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

FY 2023 National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP) Training and Technical Assistance Program

Assistance Listing Number #   16.554

Grants.gov Opportunity Number: O-BJS-2023-171460

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Step 1: Application Grants.gov Deadline: January 24, 2023 8:59 PM ET

Step 2: Application JustGrants Deadline: January 31, 2023 8:59 PM ET

Overview

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) seeks applications for funding to continue the delivery of training and technical assistance to support activities under the National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP), the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) Act Record Improvement Program (NARIP), and portions of the recently enacted Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (P.L. 117–159) in fiscal year (FY) 2023. Direct technical assistance is provided to states, territories, and tribal jurisdictions to ensure that record systems are developed and managed to conform to FBI standards, ensure jurisdictions are using the most appropriate technologies, and adhere to the highest standards of practice with respect to privacy and confidentiality. This program also routinely collects and evaluates performance measures to assess the level of improvement of state and national records holdings and information sharing and exchanges. BJS has supported the NCHIP Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) program since 1995. This program furthers the DOJ's mission to reduce violent crime and address gun violence by improving the accuracy, utility, and interstate accessibility of criminal history and related records in support of national record systems and their use for name- and fingerprint-based criminal history background checks.

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

Solicitation Categories

This solicitation does not include Solicitation Categories.

Eligible Applicants:

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

BJS will consider applications under which two or more entities would carry out the federal award; however, only one entity may be the applicant. Any others must be proposed as subrecipients (subgrantees). For additional information on subawards, see the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide.

Contact Information

For assistance with the requirements of this solicitation, contact Devon B. Adams, Deputy Director, Policy Division, at 202-307-0765, or AskBJS@usdoj.gov include "NCHIPTTA23" in the subject line.

Submission Information

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Contents

Program Description

Overview

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

With this solicitation, BJS seeks to support activities under the National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP), the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) Act Record Improvement Program (NARIP), and the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act in fiscal year (FY) 2023.

Statutory Authority

The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (P.L. 117–159) and 34 U.S.C. § 10132(c)(19).

Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables

Goals

The recipient of funds will deliver technical assistance and training to state, local, and tribal justice agencies, including courts, as needed in the development, management, improvement, acquisition, and integration of their automated criminal history and related information systems.

Objectives

An applicant should address all the objectives that are relevant to their proposed program/project in the Goals, Objectives, Deliverables and Timeline web-based form.

The recipient of funds must be able to work effectively with individual justice agencies (such as a state record repository implementing a new computerized criminal history system and state adult and juvenile courts developing electronic systems to share relevant court records with) and with multidisciplinary groups of justice agencies to assist them in developing and implementing integrated information systems at state, local, and regional/tribal levels.

The recipient of funds must have significant demonstrable expertise in the creation, maintenance, and transmission of criminal history record information to and between repositories at the federal, state, and local levels of government. Specifically, the recipient of funds should have demonstrated knowledge and experience in the following areas:

- state and federal criminal history record repositories, including record expungement and sealing practices
- the NICS and criminal history background check processes
- the Interstate Identification Index (III)
- court systems, structure, and records relevant to NICS checks, including criminal, civil, and juvenile court systems.
- integration planning and requirements
- the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM), Justice Reference Architecture (JRA), and Web Services
- privacy and information quality policy development and implementation.

State and Federal Criminal History Record Repositories

The NCHIP aims to improve the quality and completeness of criminal history record information to support effective criminal history background checks at the state and federal levels. A crucial aspect of BJS's national strategy has been to help identify and work toward solving information management problems of state, local, and tribal justice agencies confronted with the need to exchange information with other state, local, or tribal agencies; agencies in other states; or with the federal government. One of the most critical ways justice agencies exchange information is through criminal history record background checks. The recipient of funds must have significant experience working with the federal government and states on legal, policy, and operational aspects of criminal history background checks. The recipient must also have a demonstrable track record of providing effective assistance, guidance, and expertise on various criminal history background check initiatives, including automated record expungement and sealing policies and practices.

NICS and Criminal History Background Checks

The NICS is a computerized system that queries several national systems and databases simultaneously in order to process a name-based background check. These systems include the (1) Interstate Identification Index (III), which provides access to more than 100 million criminal history records; (2) NCIC, which includes files of protection orders, convicted sex offenders, and wanted persons; (3) NICS Indices, which includes information relevant to firearm background checks not found in the III or NCIC; and (4) in cases where the prospective transferee is a non-U.S. citizen, databases of the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The NICS is designed to respond to a Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL) instantly with a determination of whether a prospective buyer is prohibited from receiving or possessing a firearm under federal or state law.

FBI personnel are responsible for processing NICS checks generated by most states, but states can elect to serve as a point of contact (POC) for purchases occurring in their states. As a POC, a state-designated law enforcement agency processes NICS checks for the FFLs in that state. Currently, 13 states serve as POCs for all firearms transactions within those states. An additional seven states serve as partial POCs for background checks for either handgun sales or handgun permits within those states, with the FBI conducting checks on long gun transfers. The recipient of funds must have significant expertise on all operational aspects of the NICS and be able to provide assistances to state, local, and tribal agencies regarding the types of records that qualify for entry into the NICS and minimum data entry requirements. This expertise is particularly valuable in light of the recent passage of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (P.L. 117–159) and the expansion to include access to relevant juvenile records (as defined in 18 U.S.C. 922 (g) or (n)) for persons under the age of 21, and the revised definition of misdemeanor conviction for domestic violence (P.L. 117–159 Section 12005).

Interstate Identification Index (III)

The III is a fingerprint-supported "index-pointer" system for the interstate and federal/state exchange of criminal history record information. Through the III system, the FBI provides an index listing the names of individuals on whom it maintains criminal history record information. An agency seeking information on a specific individual will submit his or her name to the FBI. The Bureau will match the name against the index and then "point" the information request to the database (either state or federal) where the requested information is maintained. The index contains information on persons arrested for fingerprintable felonies and misdemeanors under state or federal law. It includes identification information (e.g., name, birth date, race, sex), and FBI and state identification numbers from each state that has information about an individual. In many ways, the III provides key technological infrastructure that supports national criminal history background checks. The recipient of funds must have extensive expertise on all operational aspects of the III, including all policies and regulations that govern its use, particularly for noncriminal justice purposes like background checks on persons seeking positions of responsibility involving national security, employment with vulnerable populations, money handling, and other activities.

Court systems, structure, and records

Each state's constitution and laws establish its state courts, which hear all cases not specifically designated for federal courts. States also usually have courts that handle specific legal matters, e.g., probate court (wills and estates); juvenile court; family court; etc. State court systems generally reflects the structure of the federal court system in that they are typically composed of three main levels: trial courts, state appellate courts, and a state Supreme Court. However, the organization of each state's court system varies from state to state. Many states have unified court systems where local courts in a state are centrally operated, while others are non-unified and operated and funded at the local level without a central court system connecting them. The recipient of funds must have significant knowledge and experience in working with courts in all forms of operation and understanding of how to tailor technical assistance and training to the particular court system, including juvenile justice courts.

Integration Planning and Requirements

Criminal history record information improvements directly relate to the effectiveness of state and local information-sharing practices, which frequently depend on multiple independent partners, each with its own mission and capabilities. The partners' consensus around well understood, clearly documented requirements provide a stable foundation for design, implementation, and deployment of information-sharing solutions. Establishing this consensus is a key step in the planning of any information-sharing initiative. The recipient of funds must be experienced in assessing information exchange requirements and planning, developing, and implementing integrated information-sharing projects.

National Information Exchange Model (NIEM), Justice Reference Architecture (JRA), and Web Services

The NCHIP supports states in adopting the NIEM and implementing criminal history record improvement initiatives. The NIEM provides a vocabulary that practitioners use to represent the meaning and structure of the information they share. This vocabulary represents best practices and common understanding across the country, which allows the NIEM to ensure interoperability across jurisdictions, while accelerating the definition of information requirements within a jurisdiction. The recipient of funds must have significant experience working with and promoting the use of the NIEM (and its predecessor, the Global Justice XML Data Model), and they must be well placed to offer practitioners advice on its proper and efficient use.

Using the NIEM involves building Information Exchange Package Documentation (IEPD) for specific exchanges (a process that involves several complex steps and tools). The recipient of funds must have significant experience in developing this process and in assisting jurisdictions in navigating it. The recipient of funds must also be experienced in the utilization of pre-built IEPDs that are already available from the community and specialized NIEM tools, such as the Law Enforcement Exchange Specification, and have demonstrable experience assisting jurisdictions in applying these off-the-shelf assets where appropriate. The recipient of funds should also have significant experience in utilizing service-oriented architecture for justice information-sharing projects, especially the Global JRA specifications and guidelines.

As justice and public safety practitioners use the NIEM to represent the semantics of their information exchanges, they also must address how they will transport the information between systems to ensure interoperability and conformity with open standards. The Web Services Stack of industry standards provides a flexible, comprehensive, and standards-based approach to messaging. The recipient of funds must have experience in delivering technical assistance for web services implementations, particularly any related to justice information-sharing initiatives.

Privacy and Information Quality Policy Development and Implementation

A critical component of NCHIP-supported information-sharing systems and strategies is to ensure such efforts include some examination of the policies that address criminal history record information quality and protect the privacy of the information maintained within criminal record systems. The primary objective of a privacy policy is to demonstrate how an agency intends to abide by existing laws and public expectations for handling personally identifiable information (PII). Effective privacy policies should address how a justice entity intends to deal with gaps or vulnerabilities in existing laws that govern PII management. To protect privacy, agencies should adopt sound operational policies and practices that promote information quality. BJS's NCHIP and NARIP aim to implement guidance and procedures that ensure the quality of the nation's criminal history records. The recipient of funds must have experience in assisting justice entities in developing and implementing such policies

Deliverables

Technical assistance and training provided under this program includes—

- direct on-site visits
- telephone and web services
- regional conferences and workshops
- data collection and publication of criminal history-related surveys and materials.

Direct on-site visits. The successful applicant will provide technical assistance to states, territories, and tribes as needed to help respond to increasing demands at the federal and state level for access to complete, accurate, and timely criminal history record information. Assistance includes efforts to meet the NCHIP goals, comply with record and data provisions as specified in the Fix NICS Act, and participate in NCIC and Next Generation Identification initiatives. The successful applicant will provide technical assistance as needed to assist the National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact Council on III-related issues and to support efforts to increase the number of states participating in the National Fingerprint File.

Telephone and web service. The successful applicant will have the capacity and resources to provide in-house technical assistance via phone and web in response to requests for information about issues related to the collection, maintenance, use, dissemination, quality, and protection of criminal history and related record information.

Regional conferences and workshop. The successful applicant will develop, organize, and implement at least two regional workshops focused on one or more issues of importance to criminal record repositories and other relevant criminal justice agencies that affect the quality and completeness of the nation's criminal history record

information. Workshop topics will derive from an organized effort to solicit input from repository officials and other key stakeholders. Possible issues include—

- development and successful implementation of the provisions outlined in the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act and the Fix NICS Act of 2018
- data quality auditing and analysis practices to support repository operations and effective planning for the use of federal record improvement grant programs
- effective outreach and training programs to maintain the accuracy and completeness of criminal history records
- recommended practices for reporting/recording important criminal history events, such as—
  - relevant juvenile records (under 18 U.S.C. 922 (g) or (n)), as permitted under state law
  - arrests on warrants
  - violations of community supervision, probation, parole, etc.
  - cite and release, notifications to appear in court, etc.
- revisiting the utility of the criminal history record and evaluating if the needs of users/consumers are effectively met.

Such work may result in one or more reports to BJS.

Data collection and publication of criminal history-related surveys and materials. The successful applicant will work in collaboration with BJS to collect complete, comprehensive, and relevant data on the number and status of state-maintained criminal history records and on the increasing number of operations and services provided by state repositories. Such collaboration may result in one or more publications or other products to benefit repositories or other stakeholders. Since 1989, a biennial survey of state record repositories has been conducted as part of the NCHIP TTA. In collaboration with BJS, the FBI, and state agencies, the successful applicant will continue efforts to analyze progress and improvements of criminal history record data and information systems maintained by state record repositories. The most recent biennial report of state criminal history information systems is available here: https://bjs.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh236/files/media/document/255651.pdf. Data from this survey help BJS and the FBI gauge the efficacy of initiatives designed to improve criminal history records for criminal justice and noncriminal justice purposes.

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

Evidence-Based Programs or Practices

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

Information Regarding Potential Evaluation of Programs and Activities

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

Federal Award Information

Solicitation Categories

This solicitation does not include Solicitation Categories.

Awards, Amounts and Durations

Anticipated Number of Awards	**Anticipated Maximum Dollar Amount of Awards**
1	$1,500,000.00

Period of Performance Start Date	**Period of Performance Duration (Months)**
4/1/23	18

Anticipated Total Amount to be Awarded Under Solicitation
$1,500,000.00

Additional Information
The project period can start as early as April 1, 2023
to as late as October 1, 2023.

Continuation Funding Intent

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

Availability of Funds

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

Type of Award

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

Financial Management and System Controls

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

Budget Information

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

Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

This solicitation does not require a match.

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

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

Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation: Waiver

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

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

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

Costs Associated with Language Assistance (if applicable)

See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for information on Costs Associated with Language Assistance.

Eligibility Information

For eligibility information, see the solicitation cover page.

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

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

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

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

Application and Submission Information

Content of Application Submission

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Standard Applicant Information (JustGrants 424 and General Agency Information)

The "Standard Applicant Information" section of the JustGrants application is pre-populated with the SF-424 data submitted in Grants.gov. The applicant will need to review the Standard Applicant Information in JustGrants and

make edits as needed. Within this section, the applicant will need to add ZIP codes for areas affected by the project; confirm their Authorized Organization Representative; and verify and confirm the organization's unique entity identifier, legal name, and address.

Proposal Abstract

A Proposal Abstract (no more than 400 words) summarizing the proposed project — including its purpose, primary activities, expected outcomes, the service area, intended beneficiaries, and subrecipients (if known) — must be completed in the JustGrants web-based form. This abstract should be in paragraph form without bullets or tables, written in the third person, and exclude personally identifiable information. Abstracts will be made publicly available on the OJP and USASpending.gov websites if the project is awarded. See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for an example of a proposal abstract.

Proposal Narrative

The Proposal Narrative should be submitted as an attachment in JustGrants. The attached document should be double-spaced, using a standard 12-point font; have no less than 1-inch margins; and should not exceed **30 numbered pages**. If the Proposal Narrative fails to comply with these length restrictions, BJS may consider such noncompliance in peer review and in the final award decision. Relevant tables, charts, and graphs can be created in font smaller than 12-point, as needed, and these items will not count toward the page limit. Resumes and backgrounds of key personnel will not count toward the page limit.

The Proposal Narrative must include the following sections:

a. Description of the Issue

    Clearly describe why proposed activities are necessary or address a need. Include supporting information. Demonstrate that the applicant understands the nature and dimension of the problem.

b. Project Design and Implementation

    Describe how the proposed activities will address the areas discussed in the "Program Description – Specific Information" Section. List the activities and describe how they relate to the stated objectives. Activities are the specific actions to be undertaken to fulfill the program's objectives and reach the program's goal(s). Provide a detailed description of the method(s) to be used to carry out each activity. Provide a timetable indicating roughly when the activities or program milestones are to be accomplished.

    Describe successful methods of training and technical assistance (TTA) delivery and the importance of expert strategies to engage the field more broadly.

    Provide a list of any subcontractors or subgrantees who will provide TTA.

c. Capabilities and Competencies

    Describe the capabilities and competencies required to accomplish the goals and objectives of the project as outlined in the "Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables" section.

    Fully describe the applicant's experience and capabilities to implement the program being proposed and the competencies of the staff assigned to the program. Resumes for key personnel (including subject matter experts) must be included in the application package.

    Provide information that illustrates the ability to manage complex technical national-in-scope activities.

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

    Describe the process for measuring project performance. Identify who will collect the data, who is responsible for performance measurements, and how the information will be used to guide and evaluate the project's impact. Describe the process to accurately report data. Performance measures for this solicitation are listed under the performance measurement section of this solicitation.

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

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

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

Note on Project Evaluations

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

Goal, Objective and Deliverables

The applicant will submit the project's goals, objectives, deliverables and timeline in the JustGrants web-based form. The projected fiscal year and quarter the objectives and deliverables will be completed is also entered into the form. Please refer to the Application Submission Job Aid for step-by-step directions.

Goals

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

Program Objectives

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

Deliverables

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

Budget and Associated Documentation

Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative (Web-based Form)

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

In addition to the required web-based form please attach a separate budget detail and narrative to the application.

Pre-agreement Costs

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

Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)

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

Consultant Rate

See the DOJ Grants Financial Guide for information on the consultant rates which require prior approval from OJP.

Employee Compensation Waiver

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

Financial Management Questionnaire (including applicant disclosure of high-risk status)

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

Disclosure of Process Related to Executive Compensation

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

Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and Other Supportive Documents

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

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

Additional Application Components

The applicant will attach the additional requested documentation in JustGrants.

Curriculum Vitae or Resumes

Provide resumes of key personnel.

Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity Statement

If an application proposes research (including research and development) and/or evaluation, the applicant must demonstrate research/evaluation independence and integrity, including appropriate safeguards, before it may receive award funds. The applicant will upload documentation of its research and evaluation independence and integrity as an attachment in JustGrants. For additional information, see the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide.

Disclosure and Assurances

The applicant will address the following disclosures and assurances.

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

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

DOJ Certified Standard Assurances

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

Applicant Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items

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

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

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

Applicant Disclosure and Justification - DOJ High Risk Grantees

If applicable, submit the DOJ High Risk Disclosure and Justification as an attachment in JustGrants. A DOJ High Risk Grantee is an award recipient that has received a DOJ High Risk designation based on a documented history of unsatisfactory performance; financial instability; management system or other internal control deficiencies; noncompliance with award terms and conditions on prior awards or is otherwise not responsible. See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for additional information.

How to Apply

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

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

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

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

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

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

For additional information, see the "How to Apply" section in the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide and the DOJ Application Submission Checklist.

Submission Dates and Time

The **SF-424 and the SF-LLL** must be submitted in Grants.gov by **8:59 PM Eastern Time, January 24, 2023.**

The **full application** must be submitted in JustGrants by **8:59 PM Eastern Time, January 31, 2023.**

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

Experiencing Unforeseen Technical Issues Preventing Submission of an Application

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

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

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

- SAM.gov - contact the SAM Help Desk (Federal Service Desk), Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET at 866-606-8220.
- Grants.gov - contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays, at 800-518-4726, 606-545-5035, or support@grants.gov.
- JustGrants - contact the JustGrants Service Desk at JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov or 833-872-5175, Monday – Friday from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. ET and Saturday, Sunday, and Federal holidays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET.

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

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

Waiver requests sent to the OJP Response Center must -

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

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

For more details on the waiver process, OJP encourages applicants to review the "Experiencing Unforeseen Technical Issues" section in the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide.

Application Review Information

Review Criteria

Merit Review Criteria

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

Description of the Issue (20%) - evaluate the applicant's understanding of the program/issue to be addressed.

- Content of the proposal and how it addresses the tasks in the statement of work and deliverables and scheduled timeline. Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of state and federal efforts toward improvement of criminal history and related records.

Project Design and Implementation (30%) - evaluate the adequacy of the proposal, including the goals, objectives, timelines, milestones, and deliverables.

- Technical feasibility of the proposed program design and reasonableness of the proposal given the scope of work and tasks to be completed, and the required deliverables, and other products proposed.

Capabilities and Competencies (35%) - evaluate the applicant's administrative and technical capacity to successfully accomplish the goals and objectives.

- Demonstrated ability and breadth of experience of the organization and its staff in providing technical assistance to improve the quality, completeness, timeliness, accuracy, and accessibility of criminal history and related records to state, territorial, and tribal criminal justice agencies.
- Demonstrated past successful collaboration with key federal, state, and local agencies, such as the FBI Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS); Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives; Bureau of Justice Assistance; state record repositories, state and local courts, and related agencies.
- Demonstrated knowledge of and experience in survey research, including survey development; data collection, entry, and verification; and analysis and publication of results.

Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures (5%) - evaluate the applicant's understanding of the performance data reporting requirements and the plan for collecting the required data.

- Identify how the approach and methods in this project will achieve the performance goals described in the solicitation.

Budget (10%) - evaluate for completeness, cost effectiveness, and allowability (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities).

- Demonstrated fiscal, management, staff, and organizational capacity to provide sound management for this project.
- Applicant should include detailed staff resources and other costs by project tasks.

Other Review Criteria/Factors

Other important considerations for BJS include geographic diversity, available funding, past performance, and the extent to which the Budget Web-Based form accurately explains project costs that are reasonable, necessary, and otherwise allowable under federal law and applicable federal cost principles.

Review Process

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

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

- The application must be submitted by an eligible type of applicant.
- The application must request funding within programmatic funding constraints (if applicable).
- The application must be responsive to the scope of the solicitation.
- The application must include all items necessary to meet the basic minimum requirements.

Pursuant to the Part 200 Uniform Requirements, before award decisions are made, OJP also reviews information related to the degree of risk posed by the applicant entity. Among other things to help assess whether an applicant with one or more prior federal awards has a satisfactory record of performance, integrity, and business ethics, OJP checks whether the applicant entity is listed in SAM as excluded from receiving a federal award.

In addition, if OJP anticipates that an award will exceed $250,000 in federal funds, OJP also must review and consider any information about the applicant entity that appears in the non-public segment of the integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently, the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System, FAPIIS).

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

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

Federal Award Administration Information

Federal Award Notices

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

Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements

If selected for funding, in addition to implementing the funded project consistent with the OJP-approved application, the recipient must comply with all award conditions and all applicable requirements of federal statutes and regulations, including the applicable requirements referred to in the assurances and certifications executed in connection with award acceptance. For additional information on these legal requirements, see the "Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements" section in the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide.

Information Technology (IT) Security Clauses

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

General Information about Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements

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

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

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

Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

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

Other Information

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

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

Provide Feedback to OJP

See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for information on how to provide feedback to OJP.

Performance Measures

Objective	Performance Measure(s)	Data Recipient Provides
Deliver timely, high-impact TTA to grant recipients that results in sustained and improved criminal history recordkeeping	Percent of requests that are responded to within seven days once submitted	During the reporting period. the: a) Number of TTA requests submitted) Number of TTA requests responded to within seven days 1. Date of submitted TTA requests 2. Date of initial response to TTA requests
	Percentage of surveys or evaluations reflecting a rating of satisfactory or better	a. Number of surveys b. Number of surveys reflecting a rating of satisfactory or better
	Percentage of TTA recipients reporting sustained/improved criminal history recordkeeping	a. Number of TTA recipients a. Number of TTA recipients reporting sustained/improved criminal history recordkeeping
Improve criminal history record systems (adult and juvenile) in the states and territories to support background checks for the purposes of identifying ineligible firearm purchases	Percentage of on-site technical assistance requests completed	During the reporting period: a. Number of on-site technical assistance requests received b. Number of on-site technical assistance requests completed a. Number of in-house technical assistance requests received b. Number of in-house technical assistance requests completed
	Percentage of in-house technical assistance requests completed	Number of program/conference materials developed
	Number of program/conference materials developed Number of participants attending conferences/workshops	a. Number of states represented at conferences/workshops. b. Number of people attending conferences/workshops

Objective	Performance Measure(s)	Data Recipient Provides
Conduct a biennial survey of state/territory criminal history record repositories to analyze progress and improvements of criminal history record data and information systems maintained by state record repositories.	Number of agencies participating in the survey	Number of agencies participating in the survey
	Number of state-maintained criminal history records repositories	Number of state-maintained criminal history records
	Percent increase in the number of operations and/or services provided by state repositories	Number of states reporting an increase in operations and/or services provided by the state repository
	Percent of survey responses that are obtained by electronic means	Number of complete survey responses received
		Number of responses that are obtained by electronic means
		Number of new responses received in the reporting period
	Achieve a 95% response rate	
		Total number of responses to include responses from the previous reporting period
	Percent increase in the number of responses received from the previous reporting period	Achieve a 95% response rate to include a 100% response rate from the 50 states.

Application Checklist

FY 2023 National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP) Training and Technical Assistance Program

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

Pre-Application

Before Registering in Grants.gov:

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

Register in Grants.gov

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

Find the Funding Opportunity

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

Review the Overview of Post-Award Legal Requirements

- Review the "Overview of Legal Requirements Generally Applicable to OJP Grants and Cooperative Agreements - FY 2022 Awards" in the OJP Funding Resource Center.

Review the Scope Requirement

- The federal amount requested is within the allowable limit(s) of $1,500,000.

Review Eligibility Requirement:

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

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Application Step 1

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

- In Section 8F of the SF-424, include the name and contact information of the individual **who will complete the application in JustGrants and the SF-LLL in Grants.gov**

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

- a submission receipt
- a validation receipt

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

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

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

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

- Proceed to Application Step 2 and complete application in JustGrants

Application Step 2

Submit the following information in JustGrants:

Application Components

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

Budget and Associated Documentation

- **Budget Web-Based form***
- Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable) (see OJP Grant Application Resource Guide)
- Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (see OJP Grant Application Resource Guide)
- Disclosure of Process related to Executive Compensation (see OJP Grant Application Resource Guide)

Additional Application Components

- Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity (see OJP Grant Application Resource Guide
- Request and Justification for Employee Compensation; Waiver (if applicable) (see OJP Grant Application Resource Guide)
- Timeline
- Curriculum Vitae or Resumes
- Memorandum of understanding (if applicable)

Disclosures and Assurances

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

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

Review, Certify and Submit Application in JustGrants

- Any validation errors will immediately display on screen after submission.

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

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

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

Standard Solicitation Resources

OJP Grant Application Resource Guide provides guidance to assist OJP grant applicants in preparing and submitting applications for OJP funding.

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

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

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

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