

**U.S. Department of Justice**  
Office of Justice Programs  
*Bureau of Justice Assistance*



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**Solicitation Title:** BJA FY24 Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program  
**Assistance Listing Number:** 16.037  
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**Step 2: Application JustGrants Deadline:** 8:59 p.m. Eastern Time on April 15, 2024

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# Synopsis

## Program Description Overview

The [U.S. Department of Justice](#) (DOJ), [Office of Justice Programs](#) (OJP), [Bureau of Justice Assistance](#) (BJA) is seeking applications for funding.

OJP is committed to advancing work that promotes civil rights and 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, BJA seeks to fund applications to strengthen the medical examiner-coroner (ME/C) system by increasing the number of qualified forensic pathologists and enhance the quality of medicolegal death investigations nationwide.

This program furthers the DOJ’s mission to uphold the rule of law, to keep our country safe, and to protect civil rights by providing resources to improve medicolegal death investigations (MDIs) in the United States.

## Funding Category

Competition ID	Competition Title (Category Name)	Expected Number of Awards	Dollar Amount for Award	Performance Start Date	Performance Duration (Months)
C-BJA-2024-00012-PROD	Purpose Area 1: Forensic Pathology Fellowships	Up to 6	1 Fellow = Up to \$150,000 2 Fellows = Up to \$300,000	10/1/2024	36
C-BJA-2024-00013-PROD	Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner Coroner Office Accreditation	Up to 7	Up to \$100,000	10/1/2024	36

## Eligibility

- City or township governments
- County governments
- For profit organizations other than small businesses
- Native American tribal governments (federally recognized)
- Native American tribal organizations (other than federally recognized tribal governments)
- 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
- Special district governments
- State governments

See [Eligibility Information](#) section for purpose areas-specific eligibility details.

An applicant may submit more than one application, if each application proposes a different project in response to the solicitation. Also, an entity may be proposed as a subrecipient (subgrantee) in more than one application.

**Note:** Proposals are expected to clearly identify the purpose area to which they are applying. If applicants are requesting funds from both purpose areas, a separate application must be submitted for each purpose area.

BJA will consider applications under which two or more entities (project partners) would carry out the federal award; however, only one entity may be the applicant for the solicitation. Any others must be proposed as subrecipients (subgrantees). See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information on subawards.

## Agency Contact Information

For assistance with the requirements of this solicitation, contact the OJP Response Center by phone at 800-851-3420 or 301-240-6310 (TTY for hearing-impaired callers only) or email [grants@ncjrs.gov](mailto:grants@ncjrs.gov). The OJP Response Center operates from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time (ET) Monday–Friday and from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET on the solicitation closing date.

For procedures related to unforeseen technical issues beyond the control of the applicant that impact submission by the deadlines, see the “How To Apply” section, [Experiencing Unforeseen Technical Issues](#).

For assistance with submitting the [Application for Federal Assistance standard form \(SF-424\)](#) and a [Disclosure of Lobbying Activities \(SF-LLL\)](#) 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](mailto:support@grants.gov). The Grants.gov Support Hotline is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays.

For technical assistance with submitting the **full application** in JustGrants, contact the JustGrants Service Desk at 833-872-5175 or [JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov](mailto:JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov). The JustGrants Service Desk operates from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. ET Monday–Friday and from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET on Saturday, Sunday, and federal holidays.

## Pre-Application Information Session

Because the FY 2024 ME/C solicitation does not include any significant changes from the prior year, BJA will not convene a solicitation webinar under FY 2024. As a result, applicants are encouraged to examine the FY 2023 archived solicitation webinar and accompanying solicitation frequently asked questions for an overall detailed program overview. This information can be found at <https://bja.ojp.gov/program/strengthening-mec/archives>.

## Application Submission Information

### Registration

Before submitting an application, an applicant must have a registration in the [System for Award Management \(SAM.gov\)](#).

### Submission

Applications must be submitted to DOJ electronically through a two-step process that begins in Grants.gov and is completed in JustGrants. See the [Submission Dates and Time](#) section for the Grants.gov and JustGrants application deadlines.

**Step 1:** The applicant must register for this opportunity in Grants.gov at <https://grants.gov/register> and submit by the Grants.gov deadline the required [Application for](#)

[Federal Assistance standard form \(SF-424\)](#) and a [Disclosure of Lobbying Activities \(SF-LLL\)](#). See the [Submission Dates and Time](#) section for application deadlines.

**Step 2:** The applicant must submit the **full application**, including attachments, in JustGrants at [JustGrants.usdoj.gov](https://JustGrants.usdoj.gov) by the JustGrants application deadline. See the [Submission Dates and Time](#) section for application deadlines.

# Program Description

## Program Description Overview

The [U.S. Department of Justice](#) (DOJ), [Office of Justice Programs](#) (OJP), [Bureau of Justice Assistance](#) (BJA) is seeking applications for funding.

OJP is committed to advancing work that promotes civil rights and 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, BJA seeks to fund applications to strengthen the ME/C system by increasing the number of qualified forensic pathologists and enhance the quality of medicolegal death investigations nationwide.

This program furthers the DOJ's mission to uphold the rule of law, to keep our country safe, and to protect civil rights by providing resources to improve medicolegal death investigations (MDIs) in the United States.

Specifically, through this program, BJA will award funding for:

1. Forensic pathology fellowships (up to two allowed, per application).
2. Resources necessary for ME/C offices to achieve and maintain accreditation.

Successful Grant Application Examples: Samples of previous and successful applications under both Purpose Area 1, Forensic Pathology Fellowships, and Purpose Area 2, ME/C Office Accreditation, can be found at: <https://bja.ojp.gov/program/strengthening-mec/funding>.

## Statutory Authority

Any awards under this solicitation would be made under statutory authority provided by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024. As of the writing of this solicitation, the Department of Justice is operating under a short-term Continuing Resolution with no full-year appropriation for the Department being enacted for FY 2024 currently.

## Specific Information

Death investigations performed by ME/C offices are vital to criminal justice. However, there are systemic issues with death investigation data quality and infrastructure, inadequate facilities, and inconsistent expertise levels. In addition, the ME/C community lacks enough personnel and resources to properly address the volume of medicolegal death investigations (MDIs).

To address these deficiencies, the Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program is a competitive, discretionary grant program that seeks to increase the number of qualified forensic pathologists and enhance the quality of MDI services nationwide. This program helps address the extreme shortage of board-certified forensic pathologists as underscored in the [2019 Report to Congress: Needs Assessment of Forensic Laboratories and Medical Examiner/Coroner Offices](#). It also provides ME/C offices with the resources to become accredited and maintain that accreditation.

**Attendance at BJA's 2024 Forensics Programs Grantees Meeting (Virtual Event):** Award recipients must register and attend BJA's 2024 annual virtual 2-day forensics workshop that's

being held for all grantees under BJA's individual forensic grant programs. Key personnel are allowed to participate that includes up to three representatives, per awardee. The workshop will focus on the elements of a successful project and key issues regarding forensics, medical examiners, coroners, laboratories, and other areas. For 2025 and 2026, BJA has not yet determined whether the grantees meetings will be virtual or in-person. As a result, FY 2024 ME/C award recipients may be required to allocated grant funding in the future for those two years. Please examine the archived 2023 event here for more information: <https://academy.forensicstta.org/course/view.php?id=2>.

### **Additional Federal Funding Opportunities and Resources for ME/C Offices**

#### **BJA's Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants (Coverdell) Program:**

The Coverdell Program awards grants to states and units of local government to help improve forensic science and medical examiner/coroner services, including services provided by laboratories operated by states and units of local government.

Funding under the Coverdell Program may not be used for research; however, applicants may request funding to address emerging forensic science issues and technology through implementation of new technologies and processes into public laboratories.

For more information, visit <https://bja.ojp.gov/program/coverdell/overview>.

**National Institutes of Health (NIH) Loan Repayment Programs (LRPs):** The escalating costs of advanced education and training in medicine and clinical specialties are forcing some scientists to abandon their research careers for higher paying private industry or private practice careers. To counteract that financial pressure, the LRPs repay up to \$50,000 annually of a researcher's qualified educational debt in return for a commitment to engage in NIH mission relevant research. Because tomorrow's medical breakthroughs will be made by investigators starting in their research careers today, the LRPs represent an important investment by NIH in the future health discovery and the well-being of the nation.

BJA strongly encourages medical examiner fellowship applicants and awardees to review the following information regarding loan repayment opportunities through the link provided below. NIH LRPs are a set of programs established by Congress and designed to recruit and retain highly qualified health professionals into biomedical or biobehavioral research careers.

**Note:** NIH LRPs are not managed through this BJA/OJP solicitation, so all questions concerning the loan repayment program should be directed to NIH. For more information, visit [www.lrp.nih.gov](http://www.lrp.nih.gov).

**BJA's Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program:** The JAG Program is the leading source of federal justice funding to state and local jurisdictions. The JAG Program provides states, tribes, and local governments with critical funding necessary to support a range of program areas, including law enforcement, prosecution, indigent defense, courts, crime prevention and education, corrections and community corrections, drug treatment and enforcement, planning, evaluation, technology improvement, crime victim and witness initiatives, mental health programs, and related law enforcement and corrections programs, including behavioral programs and crisis intervention teams.



In general, JAG funds may be used to provide additional personnel, equipment, supplies, contractual support, training, technical assistance, and information systems for criminal justice programs. For more information, visit <https://bja.ojp.gov/program/jag/overview>.

**The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)—Collaborating Office of Medical Examiners and Coroners (COMEC):** MDIs conducted by medical examiners and coroners are crucial to understanding causes of death, monitoring evolving health challenges, and ultimately saving lives. COMEC works to bring together resources from across the CDC to support the work in the ME/C community. Content is continuously updated as new materials are developed or identified. For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/comec/index.htm>.

**BJA’s Forensics Training and Technical Assistance (FTTA) Program:** Awarded in FY 2022, the FTTA Program, led by RTI International in collaboration with a team of subject matter experts, offers expertise and assistance to grantees of BJA’s forensic science programs. The FTTA Program assists BJA forensics program grantees with meeting strategic goals and objectives, implementing national recommendations into policy, enhancing capacity and outcomes, and fostering sustainability through the implementation of new technologies to enhance existing policies and practices. For more information, visit [www.forensicstta.org/](http://www.forensicstta.org/).

## Solicitation Goals and Objectives

### Goals

The goals of the Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program are:

- Purpose Area 1: Forensic Pathology Fellowships—Increase the number of qualified forensic pathology practitioners.
- Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation—Strengthen the quality and consistency of ME/C services in their respective offices, thereby increasing public trust in these services.

BJA expects applicants to clearly identify the purpose area to which they are applying. If applicants request funds from both purpose areas, they must submit a separate application for each purpose area.

### Objectives

Purpose Area 1: Forensic Pathology Fellowships—Recruit quality candidates who have completed all of the necessary medical education and pathology residency requirements by soliciting applications from institutions with current Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) accredited forensic pathology fellowship programs.

Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation—Ensure that agencies performing postmortem examinations are following industry and professional standards and performance criteria.

For information about what the applicant needs to submit regarding Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables, please see the [How to Apply section on the Application Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Timeline Web-Based Form](#).

## Priority Areas

In order to further OJP's mission, OJP will provide priority consideration when making award decisions to the following:

**1A.** Applications that propose project(s) that are designed to meaningfully advance equity and remove barriers to accessing services and opportunities for communities that have been historically underserved, marginalized, adversely affected by inequality, and disproportionately impacted by crime, violence, and victimization.

To receive this consideration, the applicant must describe how the proposed project(s) will address identified inequities **and** contribute to greater access to services and opportunities for communities that have been historically underserved, marginalized, adversely affected by inequality, and disproportionately impacted by crime, violence, and victimization. Project activities under this consideration may include but are not limited to the following: improving victim services, justice responses, prevention initiatives, reentry services and other parts of an organization's or community's efforts to advance public safety. Applicants should propose activities that address the cultural (and linguistic, if appropriate) needs of communities, outline how the proposed activities will be informed by these communities, and implement culturally responsive and inclusive outreach and engagement.

**1B.** Applicants that demonstrate that their capabilities and competencies for implementing their proposed project(s) are enhanced because they (or at least one proposed subrecipient that will receive **at least 40 percent** of the requested award funding, as demonstrated in the Budget web-based form) are a *population specific organization* that serves communities that have been historically underserved, marginalized, adversely affected by inequality, and disproportionately impacted by crime, violence, and victimization.

For purposes of this solicitation, population specific organizations are nonprofit, nongovernmental, or Tribal organizations that primarily serve members of a specific underserved population and have demonstrated experience and expertise providing targeted services to members of that specific underserved population.

To receive this additional priority consideration, applicants must describe how being a population specific organization (or funding the population specific subrecipient organization(s)) will enhance their ability to implement the proposed project(s), and should also specify which historically underserved populations are intended or expected to be served or have their needs addressed under the proposed project(s).

**Note:** Addressing these priority areas is one of many factors that OJP considers in making funding decisions. Receiving priority consideration for one or more priority areas does not guarantee an award.

## Federal Award Information

### Awards, Amounts, and Durations

- Anticipated Number of Awards: Up to 13
- Anticipated Maximum Dollar Amount per Award:
  - Purpose Area 1: Forensic Pathology Fellowships:
    - 1 Fellow = Up to \$150,000
    - 2 Fellows = Up to \$300,000

- Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner/Coroner Office Accreditation = Up to \$100,000
- Period of Performance Start Date: October 1, 2024
- Period of Performance Duration (Months): 36
- Anticipated Total Amount to Be Awarded Under This Solicitation: Approximately \$2,050,000

### **Continuation Funding Intent**

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

### **Availability of Funds**

This funding opportunity, and awards under this funding opportunity, are subject to the availability of funding and to any changes 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**

OJP expects to make awards under this funding opportunity as "grants." See the "[Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements](#)" section of the [Application Resource Guide](#) for a brief discussion of important statutes, regulations, and award conditions that apply to many (or in some cases, all) OJP grants.

### **Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement**

This funding opportunity does not require a match.

### **Eligibility Information**

Eligible applicants for Purpose Area 1: Forensic Pathology Fellowships are limited to entities with programs that meet or exceed the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) requirements. For additional information on ACGME, please visit <https://www.acgme.org/about/overview/>.

Eligible applicants for Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner (ME/C) Office Accreditation are limited to domestic ME/C offices actively seeking or maintaining accreditation through an independent accrediting organization such as the National Association of Medical Examiners, the International Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners, or other appropriate accrediting bodies.

For the purposes of this notice of funding opportunity, "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.

# How To Apply

## Application Resources

When preparing and submitting an application, the following resources may aid prospective applicants:

1. Grants.gov [“How to Apply for Grants”](#)
2. OJP [“How To Apply”](#) section in the [Application Resource Guide](#)
3. JustGrants [Application Submission Training](#)

This solicitation (notice of funding opportunity) incorporates guidance provided in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) (Application Resource Guide), which provides additional information for applicants to prepare and submit applications to OJP for funding. **If this solicitation requires something different from any guidance provided in the [Application Resource Guide](#), the difference will be noted in this solicitation and the applicant is to follow the guidelines in this solicitation, rather than the guidance in the [Application Resource Guide](#) that is in conflict.**

## How To Apply

### Registration

Before submitting an application, all applicants must register with the System for Award Management (SAM.gov). An applicant must renew their registration every 12 months. If an applicant does not renew their SAM.gov registration, it will expire. An expired registration can delay or prevent application submission in Grants.gov and JustGrants. Applicants are encouraged to start the SAM.gov registration process at least 30 days prior to the application deadlines. Applicants who fail to begin the registration or renewal process at least 10 business days prior to the Grants.gov deadline may not complete the process in time and will not be considered for late submission.

### Submission

Applications must be submitted to DOJ electronically through a two-step process that begins in Grants.gov and is completed in JustGrants.

**Step 1:** After registering with SAM.gov, the applicant must submit the **SF-424** and **SF-LLL** in Grants.gov at <https://grants.gov/register> by the Grants.gov deadline. **To leave time to address any technical issues that may arise, an applicant should submit the SF-424 and SF-LLL as early as possible and recommended not later than 48 hours before the Grants.gov deadline.** If an applicant fails to submit in Grants.gov by the deadline, they will be unable to apply in JustGrants. Applicants can confirm Grants.gov submission by verifying their application status shows as “submitted” or “agency tracking number assigned.”

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

OJP recommends that applicants submit the complete application package in JustGrants at least 48 hours prior to the JustGrants deadline. Some of the required sections of the application will be entered directly into JustGrants, and other sections will require documents to be uploaded and attached. Therefore, applicants should allow enough time before the JustGrants deadline to prepare all the requirements of the application. Applicants may save their progress

in the system and add to or change the application as needed prior to hitting the “Submit” button at the end of the application in JustGrants.

An applicant will receive emails when successfully submitting in Grants.gov and JustGrants and should maintain all emails and other confirmations received from SAM.gov, Grants.gov, and JustGrants systems.

For additional information, see the “How To Apply” section in the [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 April 10, 2024.

The **full application** must be submitted in JustGrants by April 15, 2024.

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 and application process in sufficient time (i.e., waiting until the due dates identified in this solicitation for those systems to begin the application steps) is not an acceptable reason to request a technical waiver.

### **Experiencing Unforeseen Technical Issues Preventing Submission of an Application (Technical Waivers)**

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 submission of the application on time.

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 documentation of attempts to receive technical assistance to resolve the issue prior to the application deadline. A tracking number is the most typical documentation and is 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, long call wait times for support do 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.gov Help Desk \(Federal Service Desk\)](#), Monday–Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 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](mailto:support@grants.gov).
- JustGrants: contact the JustGrants Service Desk at [JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov](mailto:JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov) or 833-872-5175, Monday–Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. ET and Saturday, Sunday, and federal holidays from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 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](mailto: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](mailto: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 (provide screenshots if applicable);
- Include a timeline of the applicant's submission efforts (e.g., date and time the error occurred, date and time of actions taken to resolve the issue and resubmit; and date and time support representatives responded);
- Include an attachment of the complete grant application and all the required documentation and materials;
- Include the applicant's Unique Entity Identifier (UEI); and
- Include any SAM.gov, Grants.gov, and JustGrants Service Desk tracking numbers documenting the technical issue.

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

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

## **Application and Submission Information**

### **Content of Application Submission and Available Surveys**

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:

- SF-424 and SF-LLL (in Grants.gov)
- Proposal Abstract (in JustGrants)
- Proposal Narrative (in JustGrants)
- Budget Web-Based Form, which includes the budget details and the budget narrative (in JustGrants)
- Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire, including applicant disclosure of high-risk status (in JustGrants)

If OJP determines that an application does not include these elements, it will not proceed to peer review and will not receive any further consideration.

### **Content of the 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 [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 funding opportunity **is not** subject to [Executive Order \(E.O.\) 12372](#). In completing the SF-424, an applicant should answer question 19 by selecting "Program is not covered by E.O. 12372."



## **Content of the JustGrants Application Submission**

### ***Entity and User Verification (First Time Applicant)***

For first time JustGrants applicants, once the application is received from Grants.gov, DOJ will send an email (from [DIAMD-NoReply@usdoj.gov](mailto:DIAMD-NoReply@usdoj.gov)) to the individual listed in Section 8F of the SF-424 with instructions on how to create a JustGrants account. This email should arrive within 24 hours after this individual receives confirmation from Grants.gov of their SF-424 and SF-LLL submissions. Register the Entity Administrator (the person who manages who can access JustGrants on behalf of the applicant), the Application Submitter, and Authorized Representative for the applicant with JustGrants as early as possible and (recommended) not later than 48-72 hours before the JustGrants deadline. Once registered in JustGrants, the Application Submitter will receive a link in an email to complete the rest of the application in JustGrants. Find additional information on JustGrants Application Submission in the [Application Resource Guide](#).

### ***Standard Applicant Information***

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

### ***Proposal Abstract***

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

### ***Data Requested With Application***

The following application elements should be submitted in the web-based forms in JustGrants.

#### ***Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (Including Applicant Disclosure of High-Risk Status)***

The Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire helps OJP assess the financial management and internal control systems, and the associated potential risks of an applicant as part of the pre-award risk assessment process. Every OJP applicant (other than an individual applying in their personal capacity, not representing an applicant organization) is required to complete the web-based Questionnaire form in JustGrants. See the [Application Resource Guide: Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire \(including Applicant Disclosure of High Risk Status\)](#) for additional guidance on how to complete the questionnaire.

#### ***Brief Applicant Entity Questionnaire***

The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) is collecting the following information to help assess its efforts to attract a broader range of applicants. These questions apply to the applicant entity and

its work and scope only, and not to the specific project(s) being proposed within the application. Responses to the questions will not be considered in the application review process. The questions included in the questionnaire are available in the [Standard Forms & Instructions: Brief Applicant Entity Questionnaire](#).

### ***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 size font; have no less than 1-inch margins; and should not exceed 12 numbered pages. If the Proposal Narrative fails to comply with these length restrictions, OJP may consider such noncompliance in peer review and in final award decisions.

The proposal narrative should describe the proposed project in depth, and it should:

- Explain the proposed project's significance to the overall criminal justice system and their local system.
- Explain how the proposed project will strengthen the ME/C system and improve ME/C services.

The Proposal Narrative must include the following sections:

a. Description of the Issue

- Describe the challenges faced by the agency when performing ME/C services.
- Describe the scope of the current state of ME/C issues.
- Describe the impact of the project's funding and staffing on the ME/C system and ME/C services in the United States.

b. Project Design and Implementation

- Describe the strategy to address the needs identified in the Description of the Issue, particularly any areas of specific concern and the relevance to the program's goals and objectives.
- Document the soundness in methods and approach to address the proposed project's stated objectives. The overall strategy should be well reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the project's goals.
- Describe the feasibility of the proposed project, including the likelihood of completion within the proposed period of performance.
- Explain any potential pitfalls in the proposed project's design, as well as actions to minimize and/or mitigate them.
- Demonstrate the effectiveness of recruitment and/or advertising strategies used by the agency to fill fellowship positions.
- Demonstrate innovation and creativity (when appropriate).

If an applicant is seeking consideration under Priority 1A, it should explain in this section how the proposed project(s) will meaningfully address identified inequities **and** contribute to greater access to services and opportunities for communities that have been historically underserved, marginalized, adversely affected by inequality, and disproportionately impacted by crime, violence, and victimization. The applicant should also identify how the project design and implementation will specifically incorporate the input and/or participation of these communities.



c. Capabilities and Competencies

- Describe the qualifications and experience of the proposed project staff members, including all individuals and organizations identified in the application who will be significantly involved in the project.
- Document the applicant organization's ability to manage the effort.
- Describe the relationship between the capabilities/competencies of the proposed project staff members (including the applicant organization) and the scope of the proposed project.
- Describe the environment (e.g., institutional and jurisdictional support, equipment and other physical resources, or collaborative arrangements) in which the work will be done and its contribution to the probability of success. Address whether the program meets or exceeds the ACGME-accredited forensic pathology fellowship requirements.
- Demonstrate how the proposed approach is affordable and cost-effective.

If the applicant is seeking priority consideration under Priority 1B, it should: (1) describe within this section how being a population specific organization (or funding a population specific subrecipient organization at a minimum of 40% of the project budget) will enhance its capabilities and competencies to implement the proposed project; (2) specify which populations are intended or expected to be served, have their needs addressed, and/or be affected by the proposed project; and (3) include information to confirm that the population specific organization is specifically designed to serve communities that have been historically underserved, marginalized, adversely affected by inequality, and disproportionately impacted by crime, violence, and victimization (examples of such information include, but are not limited to, the website address, charter, mission statement, or operating principles of the population specific organization).

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.

**Note:** An applicant is **not** required to submit performance data with the application. Rather, performance measure information is included to provide notice that award recipients will be required to submit performance data as part of each award's reporting requirements.

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 solicitation goals and objectives identified in the "[Goals and Objectives](#)" section.

Applicants can visit [OJP's performance measurement page](#) at [www.ojp.gov/performance](http://www.ojp.gov/performance) for more information on performance measurement activities.

In addition to the performance measures, awardees under Purpose Area 1 will be required to provide a narrative report to BJA detailing the impact and progress of the fellowship program. The awardee should include details about the number of fellowship applications they received prior to implementing the BJA program, and any changes noted in the number of fellowship applications received after the program was implemented. They should

describe the outreach efforts to increase the fellowship applicant pool, and the results of these efforts.

In addition to the performance measures, awardees under Purpose Area 2 will be required to provide a narrative report to BJA detailing the impact and progress of the accreditation project. The report should include information on the level of effort given the accreditation processes and the progress made, including the level of staffing and amount of time provided. Any information on the successes and pitfalls, as well as any information BJA can use toward learning about ME/C accreditation processes, issues, and results, should also be provided.

BJA will require award recipients to submit performance measure data and performance reports in JustGrants. BJA will provide further guidance on the post-award submission process, if the applicant is selected for award. A list of performance measure questions for this program can be found [here](#). Some measures are presented as examples, but others are the exact measures that every recipient will be expected to address.

#### 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 [Application Resource Guide](#).

#### *Application Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Timeline Web-Based Form*

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

- **Goals:** The applicant should describe the project’s intent to change, reduce, or eliminate the problem noted in the proposal narrative.
- **Program Objectives and Timeline:** The applicant should include objectives to accomplish its goals. Objectives are specific, measurable actions to reach the project’s desired results. The included timelines should be clearly linked to the goals of BJA’s Strengthening the ME/C System Program, which are the following:
  - Purpose Area 1: Forensic Pathology Fellowships—Recruit quality candidates who have completed all of the necessary medical education and pathology residency requirements by soliciting applications from institutions with current Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) accredited forensic pathology fellowship programs.
  - Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation—Ensure that agencies performing postmortem examinations are following industry and professional standards and performance criteria.
- **Deliverables and Timeline:** Project deliverables refer to outputs—tangible (for example, a report or a website) or intangible (for example, greater feelings of safety reported by the community)—that are documented and submitted within the scope of a project. Deliverables include timelines.

#### Deliverables Expected by Successful Applicants

Program objectives and deliverables should be included in one timeline.

In addition to the performance measures, awardees under Purpose Area 1 will be required to provide a narrative report to BJA detailing the impact and progress of the fellowship program. The awardee should include details about the number of fellowship applications they received prior to implementing the BJA program, and any changes noted in the number of fellowship applications received after the program was implemented. They should also describe their outreach efforts to increase the fellowship applicant pool, and the results of these efforts.

In addition to the performance measures, awardees under Purpose Area 2 will be required to provide a narrative report to BJA detailing the impact and progress of the accreditation project. The report should include information on the level of effort given the accreditation processes and the progress made, including the level of staffing and amount of time provided. Any information on the successes and pitfalls, as well as any information BJA can use toward learning about ME/C accreditation processes, issues, and results, should also be provided.

All ME/C award recipients are required to report specific performance measures (see [Performance Measures](#)). In addition, the applicant is asked to consider what other measures may be of use in demonstrating the successful outcome of the program/project.

### ***Budget and Associated Documentation***

#### ***Funding Restrictions***

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

#### **Permissible Expenses**

**Note (No-Cost Extensions)**—If awarded, an award recipient can request a no-cost extension to lengthen their project period. This would allow them the capability to complete their fellowship program in relation to their state/local level timeframe, which may not correlate with the federal fiscal year or federal project duration.

#### **Purpose Area 1: Forensic Pathology Fellowships**

To help address the extreme shortage of board-certified forensic pathologists in the United States, allowable uses of funds for Purpose Area 1 include:

- A salary/stipend for the fellow and related costs that may include fringe benefits (if applicable), at the applicant institution's discretion.
- Loan Repayments—To offset the financial burden associated with educational debt and assist with recruiting qualified candidates, an award recipient may use up to \$75,000 of the available \$150,000 award amount for fellowship loan repayments for each fellowship position. If they are applying for two fellowship positions, they may use up to \$150,000 of the available \$300,000 award amount to make the loan repayments.
- Recruitment Travel—As part of a marketing and recruitment strategy, applicants may use a portion of funding for mentee-type travel, so that fellowship candidates may gain more training and knowledge about the fellowships.
- Equipment and Supplies—The purchase of minor equipment and supply items (e.g., microscopes) for fellows are allowable costs; however, all purchases need to be justified and approved by BJA. The applicant will need to include information within their application stating that the purchase of the item(s) is needed for fellows to complete the program.
- Certification Fees—Certification fees are allowable as long as the applicant can justify that they are in support of the overall scope of the ME/C Program and purpose area. In addition, the applicant must ensure that these fees are accurately articulated in the budget.

- Training, including travel associated with the fellow(s) attending training activities.
- Medical license reimbursement.

### Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation

Accreditation provides an independent measure of quality assurance by assessing that an ME/C office maintains written policies and procedures, adequate staff, equipment, training, and suitable physical facilities to produce a forensically documented, accurate, and credible death investigation product. Under this program, allowable uses of funds for Purpose Area 2 include:

- **Equipment and Supplies**—Award funds may be used to purchase equipment and supplies as long as the applicant can justify that the items are necessary to achieve or maintain accreditation. However, all purchases need to be justified and approved by BJA.
- **Personnel**—Funds may be used to pay personnel within the ME/C agencies that are seeking certification.
- **Travel**—Travel costs are allowable if they are incurred while supporting the ME/C office's accreditation.
- **Microgrants**—An entity may use funding to establish microgrants for individual ME/C offices. Since an ME/C office's accreditation fee (~\$10,000 to \$20,000) is lower than this purpose area's overall award amount (\$100,000), an entity may apply for funds to distribute payments for the accreditation fee on behalf of several ME/C offices.
- **Certification Fees**—Certification fees are allowable as long as the applicant can justify that they are in support of the overall scope of the ME/C Program and purpose area. In addition, the applicant must ensure that these fees are accurately articulated in the budget.
- Funds may be used to support new ME/C office accreditation.
- Funds may be used to maintain existing accreditation.

### **Expenses That Are Not Permitted**

1. Expenses other than those listed above. – Under both Purpose Areas
2. Supplanting is unallowable. – Under both Purpose Areas
3. Construction costs. – Under both Purpose Areas
4. Recipient administrative expenses (direct or indirect) that exceed 10 percent of the total grant amount. – Under both Purpose Areas
5. The use of funds for the purchase and/or lease of vehicles such as crime scene vans. – Under both Purpose Areas
6. The use of BJA grant funds for unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), including unmanned aircraft vehicles (UAV) and/or any accompanying accessories to support UAS or UAV devices/systems, is unallowable. – Under both Purpose Areas
7. Stipends – The use of “stipends” for personnel within the applicant's organization – For Purpose Areas 2 only

Additional information, including success stories and publications, is available at:  
<https://bjaj.gov/program/strengthening-mec/overview>.

### **Budget Detail and Narrative Web-Based Form**

The applicant will complete the JustGrants web-based budget form, which includes both detailed calculations and budget narrative sections.

For additional information about how to prepare a budget for federal funding, see the [“Application Resource Guide”](#) section on [Budget Preparation and Submission Information](#) and the technical steps to complete the budget form in JustGrants in the [Complete the Application in JustGrants: Budget](#) training.

If the applicant is seeking priority consideration under Priority 1A and has proposed activities to incorporate the input and participation of communities that have been historically underserved, marginalized, adversely affected by inequality, and disproportionately impacted by crime, violence and victimization, financial support for the identified activities and participation must be reflected in the web-based budget form.

If the applicant is seeking priority consideration under Priority 1B based on the identification of a proposed subrecipient as a population specific organization, the proposed funding for the subrecipient must **reflect a minimum of 40 percent of the total award funding** within the web-based budget form. The budget narrative must also describe how the **activities that will be funded** with the (minimum) 40 percent of award funding provided to the subrecipient **specifically relate to the proposed project** that will meaningfully address identified inequities and contribute to greater access to services and opportunities for communities that have been historically underserved, marginalized, adversely affected by inequality, and disproportionately impacted by crime, violence, and victimization.

#### [Prior Approval, Planning, and Reporting of Conference/Meeting/Training Costs](#)

OJP strongly encourages every applicant that proposes to use award funds for any conference-, meeting-, or training-related activity (or similar event) to review carefully—before submitting an application—the [Application Resource Guide](#) for information on prior approval, planning, and reporting of conference/meeting/training costs.

#### [Costs Associated With Language Assistance \(if applicable\)](#)

If an applicant proposes a program or activity that would deliver services or benefits to individuals, the costs of taking reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to those services or benefits for individuals with limited English proficiency may be allowable. See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for information on costs associated with language assistance.

#### [Unmanned Aircraft Systems](#)

The use of BJA grant funds for unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), including unmanned aircraft vehicles (UAV), and all accompanying accessories to support UAS or UAV, is unallowable.

#### [Budget/Financial Attachments](#)

##### [Pre-Agreement \(Pre-Award\) Costs \(if applicable\)](#)

Pre-agreement costs are defined as costs requiring approval incurred by the applicant prior to the start date of the period of performance of the federal award. OJP does not typically approve pre-agreement costs. If a successful applicant, in anticipation of the Federal award, but before the start date of the period of performance, incurs costs which are necessary for efficient and timely performance of the funded project, those costs may not be charged to the award. See the “Costs Requiring Prior Approval” section in the [DOJ Grants Financial Guide Post-Award Requirements](#) for more information.

#### Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)

Indirect costs are costs of an organization that are not readily assignable to a particular project but are necessary to the operation of the organization and the performance of the project. Examples of costs usually treated as indirect include those incurred for facility operation and maintenance, depreciation, and administrative salaries. The requirements for the development and submission of indirect cost proposals and cost allocation plans are listed in Appendices III–VII of 2 C.F.R. Part 200. A non-federal applicant should follow the guidelines applicable to its type of organization. If applicable, an applicant with a current federally approved indirect cost rate agreement will upload it as an attachment in JustGrants. See the [DOJ Financial Guide](#) for additional information on [Indirect Cost Rate Agreement](#).

#### Consultant Rate (if applicable)

Costs for consultant services require prior approval from OJP. If the proposed project expects to fund consultant services, compensation for individual consultant services is to be reasonable and consistent with that paid for similar services in the marketplace. See the [DOJ Grants Financial Guide](#) for information on the consultant rates, which require prior approval from OJP.

#### Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation for Awards Over \$250,000; Waiver (if applicable)

If an applicant proposes to hire employees with Federal award funds, for any award of more than \$250,000 made under a funding opportunity, an award recipient may not use federal funds to pay total cash compensation (salary plus cash bonuses) to any employee of the recipient at a rate that exceeds 110 percent of the maximum annual salary payable to a member of the federal government’s Senior Executive Service (SES) at an agency with a Certified SES Performance Appraisal System for that year. See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for information on the “Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation for Awards over \$250,000; Waiver.”

#### Disclosure of Process Related to Executive Compensation (if applicable)

An applicant that is a nonprofit organization may be required to make certain disclosures relating to the processes it uses to determine the compensation of its officers, directors, trustees, and key employees. 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 [Application Resource Guide](#) for information.

#### **Additional Application Components**

The applicant will attach the additional requested documentation in JustGrants.

#### Accreditation Documentation—For Purpose Area 1: Forensic Pathology Fellowships (if applicable)

- Acceptable types of documentation of current accreditation include: an electronic (scanned) copy of the current accreditation certificate(s), a digital photograph of the current accreditation certificate(s), or a letter from the accrediting body that includes the certificate number.
- Additionally, if a certificate references another document that contains key information on the type or scope of the accreditation, provide a copy of that supplemental documentation. Independent accrediting or certifying organizations may include the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education or other appropriate accrediting bodies.



### Accreditation Documentation—For Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation (if applicable)

- Acceptable types of documentation of current accreditation include: an electronic (scanned) copy of the current accreditation certificate(s), a digital photograph of the current accreditation certificate(s), or a letter from the accrediting body that includes the certificate number.
- Additionally, if a certificate references another document that contains key information on the type or scope of the accreditation, provide a copy of that supplemental documentation. Independent accrediting or certifying organizations may include the National Association of Medical Examiners, the International Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners, or other appropriate accrediting bodies.
- **Note:** If the office is not currently accredited, the applicant may provide documentation that demonstrates they are seeking accreditation.

### Lists of Key Personnel

- Organizational Chart—Of the applicant agency and all proposed collaborators involved in the project. Include project-related staffing plans and narratives for each organizational chart, proposed new hires, and any anticipated staffing changes related to the Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program funding if received.
- Position Descriptions and Résumés—Curriculum vitae, resumes, or biographical sketches for key personnel. Attach this as a separate PDF file titled “Curriculum Vitae or Resumes.”
- List (to the extent known) of All Proposed Project Staff Members—The list should include those affiliated with the applicant organization or any proposed subrecipient organization(s), any proposed consultant(s) and contractors (whether individuals or organizations), and any proposed members of an advisory board for the project (if applicable). The list should include for each individual and organization: name, title (if applicable), employer or other organizational affiliation, and roles and responsibilities proposed for the project. Attach this as a separate PDF file titled “Proposed Project Staff.”

### Curriculum Vitae or Resumes

Provide resumes of key personnel who will work on the proposed project.

### Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable)

An application in response to this solicitation may require inclusion of tribal authorizing documentation as an attachment. If applicable, the applicant will upload the tribal authorizing documentation as an attachment in JustGrants. See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for information on tribal authorizing resolutions.

### Letters of Support

Applicants should include, for each named supporting entity, a signed letter of support that outlines the supporting entity’s reasons for supporting for the project. Applications submitted from two or more entities are encouraged to submit signed letters of support that provide a detailed description of why the proposed project should receive federal funding. Each letter of support may include the following: (1) a description of the relationship between the applicant entity and the supporting entity; (2) a description of the need and what benefits would be gained from the project; (3) a description of the applicant’s capacity to complete the

proposed project. Letters of support should be signed and then submitted as one separate attachment to the application.

#### [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 [Application Resource Guide](#).

#### [Disclosures and Assurances](#)

The applicant will address the following disclosures and assurances.

##### [Disclosure of Lobbying Activities](#)

The SF-LLL attachment that was completed and submitted in Grants.gov is attached to this section.

##### [Applicant Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items](#)

To ensure funding coordination across grant making agencies, and to avoid unnecessary or inappropriate duplication among grant awards, the applicant will disclose if it has any pending applications for federal funding, including pending applications for subawards of federal funds. Complete the JustGrants web-based Applicant Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items form. See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

##### [DOJ Certified Standard Assurances](#)

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

## **Application Review Information**

### **Review Criteria**

#### [Basic Minimum Review Criteria](#)

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 requirements for all OJP solicitations:



- The application must be submitted by an eligible type of applicant.
- The application must request funding within any stated programmatic funding limits or boundaries.
- The application must be responsive to the scope of the solicitation.
- The application must include all items necessary to meet the basic minimum requirements.

### ***Merit Review Criteria***

#### **Scored Review Criteria for Purpose Area 1: Forensic Pathology Fellowships**

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

1. Description of the Issue (15%): Evaluate the applicant's understanding of the program/issue to be addressed. See "Description of the Issue" under the Proposal Narrative section for more information.
2. Project Design and Implementation (15%): Evaluate the strength of the proposal, including information provided in the goals, objectives, timelines, and deliverables web-based form. See "Project Design and Implementation" under the Proposal Narrative section for more information.
3. Capabilities and Competencies (15%): Evaluate the applicant's administrative and technical capacity to successfully accomplish the goals and objectives. See "Capabilities and Competencies" under the Proposal Narrative section for more information.
4. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for This Solicitation's Performance Measures (15%): Evaluate the applicant's understanding of the performance data reporting requirements and the plan for collecting the required data. See "Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures" under the Proposal Narrative section for more information.
5. Budget (10%): Evaluate for completeness, cost effectiveness, and allowability (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities).
  - Describe the total cost of the project relative to the perceived benefit (cost effectiveness).
  - Demonstrate the appropriateness of the budget relative to the level of effort.
  - Describe the use of existing resources to conserve costs.
  - Describe how the proposed budget aligns with the proposed project activities.
6. Other Expected Outcomes/Potential Impact (30%):
  - Describe the expected outcome(s) of the project, including the number of forensic pathology fellowships anticipated to be completed and the forensic pathology fellowship processes anticipated to be initiated and/or assisted through the program.
  - Demonstrate the potential for significantly improved understanding of the stated issue. If the goals of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or MDI practice in the criminal justice system be improved?
  - Describe the likelihood that the project will exert a sustained, powerful influence on the MDI and ME/C fields as it relates to criminal justice.
  - Describe the potential for innovative solutions to address (all or a significant part of) the stated criminal justice issue. How will successful completion of the project change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, or services that drive MDI as it relates to

criminal justice? How will a successful project address the identified ME/C problem and associated critical barriers to progress?

- Describe the potential to increase awareness of best practices for the ME/C community.

## **Scored Review Criteria for Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation**

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

1. **Description of the Issue (15%):** evaluate the applicant's understanding of the program/issue to be addressed. See "Description of the Issue" under the Proposal Narrative section for more information.
2. **Project Design and Implementation (15%):** evaluate the strength of the proposal, including information provided in the goals, objectives, timelines, and deliverables web-based form. See "Project Design and Implementation" under the Proposal Narrative section for more information.
3. **Capabilities and Competencies (15%):** evaluate the applicant's administrative and technical capacity to successfully accomplish the goals and objectives. See "Capabilities and Competencies" under the Proposal Narrative section for more information.
4. **Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures (15%):** evaluate the applicant's understanding of the performance data reporting requirements and the plan for collecting the required data. See "Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures" under the Proposal Narrative section for more information.
5. **Budget (10%):** evaluate for completeness, cost effectiveness, and allowability (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities).
  - Describe the total cost of the project relative to the perceived benefit (cost effectiveness).
  - Demonstrate the appropriateness of the budget relative to the level of effort.
  - Describe the use of existing resources to conserve costs.
  - Describe how the proposed budget aligns with the proposed project activities.
6. **Other Expected Outcomes/Potential Impact (30%):**
  - Describe the expected outcome(s) of the project, including the accreditation processes anticipated to be completed, initiated, and/or assisted through the program.
  - Describe the potential for significantly improved understanding of the stated issue. If the goals of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or MDI practice be improved?
  - Describe the likelihood that the project will exert a sustained, powerful influence on the MDI field as it relates to criminal justice.
  - Describe the potential for innovative solutions to address (all or a significant part of) the stated criminal justice issue. How will successful completion change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, or services that drive MDI as it relates to criminal justice? How will a successful project address the identified ME/C problem and associated critical barriers to progress?
  - Describe the potential to increase awareness of best practices for the ME/C community.

- Describe the potential to improve understanding of the scientific rationale underpinning existing ME/C practices.
- Describe the potential for innovative protocols to increase the efficiency, accuracy, reliability, or cost-effectiveness of MDIs.

### **Other Review Criteria/Factors**

Other important considerations for OJP include geographic diversity, strategic priorities (specifically including, but not limited to, those priority areas already mentioned, if applicable), available funding, past performance, and the extent to which the Budget web-based form accurately explains project costs that are reasonable, necessary, and otherwise allowable under federal law and applicable federal cost principles. Costs are allowable when they are reasonable, allocable to, and necessary for the performance of the federal award, and when they comply with the funding statute and agency requirements (to include the conditions of the award), including the cost principles set out in the [Uniform Requirements 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart E](#).

### **Risk Criteria/Factors**

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. 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 is listed in SAM.gov 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 that appears in the non-public segment of the integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.gov.

Important note on Responsibility/Qualification Data (formerly FAPIIS): An applicant may review and comment on any information about its organization that currently appears in SAM.gov and was entered by a federal awarding agency. OJP will consider such comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in SAM.gov, in its assessment of the risk posed by the applicant.

### **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. Absent explicit statutory authorization or written delegation of authority to the contrary, all final award decisions will be made by the Assistant Attorney General, who may consider not only peer review ratings and BJA 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 30. See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for information on award notifications and instructions.

### **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 (programs or practices that have been evaluated as effective), see the [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 on what should be included in the application, see the [Application Resource Guide](#) section entitled “Information Regarding Potential Evaluation of Programs and Activities.”

### **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 [Application Resource Guide](#).

### **Civil Rights Compliance**

If a successful applicant accepts funding from OJP—as a recipient of OJP funding—that award recipient must comply with certain federal civil rights laws that prohibit it from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, or disability in how the recipient delivers its program’s services or benefits and in its employment practices. The civil rights laws that may be applicable to the award include Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), the nondiscrimination provisions of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (Safe Streets Act), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. These and other federal civil rights laws are discussed in greater detail here: [Overview of Legal Requirements Generally Applicable to OJP Grants and Cooperative Agreements - FY 2024 Awards](#) under the “Civil Rights Requirements” section, and additional resources are available from the [OJP Office for Civil Rights](#).

Part of complying with civil rights laws that prohibit national origin discrimination includes recipients taking reasonable steps to ensure that people who are limited in their English proficiency (LEP) because of their national origin have meaningful access to a recipient’s program and activity. An LEP person is one whose first language is not English and who has a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English. To help recipients meet this obligation to serve LEP persons, DOJ has published a number of resources, including a language access assessment and planning tool, which are available at <https://www.lep.gov/language-access-planning>. Additional resources are available at <https://www.ojp.gov/program/civil-rights-office/limited-english-proficient-lep>.

If the award recipient proposes a program or activity that would deliver services or benefits to LEP individuals, the recipient may use grant funds to support the costs of taking reasonable steps (e.g., interpretation or translation services) to provide meaningful access. Similarly, recipients are responsible for ensuring that their programs and activities are readily accessible to qualified individuals with disabilities. Applicants for OJP funding must allocate grant funds or explain how other available resources will be used to ensure meaningful and full access to their programs. For example, grant funds can be used to support American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter services for deaf or hard of hearing individuals or the purchase of adaptive

equipment for individuals with mobility or cognitive disabilities. For resources, see <http://www.ADA.gov> or contact OJP.

### **Financial Management and System of Internal Controls**

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

### **Information Technology Security Clauses**

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

### **General Information About Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements**

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

Required reports. Award recipients 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 [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 Synopsis.

### **Other Information**

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

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

#### **Provide Feedback to OJP**

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

### **Performance Measures**

Performance measures for BJA's Strengthening the ME/C System Program can be found here: <https://bja.ojp.gov/funding/performance-measures/MEC-Measures.pdf>.

## Application Checklist

### BJA FY 2024 Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System 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*

- Confirm your entity's registration in the [System Award Management \(SAM.gov\)](#) is active through the solicitation period; submit a new or renewal registration in SAM.gov if needed (see [Application Resource Guide](#))

### *Register in Grants.gov*

- Acquire an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and a Grants.gov username and password (see [Application Resource Guide](#))
- Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Business Point of Contact (E-Biz POC) (see [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)
- Select the correct Competition ID
- Access the funding opportunity and application package (see Step 7 in the [Application Resource Guide](#))
- Sign up for Grants.gov email [notifications](#) (optional) (see [Application Resource Guide](#))
- Read [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#) (about [browser compatibility and special characters in file names](#))
- Read OJP policy and guidance on conference approval, planning, and reporting available at <https://www.ojp.gov/funding/financialguidedo/iii-postaward-requirements#6q3y8> (see [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 2024 Awards](#)" in the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#).

### *Review the Scope Requirement*

- The federal amount requested is within the allowable limit(s) of:
  - Purpose Area 1: Forensic Pathology Fellowships
    - 1 Fellowship = Up to \$150,000
    - 2 Fellowships = Up to \$300,000
  - Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation = Up to \$100,000

### *Review Eligibility Requirement*

- Review the "Eligibility" section in the Synopsis and "Eligibility Information" section in the solicitation.

## Application Step 1

After registering with SAM.gov, 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 BJA or Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726, 606-545-5035, [Grants.gov customer support](#), or [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov) regarding technical difficulties (see [“Application Resource Guide” section on Experiencing Unforeseen Technical Issues](#))

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***

- Entity and User Verification (First Time Applicant)
- Standard Applicant information (SF-424 information from Grants.gov)
- Proposal Abstract\*
- Proposal Narrative\*
- Application Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Timeline web-based form

### ***Budget and Associated Documentation***

- Budget Detail Narrative and web-based form\*
- Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (see [Application Resource Guide](#))
- Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable) (see [Application Resource Guide](#))
- Disclosure of Process related to Executive Compensation (see [Application Resource Guide](#))

### ***Additional Application Components***

- Accreditation Documentation – For Purpose Area 1: Forensic Pathology Fellowships (if applicable)
- Accreditation Documentation – For Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation (if applicable)
- Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable) (see [Application Resource Guide](#))
- Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity (see [Application Resource Guide](#))
- Request and Justification for Employee Compensation; Waiver (if applicable) (see [Application Resource Guide](#))
- Memorandum of Understanding (if applicable)
- Letters of Support



- Position descriptions and resumes
- List of all proposed project staff members
- List of procurement contracts (if applicable)
- Organizational chart
- Potential Environmental Impact Coversheet and Checklist – National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

### **Disclosures and Assurances**

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

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

### **Review, Certify, and Submit Application in JustGrants**

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

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

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



## **Standard Solicitation Resources**

[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.