traffic offenses. In addition, significant state-to-state differences exist in the number and types of arrest cycles that include disposition information. These state-level disposition reporting rates can be affected by the availability of automated fingerprinting technology (e.g., live scan) among local criminal justice agencies. With BJS guidance, the selected applicant will produce a written report with approximately 20 statistical tables on the state-level variations found in the content of each parsed database and provide recommendations on the methods to standardize the variable information to minimize the impact these variations of research findings.

This task supports BJS's need to assess the capacity of the administrative data extracted from criminal history information systems to support studies on the criminal careers of various cohorts of interest (e.g., first-time arrestees and persons who served time in prison). The selected applicant will work with BJS to develop baseline measures to understand and monitor criminal history reporting practices and data quality issues and help facilitate BJS's national criminal history record improvement efforts by performing various ad hoc analyses of the rap sheet databases. Such analyses may, at BJS discretion, result in one or more BJS publications.

Examples of such analyses include—

- across and within state variations in how rap sheets report arrests made on warrants and information relating to violations of parole and other forms of community supervision
- across and within state variations of the extent to which death notices are reported in the criminal history records
- across and within state variations of the consistency of criminal history records with data from other sources.

6) Develop a plan to research and recode thousands of fields found on the state and federal rap sheets that are not handled in the existing crosswalk libraries and develop rules and quality control checks to ensure the information is recoded in a consistent manner according to BJS's specifications. The selected applicant will be required to consult BJS and other criminal justice agencies to determine the appropriate classification for newly encountered fields not currently captured in the crosswalks. The plan should include methods to successfully transform 100% of the data fields found in the national rap sheets obtained for at least three studies into BJS's standardized values.

7) Convert at least three parsed relational databases into databases with a standardized coding structure. To complete this task, the selected applicant may choose to use, and modify as needed, the software produced by the CCHRRD Project or may choose to provide another software solution that would be developed during the project period. If an alternative software solution is planned, the application must clearly show that the proposed software will provide at least all of the capabilities of the existing CCHRRD software. The time frame and cost to develop the alternative software solution must be clearly documented in the proposal. If the applicant selects to use or build upon the existing CCHRRD software, the time frame and cost to develop a detailed understanding of the software must be clearly documented in the proposal.

No more than 7 months of receiving the parsed relational database for the first study, the selected applicant will be expected to deliver to BJS the standardized database, and a written report on the state-level variations found in the content of the parsed database as well as recommendations on methods proposed to accommodate these variations in the research extracts.

For subsequently provided parsed relational databases, the selected applicant will be expected to deliver to BJS the standardized databases, written reports on the state-level variations found in the content of the parsed databases, and recommendations on methods proposed to accommodate these variations in the research extracts no more than 6 months of receiving the parsed databases. The selected applicant will provide BJS with a preliminary version of each

standardized database when the completed recoding of the fields in the parsed database reaches 80%.

The most recent version of the CCHRRD software processed the parsed relational database that was based on the structure and content of state rap sheets as they existed at that time. States may change the structure and content of their rap sheets, and in doing so have required Nlets to modify the state-specific parsing program. As a result, the range and structure of the information found in the parsed relational database may have changed for these states, requiring the logic of the standardization software to also change. Therefore, it is likely that the current version of the CCHRRD software must be modified to handle these changes in the parsed relational database.

The selected applicant will be required to update the crosswalk libraries and programming logic to accommodate 1) any necessary modifications following the initial review of the coding rules developed for the CCHRRD Project, and 2) any new (i.e., not previously observed) codes or text fields found in the parsed relational databases. In addition to the demographic, arrest, and court tables in the parsed relational database, the selected applicant will also be required to standardize the data fields in the prosecution and supervision tables into BJS's nationally standardized coding structure. The selected applicant must verify that the standardized output is consistent with the specifications in the coding documentation developed for the FY2015 CHRARP.

Much of the cost of standardizing a parsed relational database is based on the number and type of fields encountered in the database that the crosswalk libraries cannot handle (e.g., fields not found in previously processed databases that need to be added to the crosswalk libraries) or changes by Nlets to state parsers that require modifications to the conversion software to process the new data fields found in the parsed file. After receiving the parsed relational database for each study, the selected applicant will use a small portion of the funding to determine how well the current coding rules standardize the file. After this assessment, the selected applicant will provide a cost estimate with rationale for preparing the standardized relational database and research extracts. Without knowing the exact characteristics of the parsed relational databases, the amount of funds budgeted for standardize the parsed databases is difficult to determine. BJS recommends that the applicant include at least \$600,000 in the proposed budget to support the tasks of data standardization and the production of research extracts.

To minimize the cost of the standardization tasks, applicants are encouraged to propose cost-efficient methods for converting state- and federal-specific data fields into a uniform coding structure that supports BJS information needs. For example, applicants may propose to design and implement enhancements to the functionality and capabilities of the current standardization system. Currently, the updating of crosswalk libraries is highly dependent on case-by-case human decision making; however, an applicant may propose to use more advanced technology to suggest recoding options for content unknown to the crosswalk libraries and, in doing so, reduce the level of effort needed to manually program the appropriate BJS code into the crosswalk libraries. Applicants who propose new cost-efficient data processing methods should also provide the cost estimates for these services in their application budget.

8) Implement and maintain a secure, automated system that the selected applicant and BJS will use to track the progress of the various project tasks and deliverables, including
a) validation of the coding rules within the crosswalk tables developed for the CCHRRD Project,
b) verification that the parsed relational databases accurately reflect the original rap sheet

information, c) development of the software system that converts the fields in the parsed relational databases into BJS's standardized codes, and d) documentation on problems or errors encountered in the project data and proposed solutions. The tracking system should also be capable of generating state-level summary reports on the status of each task, including a description of the work and the dates each task was started and completed. It should provide real-time information and be accessible to BJS at all times.

9) Prepare to BJS specifications research extracts from each standardized relational database. The software proposed to create research extracts must be capable of adapting to the varying research needs of BJS.

The selected applicant will also deliver to BJS written reports that provide recommendations on statistical methods to a) select and weight samples of rap sheets from a universe list, b) adjust sampling weights to account for study subjects for whom a complete criminal history record was not obtained through the FBI and state repositories, and, c) minimize the impact state variations in rap sheet content on any estimates flowing from this work and ensure consistent counting rules when measuring criminal histories across states.

10) Produce approximately 20 statistical summary tables and the standard errors for those estimates at BJS's request from the research extracts. Within no more than 6 months of delivering the standardized relational database for the first study, the selected applicant will be expected to deliver to BJS the research extracts and the statistical summary tables and standard errors for those estimates. The selected applicant will be expected to deliver to BJS the research extracts for the standardized databases for the second and third studies and the statistical summary tables and standard errors for those estimates within no more than 5 months of delivering the standardize databases. Based on the review of the data files and other materials submitted to BJS, the selected applicant may need to provide additional data or documentation.

11) Assist BJS with producing public-use versions of the research databases that contain no personally identifiable information to be stored at the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research's National Archives for Criminal Justice Data (NACJD). The selected applicant will provide BJS with a codebook that includes information about the data variables, coding values, and recodes implemented during the data processing stage. Following the release of the first report for each of the studies, BJS will release a data analysis tool on its website that will allow users to generate customized statistical tables and graphs not provided in the publication. The selected applicant will provide BJS with data extracts from the research databases that include about 20 variables needed to populate the analysis tool.

The data collected from the FY2015 CHRARP project will be reported in at least one BJS publication. BJS retains all rights to exclusive use of the data until it releases the data file to the public via the NACJD. The selected applicant will not release or disclose any data collected through this cooperative agreement without the prior written approval of BJS. This includes, but is not limited to, presentations at professional conferences and meetings, press releases, or grant applications. Unauthorized release of the data by the recipient of funds or its associates may result in the immediate commencement of termination or suspension proceedings in accordance with 28 CFR Part 18.

12) Provide to BJS the updated crosswalk libraries and the source code for each version of the standardization software used to standardize each parsed database provided by BJS. If the successful applicant chooses to use software other than that developed by the CCHRRD

Project, the applicant must agree to provide BJS with the source code for their standardization and research database extraction software. The selected applicant using non-CCHRRD software must agree to write their software using publically available (preferably open source) software and confirm that BJS will be able to be run this software on BJS's computer system after the cooperative agreement has ended so that BJS may continue the standardization tasks on its own. The selected applicant must also provide BJS with a) detailed documentation that describes the methods used to produce the research files, b) a user manual for the rap sheet standardization and research extract software, and c) detailed instructions documenting how the software can be installed and run on BJS's internal computer system. At the completion of the project, the selected applicant will return all data files to BJS, and delete all copies from its system.

13) Work closely with BJS throughout all stages of this project. To facilitate this collaboration, the project plan should include bi-weekly telephone meetings with BJS and key project staff to review progress on the project and identify tasks or problems for BJS staff to address. The selected applicant must submit the required financial and progress reports through the Grants Management System (GMS) in accordance with the OJP Financial Guide.

Evidence-Based Programs or Practices

OJP strongly emphasizes the use of data and evidence in policy making and program development in criminal justice, juvenile justice, and crime victim services. OJP is committed to—

- improving the quantity and quality of evidence OJP generates
- integrating evidence into program, practice, and policy decisions within OJP and the field
- improving the translation of evidence into practice.

OJP considers programs and practices to be evidence-based when their effectiveness has been demonstrated by causal evidence, generally obtained through one or more outcome evaluations. Causal evidence documents a relationship between an activity or intervention (including technology) and its intended outcome, including measuring the direction and size of a change, and the extent to which a change may be attributed to the activity or intervention. Causal evidence depends on the use of scientific methods to rule out, to the extent possible, alternative explanations for the documented change. The strength of causal evidence, based on the factors described above, will influence the degree to which OJP considers a program or practice to be evidence-based. OJP's CrimeSolutions.gov website is one resource that applicants may use to find information about evidence-based programs in criminal justice, juvenile justice, and crime victim services.

Amount and Length of Awards

BJS anticipates making one award of up to \$1,000,000 for the 18-month program described herein. This award may be supplemented in the future, at BJS discretion, and depending on the selected applicant's performance and the availability of appropriations.

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

Budget 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, recipients may not use federal funds to pay total cash compensation (salary plus cash bonuses) to any employee of the award recipient at a rate that exceeds 110% 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. The 2014 salary table for SES employees is available at www.opm.gov/salary-tables. Note: A recipient may compensate an employee at a greater rate, provided the amount in excess of this compensation limitation is paid with nonfederal funds. (Any such additional compensation will not be considered matching funds where match requirements apply.)

The Director of BJS may exercise discretion to waive, on an individual basis, the limitation on compensation rates allowable under an award. An applicant requesting a waiver should include a detailed justification in the budget narrative of the application. Unless the applicant submits a waiver request and justification with the application, the applicant should anticipate that OJP will request the applicant to adjust and resubmit the budget.

The justification should include the particular qualifications and expertise of the individual, the uniqueness of the service the individual will provide, the individual's specific knowledge of the program or project being undertaken with award funds, and a statement explaining that the individual's salary is commensurate with the regular and customary rate for an individual with his/her qualifications and expertise, and for the work to be done.

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

OJP strongly encourages applicants that propose to use award funds for any conference-, meeting-, or training-related activity to review carefully—before submitting an application—the OJP policy and guidance on “conference” approval, planning, and reporting available at www.ojp.gov/financialguide/PostawardRequirements/chapter15page1.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 such costs for cooperative agreement recipients and of some such costs for grant recipients; and (3) set cost limits, including 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 of the OJP "Other Requirements for OJP Applications" web page at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/other_requirements.htm.

Match Requirement

This solicitation does not require a match. However, 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.

Performance Measures

To assist the Department 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, applicants that receive funding under this solicitation must provide data that measure the results of their work done under this solicitation. OJP will require any award recipient, post award, to provide the data requested in the “Data Grantee Provides” column so that OJP can calculate values for the “Performance Measures” column. Performance measures for this solicitation are as follows:

Objective	Performance Measures	Data Grantee Provides
<p>1) Support the BJS Criminal History Record Assessment and Research Program throughout the project period by implementing data quality assurance systems, processing the data, providing statistical support, preparing written reports on the results of project activities, and producing data analysis files.</p>	<p>Percent of deliverables that meet expectations.</p> <p>Percent of deliverables completed on time.</p> <p>Provide databases and written reports that are comprehensive and accurate.</p>	<p>Quarterly financial reports, semi-annual progress reports, and final progress report.</p> <p>Project plans and regular communication with BJS, including bi-weekly conference calls.</p> <p>The selected applicant must conduct verification and quality control checks on the coding rules within the crosswalk tables and the parsed relational databases.</p> <p>Number of records in the standardized databases and research extracts that are complete and accurate.</p> <p>The selected applicant must provide BJS with an automated system to track the progress of project tasks.</p>
<p>2) Develop a software system for converting criminal history record information into research extracts with a standardized coding structure.</p>	<p>Provide deliverable that meets expectations involving the successful transformation of 100% of the data fields found in the national rap sheets obtained for at least three studies into BJS’s standardized values.</p>	<p>Provide a systematic count of the number of unique data fields stored in the parsed relational databases.</p> <p>Provide a systematic count of the number of data fields transformed into BJS’s nationally standardized values.</p>

OJP does not require applicants to submit performance measures data with their applications. Instead, applicants should discuss in their application their proposed methods for collecting data for performance measures. Refer to the section “What an Application Should Include” on page 17 for additional information.

Note on Project Evaluations

Applicants that propose to use funds awarded through this solicitation to conduct project evaluations should be aware that certain project evaluations (such as systematic investigations designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge) may constitute “research” for purposes of applicable DOJ human subjects protection regulations. However, project evaluations that are intended only to generate internal improvements to a program or service, or are conducted only to meet OJP’s performance measure data reporting requirements likely do not constitute “research.” Applicants should provide sufficient information for OJP to determine whether the particular project they propose would either intentionally or unintentionally collect and/or use information in such a way that it meets the DOJ regulatory definition of research.

Research, for the purposes of human subjects protections for OJP-funded programs, is defined as, “a systematic investigation, including research development, testing, and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge” 28 C.F.R. § 46.102(d). For additional information on determining whether a proposed activity would constitute research, see the decision tree to assist applicants on the “Research and the Protection of Human Subjects” section of the OJP “Other Requirements for OJP Applications” web page (www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/other_requirements.htm). Applicants whose proposals may involve a research or statistical component also should review the “Confidentiality” section on that web page.

What an Application Should Include

Applicants should anticipate that if they fail to submit an application that contains all of the specified elements, it may negatively affect the review of their application; and, should a decision be made to make an award, it may result in the inclusion of special conditions that preclude the recipient from accessing or using award funds pending satisfaction of the conditions.

Moreover, applicants should anticipate that applications that are determined to be nonresponsive to the scope of the solicitation, or that do not include the application elements that BJS has designated to be critical, will neither proceed to neither peer review nor receive further consideration. Under this solicitation, BJS has designated the following application elements as critical: Program Narrative, Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative. Applicants may combine the Budget Narrative and the Budget Detail Worksheet in one document. However, if an applicant submits only one budget document, it must contain **both** narrative and detail information.

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

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).

2. Program Narrative

This should describe the manner in which the applicant will address the goals and objectives and meet the deliverables for the project, as well as address the evaluation criteria. The narrative should present a clear understanding of the substantive and methodological issues associated with the work described in this solicitation.

The first two sections of the program narrative (sections a. and b. from the list below) should not exceed 30 pages with line spacing of no less than 1.5 lines, with a font size no smaller than 12-point Arial, with no less than 1-inch margins all around. These limitations apply to tables and figures included within the narrative. If the program narrative fails to comply with these length-related restrictions, BJS may consider such noncompliance in peer review and in final award decisions.

The following sections should be included as part of the program narrative.

- a. Statement of the Problem
- b. Project Design and Implementation
- c. Capabilities and Competencies
- d. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures

BJS does not require applicants to submit performance measures data with their application. Performance measures are included as an alert that BJS will require successful applicants to submit specific data as part of their reporting requirements. For the application, applicants should indicate an understanding of these requirements and discuss how they will gather the required data, should they receive funding.

3. Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative

a. Budget Detail Worksheet

A sample Budget Detail Worksheet can be found at www.ojp.gov/funding/forms/budget_detail.pdf. Applicants that submit their budget in a different format should include the budget categories listed in the sample budget worksheet.

For questions pertaining to budget and examples of allowable and unallowable costs, see the OJP Financial Guide at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/financialguide/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).

Applicants should demonstrate in their budget narratives how they will maximize cost effectiveness of grant 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 narrative should be mathematically sound and correspond 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 they are relevant 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 be broken down by year.

c. Non-Competitive Procurement Contracts In Excess of Simplified Acquisition Threshold

If an applicant proposes to make one or more non-competitive procurements of products or services, where the non-competitive procurement will exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (as known as the small purchase threshold), which is currently set at \$150,000, the application should address the considerations outlined in the [OJP Financial Guide](#).

4. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)

Indirect costs are allowed only if the applicant has a federally approved indirect cost rate. (This requirement does not apply to units of local government.) Attach a copy of the federally approved indirect cost rate agreement to the application. Applicants that do not have an approved rate may request one through their cognizant federal agency, which will review all documentation and approve a rate for the applicant organization, or, if the applicant's accounting system permits, costs may be allocated in the direct cost categories. For assistance with identifying your cognizant agency, please contact the Customer Service Center at 1-800-458-0786 or at ask.ocfo@usdoj.gov. If DOJ is the cognizant federal agency, applicants may obtain information needed to submit an indirect cost rate proposal at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/pdfs/indirect_costs.pdf.

5. Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable)

Tribes, tribal organizations, or third parties proposing to provide direct services or assistance to residents on tribal lands should include in their applications a resolution, a letter, affidavit, or other documentation, as appropriate, that certifies that the applicant has the legal authority from the tribe(s) to implement the proposed project on tribal lands. In those instances when an organization or consortium of tribes applies for a grant 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 grant. 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.

Applicants unable to submit an application that includes a fully-executed (i.e., signed) copy of appropriate legal documentation, as described above, consistent with the applicable tribe's governance structure, should, at a minimum, submit an unsigned, draft version of such legal documentation as part of its application (except for cases in which, with respect to a tribal consortium applicant, consortium bylaws allow action without the support of all consortium member tribes). If selected for funding, BJS will make use of and access to funds contingent on receipt of the fully-executed legal documentation.

6. Applicant Disclosure of High Risk Status

Applicants are to disclose whether they are currently designated high risk by another federal grant making agency. This includes any status requiring additional oversight by the federal agency due to past programmatic or financial concerns. If an applicant is designated high risk by another federal grant making agency, you must email the following information to OJPComplianceReporting@usdoj.gov at the time of application submission:

- The federal agency that currently designated the applicant as high risk;
- Date the applicant was designated high risk;
- The high risk point of contact name, phone number, and email address, from that federal agency; and
- Reasons for the high risk status;

OJP seeks this information to ensure appropriate federal oversight of any grant award. Unlike the Excluded Parties List, this high risk information does not disqualify any organization from receiving an OJP award. However, additional grant oversight may be included, if necessary, in award documentation.

7. Additional Attachments

a. Applicant Disclosure of Pending Applications

Applicants are to disclose whether they have pending applications for federally funded grants or subgrants (including cooperative agreements) that include requests for funding to support the same project being proposed under this solicitation and will cover the identical cost items outlined in the budget narrative and worksheet in the application under this solicitation. The disclosure should include both direct applications for federal funding (e.g., applications to federal agencies) and indirect applications for such funding (e.g., applications to State agencies that will subaward federal funds).

OJP seeks this information to help avoid any 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.

Applicants that have pending applications as described above are 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 funding agency.

Federal or State Funding Agency	Solicitation Name/Project Name	Name/Phone/E-mail for Point of Contact at Funding Agency
DOJ/COPS	COPS Hiring Program	Jane Doe, 202/000-0000; jane.doe@usdoj.gov
HHS/ Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration	Drug Free Communities Mentoring Program/ North County Youth Mentoring Program	John Doe, 202/000-0000; john.doe@hhs.gov

Applicants should include the table as a separate attachment, with the file name “Disclosure of Pending Applications,” to their application. Applicants that do not have pending applications as described above are to include a statement to this effect in the separate attachment page (e.g., “[Applicant Name on SF-424] does not have pending applications submitted within the last 12 months for federally funded grants or subgrants (including cooperative agreements) that include requests for funding to support the same project being proposed under this solicitation and will cover the identical cost items outlined in the budget narrative and worksheet in the application under this solicitation.”).

b. Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity

If a proposal involves research and/or evaluation, regardless of the proposal’s other merits, in order to receive funds, the applicant must demonstrate research and evaluation independence, including appropriate safeguards to ensure research and evaluation objectivity and integrity.

For purposes of this solicitation, research and evaluation independence and integrity pertains to ensuring that the design, conduct, or reporting of research and evaluation funded by BJS grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts will not be biased by any personal or financial conflict of interest on the part of the investigators responsible for the research and evaluation or on the part of the applicant organization. Conflicts can be either actual or apparent. Examples of potential investigator (or other personal) conflict situations may include 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 colleague (potential apparent conflict). With regard to potential organizational conflicts of interest, as one example, generally an organization could not be given a grant to evaluate a project if that organization had itself provided substantial prior technical assistance to that project, as the organization in such an instance would 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 is a problem.

In the attachment dealing with research and evaluation independence and integrity, the applicant should explain the process and procedures that the applicant has put in place

to identify and eliminate (or, at the very least, mitigate) potential personal or financial conflicts of interest on the part of its staff, consultants, and/or subrecipients. It should also identify any potential organizational conflicts of interest on the part of the applicant with regard to the proposed research/evaluation. If the applicant reasonably believes that no potential personal or organizational conflicts of interest exist, then the applicant should provide a brief narrative explanation of how and why it reached that conclusion. Documentation that may be helpful in this regard could include organizational codes of ethics/conduct or policies regarding organizational, personal, and financial conflicts of interest.

For situations in which potential personal or organizational conflicts of interest exist, in the attachment, the applicant should identify the safeguards the applicant has or will put in place to eliminate, mitigate, or otherwise address those conflicts of interest.

Considerations in assessing research and evaluation independence and integrity will include, but may not be limited to, the adequacy of the applicant's efforts to identify factors that could affect the objectivity or integrity of the proposed staff or the organization 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.

c. Key staff information

This should include a staff loading chart for all key staff, by task, showing their allocation of effort throughout the project. Resumes or curricula vitae of Key Project Personnel must not exceed 4 pages each.

d. Privacy certificate

This Privacy Certificate is a funding recipient's certification of compliance with federal regulations requiring confidentiality of information identifiable to a private person that is collected, analyzed, or otherwise used in connection with an OJP-funded research or statistical activity. The funding recipient's Privacy Certificate also includes a description of its policies and procedures to be followed to protect identifiable data. A model certificate is located at: <http://bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/bjsmpc.pdf>.

8. Accounting System and Financial Capability Questionnaire

Any applicant (other than an individual) that is a non-governmental entity and that has not received any award from OJP within the past 3 years must download, complete, and submit this [form](#).

Selection Criteria

1. Statement of the Problem (15%)

The application should demonstrate that the applicant understands the goals and objectives of the project, including the value of the work to the criminal justice field. The applicant should clearly demonstrate an understanding of the problems faced in performing the tasks required to understand recode tens of thousands of unique state and federal data fields into a set of nationally standardized variables and values and the problems faced when transforming criminal history records into databases that support multi-state criminal history research. The applicant should propose methods for overcoming challenges in an efficient and timely manner.

2. Project Design and Implementation (40%)

The application should describe how the applicant will completely address all tasks outlined in the Scope of Work and scheduled timeline. The applicant should describe the methods it will use to 1) assess the content and attributes of the criminal history data and document differences in the composition of the information over time and across federal and state jurisdictions, and 2) conduct data quality assurances on the parsed relational databases and crosswalk libraries within the CCHRRD software. The applicant should also describe its approach to converting the data fields in the parsed relational databases into BJS's standardized coding structure and producing high-quality data analysis files. The applicant should identify (and detail the time and costs allotted to procure and produce) the software tools, programs, programming language(s) that will be used, and identify the ancillary information resources that will be developed. In addition, the application should detail its proposed enhancements to BJS's existing software capabilities and outline the steps that will be taken to guarantee that the software system will be adaptable to future criminal career studies conducted by BJS.

3. Capabilities and Competencies (30%)

The application should describe the applicant's ability to successfully complete the prescribed tasks. This may be done by describing the benefits of the proposed design/work plan, past work, or by the relevant skills and experience of proposed project staff. This section should identify proposed key personnel and their qualifications for the significant functions in this project, along with concise descriptions of the duties each will perform under the cooperative agreement, and identification by name of all key personnel with decision-making authority (curriculum vitae or resumes of key staff should be included in an appendix to the proposal).

The applicant should—

- a. demonstrate the ability to process and analyze administrative data from a large number of federal and state criminal justice agencies across the country
- b. demonstrate knowledge of applied survey research and social science research methods, with an emphasis on information technology and the processing, coding, cleaning, and verification of administrative data
- c. demonstrate the ability to provide a computing environment that provides data security and includes the hardware and software needed for processing large data files
- d. demonstrate knowledge of standard science data processing software and the ability to produce data files for analysis and report production in formats readable by a variety of statistical software packages, such as SAS and SPSS
- e. demonstrate the ability to provide up-to-date tracking of the project activities and regular reporting of progress
- f. demonstrate the ability to identify and communicate potential problems needing to be addressed and problem-solving techniques.

4. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures (5%)

The applicant should indicate an understanding of the Performance Measures required for this grant and confirm that the necessary measures will be provided.

5. Budget: complete, reasonable and allowable; cost-effective; and necessary for project activities (10%)

The budget should clearly identify how and on what tasks the funds will be expended. Budget narratives should demonstrate cost effectiveness in relation to potential alternatives and the goals of the project.¹

The budget should clearly document the costs of preparing the standardization software (excluding the enhancement of the crosswalk files) and extraction software to the point that they are prepared to process the first parsed relational database provide by BJS. The application should include a time or task plan that identifies dates for all key milestones and a staff load chart (by task) showing the role and number of hours committed for proposed staff. Key project staff should dedicate a substantial portion of their time to the completion of this project.

The applicant should—

- a. demonstrate the reasonableness of the proposed budget, including the fiscal, management, staff, and organizational capacity to provide sound management for this project, and the degree to which the budget demonstrates that services and products provided by the grantee are of high quality and reasonable cost
- b. demonstrate fiscal management on past projects of a similar scale
- c. indicate methods of conserving costs while maximizing the use of existing resources.

Review Process

OJP is committed to ensuring a fair and open process for awarding grants. BJS 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. BJS may use internal peer reviewers, external peer reviewers, or a combination, to review the applications. 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. A peer review panel will evaluate, score, and rate applications that meet basic minimum requirements. Peer reviewers' ratings and any resulting recommendations are advisory only. In addition to peer review ratings, considerations for award recommendations and decisions may include, but are not limited to, underserved populations, geographic diversity, strategic priorities, past performance, and available funding.

¹ Generally speaking, a reasonable cost, in its nature or amount, does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the costs.

All final award decisions will be made by the Director of BJS, who may consider factors including, but not limited to, underserved populations, geographic diversity, strategic priorities, past performance, and available funding.

Special Conditions Applied to Awards Under this Solicitation

The award of federal funds under this BJS solicitation will be through a Cooperative Agreement. In accordance with the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977 (31 U.S.C. § 6305), if the purpose of the funded activity is to support a public purpose rather than for direct benefit or use by the federal government, a grant or a cooperative agreement can be used to administer the funds. A cooperative agreement is distinguished from a grant by the level of federal participation or involvement in carrying out project activities. Specifically, Title 31, section 6305 of the US Code states, states “An executive agency shall use a cooperative agreement as the legal instrument reflecting a relationship between the United States Government and . . . other recipient when . . . substantial involvement is expected between the executive agency and the . . . recipient when carrying out the activity contemplated in the agreement.”

For the purpose of this solicitation, “substantial involvement” by BJS means that BJS will provide substantial guidance, input, and approval of the approach through which deliverables are accomplished. It also means that throughout the performance period, BJS will specify project deliverables that the award recipient agrees to by accepting the award. The award document will incorporate several special conditions which operationalize the specific parameters of this cooperative relationship. The goals of the substantial involvement of BJS are 1) to ensure that final deliverables are of acceptable quality as to justify the use of federal funds, 2) to accurately represent the project’s findings, and 3) to ensure that all federal regulations governing the collection and dissemination of statistical information are met.

All tasks carried out through the use of project funds will be assessed by BJS as needed to ensure that they meet federal regulations concerning confidentiality, personal identifying information, human research subjects, and the release of proprietary information, and to ensure that they meet general data quality standards for substance and presentation. As part of the assessment, BJS will continuously monitor the project to ensure that all activities performed under project tasks contribute to developing previously agreed upon deliverables within the award’s budget. BJS reserves the right to stop funding the project and to restrict the release of the information or findings should regulations or standards not be met. However, BJS will not impede the completion of deliverables within the project period unless project tasks or deliverables fail to meet general data quality standards or federal regulations as previously described.

All methodological, statistical, procedural, and technological work conducted by the award recipient using award funds will remain the property of BJS until BJS determines that the information can be made publicly available. Therefore, BJS must approve any release of this proprietary information by the award recipient. BJS retains the right to the first release of all work funded by the project. This includes specific knowledge related to the project which was developed through the course of generating the deliverables that the award recipient was funded to produce.

Any additional work using project funds, including attendance or presentations at conferences and the publication of journal articles or other materials, that constitutes a change in the scope of the project requires BJS approval in the same way that any other changes to the performance

period, key project staff, or budget would require prior approval and a Grant Adjustment Notification. Because the information and materials generated through the project constitute proprietary information, any release of this information using outside funding sources without sufficient justification and specific approval by BJS would jeopardize the relationship between BJS and the award recipient and potentially result in an inability to work together to accomplish remaining project goals. BJS is generally supportive of public dissemination efforts to the extent that BJS has prior knowledge and approval of the release of information by the award recipient and is able to ensure that this release contributes to the success of the project or enhances public knowledge regarding the topic without violating confidentiality restrictions or other federal regulations.

Among others, the following special conditions will be attached to an award under this solicitation:

1. Exclusive rights to data. BJS retains all rights to exclusive use of the data until BJS releases the public use dataset, which will be available to the public via the internet and at the National Criminal Justice Data Archives at the University of Michigan. The recipient shall not release or disclose any data collected through this cooperative agreement without prior written approval of BJS or until the dataset has been released to the public. This includes, but is not limited to, presentations at professional conferences and meetings, press releases, or grant applications. Unauthorized release of the data by the recipient or its associates may result in the immediate commencement of termination or suspension proceedings in accordance with 28 CFR Part 18.
2. Exclusive rights to methodological information. Within certain limitations, BJS may grant the recipient exclusive use of any methodological findings derived from the project funded through this cooperative agreement. The recipient must have prior written approval by BJS before public disclosing methodological information or experiential findings derived from the project prior to the public release of the dataset. Any such disclosures, however, must be public in nature and contribute meaningfully to the development or advancement of social science research. Subject to the prior written approval of BJS, allowable public disclosure may include, but are not limited to, presentations at professional conferences and meetings, articles appearing in widely distributed publications, internet postings, or similar outlets which constitute a broad public release of the methodological information. Unauthorized release of the methodological information by the recipient or its associates may result in the immediate commencement of termination or suspension proceedings in accordance with 28 CFR Part 18.
3. Prior approval of products and publications. All materials and reports drafted or produced using funds under this award will be provided to BJS for its review and approval prior to initial publication.

Additional Requirements

Applicants selected for awards must agree to comply with additional legal requirements upon acceptance of an award. OJP encourages applicants to review the information pertaining to these additional requirements prior to submitting an application. Additional information for each requirement can be found at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/other_requirements.htm.

- Civil Rights Compliance
- Civil Rights Compliance Specific to State Administering Agencies
- Faith-Based and Other Community Organizations
- Confidentiality
- Research and the Protection of Human Subjects
- Anti-Lobbying Act
- Financial and Government Audit Requirements
- Reporting of Potential Fraud, Waste, and Abuse, and Similar Misconduct
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- DOJ Information Technology Standards (if applicable)
- Single Point of Contact Review
- Non-Supplanting of State or Local Funds
- Criminal Penalty for False Statements
- Compliance with [Office of Justice Programs Financial Guide](#)
- Suspension or Termination of Funding
- Non-profit Organizations
- For-profit Organizations
- Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)
- Rights in Intellectual Property
- Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (FFATA)
- Awards in Excess of \$5,000,000 – Federal Taxes Certification Requirement
- Active SAM Registration
- Policy and Guidance for Approval, Planning, and Reporting of Conferences (including Meetings and Trainings)
- OJP Training Guiding Principles for Grantees and Subgrantees

How to Apply

Applicants must register in, and submit applications through Grants.gov, a “one-stop storefront” to find federal funding opportunities and apply for funding. Find complete instructions on how to register and submit an application at www.Grants.gov. Applicants that experience technical difficulties during this process should call the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at **800-518-4726** or **606-545-5035**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except federal holidays. 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 and a user password. OJP encourages applicants to **register several weeks before** the application submission deadline. In addition, OJP urges applicants to submit applications 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.

BJS strongly encourages all prospective applicants to sign up for Grants.gov email notifications regarding this solicitation. If this solicitation is cancelled or modified, individuals who sign up with Grants.gov for updates will be notified.

Note on File Names and File Types: Grants.gov only permits the use of certain specific characters in names of attachment files. Valid file names may include only the characters shown in the table below. Grants.gov is designed to reject any application that includes an attachment(s) with a file name that contains any characters not shown in the table below. Grants.gov is designed to forward successfully submitted applications to OJP’s 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:

- 1. Acquire a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number.** In general, the Office of Management and Budget requires that all applicants (other than individuals) for federal funds include a DUNS number in their applications for a new award or a supplement to an existing award. A DUNS number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and differentiating entities receiving federal funds. The identifier is used for tracking purposes and to validate address and point of contact information for federal assistance applicants, recipients, and subrecipients. The DUNS

number will be used throughout the grant life cycle. 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. A DUNS number is usually received within 1-2 business days.

- 2. Acquire registration with the System for Award Management (SAM).** SAM is the repository for standard information about federal financial assistance applicants, recipients, and subrecipients. OJP requires all applicants (other than individuals) for federal financial assistance to maintain current registrations in the SAM database. Applicants must be registered in SAM to successfully register in Grants.gov. Applicants must **update or renew their SAM registration annually** to maintain an active status.

Applications cannot be successfully submitted in Grants.gov until Grants.gov receives the SAM registration information. The information transfer from SAM to Grants.gov can take up to 48 hours. OJP recommends that the applicant register or renew registration with SAM as early as possible.

Information about SAM registration procedures can be accessed at www.sam.gov.

- 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. The applicant organization's DUNS number must be used to complete this step. For more information about the registration process, go to www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp.
- 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. 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 number for this solicitation is 16.734, titled "Special Domestic Assistance and Statistical Studies," and the funding opportunity number is BJS-2014-3933.
- 6. Complete the Disclosure of Lobbying Activities.** All applicants must complete this information. Applicants that expend any funds for lobbying activities must provide the detailed information requested on the form *Disclosure of Lobbying Activities* (SF-LLL). Applicants that do not expend any funds for lobbying activities should enter "N/A" in the required highlighted fields.
- 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 an e-mail validation message from Grants.gov. The message will state whether the application has been received and validated, or 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 well ahead of the deadline provides time to correct the problem(s) that caused the rejection. **Important:** OJP urges applicants to submit applications **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. Click [here](#) for further details on DUNS, SAM, and Grants.gov registration steps and timeframes.

Note: Duplicate Applications

If an applicant submits multiple versions of an application, BJS will review only the most recent valid version submitted.

Experiencing Unforeseen Grants.gov Technical Issues

Applicants that experience unforeseen Grants.gov technical issues beyond their control that prevent them from submitting their application by the deadline must e-mail the BJS contact identified in the Contact Information section on page 2 **within 24 hours after the application deadline** and request approval to submit their application. The e-mail must describe the technical difficulties, and 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: BJS does not automatically approve requests.** After the program office reviews the submission, and contacts the Grants.gov or SAM Help Desks to validate 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 applicant failed to follow all required procedures, which resulted in an untimely application submission, OJP will deny the applicant's request to submit their application.

The following conditions are generally insufficient to justify late submissions:

- failure to register in SAM or Grants.gov in sufficient time
- failure to follow Grants.gov instructions on how to register and apply as posted on its Web site
- failure to follow each instruction in the OJP solicitation
- technical issues with the applicant's computer or information technology environment, including firewalls.

Notifications regarding known technical problems with Grants.gov, if any, are posted at the top of the OJP funding Web page at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/solicitations.htm.

Provide Feedback to OJP

To assist OJP in improving its application and award processes, we encourage applicants to provide feedback on this solicitation, the application submission process, and/or the application review/peer review process. Provide feedback to OJPSolicitationFeedback@usdoj.gov.

IMPORTANT: This e-mail is for feedback and suggestions only. Replies are **not** sent from this mailbox. If you have specific questions on any program or technical aspect of the solicitation, **you must** directly contact the appropriate number or e-mail listed on the front of this solicitation document. These contacts are provided to help ensure that you can directly reach an individual who can address your 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 ojppeerreview@imbps.com. The OJP Solicitation Feedback email account will not forward your resume. **Note:** Neither you nor anyone else from your organization can be a peer reviewer in a competition in which you or your organization have submitted an application.

Application Checklist

2015 Criminal History Record Assessment and Research Program (CHRARP)

This application checklist has been created to assist in developing an application.

What an Applicant Should Do:

Prior to Registering in Grants.gov:

- Acquire a DUNs Number (see page 28)
- Acquire or renew registration with SAM (see page 29)

To Register with Grants.gov:

- Acquire AOR and Grants.gov username/password (see page 29)
- Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Biz POC (see page 29)

To Find Funding Opportunity:

- Search for the funding opportunity on Grants.gov (see page 29)
- Download Funding Opportunity and Application Package (see page 28)
- Sign up for Grants.gov email notifications (optional) (see page 28)
- Read [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#)

General Requirements:

- Review "[Other Requirements](#)" webpage

Scope Requirement:

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

Eligibility Requirement: Eligible applicants are national, regional, state, or local public and private entities, including for-profit (commercial) and nonprofit organizations (including tribal nonprofit or for-profit organizations), faith-based and community organizations, institutions of higher education (including tribal institutions of higher education), federally recognized Indian tribal governments as determined by the Secretary of the Interior, and units of local government that support initiatives to improve the functioning of the criminal justice system. For-profit organizations must agree to forgo any profit or management fee.

What an Application Should Include:

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) (see page 18)
- Program Narrative (see page 18)
 - Double-spaced
 - 12-point standard font, Arial
 - 1" standard margins
 - Spacing of no less than 1.5 lines
 - Narrative is 30 pages or fewer
- Budget Detail Worksheet (see page 18)
- Budget Narrative (see page 19)
 - Employee Compensation Waiver request and justification (if applicable) (see page 15)

- _____ Read OJP policy and guidance on “conference” approval, planning, and reporting available at www.ojp.gov/funding/confcost.htm (see page 15)
- _____ Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) (see page 29)
- _____ Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable) (see page 19)
- _____ Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable) (see page 19)
- _____ Applicant Disclosure of High Risk Status (see page 20)
- _____ Additional Attachments
 - _____ Applicant Disclosure of Pending Applications (see page 20)
 - _____ Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity (see page 21)
 - _____ Key staff information (see page 22)
 - _____ Privacy Certification (see page 22)
- _____ Accounting System and Financial Capability Questionnaire (if applicable) (see page 22)