

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



Solicitation Title: BJA FY24 Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence
Assistance Listing Number: 16.820
Grants.gov Opportunity Number: O-BJA-2024-172014
Solicitation Release Date: March 6, 2024
Step 1: Application Grants.gov Deadline: 8:59 p.m. Eastern Time on April 29, 2024
Step 2: Application JustGrants Deadline: 8:59 p.m. Eastern Time on May 6, 2024

Contents

Synopsis.....	4
Program Description Overview	4
Funding Category	4
Eligibility.....	4
Agency Contact Information	4
Pre-Application Information Session.....	5
Application Submission Information.....	5
Registration	5
Submission.....	5
Program Description.....	6
Program Description Overview	6
Statutory Authority	6
Specific Information	6
Solicitation Goals and Objectives	8
Goals.....	8
Objectives	8
Category 1.....	8
Category 2.....	8
Priority Areas	8
Federal Award Information	9
Awards, Amounts, and Durations.....	9
Continuation Funding Intent.....	10

Availability of Funds	10
Type of Award	10
Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement	10
Eligibility Information	10
How To Apply	11
Application Resources	11
How To Apply	11
Registration	11
Submission.....	11
Submission Dates and Time	12
Experiencing Unforeseen Technical Issues Preventing Submission of an Application (Technical Waivers)	12
Application and Submission Information.....	13
Content of Application Submission and Available Surveys	13
Content of the SF-424 in Grants.gov	13
Content of the JustGrants Application Submission	14
Application Review Information	25
Review Criteria	25
Review Process	26
Federal Award Administration Information.....	26
Federal Award Notices	26
Evidence-Based Programs or Practices	26
Information Regarding Potential Evaluation of Programs and Activities	26
Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements.....	26
Civil Rights Compliance	26
Financial Management and System of Internal Controls	27
Information Technology Security Clauses.....	27
General Information About Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements	27
Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s).....	28
Other Information.....	28
Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. §§ 552 and 552a).....	28
Provide Feedback to OJP	28
Performance Measures	28
Application Checklist.....	29
Pre-Application.....	29

Application Step 129
Application Step 230
Review, Certify, and Submit Application in JustGrants31
Standard Solicitation Resources.....32

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, protects the public from crime and evolving threats, and builds trust between law enforcement and the community.

With this solicitation, BJA seeks to assist in defraying the costs associated with postconviction case review, evidence location, and DNA testing in violent felony cases (as defined by state law) where the results of such testing might show actual innocence. The program ensures the availability of fair and impartial administration of justice to individuals who may have been unjustly convicted.

This program furthers the DOJ's mission to uphold the rule of law, to keep our country safe, and to protect civil rights.

Funding Category

Competition ID	Competition Title (Category Name)	Expected Number of Awards	Dollar Amount for Award	Performance Start Date	Performance Duration (Months)
C-BJA-2024-00018-PROD	Category 1: Case reviews and DNA testing	10	\$1,000,000	10/01/2024	36
C-BJA-2024-00019-PROD	Category 2: Improve preservation of biological evidence and/or modernization of record storage systems	2	\$500,000	10/01/2024	36

Eligibility

- State governments
- City or township governments
- Public- and state-controlled institutions of higher education
- County governments

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.

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. 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. 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. 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

BJA will hold a webinar on this solicitation on April 3rd at 3:00 PM ET. This call will provide a detailed overview of the solicitation and allow interested applicants to ask questions. Preregistration is required for all participants. Register by clicking on this [link](#) and following the instructions. To use the time most efficiently, BJA encourages participants to review this solicitation and submit any questions in advance, and no later than April 2, 2024, to forensicstta@rti.org with the subject “Questions for *FY2024 Solicitation Webinar – Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence (Postconviction) Program*.” The session will be recorded and available on <https://www.forensicstta.org/programs/postconviction-testing-of-dna-evidence-postconviction-program/>.

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 by the JustGrants application deadline. See the [Submission Dates and Time](#) section for application deadlines.

Program Description

Program Description Overview

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

With this solicitation, BJA seeks to assist in defraying the costs associated with postconviction case review, evidence location, and DNA testing in violent felony cases (as defined by state law) where the results of such testing might show actual innocence. This program furthers the DOJ's mission by ensuring the availability of fair and impartial administration of justice to individuals who may have been unjustly convicted.

Statutory Authority

Any awards under this solicitation would be made under statutory authority provided by a full-year appropriations act for FY 2024. As of the writing of this solicitation, the Department of Justice is operating under a short-term "Continuing Resolution;" no full-year appropriation for the Department has been enacted for FY 2024.

Specific Information

Under Category 1, BJA seeks to help defray the costs (e.g., additional personnel, overtime, testing supplies, and services) associated with postconviction DNA testing for violent felony offenses (as defined by state law) in which actual innocence might be demonstrated. Funds may be used to review suitable postconviction cases and locate and analyze biological evidence.

Under Category 2, BJA provides funding to assist entities to improve the preservation of biological evidence and/or modernize record retention for postconviction violent felony offenses (as defined by state law) in which actual innocence might be demonstrated.

BJA will prioritize applications for Category 1 for funding over those in Category 2. Once funding decisions for Category 1 are complete, remaining funding will be distributed to the relevant applications in Category 2, as appropriate.

Definitions

For the purposes of this solicitation, the following are defined:

Case Identification

Performing outreach or initial screening activities, other than "case review" as defined below, designed to identify postconviction cases of violent felony offenses (as defined by state law) where DNA analysis might demonstrate actual innocence.

Case Review

Review of files or documentation of postconviction cases of violent felony offenses (as defined by state law) by appropriate persons (e.g., prosecutors, public defenders, law enforcement personnel, and medical examiners) to determine whether biological evidence exists that might, through DNA analysis, demonstrate the actual innocence of the person previously convicted. This includes actions such as, but not limited to, document review, filing of petitions/motions with the court, and litigation following receipt of DNA results and up to the point of exoneration, dismissal of charges, and acceptance of Alford plea.

CODIS

The Combined DNA Index System and the generic term used to describe the Federal Bureau of Investigation's program of support for criminal justice DNA databases, as well as the software used to run these databases.

DNA Analysis

Includes the handling, screening, laboratory testing, profile interpretation, and reporting of samples containing DNA. DNA analysis may be conducted on evidence or known samples.

DNA Profile

Genetic sequence related to an individual contributor. One case may generate one or more profiles.

Evidence

Material collected from the crime scene. This does not include known samples (e.g., buccal swabs) from the victim and/or postconviction claimant.

Evidence Item

Original item recovered from the crime scene. Swabbings/cuttings taken from the evidence item are considered subsets of that evidence item.

Evidence Location

Seeking to locate physical biological evidence that, through DNA analysis, might demonstrate actual innocence. It includes activities such as the searching of files, storage facilities, and evidence rooms.

Familial DNA Searching

An intentional or deliberate search of the DNA database conducted after a routine search for the purpose of potentially identifying close biological relatives of the unknown forensic sample associated with the crime scene profile.

Forensic Genetic Genealogy

The combination of genetic analysis with traditional historical and genealogical research to study family history. For forensic investigations, it can be used to identify remains by tying the DNA to a family with a missing person or to point to the likely identity of a perpetrator.

NDIS

The National DNA Index System, which is a component of CODIS, containing the DNA profiles contributed by federal, state, and local participating forensic laboratories. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Federal Government, the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory, and Puerto Rico participate in NDIS.

Postconviction DNA Cases in Which an Evidence Search Was Conducted

Any activity intended to identify the location of evidence pertaining to a particular case. It includes physical searches or paperwork reviews.

Postconviction DNA Cases in Which Biological Evidence Was Found

Cases for which physical evidence was located that could reasonably be submitted for DNA testing. This includes evidence not previously tested and evidence that may have been previously tested with methods not advanced enough to provide conclusive results.

Postconviction DNA Cases in Which Biological Evidence Was Determined to Have Been Destroyed

Cases for which a final determination has been made that the evidence was destroyed and that no further attempts will be made to locate this evidence under this award. Generally, records may show that the evidence was destroyed.

Postconviction DNA Cases in Which Biological Evidence Was Determined to Be Missing

Cases for which a final determination has been made that the evidence was lost and that no further attempts will be made to locate this evidence under this award. "Missing" evidence is declared after thorough searches in several possible locations and without finding the evidence at the last recorded location.

Viable DNA Profile

A full or partial DNA profile, or mitochondrial DNA sequence taken from an evidence item that can be uploaded to CODIS or is otherwise statistically relevant and could be used to compare against other DNA profiles such as the postconviction claimant's profile. One case may generate one or more profiles.

Solicitation Goals and Objectives

Goals

This program's primary goal is to assist states and units of local government with postconviction DNA testing in cases of violent felony offenses where actual innocence might be demonstrated.

Objectives

Category 1

Program objectives for Category 1 are to:

1. Identify potential postconviction DNA testing cases.
2. Review appropriate postconviction cases to identify those in which DNA testing could prove the actual innocence of a person convicted of a violent felony offense as defined by state law.
3. Locate biological evidence associated with such postconviction cases.
4. Perform DNA analysis of appropriate biological evidence and report and review the DNA test results.

Category 2

Program objectives for Category 2 are to:

1. Locate, record, store, and retain biological evidence in adjudicated cases in accordance with best practices.
2. Modernize evidence retention practices for biological evidence in accordance with best practices.
3. Modernize and digitize the storage of existing files and records in adjudicated cases.
4. Implement modern, digitized file and record retention systems.

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: 10 in Category 1; 2 in Category 2

Anticipated Maximum Dollar Amount per Award: up to \$1,000,000 in Category 1; up to \$500,000 in Category 2

Period of Performance Start Date: October 1, 2024

Period of Performance Duration (Months): 36

Anticipated Total Amount to Be Awarded Under This Solicitation: \$12,000,000

Additional information: While the maximum allowable funding amount is \$1,000,000, OJP encourages applicants, including those that are new or that have never before received a federal award, to submit a proposed budget that best supports their project objectives and

organizational capabilities, even if the proposed budget is at a lower amount than the maximum allowable funding level.

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

For eligibility information, [see the Synopsis section](#).

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 29, 2024, 8:59 PM ET.

The **full application** must be submitted in JustGrants by May 06, 2024, 8:59 PM ET.

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.
- JustGrants: contact the JustGrants Service Desk at 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 within **24 hours of the Grants.gov deadline** to request approval to submit after the deadline.

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

Waiver requests sent to the OJP Response Center must:

- describe the technical difficulties experienced (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)

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) 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. 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.

Proposal abstracts should:

- Identify the partner(s) involved in the project, if any.
- Identify the issues that the applicant jurisdiction is facing regarding postconviction DNA testing (e.g., postconviction review, number of requests, number of cases reviewed, locating relevant biological evidence).
- Identify the areas of focus for identifying postconviction DNA cases.

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 must include the following sections:

a. Description of the Issue

Category 1:

- Describe the challenges faced in conducting postconviction DNA analysis, including challenges in case review and identification, locating evidence, and DNA analysis.
- Demonstrate awareness of the relevance of DNA testing in postconviction cases.

Category2:

- Describe the challenges faced in locating case records and/or biological evidence in adjudicated cases.
- Demonstrate awareness of the relevance of DNA testing in postconviction cases.

b. Project Design and Implementation

Category1:

- Describe the strategy to address the challenges identified in the Description of the Issue, particularly any areas of specific concern and the relevance to the program's goals and objectives.
- Describe the implementation approach, including case review selection criteria and the target number of cases to be reviewed with award funds.
- Discuss how funding under this initiative will help to identify and test postconviction DNA cases and demonstrate an awareness of current methods for DNA analysis of

forensic evidence. Past performance successes may be noted but must not be a predominant part of the project design and implementation.

- Discuss how the applicant will improve the quality and efficacy of case reviews.
- Describe the feasibility of the proposed project, including the likelihood of completion within the proposed period of performance.
- Provide awareness of potential pitfalls and describe the mitigation strategies should pitfalls be encountered.
- Outline the applicant's innovation and creativity (where appropriate).

Category2:

- Describe the strategy to address the challenges identified in the Description of the Issue, particularly any areas of specific concern and the relevance to the program's goals and objectives.
- Describe the implementation approach, including specific timeframes of focus for relevant impacted cases (e.g., cases from 1970 to 1990). Provide a good faith estimate of the number of cases to be targeted for improved preservation of biological evidence and/or digitization of case records in adjudicated cases.
- Discuss how funding under this initiative will improve the review of postconviction cases involving DNA evidence.
- Discuss any policies or procedures that will be implemented to improve the preservation of biological evidence and/or digitization of case records in adjudicated cases.
- Describe the feasibility of the proposed project, including the likelihood of completion within the proposed period of performance.
- Provide awareness of potential pitfalls and describe the mitigation strategies should pitfalls be encountered.
- Outline the applicant's innovation and creativity (where appropriate).

Categories1 and 2:

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

Category1:

- Describe the management structure to implement the project, including staffing and key partners. Describe how the partners, if any, will work together to implement the key project elements. Provide information, if any, on past efforts and/or outcomes as a result of this partnership, and why it will enhance efforts in this area.
- Describe the qualifications and experience of the proposed staff.
- Describe the capability of staff and the applicant organization to manage the effort.
- Discuss the adequacy of the management plan.

Category2:

- Describe the management structure to implement the project, including staffing and key partners. Describe how the partners, if any, will work together to implement the

key project elements. Provide information, if any, on past efforts and/or outcomes as a result of this partnership, and why it will enhance efforts in this area.

- Provide information about collaboration or partnership with an entity in the Postconviction realm (e.g., Innocence Organization, Conviction Integrity Unit) to achieve project goals.
- Describe the qualifications and experience of the proposed staff.
- Describe the capability of staff and the applicant organization to manage the effort.
- Discuss the adequacy of the management plan.

Categories 1 and 2:

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 for more information on performance measurement activities.

BJA will require award recipients to submit performance measure data in the Performance Measurement Tool (PMT) and separately submit a semi-annual performance report 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, whereas others are the exact measures that every recipient will be expected to address.

e. Budget

Show that the budget is complete, cost effective, and allowable (e.g., reasonable, allocable, necessary for project activities). Make sure that all expenses are permitted.

All postconviction grantees are required to report specific programmatic measures (see the [“Performance Measures”](#) discussion in the Proposal Narrative discussion). In addition, the award recipients are asked to consider what other measures or metrics may be of use in demonstrating the successful outcome of the program/project.

All traditional (e.g., nongenetic genealogy) DNA analyses conducted using program funds must be performed by a laboratory (government-owned or fee-for-service) that is accredited, undergoes external audits at least once every 2 years, and demonstrates compliance with the applicable DNA Quality Assurance Standards established by the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. All DNA analyses conducted and profiles generated under this program must be maintained pursuant to any applicable federal privacy requirements.

Please note: No profiles generated with funding from this program may be entered into any nongovernmental DNA database without prior express written approval from BJA. This includes DNA databases used for forensic genetic genealogy.

Program activity involving Forensic Genetic Genealogical DNA Analysis and Searching (FGGS) is subject to the [DOJ Interim Policy on Forensic Genetic Genealogical DNA Analysis and Searching](#) or the final policy, when issued. See the “Performance Measures” section for additional required grantee reporting on FGGS activities.

Mandatory Training

Attendance at BJA’s Forensics Programs Grantees Meeting (Virtual Event): Award recipients must register for and attend BJA’s annual “virtual” 2-day forensics workshop for all recipients. Key personnel (up to three representatives per award recipient) will be expected to attend each annual meeting during the course of the grant period (starting in 2025). The workshops will focus on the elements of a successful project and key issues surrounding postconviction DNA testing.

[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 goal.

- **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](#)

All Postconviction grantees are required to report these [Postconviction performance measures](#) and content outlining the progress and impact of the project on a semi-annual basis. In addition, the applicant is asked to consider what other metrics may be of use in demonstrating the successful outcome of the program/project.

Program objectives and deliverables should be included in one timeline. Deliverables for this program include submission of performance data a list of which can be found in this link: [Postconviction performance measures](#).

Program objectives and deliverables should be included in one timeline.

[Budget and Associated Documentation](#)

Applicants proposing to direct a significant portion of project funds to a subrecipient(s) are expected to provide a breakdown and associated narrative of how the subrecipient(s) plans to use the funds.

Budget narratives demonstrate generally how the applicant will maximize cost effectiveness of grant expenditures, and they include budget breakdowns and narratives for any subgrantees proposed to receive a significant portion of funding.

Expenses That Are Permitted

- **Salary and benefits of additional employees**—Funds may be used for salaries and benefits of additional full- or part-time employees to the extent that such employees are directly engaged in case identification, case review, location of evidence, or DNA analysis of biological evidence OR directly engaged in modernization of evidence retention practices for biological evidence or modernization of the storage of existing files/records in adjudicated cases. Applicants should demonstrate whether any additional full- or part-time employees will be directly engaged in these activities.
- **Engage additional (temporary) personnel**—Funds may be used to obtain the temporary services of individuals (other than employees of the recipient) to perform case identification and case reviews, locate evidence, or perform DNA analyses of biological evidence in the crime laboratory OR modernization of evidence retention practices for biological evidence or modernization of the storage of existing files/records in adjudicated cases.
- **Overtime**—Funds may be used for employee overtime for the purpose of case identification, case review, location of evidence, or DNA analysis of biological evidence OR the modernization of evidence retention practices for biological evidence or modernization of the storage of existing files/records in adjudicated cases. Any payments for overtime must be in accordance with the applicable provisions of the [DOJ Grants Financial Guide](#).
- **Victim Advocates**—Funds may be used for victim advocates or victim treatment providers to engage in victim-centered notification, communication and support related activities to offer victims information about the criminal justice process. This is not for

direct therapeutic services or victim compensation. The term “victim”, in this sense, may be applied to the original crime victim and their direct family but also more generally to anyone impacted by the original case, including the person convicted of the offense, their direct family, and witnesses. A limit of no more than 10% of award funds may be used for this purpose and must be specifically outlined in the budget narrative.

- **Travel (limited)**—Funds may be used for reasonable travel expenses directly associated with case identification, case review, location of evidence, or DNA analysis of biological evidence; the modernization of evidence retention practices for biological evidence; or the modernization of the storage of existing files/records in adjudicated cases. Travel funds may also support attendance at allowable training activities as described under Training (limited) below. These costs must be in accordance with federal policy or an organizationally approved travel policy. The Office of the Chief Financial Officer reserves the authority to determine the reasonableness of the recipient's own established travel rates. Current federal travel policy and per diem rate information are available at www.gsa.gov/perdiem.
- **Computer equipment**—Funds may be used to upgrade, replace, lease, or purchase computer hardware or software (including on-premises and/or cloud-based servers) that will be used exclusively for case identification, case review, location of evidence, or DNA analysis of biological evidence. This includes equipment, such as document scanners, used for modernizing and digitizing the storage of existing files and records.
- **Laboratory supplies**—Funds may be used to acquire laboratory supplies for DNA analysis of biological evidence. The proposal must clearly demonstrate that the types and number of supplies requested are appropriate for the proposed caseload. Note that award recipients whose proposals involve the purchase or use of chemicals may encounter delays in the release of award funds pending satisfactory completion of the [National Environmental Protection Act \(NEPA\)](#) review process.
- **Evidence Management/Preservation/Tracking Software, Supplies and Equipment**—Funds may be used to acquire software and/or supplies (e.g., evidence packaging) and/or equipment (e.g., storage shelves, freezers) to improve the tracking and preservation of biological evidence. The proposal must clearly demonstrate the necessity of the proposed software/supplies/equipment to improve preservation of biological evidence. Note that BJA recognizes that this implementation may also positively impact the tracking and preservation of non-adjudicated cases and cases without biological evidence; however, the primary focus must be for the preservation of biological evidence in adjudicated violent criminal offenses.
- **Procurement from private laboratories of DNA analyses**—Funds may be used for contracts with accredited fee-for-service laboratories to conduct DNA analysis of biological evidence. Note that award recipients whose proposals involve the use of funds for DNA testing services may encounter delays in the release of award funds pending satisfactory completion of the [National Environmental Protection Act \(NEPA\)](#) review process.
- **Training (limited)**—In limited circumstances, funds may be used for postconviction training directly related to case identification, case review, location of biological evidence, and DNA analysis of biological evidence. Funds for this purpose must be used only for topics directly associated with case identification, case review, location of biological evidence, or DNA analysis of biological evidence OR modernization of

evidence retention practices for biological evidence or modernization of the storage of existing files/records in adjudicated cases. The proposal must clearly demonstrate that the proposed training directly supports the program's purpose areas, and is related directly to the job position and duties of the individual(s) receiving the training.

Expenses That Are Not Permitted

Among other things, funds may not be used for:

- Costs associated with civil litigation related to the original criminal conviction.
- Salaries, benefits, or overtime for staff who are not directly engaged in case identification, case review, location of biological evidence, or DNA analysis of biological evidence or directly engaged in modernization of evidence retention practices for biological evidence or modernization of the storage of existing files/records in adjudicated cases.
- Laboratory equipment, instrumentation, and software such as, but not limited to, genetic analyzers, DNA extraction robotics and probabilistic genotyping software, except as described in "Expenses That Are Permitted" above.
- Construction.
- Renovation.
- Office furnishings.
- Witness travel.
- General litigation training or training that is not relevant to postconviction work involving DNA.
- Direct administrative expenses that exceed 5% of the federal portion of the award.

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

Funding Restrictions

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

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 \(if applicable\)](#)

This notice of funding opportunity expressly modifies the Application Resource Guide by not incorporating its "Disclosure of Process Related to Executive Compensation" provisions. Applicants to this funding opportunity are not required to provide this disclosure.

Additional Application Components

The applicant will attach the additional requested documentation in JustGrants.

[Curriculum Vitae or Resumes \(if applicable\)](#)

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

[Memoranda of Understanding \(MOUs\) and Other Supportive Documents \(if applicable\)](#)

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

Each MOU or letter of intent should include the following: (1) names of the organizations involved in the agreement; (2) what service(s) and other work will be performed under the agreement by what organization; (3) duration of the agreement.

Subcontracts, MOUs, or letters of intent should be submitted as one separate attachment to the application.

[Certification as to Provision of Postconviction DNA Testing and Preservation of Biological Evidence](#)

If an award is made, prior to receiving award funds, the recipient must submit an express [certification](#) from the chief legal officer of the state (typically the attorney general) that the state:

1. Provides postconviction DNA testing of specified biological evidence under a state statute, or under state rules, regulations, or practices, for persons convicted after trial and under a sentence of imprisonment or death for a state offense of murder or forcible rape, in a manner intended to ensure a reasonable process for resolving claims of actual innocence.
2. Preserves biological evidence secured in relation to the investigation or prosecution of a state offense of murder or forcible rape, under a state statute, local ordinances, or state or local rules, regulations, or practices, in a manner intended to ensure that

reasonable measures are taken by all jurisdictions within the state to preserve such evidence.

Any certification that is submitted must be personally executed by the chief legal officer of the state after a determination that the certification may properly be made. Certification must be provided on the BJA-provided template found [here](#). Although it may be submitted with the application package, submission of this certification is not required at the time of application. If an award is made, access to award funds will be withheld until this certification is received and approved by BJA.

Note to all applicants, in particular applicants proposing postconviction DNA testing projects involving cases outside of the applicant's state: The certification must be executed by the chief legal officer of the appropriate state for **each** state for which postconviction cases are sought to be funded consistent with this solicitation. Funds will not be made available to applicants (if awarded) that fail to submit a properly executed certification(s).

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 be responsive to the scope of the solicitation.
- The application must include all items necessary to meet the basic minimum requirements.

Merit Review Criteria

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

- Description of the Issue (20%): evaluate the applicant's understanding of the program/issue to be addressed.
- Project Design and Implementation (50%): evaluate the strength of the proposal, including information provided in the goals, objectives, timelines, and deliverables web-based form.
- Capabilities and Competencies (15%): evaluate the applicant's administrative and technical capacity to successfully accomplish the goals and objectives.
- Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures (5%): evaluate the applicant's understanding of the performance data reporting requirements and the plan for collecting the required data.
- Budget (10%): evaluate for completeness, cost effectiveness, and allowability (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities).

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

All postconviction grantees are required to report specific programmatic metrics (see the “Performance Measures” discussion).

Application Checklist

BJA FY24 Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence

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#6g3y8> (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 \$1,000,000.

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 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](#))

Additional Application Components

- Request and Justification for Employee Compensation; Waiver (if applicable) (see [Application Resource Guide](#))
- [Certification\(s\) as to Provision of Postconviction DNA Testing and Preservation of Biological Evidence](#) (if available; not required at time of application)
- Memorandum of Understanding (if applicable)
- Resumes of key personnel (if applicable)
- List of procurement contracts (if applicable)
- Organizational chart (if applicable)

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 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.

[Weekly Training Webinars](#) are advertised here and provide opportunities for users to receive topic-specific training, direct technical assistance, and support on JustGrants system functionality.