

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



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**Solicitation Title:** BJA FY24 Upholding the Rule of Law and Preventing Wrongful Convictions Program

**Assistance Listing Number:** 16.746

**Grants.gov Opportunity Number:** O-BJA-2024-172049

**Solicitation Release Date:** March 20, 2024

**Step 1: Application Grants.gov Deadline:** 8:59 p.m. Eastern Time on May 15, 2024

**Step 2: Application JustGrants Deadline:** 8:59 p.m. Eastern Time on May 22, 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, protects the public from crime and evolving threats, and builds trust between law enforcement and the community.

With this solicitation, BJA seeks to support efforts by both wrongful conviction review (WCR) entities, which represent individuals with post-conviction claims of innocence to review individual cases, and conviction integrity or review units (CIUs) to enhance criminal justice system integrity. This includes a category to select a training and technical assistance (TTA) provider to ensure WCR and CIUs entities and the field obtain the skills, training, and information on the latest practices to safeguard the integrity of convictions and support post-conviction review of claims of wrongful convictions. The TTA provider will also build and maintain a database for the field on exonerations.

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-2024-00026-PROD	Category 1: Wrongful Conviction Review Entity-Led Strategy (WCR Entity-Led Strategy)	9	\$600,000	10/1/24	36
C-BJA-2024-00027-PROD	Category 2: Prosecutor/Conviction Integrity Unit-Led Partnerships with Wrongful Conviction Review Entities (CIU-Unit-Led Partnerships)	2	\$600,000	10/1/24	36
C-BJA-2024-00028-PROD	Category 3: Wrongful Conviction Review/Conviction Integrity Unit Training and Technical Assistance (WCR/CIU TTA)	1	\$1,200,000	10/1/24	24

## Eligibility

### For Category 1 and 2

- State governments
- Special district governments
- City or township governments
- County governments
- Native American tribal organizations (other than Federally recognized tribal governments)
- Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized)
- 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
- Public- and State-controlled institutions of higher education
- Private institutions of higher education
- Other

### **Other**

State, county, or local public defender offices that have in-house post-conviction representation programs that show demonstrable experience and competence in litigating post-conviction claims of innocence. If the applicant is not a WCR entity, they must be partnered with one.

### **For Category 3**

Eligible applicants are limited to entities that have experience and expertise in administering conviction integrity and review units or experience in reviewing cases of post-conviction and appeal claims of innocence such as those applicants in Category 1 and 2. The following entities are eligible to apply:

- Public- and State-controlled institutions of higher education
- Private institutions of higher education, other than institutions of higher education
- 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

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.

BJA may choose to fund applications submitted under this FY 2024 solicitation in future fiscal years, dependent on, among other considerations, the merit of the applications and the availability of appropriations.

### **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**

BJA will hold a webinar on this solicitation on April 11, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. ET. This call will provide a detailed overview of the solicitation and allow interested applicants to ask questions. [Preregistration](#) is required for all participants. To use the time most efficiently, BJA encourages participants to review this solicitation prior to the BJA FY24 WCR Webinar. The session will be recorded and available on the BJA [Funding Webinars](#) page.

### **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 solicitation [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 solicitation [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 solicitation [Submission Dates and Time](#) section for application deadlines.

# Program Description

## Program Description Overview

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 support efforts by both wrongful conviction review (WCR) entities, which represent individuals with post-conviction claims of innocence to review individual cases, and conviction integrity or review units (CIUs) to enhance criminal justice system integrity. This includes a category to select a training and technical assistance (TTA) provider to ensure WCR and CIUs entities and the field obtain the skills, training, and information on the latest practices to safeguard the integrity of convictions and support post-conviction review of claims of wrongful convictions. The TTA provider will also build and maintain a database for the field on exonerations.

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

## 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.

## Specific Information

The purpose of the Upholding the Rule of Law and Preventing Wrongful Convictions (ROL/WCR) Program is to enhance criminal justice system integrity through support to WCR entities that represent individuals with post-conviction claims of innocence to review their potentially legitimate cases, as well as support to CIUs. The program also promotes partnerships between CIUs and WCR entities, where appropriate, to support comprehensive approaches that both review wrongful conviction claims in topic areas—such as eyewitness identifications—where the risk for error is higher to reduce the risk for future error. Where possible, the ROL/WCR Program seeks to identify those who are actually guilty of the crimes at issue and bring justice to victim(s), thereby enhancing public safety.

By advancing methodologies and policies that address the underlying causes of wrongful convictions, ROL/WCR funding is intended to help wrongful conviction entities, prosecutors, law enforcement, defense counsel, and courts identify those actually guilty and develop training tools, policies, and procedures that can prevent wrongful convictions. The reviews may also result in the identification of systemic issues related to prior practices and errors, and/or new forensic practices that can contribute to preventing wrongful convictions. Public safety is adversely impacted by delays in the identification and apprehension of those actually guilty. Exonerations based on false testimony, for example, primarily occur in murder cases, meaning that those who commit the most violent crimes may remain on the street, potentially committing further crimes. ROL/WCR funding will support both the review of post-conviction claims of innocence and conviction integrity efforts by leaders, including prosecutors, to address violent crime and improve criminal prosecution, resulting in safer neighborhoods.

See these links for more information about [Innocence Organizations](#) and [Conviction Integrity Units](#).

ROL/WCR funding will support three categories:

**Category 1: WCR Entity-Led Strategy.** A strategy led by a WCR entity that focuses on review of post-conviction claims of innocence. Specifically:

- Jurisdictions with new or established WCR entities are encouraged to apply.
- The applicant's strategic plan should review, investigate, and adjudicate individual cases of post-conviction claims of innocence with a focus on those greatest at risk.
- Each applicant must describe how it will devote resources to coordinate the intake screening, investigation, and representation of post-conviction and appeals in innocence claims.
- The strategy should also include an assessment of the risk for wrongful conviction among the reviewed cases. This assessment should support setting criteria and prioritizing for review those at highest risk of wrongful conviction.
- The program can support a partnership with a prosecutor's office or CIU, documenting how applicants would coordinate relevant information-sharing of post-conviction claims of innocence. If the application includes this partnership, applicants must include a description of policies and procedures designed to avoid conflicts of interest and protect defendants' rights, including plans for obtaining waiver of attorney-client privilege and informed consent.

**Category 2: CIU-Led Partnerships.** A strategy led by state or local prosecutor offices or CIUs that focuses on the prevention of wrongful convictions and the review of post-conviction claims of innocence, which may include partnerships with WCR entities. If resources are needed for the partnering WCR entity, the WCR entity should apply for funds under Category 1. Specifically:

- Jurisdictions with established CIUs, as well as those starting new units, are encouraged to apply.
- Applications must propose to assess the risk and prevention of wrongful conviction through the collection and analysis of data on post-conviction claims of innocence and outcomes of appeals where error is found, as well as other relevant data such as attorney grievance trends and review of cases, identifying areas for risk and consideration for review and action.
- The wrongful conviction assessment should look at any vulnerabilities in the court system and create a process to systematically identify and review cases that meet the criteria for risk of wrongful conviction.
- CIU can support a partnership with WCR entity applying under Category 1. This partnership should have an attached Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Letter of Support (LOS) between the CIU and WCR entities documenting this partnership.
- CIU applicants must include description of policies and procedures designed to avoid conflicts of interest or perceptions of partiality, particularly with regard to the involvement in reviews of prosecutors who originally tried the case or participated in the prosecution. Applicants must include description of policies and procedures for handling evidence of prosecutorial misconduct, with a strong preference for referral to an independent entity once discovered.



Note: For both categories 1 and 2, all applicant organizations should show the capacity and commitment of their key partners to conduct this work, including demonstrable experience and competence with handling motions related to or legal representation in post-conviction claims of innocence and appeals.

**Category 3: WCR/CIU Training and Technical Assistance including Database of Exonerations.** This cooperative agreement will provide resources to support the delivery of national TTA to (1) assist Category 1 and 2 award recipients with the implementation of their projects and translating this knowledge to the field more broadly through training and webinars, tools, and web content; and (2) to share these resources with the field via online tools and the creation and/or enhancement and maintenance of a database of exonerations in state, local and tribal courts in the United States. BJA is seeking applicants that can bring the cross-cutting subject matter expertise needed, as well as demonstrate established experience in providing TTA, as outlined here and in the specific objectives and deliverables below.

Note: BJA's WCR/CIU Training and Technical Assistance may provide supplemental funding in the future to include training and technical assistance for postconviction DNA-related projects and grantees.

BJA oversees a large and active portfolio of TTA. Consistent with BJA making these awards as cooperative agreements, these awards will be led in close consultation and approval by BJA staff and leaders. Several principles guide BJA's TTA:

- **Informed by data, needs of the field, and research to provide efficient and consistent delivery of services.** TTA partners should actively gather input from grantees and the field and data on relevant crime issues to inform their approaches and the TTA plan's feasibility. Any proposed approaches should employ adult learning theory and research on effective practices, and leverage technology to enhance the quality of services.
- **Reach members of the field where they are and reach a broader audience.** TTA partners should ensure that their TTA strategies are fair, flexible, and can be useful for persons and agencies with varying levels of capacity and experience. TTA partners should have a diverse team of members who can effectively work with the field and bring creative ideas to expanding the impact of BJA's TTA.
- **Assess the TTA's impact and make refinements to better accomplish the TTA's goals.** TTA partners should have a plan to ensure their TTA strategies are implemented with fidelity and to assess how well those being served are engaged and applying what is learned. The partners should evaluate the intended outcomes to make refinements to their approach.
- **Anticipate BJA processes and approvals to proactively manage and share updates and current and relevant information with the field and grantees.** TTA partners should use a proactive project management approach to ensure: (1) the planning and problem solving are accomplishing grantees' goals; (2) BJA and its grantees are kept up to date on all progress made; (3) TTA is coordinated closely with other BJA partners; and (4) TTA partners make effective use of funds. In addition, the TTA partners should make all resources available to the field in addition to grantees and proactively market these resources.

BJA's FY 2023 Post-conviction Testing of DNA Evidence solicitation provides funding to eligible applicants to help defray costs associated with post-conviction DNA testing in cases of violent felony offenses where actual innocence might be demonstrated. For more information about this program, including eligibility, see [here](#).

Applicants looking primarily for funds for DNA testing should review that solicitation to determine eligibility for funds under that program.

To learn more about BJA's programs supporting Forensic Science visit our website [here](#).

## **Solicitation Goals and Objectives**

### **Goals**

To enhance and/or expand the capacity of WCR entities and CIUs and their criminal justice and victim services partners to better identify, assess, and manage post-conviction claims of innocence while translating lessons learned into practice to prevent future error and to bring justice for victims.

### **Objectives**

Ensure all grantees over the project period have BJA WCR/CIU TTA access to support the effective implementation of their projects to:

- Increase the number of case review requests received by the program.
- Increase and document the number of case reviews that result in an innocence exoneration by the program.
- Develop and enhance strong partnerships between entities and other criminal justice organizations and victim services.
- Develop and implement a wrongful conviction risk assessment process.
- Enhance capacity to identify and review high-risk cases.
- Enhance the expertise of the entities to support quality post-conviction and appellate legal representation in the identified cases.
- Enhance the ability to demonstrate the value of identifying appropriate suspects when convictions are overturned.
- Enhance the ability to demonstrate the value of seeking to overturn challenged convictions.
- Enhance the collection and analysis of data to support the prevention of error and enhance efforts to review and manage claims of innocence.

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.

Note: Addressing this priority area is one of many factors that OJP considers in making funding decisions. Receiving priority consideration does not guarantee an award.

## **Federal Award Information**

### **Awards, Amounts, and Durations**

Anticipated Number of Awards: 12

Category 1: 9

Category 2: 2

Category 3: 1

Anticipated Maximum Dollar Amount per Award:

Category 1: Up to \$600,000

Category 2: Up to \$600,000

Category 3: Up to \$1,200,000

Period of Performance Start Date: October 1, 2024

Period of Performance Duration per Award:

Category 1: 36 months

Category 2: 36 months

Category 3: 24 months

Anticipated Total Amount to Be Awarded Under This Solicitation: \$7,800,000

Additional Information: 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 and cooperative agreements. Cooperative agreements provide for OJP to have substantial involvement in carrying out award activities. 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 May 15, 2024, 8:59 p.m. ET. The **full application** must be submitted in JustGrants by May 22, 2024, 8:59 p.m. 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](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)
- Timeline web-based form (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, community and criminal justice partnerships, 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.

### ***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 15 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. Table, charts, and graphs included in the program narrative can be created in a legible font smaller than 12-point font and will be included in the total page limit.

The Proposal Narrative must include the following sections:

- a. Description of the Issue

#### **Category 1 and 2**

Identify the challenges the applicant faces in addressing cases with a risk for error resulting in wrongful conviction, including current cases being considered. What are the barriers to preventing wrongful conviction, and/or identifying claims of innocence and cases at risk for error, including trends in areas of risk for error and wrongful conviction? What are the challenges the applicant faces in implementing effective strategies to review and respond to claims of error? Describe the current resources the applicant has and any gaps in resources to support case reviews, including post-conviction claims of innocence and/or mitigating the risk of wrongful conviction. Describe how additional resources will assist the applicant's and any partner's ability to improve system integrity and improve public safety, as relevant.

For new programs, describe the issues faced by the applicant that resulted in the need for a new WCR or CIU effort to address the needs of the jurisdiction or target audience, including potential risks to public safety and security. How would the applicant and its partners benefit from this new program, including anticipated exonerations and support for the conviction integrity efforts of prosecutors?

Provide data on the estimated number of innocence claims and the areas of greatest risk for error in criminal cases in the target location and/or target topic. For current efforts, describe the exonerations resulting from the current or prior work of the CIU and/or WCR entity and trends in risk for error. If relevant, describe the applicant's planned or current intake policy, including how cases will be screened, and stages of case review. Include whether the applicant or jurisdiction has a current backlog of cases, and which of these would be the focus for this project. For existing projects, provide the number of cases processed in the last 2 calendar years (2022 and 2023), if any, and the case outcomes.

Describe any specific challenges or issues that impact the need in the jurisdiction(s) the applicant serves. Describe any national, regional, state, or local issues impacting the lack of adequate review in these cases in relation to the number of potential cases. Describe any new challenges you face as a result of the pandemic in identifying and addressing these needs and cases.

Describe any current partnerships or efforts to assess the areas of risk for wrongful conviction and to prevent error.

### **Category 3**

Describe the overall challenges WCR/CIU entities face in preventing wrongful conviction and/or identifying claims of innocence, and describe effective strategies implemented to address these challenges.

Describe data collected by WCR/CIU entities and how it is being used to determine trends associated with cases involving wrongful convictions and the impact of cases leading to exonerations.

Provide a thorough understanding of the need to gather and transfer knowledge, best practices, and information to the Wrongful Conviction entities, CIUs and the field, and the impact on enhancing system integrity and responding to violent crime.

Provide specific information on the project, to include an overview of any materials that need to be developed, as well as the information, areas of instruction, and/or technical assistance to be provided based on the demonstrated needs of the field. Topics may include forming a new unit to handle these cases, best practices and procedures for these units, building partnerships, evaluation/screening of innocence claims, forensic testing, expert consultation and testimony, and legal representation strategies. The applicant should consider other topics it believes need to be addressed.

#### b. Project Design and Implementation

### **Category 1 and 2**

Describe the strategy to address the needs identified in the “Description of the Issue” section, particularly any anticipated needs or areas of specific concern. Describe any area(s) of focus for the project (e.g., eyewitness evidence, confession documentation, forensic evidence; and/or geographic focus). Describe how the current or planned CIU and the WCR entity has and/or will work to review post-conviction claims of innocence and areas of risk for wrongful convictions, if applicable. Describe how they will use data, research, and analysis to support this work.

Attach a timeline and task plan outlining the key activities, which should be consistent with this narrative and will be considered as part of the peer review.

Describe whether the project design seeks to build capacity by hiring or building infrastructure to begin accepting cases, and whether the applicant currently has the capacity to accept cases or rather seeks to expand current caseloads. Describe any efforts to build or enhance conviction integrity efforts.

Discuss how funding under this initiative will address these concerns and reduce the risk of wrongful convictions and failure to hold the right individuals accountable. Discuss how the applicant will improve the quality and efficacy of case reviews, contribute to improvements in the efficiency of how claims are handled, reduce or mitigate risk for error and wrongful convictions, and/or support the rule of law and improve the overall administration of justice in the targeted jurisdiction and/or on the set of target cases.

Describe how the project differs, complements, or builds upon the efforts of other agencies or organizations in the region, state, or locality that are also involved with potentially innocent defendants in post-conviction proceedings.

Describe how DNA and other forensic evidence will be used in the project.

Describe how the program will either increase the number of wrongful convictions identified and post-conviction litigation undertaken to exonerate those wrongly convicted and/or to prevent future wrongful convictions.

### **Category 3**

Describe the applicant's strategy to address: (1) the needs identified in the Description of the Issue and (2) the objectives and deliverables under the Program-specific Information section. Provide a complete description of TTA activities and the methods of intended delivery.

These activities and strategies should be consistent with BJA's expectations of its TTA partners. The selected TTA provider will support all grantees (categories 1 and 2) and develop resources for the field at large. The provider will be expected to proactively work with grantees to support successful implementation, including to:

- Develop an individualized TTA work plan for each grantee based on the goals outlined in its application. The work plan should be presented to each grantee, revised as needed, and agreed to by the grantee. The work plan should include a checklist to help each grantee execute key tasks. Please note that BJA may require the selected provider to submit for review and approval the proposed TTA plans, protocols, or strategies in advance of disseminating them to and implementing them with the grantees.
- Support grantees in completing their implementation guides and ensure the grantees address governance, program design, performance measure collection, and sustainability.
- Assign each grantee a TTA coach to assess and identify its TTA needs. The coach will prepare a summary of the findings and recommended next steps for the grantee in order to improve program performance which will be shared with BJA. Each coach should have the skills and time to support their assigned grantees to achieve their goals. They should have consistent, scheduled monthly calls with their grantees, although email check-ins may be substituted occasionally, as logistics require. The assigned coaches must provide follow-up information regarding the grantees' implementation of the recommendations. Prior to assigning coaches, the TTA provider must provide BJA with a list of TTA coaches/consultants and their expertise.
- Undertake efforts to anticipate, quickly identify, and address challenges that arise during TTA delivery. When challenges arise, the TTA provider should engage in strategies like case conferencing to harness the collective knowledge of its TTA coaches.
- Include in all training provided with BJA funding a mechanism for pre- and post-testing of knowledge and other impact assessments.
- Have staff with sufficient subject matter expertise to assist grantees in the execution of their projects. Staff members should have the necessary technical skill sets and experience to effectively coach grantees and assist them in reaching their goals, including:

- A set of diverse staff, trainers, and/or subject matter experts who reflect a mix of experiences and perspective to be able to effectively reach the communities and practitioners they will serve.
- A diverse set of providers, models, and/or subject matter experts with the skills to ensure culturally responsive programming for those involved in the criminal justice system who would benefit from the TTA strategies and related interventions.
- Knowledge of and a plan to manage BJA's approval and reporting processes for conferences, training for the field, publications, and online tools.
- When needed, an external expert. To this end, the TTA provider must choose from a range of vetted local and national subject experts, including practitioners, academics, and federal partners. The TTA provider must identify and maintain a list of subject matter experts whose expertise and experience best fit the needs of the grantees. With BJA's approval, the TTA provider will assign these experts to assist grantees and report on and monitor the TTA provided. The roles of the subject matter experts will vary across engagements, so the TTA provider must develop protocols to define the scope of their roles when needed (e.g., advisor to TTA provider, direct assistance to grantees, participating in webinars).
- Ground all strategies in a trauma-informed approach and, where applicable, use restorative justice principles and strategies that center the needs and elevate the voices of the individuals most directly involved in an incident of harm, as well as focus on issues of equity in the justice system response.
- Submit written reports to BJA regarding the TTA provided and the status of ongoing activities.
- Serve as a thought leader and information clearinghouse for relevant research and best practices. It must:
  - Create knowledge diffusion products (e.g., fact sheets, webinars) and disseminate them through BJA's networks. All products must be 508 compliant.
  - One specific set of deliverables must be a plan to assess current exoneration databases and related analyses, and to recommend an approach to build and/or enhance and maintain this database for the field as a resource, considering other efforts in the field; and implement this plan upon approval.
  - Convene grantee learning communities, based on their respective projects/programs, to explore best practices and lessons learned.
  - Disseminate best practices and lessons learned by attending and presenting at national, state, local, tribal, or other conferences and events related to award activities where officials and other stakeholders can learn about successful strategies.
- Proactively build field knowledge and capacity in the areas outlined in the solicitation. This includes coordinating and supporting a presence at national

meetings and conferences via workshops, panel presentations, and briefings. The provider must also:

- Assist grantees in the collection of performance measures data for submission into the Performance Measurement Tool (PMT) and JustGrants.
- Propose to and work with BJA on tailoring the TTA strategy to meet emerging needs and trends based on the performance reporting trends and TTA needs assessments.
- Maintain a listserv of grantees, subgrantees, and key contacts responsible for undertaking grant and related activities, including interested state, local, and tribal contacts, and federal and national partners.
- Prepare and submit end-of-year annual reports, in addition to other required reporting. BJA will provide the template for the provider to fill out and submit for BJA review. The report will include best practices and success stories, including site-based activity. These reports are on the calendar year and due Jan 31, 2024.

For all categories, 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

**Category 1 and 2**

Describe the management structure for implementation of the strategy, 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.

Demonstrate the overall capability to implement the project successfully. Describe the specific qualifications of all staff and partners, including work to analyze and prioritize cases, to assess trends and build knowledge. If the applicant is planning to hire staff, provide job posting descriptions and describe the anticipated recruitment efforts. Describe how this structure will be tied to the strategy identified in the Project Design and Implementation section. Provide position descriptions outlining the roles and responsibilities of the key positions and résumés for current staff (as an attachment).

**Category 3**

Fully describe the applicant's capabilities to implement the TTA within the established timeline to enable the timely and effective delivery of the information, materials, training, and assistance.

Provide an overview of the competencies of the staff and partners assigned to develop and deliver all the information, instruction, and technical assistance specifically required by this category. Demonstrate the applicant's experience in addressing wrongful

conviction cases and the elements therein, working with prosecutors in the area of conviction review, and the delivery of TTA on a national level. The applicant must include discussion of the organization's experience with and capacity to provide effective, innovative training and technical assistance to the audience being served.

Describe the capabilities, competencies, and management structure for implementation of the national training and assistance strategy, to include staffing.

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

**Category 1 and 2**

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.

Applicants should describe what success may look like and how success may be measured or conveyed to a broader audience.

All applicants should indicate their willingness and ability to collect and report performance and outcome data through BJA's reporting tools (no personally identifiable information will be collected).

Applicants are expected to report on behalf of any subawardees.

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.

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

**Category 3**

Post award, grant recipients will be required to submit performance metric data semiannually through BJA's online TTA Reporting Portal. More information on the reporting requirements can be found at: <https://bja.ojp.gov/funding/performance-measures/bja-training-and-technical-assistance-providers>.

The performance measures can be found at: <https://bja.ojp.gov/performance-measures/tta-deliverable-performance-metrics.pdf>.

### 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

Applicants will document their successful implementation by reporting outcomes in the PMT reports, semi-annual reports and a final report. Specific program objectives and deliverables should be included in one timeline. Specifically, the grantee should:

- **Category 1: WCR Entity-Led Strategy.** Document the development or establishment of a WCR entity that reviews, investigates, and adjudicates individual cases of post-conviction claims of innocence and appeals. Support high quality and efficient post-conviction representation for defendants in post-conviction claims of innocence.
- **Category 2: CIU-Led Partnerships.** Document the development or establishment of a CIU that assesses the risk and prevention of wrongful conviction through the collection and analysis of data on post-conviction claims of innocence and outcomes of appeals.
- **Category 3: WCR TTA.** Document the development of best practices from lessons learned that have been disseminated to WCR and CIUs entities and the field by attending and presenting at conferences and events related to award activities where officials and other stakeholders can learn about successful strategies.

Assessment of current efforts, obtaining an approved plan for and beginning implementation of an exoneration database and related analysis of exonerations in the United States.

### *Budget and Associated Documentation*

#### Funding Restrictions

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

Applicants should consider the most effective and efficient ways for reaching the field in proposing approaches to the work.

Applicants should become familiar with the rules and timelines for conference cost approvals and reporting, and the applications should reflect sufficient time and resources to complete these approvals on a timely basis.

#### [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.

#### [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.

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

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.

#### [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.

#### [Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity Statement \(if applicable\)](#)

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***

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

- Statement of the Problem/Description of the Issue (15%): evaluate the applicant's understanding of the program/issue to be addressed.
- Project Design and Implementation (40%): evaluate the strength of the proposal, including information provided in the goals, objectives, timelines, and deliverables web-based form.
- Capabilities and Competencies (20%): 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 (15%): 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 <https://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, quarterly 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**

#### **Category 1 and 2**

<https://bja.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh186/files/media/document/WC-Measures.pdf>

#### **Category 3**

<https://bja.ojp.gov/performance-measures/tta-deliverable-performance-metrics.pdf>

## Application Checklist

### BJA FY24 Upholding the Rule of Law and Preventing Wrongful Convictions 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/financialguidedoj/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 \$600,000 for Category 1, \$600,000 for Category 2, and \$1,200,000 for Category 3.

##### *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**

- Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable) (see [Application Resource Guide](#))
- Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity (if applicable) (see [Application Resource Guide](#))
- Request and Justification for Employee Compensation; Waiver (if applicable) (see [Application Resource Guide](#))
- Memorandum of Understanding (if applicable)
- Resumes of key personnel (if applicable)
- Timeline web-based form\*

### **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.

[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.