

FY 2023 Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Investigations and Prosecutions Program Solicitation Webinar (April 11, 2023)—Event Transcription

Sunny Schnitzer:

All right. Good afternoon and welcome, everyone. I want to thank you all so much for joining us for today's solicitation webinar. My name is Sunny Schnitzer. I'm a policy advisor with the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) at the U.S. Department of Justice. Today, we will be talking about BJA's Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Investigation and Prosecutions Program. Just very quickly, today, we'll be talking a little bit about the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) and BJA, do a quick intro to those organizations for those of you who are new to federal grants or to grants from OJP. I'll talk a little bit about the program. The best part of today is that you'll get to hear from some folks from the state of New Jersey who already have one of these grants, and they'll be telling you about some of the work they're doing with this program.

And then, we'll be walking through some of the nitty-gritty of how to write a successful application for this program and what to make sure is included. Then, finally, we'll spend a little time answering some of your questions. So without further ado, let's jump on in. So one of the things I like to do is really get a sense of who is in the audience, who is here to learn about this program, so that I can tailor what we spend time on based on what you're interested in hearing. So I'm going to start off with a really quick poll question. So there are some instructions on your screen. You can either join by Web or join by text, and you're going to enter HATECRIMESTTA, and then that'll kind of get you set up. And I promise after this first time, it'll go a lot quicker.

Once you enter this information, we'll have a couple of polls throughout again, so I can kind of tailor based on what you're interested in hearing more about. But again, on the screen, you'll have some information. It's at the top of the screen now on how to answer this question. So specifically, I'm interested in knowing, has your organization been awarded a federal grant in the past? So your options are A, yes, you have extensive experience; B, yes, but maybe it's been a little while or you don't have a current grant; C, maybe you have a little bit of experience; or D, you're new to federal grants. So we'll give it a couple of seconds, maybe 15 or 20 more seconds to get some responses in. Looks like we have a few folks who have extensive experience, a few that are relatively new.

All right, so this has been very helpful. So, tell you what, I'm going to try to blow through some of these introduction slides a little more quickly. It seems like many of you have extensive experience. But just very quickly, I want to talk to you a little bit about the Office of Justice Programs and specifically the Bureau of Justice Assistance. So the Office of Justice Programs is one of the grant-making components of the U.S. Department of Justice. So together with our partners at the Office on Violence Against Women and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, or the COPS Office, what OJP does is provide guidance and funding to state, local, tribal, and community justice efforts. And that comes in a variety of ways. It can be funding, it can be research, it can be statistical analysis or support through sex offender monitoring.

And we do all those through the different component offices listed on the right-hand side of your screen. So today, we're going to talk a little bit about BJA or the Bureau of Justice Assistance, which administers this program. It's where I work, and our mission is really to provide leadership and services

in grant administration and criminal justice policy. Again, I know I mentioned this, but at the state, local, tribal, and community level to really try to ensure we have safer communities. So BJA is led by Director Karhlton Moore. Karhlton was appointed by President Biden in February of 2022. So he's been our fearless leader for a little over a year, and we're divided into four different functions. As I mentioned, I work in the Policy Office. We develop program solicitations, work with training and technical assistance providers, develop some of our policy guidance and strategy information to go out to folks in the field.

We also work hand in hand with folks in the Programs Office who really lead in terms of being the direct line of communication with our grantees, whether it's through ensuring compliance with federal requirements or making sure that you get your money on time. Those are the folks that really kind of keep the wheels on the bus going in terms of grants management. And we're also supported by an Operations Office that has communications and budget and really works on kind of measuring performance for our grantees. And then finally, as some of you may be aware, BJA also plays host to the Public Safety Officer Benefits Office. This is an office designed to provide death and education benefits to survivors of fallen law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other public safety officials. So we have five major strategic focus areas at BJA. Obviously, focus area number one is improving public safety through measures that build trust with the community.

We also want to see a reduction in recidivism and prevention of unnecessary confinement and reduction of unnecessary interactions with the criminal justice system. We want to integrate evidence and research and data into the day-to-day operations not only of BJA but, most importantly, to provide the field with the tools to do that themselves. We want to increase program effectiveness of the programs we fund with a pretty heavy emphasis on data analysis, information sharing, performance management, and sustainability. And finally, we want to provide you all, our grantees, with organizational excellence and outstanding administration. So we do this through four primary mechanisms. First—what you're here to hear about today—we fund, that can be, we have diverse funding streams primarily through grant programs and cooperative agreements. We do have some contract programs. Specifically, today, we're going to be talking about a grant program.

We develop educational materials, whether that's research materials or training. We develop materials to help equip the field, so that may be tools or resources to build capacity for specific justice-related activities. And finally, we partner, whether that's with our other components within the Department of Justice or the federal government or with our partners in the nonprofit world or other subject-matter experts. We like to partner and bring in as many experts to help as possible. So I'll talk very quickly about the program overview. So the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Program is named in honor of the lives of Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr., both of whom lost their lives because of hate and bias. This program is designed to provide support for efforts by state, local, and tribal law enforcement and prosecution agencies and their partners in conducting outreach, educating practitioners and the public, increasing victim reporting, and really developing bigger and better capacity to investigate and prosecute hate crimes. And to really develop expertise, again, on both the prevention and the investigation and the prosecution side.

So before we move on, I know we have some folks on the call. It looks like we have a mix of some law enforcement agencies, some prosecution agencies. I see one or two nonprofit agencies as well. I do want to just say very quickly—and we'll talk about eligibility later—a little bit later, you'll hear from a couple of our partners on some of the work they're doing. We have several programs within BJA that focus on hate crimes. For this particular program, our primary grantees are law enforcement and prosecution agencies, but many do partner with nonprofit and other community partners as well. So I

did want to flag, this program does allow for subawards. We do, however, also have a sister program to this called the Community-Based Approaches to Prevent and Address Hate Crimes Program. That program is specifically designed for community-based organizations and civil rights organizations to develop community-led strategies on preventing and responding to hate crimes.

So if you're on the call and you're interested in both or one of those, let us know. I see there was a question in the chat a couple of minutes ago. We did a webinar on that recently, and we'll be posting that publicly. We're happy to share that information as soon as it's online with everyone on this call as well. But it's a great opportunity to potentially kind of double your funding and really create partnerships between law enforcement and prosecutors and community-based organizations and have both have complementary funding sources. The last program in the suite that I'll mention that's kind of a sister program to this is the Emmett Till Cold Case Program. We know that while there has been a recent rise in hate crimes in the United States, unfortunately, this is not new. The Emmett Till Cold Case Program is designed to fund investigations and prosecutions of racially motivated homicides that occurred prior to 1980.

So, really looking to address the long legacy of hate and the damage that it has caused over the years. All three of these programs are available right now for applications. And one thing I will share: many of these programs, we have joint applications across the board. Really, as I mentioned, it's a great opportunity to do some holistic work. So for this particular program, the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Program, the solicitation was released a little over a month ago, and the deadline is at the end of May. So the first deadline is going to be for grants.gov. That's going to be a little more on the technical side, and the second deadline is going to be May 30. Both of those at 8:59 p.m., Eastern. One thing I will quickly flag, and I'll come back to it again at the end: If you're interested in applying for this or any other funding at OJP, I strongly recommend that you go ahead and start your grants.gov application.

Sometimes you may find that your SAM registration has expired or some other documentation that you need may take a little time, and I've seen a few folks who have run into a timeline issue there at the end trying to get their ducks in a row for the grants.gov deadline. If you have a general idea of what you want to do, I strongly recommend that you go ahead and fill out that part of the application. It's the shortest part, I promise you. But that way, you'll have all your ducks in a row in terms of registrations and active certifications to be able to submit a full application. The program goal, so really, the goal of this program is to create comprehensive strategies to prevent hate crimes. So you're going to hear a little bit today from some of our current grantees on kind of different ends of the spectrum.

So some of the work that we support is focused on, for example, prevention, whether that's awareness, sharing what hate looks like, identifying early signs, creating community capacity to address hate before it escalates to violence. Some of the programs that we fund really focus in on investigation. They want to develop those tools not only of first responders, but of investigators to really dig in and be able to provide that really critical detail to the prosecutors who are working on these programs so that we can have successful prosecutions in these cases. Again, we have many prosecutors' offices that have these awards. It's a great opportunity for them, for those organizations as well. And then we also have some that are focused on, hey, we just don't collect the data correctly. And that's the first step to knowing how to address the issue, is getting the data. So it's really a wide range of goals and it's really designed to be comprehensive to the needs of your community.

So in terms of objectives, the idea is to build strong collaboration between law enforcement and prosecution agencies and your community institutions. That can be schools, local organizations, colleges and universities, etc. It's also to establish kind of coordinated efforts to prevent, identify, investigate, and heal from hate crimes. What we want to see through this program is not one-off efforts from this organization or that organization. Our hope is to really build the infrastructure to address this at a state or regional level across the board. It's also about, as I mentioned earlier, kind of creating a comprehensive approach. So that's going to include tools, policies, procedures, really identifying the gaps in your current systems.

So it's also really important to us; there's a lot of work happening at the federal level on hate crimes. So we certainly want to encourage collaboration between the federal partners and our state and local and tribal partners as well. So really helping to connect our state and local efforts with the United Against Hate work at the U.S. Attorney's Office, for example, or with some of the expertise that the FBI has in doing trainings or in identifying information. Another resource that I like to mention often is the Community Relations Service. This is a no-cost conflict resolution organization within the Department of Justice. They're an incredible resource and can really enhance the work that state, local, and tribal organizations do to prevent and address hate crimes. And then finally, the biggest effort, I think, is to increase trust and confidence that if and when hate crimes occur, state, local, and tribal justice partners are going to be able to identify, investigate, and prosecute these incidents and to help make communities stronger and heal so that they don't happen in the future.

So in terms of deliverables, there are two different categories this year, and we'll talk a little bit more about this when we get into the nitty-gritty of the applications. But in short, all grantees of this program are going to be expected to develop an action plan that's really focused on a strategy. For applicants that are looking to do work in multiple jurisdictions, we are going to be looking for MOUs or some sort of formal agreement between the partners that everyone is on the same page. We'll also be kind of working with the training and technical assistance partners to make sure that we're sticking to that action plan—we're doing what we're saying, and if not, that we're adapting it to meet the needs of our community should those change. Again, I know I emphasized this on the last slide. Partnership—we're really looking for partnership on this.

And finally, one thing that we're really trying to emphasize with this program is a documentation of activities and a willingness to work with your peer jurisdictions. Share your lessons learned, encourage your fellow jurisdictions to take up combating hate as a priority for their jurisdictions as well, and to really lead the field with that. So next up, it is, as I mentioned, this is really where the rubber meets the road. You're going to hear from two folks now—as I mentioned, we have programs funded that do all kinds of work. But you'll hear about two important efforts that are happening in the state of New Jersey. So it's my pleasure to introduce Deputy Attorney General Kara Webster, and Sergeant First Class Robert Demler.

Kara Webster:

Hi, how's everyone doing?

Robert Demler:

Hi, everyone.

Kara Webster:

Yeah, I mean, just to kick this off, here in New Jersey, we used our Matthew Shepard James Byrd money to expand NIBRS compliance within our state. I'll go through a little bit more of the grant aspect, but I will have Sergeant First Class Robert Demler speak more to the program particulars and why we've identified this as a priority, why we thought it was important to use this funding to really expand upon the efforts that state police has already done. They previously were awarded a federal grant and were able to do tremendous work in our state in getting many police departments updated with their specific databases to become compliant with NIBRS [the National Incident-Based Reporting System]. And as was mentioned earlier, we really were stressing that to have our data collection efforts be more robust, be more accurate in order to better New Jersey's situation in terms of how we are going to attack the issue of bias crimes here in our state.

But, I mean, I wanted to turn this over to Sergeant First Class Demler, maybe talk about the work that state police has done in the past. And again, that kind of leads into what the Attorney General's Office will be doing with our funding to continue those efforts and bring more of our departments into compliance. I think they've done a tremendous job of getting so many, and correct me if I'm wrong, Sergeant First Class, but I think we have 321 out of 539 departments now . . .

Robert Demler:

That's correct.

Kara Webster:

. . . in compliance. So it's pretty huge. We have a lot of police departments in our state. So I think, again, they've done a very tremendous job of getting a lot of our police departments up and running, especially ones in our larger cities. So I will turn it over to you to speak a little bit more about, I guess, your past program and again, why we feel like we want to continue on this path of getting everybody up and compliant with NIBRS.

Robert Demler:

Thank you very much, DAG Webster. I appreciate the compliments; it's been a lot of work for us. So I've been assigned as the unit head of the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Unit, the analytical unit, which handles all the data and is responsible for bringing these agencies on to NIBRS reporting. And I've been in the unit five years, and we were awarded the NCS-X [National Crime Statistics Exchange] grant back in 2016. And that grant, we were given 28 sample agencies, including the New Jersey State Police, to bring on to transition to NIBRS from our traditional summary reporting that the FBI collects. And that grant gave us the ability to work with those 28 departments who all had different RMS [record management system] vendors. So transitioning these agencies over involved a lot of work with their RMS to upgrade their systems with specifications to be able to report NIBRS, as well as to build the state supplemental collections that we do collect in New Jersey, such as domestic violence and our bias incidents and hate crimes.

Kara Webster:

Sergeant Delmer, can I interject? I think everybody on this call knows what NIBRS is, but just in case, the acronym NIBRS means National Incident Based Reporting System. So let's give a little context again. I am sure everybody already knows what that is, but I know when I came to this project I didn't, so . . .

Robert Demler:

Sure, no problem. So National Incident Based Reporting System, that is the platform that the FBI collects their crime statistics on now. And that has been in existence for quite a long time. It's been in existence since the late '80s, if I recall right. And nationally, everybody is moving toward NIBRS. It's been a new program, obviously from New Jersey. So it's not a new program to the FBI, it's been around for a long time. But you're going from collecting very few crimes that had limitations of the data in summary, which was only collecting eight crimes that were divided between person crimes and property crimes. And NIBRS collects more of that; it collects 52 crimes, and it collects a lot more information regarding victim information and offender information. Much more detailed in terms of property, in terms of what's collected there.

Frauds, which were never collected by the FBI, other than putting handcuffs on somebody and charging them. So now with the rise in thefts, with identity theft and wire frauds and things like that, these are all things that are much more accurately depicted in NIBRS reporting. So that's where we are in New Jersey, is to take those departments, move them toward this new platform. We moved these 28 departments onto NIBRS, including ourselves, but the work that we did working with these vendor operator systems, as DAG Webster stated, to date, we have 321 departments and the NCS-X grant had ended in 2021. So in a short couple years, we were able to work with these departments, work with these vendors. We did put the word out to them from our colonel. There were several letters sent. We did send out surveys to these agencies to ask where they are in terms of a readiness about a projected cost of how much it will cost to move over to NIBRS.

And again, the good thing was that we did have a lot of buy-in. So a lot of these departments did jump in. We revised our administrative code to make sure that everything was up to date with accepting NIBRS because in New Jersey, it is part of the administrative code for every police department to contribute crime statistics to the state police and to the Attorney General's Office. So we did get a lot of buy-in. We have 539 departments that do contribute to the UCR [uniform crime reporting] program. So we're getting there. Our goal is to obviously have a 100 percent compliance, and every day we're putting more on. So I think I have between 30 and 40 departments that I've yet to certify, which I'm more than happy to talk about in terms of the process of bringing departments on to NIBRS. But I envision that we will have no problem over the years getting all of those on.

Kara Webster:

Okay, thanks. I may switch gears and just talk a little bit about how we're looking to structure our sub-grantee applications, how we are going to identify which police departments would be eligible to apply for these funds. So we reach out; we have a chief data officer, and she's in our Attorney General's Office in the Office of Justice Data. So we really leaned on her to get a rubric or, I guess, a selection criteria together to select specific law enforcement agencies to receive this upgrade. And I'll go through that list of variables, but first and foremost, just based on their own bias, hate crimes data, their current reporting capabilities, demonstrated need—and we're looking at need based on focusing on agencies

that are currently reporting zero bias crimes. If an agency is reporting zero, we think that might be indicative of them maybe not having, I guess, a data collection system or process that is capturing.

And there might be issues that we will address with training in terms of identifying when something is a bias crime, but that's kind of our need category that we're going to focus on. We may also include prior years' biased crimes data for the specific jurisdiction, the size of the community they serve. And really important, and this is what Sergeant Demler has brought up in the past, was just whether the agency's current RMS vendor is able to meet the NIBRS criteria. So that's going to be really important just to identify those agencies that have the capacity, the records management software, to even meet those NIBRS criteria. Based on those specific selection criteria, our chief data officer found that we had a list of 105 eligible agencies. So I think we're going to focus on them and then maybe further hone down that number a little bit more based on adding a few other criteria.

Because currently, I don't think we have maybe the last three involved in terms of the capacity of their current system, especially. In terms of the money amount, we kind of roughly estimated that for a small agency it might be \$10,000–15,000; medium, \$30,000; large, \$40,000. But that's something that we are also going to have to put into our application package as to—Sergeant Demler, you had a good way of phrasing it as a “readiness assessment”—and use this readiness assessment to see how much that upgrade will cost based on their current infrastructure, their size. Basically, how their current systems would be able to easily transition to NIBRS.

We definitely know that there may be issues with server migration. Do they have hardware, software, the equipment necessary, does that all have to be upgraded? And then also inclusive, it's just training of the staff on the NIBRS requirements. So I think that's kind of how we're looking at structuring this. But I'll turn it back over to Sergeant Demler, especially to talk about that readiness assessment and seeing who would be the best recipients for this funding, who would be the most primed to get this funding and then hit the ground running.

Robert Demler:

Thank you. So when we did our previous grant, when we brought these departments on—and that's really what it broke down to, was to look at what these departments were going to need in terms of an upgrade, in terms of servers and any type of upgrade in terms of the software to the RMS. Everything with NIBRS is driven through the RMS reporting, and it does fall ultimately into our UCR state repository. So everything is electronically transferred. And that's the difference of NIBRS as opposed to the old traditional way of UCR reporting where everything was really manually compiled and entered in by a UCR reporter. Now everything is really driven through the RMS, and the capability now is great with the technology because now they have Web service introduced into these systems.

So the reporter can literally validate incidents and they don't have to enter anything. It'll actually just validate and land in our state repository. And we have our state repository set up that every six hours, it will extract data from the repository and send it to the FBI. So as DAG Webster said, that's really the point of the transition is to really look at what agencies need to get onto NIBRS, that are important to have and also what they're going to need. And that's really—as far as training goes, the FBI has been excellent to the state of New Jersey. They've come out here, we've posted them a number of times to do their NIBRS overview training for departments. It's a two-day course. We also are NIBRS instructors as well, members of the Uniform Crime Reporting Unit, the state police, we've all attended the NIBRS training. I spent three days with the FBI out at their headquarters in West Virginia.

So we like to do agency training. Large group trainings are fine, but everyone's using different RMS systems. So we do like to do agency training and we're pretty well versed in most of the RMSs that are used here in New Jersey. So we can help them give them that personalized training of NIBRS and help them with their RMS, which is always a struggle than using their RMS with something new, which NIBRS obviously is reporting more. So there's a lot more going on in the RMS. So the big thing is to identify what the struggle is.

I will tell you that from the NCS-X grant, we failed to get Trenton on. Trenton was a sample agency, and they didn't apply for any funding. And we tried our best to try to get them in by the deadline of the grant; we were unable to. But we were able to get really most of the major cities in, whether it be through the grant or after. But Trenton is one of the ones that we definitely would like to see come into NIBRS reporting. So most of the large cities in New Jersey—Newark, Jersey City, Patterson, Elizabeth, Rahway, Atlantic City; there's several, the big ones—we do have those on reporting numbers now. So some of the smaller departments, there's still some of the holdouts that we're focusing on now.

Kara Webster:

I think that's pretty much the gist of what we're doing with this grant funding. I'm sure a lot of your states or jurisdictions are like ours, very much focused on data no matter what subject matter we're really speaking about. And so, we're helping to, I guess, fulfill that mandate of having better data within this state. When I first started at the DAG's office, we never had, to my knowledge, a chief data officer. So having that is really helpful, it's important. And again, I think it just shows that we are committed to getting more accurate, timely, and just useful data to help inform our specific policies.

Sunny Schnitzer:

Well, DAG Webster and Sergeant First Class Demler, I want to thank you both so much. One thing I want to flag for everyone on the call, something that I think is so exciting about what New Jersey is doing, is that they identified, again, something I talked about earlier: a gap in the system in New Jersey. And whether that's data, it may be victim services, it may be prosecution training—we want to encourage anyone who's trying to or interested in applying for this award to think creatively. There's a lot of exciting stuff happening in the state of New Jersey; DAG Webster's also working on a public awareness campaign, working within schools. So there's a lot that can be done in this space. And we wanted to highlight what New Jersey's doing because again, it's not always going to be the, pardon my phrasing, but the big sexy thing that you need to be able to move forward in terms of addressing hate. Sometimes it's getting a really good understanding of just what hate crimes look like in your jurisdiction.

And we're just so impressed with all the work happening in New Jersey. As I mentioned, we have several jurisdictions that are funding specific victim services or training efforts. We have several that are doing public awareness or that are providing the bulk of their money as a subaward to a nonprofit partner that will be doing work. So really, we encourage creativity; do an assessment of what your community needs. That may be more data, it may be more training, it may be more community conversations, may be all of the above. But those are all eligible for funding under this program.

Kara Webster:

Yeah, I'm sorry, I forgot to notate our public awareness campaign. Sorry about that.

Sunny Schnitzer:

No worries.

Kara Webster:

Because that's something that's a little bit different. We did contract with the communications firm, so that's pretty atypical for us. I think we do a lot of things in house, but because of our specific target audience, which would be teens and children, like basically elementary to high school, we are looking to focus all of the media, all of the advertising, everything on digital platforms, so gaming platforms, social media. So we definitely needed the help of a communications firm to get those ad buys in those specific platforms, which again, we really haven't used as aggressively. And again, it's for the efforts of reaching this specific target audience to hopefully kind of change and prevent behaviors and just things that may problematically fester as they get older. We're looking to, as a component of educating this specific audience, to see the red flags of radicalization websites. Give them that light-bulb moment that this might be a rabbit hole to downward spiral into more and more hate and then create, again, these really harmful viewpoints that could manifest into violent behaviors later on.

But it's definitely been a slower launch because it's very different for us. We're having a lot of layers of approval. I think it's with our attorney general now, but because we thought about throwing an influencer component that kind of got nixed, which I understand why. The vetting process for an influencer might have been a little bit crazy. But I mean, I'm definitely really excited about when we do roll this out, which I think would be summer – fall now at this point, which is great. We wanted to coincide with this school year. But I think I'm pretty excited to see how this very digital-oriented campaign will look as opposed to our past radio, traditional media. So that's kind of our other concurrent project.

Sunny Schnitzer:

Awesome. Well, thank you so much. Next up, we're going to move back to another poll. So now that you've heard a little bit about the work that's happening in the state of New Jersey, what role would you play if your jurisdiction received an award? So do you work for an eligible applicant? So that's state, local, or tribal law enforcement or prosecution agency. B, you work for an organization that hopes to partner with an eligible applicant. Or C, you are a community stakeholder, and you plan to encourage your local jurisdiction or state jurisdiction to apply for this program.

All right, great. Wonderful. Looks like we've got a good mix. Great. All right, awesome. So with that, we'll dive in a little bit on the application process and what's required and the eligibility, and then we'll dive into some of your questions. So first, and I know I mentioned this at the top of the call, for this program for the primary applicant, the eligible applicants by statute are state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies and prosecutors' offices. You may submit more than one application, but just be aware that there are some kind of statutory requirements about the amount of money that goes to each jurisdiction. So we'll talk about that in a future slide. But those are the eligible applicants. I will say we place a heavy emphasis. So each application that is submitted to BJA goes through a peer review process. So that means your peers in other eligible applicants or who have subject-matter expertise are reviewing and providing feedback on your applications.

We place a heavy emphasis on partnership. So I definitely encourage you to think creatively in terms of who your partners are. That increases your chances of success. So a new program feature: So in previous years when we have issued this program, it has been a single-agency program. This year, we have two different categories. So category one, again, it's the same agencies that are eligible to apply. But this is for either a statewide or regional approach. So as I mentioned, there is a statutory rule with the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Program that no more than \$100,000 per jurisdiction per year may be awarded. So what this category allows is kind of one primary applicant that can be, again, a state, local, or tribal law enforcement or prosecution agency. You can apply for up to \$4 million for a period of 48 months or four years.

So you can work with as many as ten or even more if you're spending less than \$100,000 per jurisdiction per year. So the idea here, again, is to really create a comprehensive approach. Perhaps it's a county looking to fund a prosecutor's office and several law enforcement agencies; perhaps your state is looking to do work in several jurisdictions within your state. So that's really the purpose of category one, is to serve multiple jurisdictions. And again, no more than \$100,000 per year per individual kind of jurisdiction or unit of government.

Category two is maybe your specific agency needs some funding to focus locally. So that's going to be those single agencies. So perhaps a single police department is looking to fund an investigator position or a prosecutor. This is really focused on the needs of your individual agency. And that will be capped again at \$100,000 per year per jurisdiction for a total of \$400,000 for the total award.

So this is a little bit back and forth. So the total amount of money we anticipate to award this year is \$16 million. The breakdown will really be dependent on how many applicants we get for the different programs. As I mentioned, for category one, the maximum amount is \$4 million. For category two, it is \$400,000. The start date of these awards would be October 1 of this year, and they would run for a period of up to four years. So as I mentioned earlier, there are kind of two different processes in applying for federal grants. So the first is going to be that grants.gov process, that one that has the earlier due date, I think it's May 20, and that's where you're going to fill out your application for federal assistance or your SF-424. You're also going to include some general information, your program title, your jurisdiction, the amount you're applying for.

I really encourage you to do that earlier. I believe you also, I think that's also where you disclose any lobbying activities, and there will be a few other pieces. So some additional things that we ask from applicants include timelines and task lists. If you're looking to hire, what that resume or job description would be. If you have existing partnerships or proposed partnerships, it is definitely helpful to have letters of support or MOUs. And then a few other kind of more formulaic things around pending applications for funding the same program from the federal government with other agencies, and then research and evaluation in independence and integrity.

Okay, so one thing I'll flag again, I know I keep harping on the peer review process, but I did want to kind of give a little bit of insight into how that works. The first thing that a peer reviewer is going to see of your application is your proposal abstract. It is really important that you write a really strong abstract and that you hit each of these areas because that's going to be their first impression of your application. So you should name the applicant, your organization, if you're applying; you should focus or really accurately describe your focus area. So maybe it's a location; maybe you're looking at a specific type of hate crime. Really describe kind of the challenge that you're looking to address. Really give us summary of scope and activities. Maybe also talk a little bit about the number of cases. Again, I know I keep

emphasizing it, but partnerships, if you have partnerships listed in your application, definitely list them here.

It's really important and it goes a long way. And then going along with that, I think a description of how you're incorporating your community into the work is also something that goes a really long way in the abstract. And then finally, I do want to flag: so BJA and a few other OJP offices, we do offer priority consideration, which kind of bumps folks, gives you a few little extra points in the application process for certain things. For this program, if either the primary applicant or a sub-applicant or a sub-awardee is considered culturally specific or culturally specific-serving and will be receiving at least 40 percent of the award funding, those program applications will receive priority consideration. I believe that's listed on, I want to say page 13 or 14 of the solicitation. I'd say, read that through really closely, really carefully. Again, priority consideration can be the difference between getting an award and not getting an award. So if you're able to demonstrate that you have those partnerships or that your agency kind of fits that priority consideration, you will be bucketed in, and I definitely recommend you put it in your abstract.

In terms of the narrative, this is what most folks think of when you think of writing a grant. This is kind of that written portion. So for this program, the narrative should not exceed 15 pages. You'll be focusing in on describing the issue that you're looking to address, really giving a detailed description of the design and the implementation of the program. You're also going to want to really focus in on your capabilities and competencies. This is another place where I highly recommend, if you're trying to get a priority consideration, spell it out, make it very obvious that you qualify for this priority consideration and you should be getting extra points for it. This is where you're going to want to do that.

We also, as I emphasized at the beginning, we at BJA, we love our data. We love performance measures, so give us a little information on how you plan to do that. And then finally, we need to understand how you're going to spend your money. The one thing I'll flag on the budget and budget worksheet: all of this information is going to be entered into the JustGrants system. If it's been a few years since you've had an award from OJP, we have moved from the grants management system to JustGrants. It is our new grants management system, and rather than updating a spreadsheet and being on your merry way, we now require you to enter every single item.

I know from back in my days when I used to apply for grants, I would often put off entering information into the system until a day or two before it was due. With this new system, it can be a little time-consuming to go in and hand-enter all of your budget information. So again, really want to emphasize that you may want to, even if you're cutting your time a little tight, log in a few days early and at least start that budget process so you're comfortable with it. I don't want anyone to run out of time. I know that May 25 and 30 seem far away now, but any of the information you can get into the system now, that's just something you don't have to worry about later. We already talked about this. One thing I'll flag, again, it's not just uploading a spreadsheet. You have to go in and itemize your budget for every single year of this four-year grant program. So it can be a little time-consuming. We don't require a match for this program.

And I would also recommend, take a look in the solicitation; we include some required things. So for example, we require that that grantees are setting aside a little bit of money to travel to some national conferences and meet with their peer jurisdictions in the program. Peer-to-peer support is really important in this program. And so, you're going to want to make sure you meet that requirement that you have at least a little bit of travel money set aside to go to conferences and other sites. The last thing I'll say on this, and I know I keep harping on the priority considerations: we need to be able to see your

priority consideration. If your organization is not the one that is applying to kind of meet that standard, but instead it is a sub-awardee, then we need to see in your budget that sub-awardee will be receiving a minimum of 40 percent of the awarded funding. So again, just make sure that that aligns with what you have in your narrative and your abstract.

Okay, so I mean, you heard a little bit today about some of the programs that other grantees are doing. I definitely encourage you to check out some of the resources on DOJ's website. So there is a Hate Crimes DOJ site. There's also information, I know I mentioned earlier, the Community Relations Service, and certainly we heard a good bit today about NIBRS and the FBI. The FBI has a Hate Crimes website, and you can learn a little bit more about some of those challenges with NIBRS and collecting accurate data. But also, from the data we have, there's some really good insights, and you may be able to find some helpful data for your application on the FBI's website. And then certainly, if you're interested in hearing more about current awardees from the last few years, you can visit BJA's website. Okay, so that was me doing a lot of talking about a lot of nitty-gritty.

Now that you've heard a little bit more about the program and the application process, are you thinking you're going to apply? So please select A, if you plan to apply; B, if you're not sure; and C, if you think it may not be relevant for you at this time. All right, so mix across the board. All right, we're going to close out with a couple of quick resources if you run into any challenges while you're applying. So first up, as I mentioned, I highly recommend you go ahead and jump onto grants.gov. Fill in that SF-424, that's your application. It's a lot of administrative information about your agency and that lobbying disclosure. If you run into any issues, there's a customer support hotline. That information is up on the screen for you. There's also an email, and I'll have a summary slide with all this information as well.

If you run into issues with JustGrants—which, as I mentioned, it's a new system—if you haven't applied for a DOJ grant in a while, there may be some kind of technical challenges. So again, I recommend you log in and get to know that system. We have some information on the screen there about the customer support helpline there. And then finally, this program is pretty broad. We're looking for a wide range of application types. And so, you may have some specific questions about content. If you do, please email those to our OJP Response Center. This is a group that is specifically focused on answering your questions about content of solicitations. And so, we definitely encourage you if you have questions about the solicitation, maybe about eligibility, submit those through the OJP Response Center.

Reminder about the dual deadline: Again, if it's been a couple of years since you've applied, please take a note that we have recently moved the time up. Applications are now due by 9:59 p.m., Eastern Time, not 11:59 p.m. as they had been in the past. I know I've been someone who's cut it close on that before. So just be mindful of those times. Again, that step one is going to be due on May 25, step two on May 30.

All right, so stay connected. We have some information about how to connect with BJA on social media. We post a lot of updates on social media about our grants. Sometimes we may extend deadlines, or sometimes what we like to do is feature some of our grantees either in videos or blog posts, and you can see a little bit about what other sites are doing with their funding. So definitely recommend that.

And if you do nothing else, I recommend take a quick screenshot of this screen. This is going to be your who you call if you're having challenges with anything. Again, for the content assistance, that's in that upper left-hand corner, and then grants.gov, and JustGrants. All right, it's looking like we don't have any questions in the chat. I really hope you all will consider applying. This is a really unique program at BJA.

As I mentioned, we encourage a lot of kind of broad applications, creative ideas. It's also a really important program. So please apply. And thank you for joining today. Take care.