

The [National Institute of Corrections](#) (NIC) is seeking applications for funding under the Fiscal Year (FY) 2016. The National Institute of Corrections (NIC) in partnership with the Bureau of Justice Assistance at the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is soliciting applications for funding under the Fiscal Year (FY) 2016.

NIC FY 2016 Safeguarding Children of Incarcerated Parents: Developing and Implementing Family Strengthening Policies at Correctional Institutions at the Local and State level

Work under this cooperative agreement will involve developing and implementing low-cost high-impact family strengthening policies for correctional facilities at the local and state, levels.

Eligibility

NIC invites applications from nonprofit organizations (including faith-based, community, and tribal organizations), for-profit organizations (including tribal for-profit organizations), and institutions of higher education (including tribal institutions of higher education). Recipients, including for-profit organizations, must agree to waive any profit or fee for services.

NIC welcomes applications that involve two or more entities; however, one eligible entity must be the applicant and the others must be proposed as sub-recipients. The applicant must be the entity with primary responsibility for administering the funding and managing the entire program.

NIC may elect to make awards for applications submitted under this solicitation in future fiscal years, dependent on the merit of the applications and on the availability of appropriations.

For additional eligibility information, see Section [C. Eligibility Information](#).

Deadline

Applicants must register with [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) prior to submitting an application. NIC encourages applicants to **register several weeks before** the application submission deadline. In addition, NIC urges applicants to **submit applications 72 hours** prior to the application due date. All applications are due to be submitted and in receipt of a successful validation message in Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. eastern time on **August 8, 2016** .

For additional information, see [How To Apply](#) in [Section D Application and Submission Information](#).

Contact Information

For programmatic questions concerning this solicitation contact **Gregory Crawford** Correctional Program Specialist, National Institute of Corrections gcrawford@bop.gov Responses to programmatic questions will be posted on [NIC's](#) website for public review. The website will be updated regularly and postings will remain on the website until the closing date of this solicitation.

For technical assistance with submitting an application, contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726 or 606-545-5035, or via e-mail to support@grants.gov. Hotline hours of operation are 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except federal holidays.

Applicants who experience unforeseen Grants.gov technical issues beyond their control that prevent them from submitting their application by the deadline must e-mail the NIC at BOP-NIC/General@bop.gov **within 24 hours after the application deadline** and request approval to submit their application. Additional information on reporting technical issues is found under "Experiencing Unforeseen Grants.gov Technical Issues" in the [How To Apply](#) section.

Grants.gov number assigned to this announcement: **16CS17**

Release date: **June 23, 2016**

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Safeguarding Children of Incarcerated Parents: Developing and Implementing Family Strengthening Policies at Correctional Institutions at the Local and State level

CFDA # 16.601

A. Program Description

Overview

A growing body of research indicates that strong family connections during incarceration is associated with better reentry outcomes, including reduced recidivism. Research also indicates that positive communication between incarcerated parents and their children can be important for their child's well-being. Maintaining family relationships during incarceration is challenging; including changes in family structure, long distances between the prison facility and family, and limited resources to maintain communication. However there are policies that correctional facilities can implement to help overcome these challenges, while still maintaining a safe and secure environment.

The goal of this cooperative agreement is for the awardee to develop training materials and implement evidence-informed, model policies that can be adopted by local jails and state prisons to reduce the traumatic impact of parental incarceration on children and improve reentry outcomes for parents. This project will be modeled on the highly successful "Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents" project that developed a model protocol for police, developed through a collaborative process, to reduce the traumatic impact of parental arrest on children. The model protocol for police was developed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) and consisted of a model protocol document, a white paper explaining the development of the protocol, training for implementation through webinars and conference presentations, and a produced training video explaining implementation. All of these materials are available to download free of charge on IACP's website: <http://www.iacp.org/cap>. The model policies for corrections would similarly be developed by an organization with expertise in the corrections profession. They will be developed through a collaborative process that would include subject matter experts in corrections, correctional safety, jail and prison administration as well as child welfare, trauma, and children of incarcerated parents. These policies and training materials will be developed, distributed, and implemented at pilot sites, with their implementation carefully tracked.

About children of incarcerated parents:

NIC has worked closely with Federal, state and local jails, prisons, and community corrections on a broad range of projects intended to improve operational practices and performance outcomes within these systems. Estimates indicate that 2.7 million children currently have a parent in prison or jail, and as many as 7% of all children in the US have had a parent living with them go to prison or jail during their childhood.^{1 2} Over fifty percent of children who have an incarcerated parent(s) are age nine or younger. This section outlines the ways in which children may be impacted by the incarceration of a parent. Although it is difficult to isolate the

¹ The Pew Charitable Trusts (2010). Collateral Costs: Incarceration's Effect on Economic Mobility.

² The National Survey of Children's Health. Data Resource Center for Child & Adolescent Health.

effect of a parent's incarceration from other, often co-occurring experiences, such as violence, drug and alcohol abuse, neglect, and poverty, research demonstrates that children with parents in jail or prison constitute a particularly fragile population that may be at risk for negative outcomes.

Financial Hardship. Families often experience financial hardship after the incarceration of a parent. Approximately one-half of parents in state prison report that they were the primary providers of financial support for their child prior to their incarceration.³ Families also can be left with the burden of legal fees associated with criminal defense and appeals.⁴ Maintaining communication with a parent in prison can exacerbate these financial challenges, since incarcerated parents often are located far away from their previous residence,⁵ making in-person visits an expensive undertaking,⁶ and most criminal justice institutions charge incarcerated individuals fees for telephone or video communication.

Difficulties with Attachment and Relationship Skills. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, 60 percent of mothers and 42.4 percent of fathers in state prisons reported living with their child prior to arrest.⁷ Nineteen percent of these parents reported living in single-parent households.⁸ Sudden separation from a primary caregiver predictably impacts a child's emotional well-being. The parent-child relationship, starting in infancy, forms the foundation for all subsequent relationships by giving children the tools to develop essential interpersonal skills. The difficulties associated with parental incarceration may vary depending on the age and developmental status of a child. For instance, when infants and toddlers are removed from their primary caregiver, they struggle with developing attachments with other caregivers.⁹ ¹⁰ Young children, when separated, may struggle with behavioral issues that impede their success in school. During adolescence, young people are balancing their need for individuality and connectedness. Children of incarcerated parents who feel isolated by stigma may be particularly at risk for disconnecting from school and becoming involved with negative peer groups.¹¹

Stigma. Crime and subsequent incarceration have a level of stigma within communities, and, as a result, children of incarcerated parents tend to experience stigma second hand. In some cases, this stigma can lead to isolation, peer hostility, and social rejection.¹² Parental incarceration also can cause individuals to make unwarranted assumptions about children based on the actions of their parents. One study examining teachers' expectations for children of incarcerated parents found that when teachers were given a scenario where a child had an incarcerated mother, they tended to rate the child as less competent than children who

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Hairston, C F. 2003 "Prisoners and Their Families: parenting issues during incarceration" Prisoners Once Removed. pp.259-79.

⁵ Mumola, CJ. (2000). Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Reports: Parents in prison and their children. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs.

⁶ Arditti, J.A. Lambert-Shute, J. & Joest, K. (2003) *Saturday morning at the jail: Implications of incarceration for families and children*. Family Relations. Vol. 52. PP 195-204.

⁷ Glaze, LE & Maruschak, LM. (2008). Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Reports: Parents in prison and their minor children. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Bowlby, J. (1973) *Attachment and loss*. Separation, Vol. 2. New York: Basic Books.

¹⁰ American Academy of Pediatrics: Committee on Early Childhood, Adoption, and Dependent Care (2000). "Developmental Issues for Young Children in Foster Care." *Pediatrics*, 106 (5), pp. 1145-1150.

¹¹ Dallaire, DH. (2007). Children with incarcerated mothers: Developmental outcomes, special challenges, and recommendations. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*. 28(1):15.

¹² Nesmith, A. & Ruhland, E. (2008). *Children of incarcerated parents: Challenges and resiliency, in their own words*. Children and Youth Services Review. Vol. 30. PP 1119-1130.

have an absent mother for other reasons.¹³ This study demonstrates the potential harm of assumptions and either conscious or unconscious attitudes about children of incarcerated parents.

Negative Behavioral Responses. Having a parent in prison, and the related stress factors that often occur in the lives of children with a parent in the custody of the criminal justice system, are associated with negative externalizing behaviors, including rule breaking, displays of irritability, and difficulty with relationships. One study examining the relationship between parental incarceration and developmental outcomes for approximately 3,000 urban children found that children with incarcerated fathers demonstrate more aggressive behaviors than children without an incarcerated parent. These children also show more aggressive behavior than children who had absent fathers for other reasons, indicating the unique role incarceration can play in a child's well-being.¹⁴ The negative impact of having an incarcerated parent tends to be stronger among young children who had been living with the parent prior to arrest, but is still evident in children who did not live with the incarcerated parent beforehand.¹⁵

Trauma. Mounting evidence points to the influence of childhood trauma on the functioning and long-term well-being of children. There are several ways children of incarcerated parents may be vulnerable to trauma. Children may experience the trauma of seeing their parent arrested. In a survey of parents incarcerated in Arkansas, 40 percent reported that their children had been present at the time of arrest and 27 percent of those cases reported that a weapon had been drawn.¹⁶ The sudden separation from a parent upon arrest and imprisonment also can be traumatic, particularly if the child and incarcerated parent lived together before the incarceration. While visiting with an incarcerated parent can ease this pain, it also can induce fear and amplify feelings of separation.¹⁷ Service providers working with children of incarcerated parents, once aware of the potential for trauma, can implement appropriate-trauma-informed approaches and interventions.

Compounding Risks. Children who have an incarcerated parent often face a number of other related challenges. The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study is a longitudinal examination of the health outcomes associated with ten negative events experienced early in life, one of which is growing up with a family member in prison.

ACEs are often co-occurring. Children who have an incarcerated parent may have been exposed to additional negative events that, cumulatively, put their future well-being at risk, regardless of whether those events are directly related to the incarceration. A recent review of existing research found that children with incarcerated parents may be more likely to have witnessed or experienced violence than their peers.¹⁸ Many incarcerated parents report a history of drug use, alcohol dependence, or mental illness.¹⁹ Children of incarcerated mothers may also be more likely to experience foster care at some point during their childhood. One study indicated that as many as 1 in 8 children who are subjects of reports of maltreatment

¹³ Dallaire, D.H. Ciccone, A. & Wilson, L. C. (2010). *Teachers' experiences with and expectations of children with incarcerated parents*. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*. Vol. 31. PP. 281-290.

¹⁴ Geller et al. (2012). Beyond Absenteeism: Father Incarceration and Child Development. *Demography* 49(1): 49-76

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Harm, N.J. & Phillips, S.D. (1998), *Helping children cope with the trauma of parental arrest*. *Interdisciplinary Report on At-Risk Children and Families*. Vol. 1 PP 35-36.

¹⁷ Arditti, J.A. (2003). *Locked doors and glass walls: Family visiting at a local jail*. *Journal of Los and Trauma*. Vol. 8. PP 115-138.

¹⁸ Uchida, CD; Swatt, M; & Solomon, SE. (2012). Exposure to violence among children of inmates: A research agenda. Silver Spring, MD: Justice & Security Strategies.

¹⁹ Mumola, C.J. (2000). Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Reports: Parents in prison and their children. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs.

and investigated by child welfare agencies has a parent who was recently arrested.²⁰

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Emotional abuse
Physical abuse
Sexual abuse
Emotional neglect
Physical neglect
Mother treated violently
Household substance abuse
Mentally ill person in the household
Parental separation or divorce
Incarcerated household member

Research has found that, when individuals have multiple ACEs in their backgrounds, they are far more likely to have significant health and mental health problems later in life. One study noted that people who experienced four or more ACEs were likely to die *twenty years* earlier than adults with no ACEs.²¹

Government programs, practitioners, other social service providers, and correctional officers working with this population can improve their services by being aware of the common co-occurring problems among this population and by aiming to mitigate them. Trauma informed care can include practices as simple as speaking to children on their level, speaking to them in a developmentally appropriate way, making security procedures more fun and less intimidating, and circulating existing resources, like the Sesame Street Little Children, Big Challenges: Incarceration materials.

Correctional Environments

Jails and prisons are active, high stress settings and administrators are charged with running safe and secure institutions while simultaneously providing opportunities for justice involved men and women to reduce risk and address needs. This requires enormous efforts in systems challenged by budget cuts, resource deficits, position vacancies, high turnover, competing missions (secure settings while providing rehabilitative opportunities), and all of the issues that go with systems that operate on a 24/7 basis. Over the past decade, research based correctional practice has created opportunities to be more effective and to focus attention and resources based on risk and need. A central premise of that research is showing us that sustaining and repairing connections with family and those identified as sources of support for justice involved men and women has tremendous positive impact on institutional behavior, program participation, planning for reentry, benefiting not only the individual incarcerated but contributing to more humane correctional environments. The challenge is building those types of activities into policy, practice and procedures within corrections and criminal justice to both improve system and individual outcomes.

²⁰ Phillips, Susan D. "Parental Arrest and Children Involved with Child Welfare Services Agencies." American Journal of Orthopsychiatry. Vol. 74, No. 2, April 2004. Accessible from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1037/0002-9432.74.2.174/abstract;jsessionid=C9C5D13170759FC2AC1A78E75823B301.d01t03>.

²¹ Felitti VJ, Anda RF, Nordenberg D, Williamson DF, Spitz AM, Edwards V, Koss MP, Marks JS. Relationship of childhood abuse and household dysfunction to many of the leading causes of death in adults: the adverse childhood experiences (ACE) study. American Journal of Preventive Medicine 1998;14:245–258.

Internal barriers

- Correctional practice focuses on the individual inmate. Family strengthening activities are not areas taught in correctional academies or integrated into overall day to day staff responsibilities as they are not considered as a security function.
- Lack of knowledge related to the research on the importance of family strengthening to improved system and inmate outcomes.
- The importance of creating and supporting opportunities for family strengthening has not been conveyed through development of correctional policy, practice and the availability of resources.
- Visitation is viewed as a benefit or reward rather than a programming and rehabilitative function, and therefore is often withheld as a sanction for a range of negative behaviors.
- Engaging collective bargaining when developing and incorporating family strengthening activities as part of correctional staff responsibilities.
- The lack of role definition for correctional personnel in supporting family strengthening activities.

Security concerns

- Visitation is often a conduit for contraband and with security as a major focus staff receive little training, support, and supervision on the benefits of visiting and family strengthening.
- Staff are often overwhelmed by their scope of responsibilities and the myriad of "hat's" they wear, from security to incorporating evidence based practice into their interactions with inmates.
- Unfilled positions and staffing requirements present significant challenges to safety and security, therefore, programming related issues often take a backseat. Unplanned transports, sick and annual leave use often disrupt well-planned schedules.
- Lean correctional budgets often do not lend themselves easily to practices that are not specifically related to security and safety.

Need for more information

- It is critical that correctional staff throughout the organization in jails and prisons, be consulted in identifying barriers as well as opportunities to incorporate family strengthening activities in policy, practice and programming.
- Correctional staff, as well as external stakeholders (ie. teachers, social workers, child welfare, community corrections, etc.) , bring a wealth of information to this topic, and the opportunities for cross training should be utilized on this topic.

Program-Specific Information

Deliverables. In addition to the strategy and content of the program design, the successful applicant must complete the following deliverables during the project period. The program narrative should reflect how the applicant will accomplish these activities.

Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables

The purpose of this cooperative agreement is to develop low-cost high-impact family strengthening policies that can be implemented in local jails and state prisons; including developing training materials with an implementation strategy for training correctional institutions about the model policies. Model policies should be based on existing research, promising practice, and guidance from experts from both the correctional and child welfare communities. Model policies for family strengthening may include, but are not limited to: assessment, referral and case management for incarcerated parents, visiting policies and procedures; visiting room and waiting room environments; parenting and other programming offered in correctional facilities; family reunification and or reentry planning; and identifying and bringing in local services. The awardee will develop these various policies and procedures into an easy to read document, targeted for a corrections audience that explains what these model policies are, how they can be implemented, and the purpose behind them. This project will be similar to the highly successful and impactful BJA-funded "Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents" Model Policy, developed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police through a collaborative process. Please see this link for the materials developed during this study: <http://www.iacp.org/cap>

The successful applicant should be knowledgeable about correctional environments, familiarity with policy, procedures and practices and understand the purpose and importance of family strengthening policies for children, incarcerated parents and the benefits to corrections. Additionally, the applicant must have experience in developing materials used to train correctional staff as well as implementation of training materials and program evaluation.

The project objectives include the following:

- Identify a committee of subject matter experts for children of incarcerated parents that can represent correctional and child welfare communities and can be utilized as experts throughout the project;
- Develop a national model of family strengthening policies that can be adopted and implemented by local jails and state prisons;
- Develop training materials that will inform correctional policy and practice in local jails and state prisons to include implementation strategies;
- Provide training and Technical Assistance;
- Design and execute an implementation evaluation protocol to track implementation of model policies and initial process outcomes; and
- Design an evaluation protocol to track implementation of model policies and outcomes.

Summary of Work:

The project will be completed in three different stages:

Stage one: Model policy development.

(Year One)

Work for this stage will commence by identifying a 10 to 15 person committee of subject matter experts (SME). The awardee will work closely with NIC, Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), and Health and Human Services (HHS) to identify these individuals. The committee will convene in person within the first twelve months with travel costs and arrangements assumed

by the awardee. It is highly important that the committee have expertise from both the correctional and child welfare communities. Members of the committee should have knowledge of jail and prison safety and security, administration, parenting programs, child welfare, child trauma, and visitation research. We would encourage at least one of the members of the expert committee to have direct experience with the criminal justice system as either a formerly incarcerated parent, child or family member of someone who experienced incarceration. There will be approximately 3 to 5 committee members that will be federal staff (these individuals will not receive financial assistance). The remaining committee members may be compensated for their time and expertise through dedicated project funds. The committee will be consulted during all stages of the project and will be used as a resource to generate initial ideas, review all draft deliverables, and provide comments and guidance on final products. After the committee has been selected, the awardee will reach out to each member to ask for guidance in the initial stages of policy development, including collecting promising practices in the field, potential barriers to implementation, and potential impacts.

- Model policies should be based on existing research, promising practice, and guidance and expertise from correctional and child welfare communities. Model policies may include, but are not limited to: assessment and referral for incarcerated parents visiting policies and procedures; visiting room and waiting room environments; parenting and related programming offered in correctional facilities; family reunification and reentry planning; child development training for staff; and accessing community-based services. The model policy documents will be concise explanations of model policies that can be implemented and reflect implementation science. Once model policy documents have been drafted, the awardee will convene the expert committee in Washington, DC [using federal meeting space] to discuss the draft documents and necessary changes. All written products should be easy to read and visually pleasing with pictures, graphs, bullets, and other formatting to make the documents engaging.
- This stage will also result in the development of a training policy for implementation which may include webinars, conference presentations, and a produced training video explaining implementation. Further, an implementation and evaluation process must be developed in collaboration with SME committee. Pilot site solicitation must also be developed in this phase of the project in anticipation of site selection.

Stage one deliverables:

- 1.1 Identification of SMEs**
- 1.2: Initial consultation with SMEs**
- 1.3: Literature search and review**
- 1.4: 1st Draft model policy documents**
- 1.5: Full project committee in-person meeting**
- 1.6: First edit using feedback from SMEs on draft documents**
- 1.7: 2nd Draft model policy documents**
- 1.8: 2nd edit using feedback from SMEs on draft documents**
- 1.9: Develop an outline for all training materials.**
- 1.10: First draft implementation strategy**
- 1.11: First draft of evaluation protocol for training and policy implementation**
- 1.12: Final draft model policy documents**
- 1.13: First draft of training materials**
- 1.14: Established criteria for pilot site eligibility and selection**

1.11: Stage two: Model policy implementation.

(Year Two and Three)

The awardee will continue to develop the training materials, disseminate information about the model policies, and offer training and technical assistance on implementation. All materials developed for this project should be available for download, free of charge, and should be disseminated widely through a variety of networks. The training and technical assistance delivery will be conducted in partnership with NIC, partner agencies, and the SME committee. The awardee will be responsible for identifying speakers, logistics, and disseminating information about the webinar and/or other training opportunities to interested stakeholders. The awardee should plan to present information about the model policies at professional conferences and other events where relevant correctional stakeholders will be present. The awardee should ensure that all training and project materials are appropriate for a broad correctional audience, to include leadership. The awardee will work with NIC and partner agencies as well as the SME committee to develop site selection criteria, market the solicitation, and choose up to five pilot sites to receive training or technical assistance (TA) in the implementation of the model policies. The pilot sites should be geographically diverse, represent a range of security levels, and serve male and female populations. The pilot sites should also demonstrate support from executive leadership, a clear need for assistance and commitment to implementing change. Lastly, all pilot sites should agree to allow the awardee access to the site, access to staff and inmates to gather information about the potential for implementation of model policies. To the best extent possible, pilot sites should currently collect information on family communication, including the number of visits, phone calls, and other contact families receive.

The awardee will provide each pilot site training or technical assistance (TA) to help them overcome barriers and implement the model policies. It is expected that at least one in-person visit will be required to successfully provide assistance to each pilot site. Training and TA will consist of working with pilot sites to implement as many of the model policies as possible. Training and TA may also include the identification of potential community partners, strategies for funding the implementation of model policies, and problem-solving around implementation. The awardee should gather feedback from each of the pilot sites and with guidance from NIC, partner agencies, and the SME committee, make appropriate revisions to the training materials based on that feedback. The awardee will also present findings through webinars and conference workshops.

Stage two deliverables:

- 2.1: Final draft of implementation strategy**
- 2.2: Final draft of evaluation protocol**
- 2.3: Training delivery to selected pilot sites**
- 2.4: Second draft of training materials**
- 2.5 Training and/or technical assistance delivery to pilot sites**
- 2.6: Webinar presentations**
- 2.7: Minimum two (2) conference presentations**

Stage three: Process Evaluation.

(Year Two and Three)

The awardee will evaluate the project through data collection and conversations with correctional staff, incarcerated parents, and families. While working with pilot sites, the awardee will provide technical assistance and track implementation of the model policies

including the costs associated with making changes, challenges encountered, lessons learned, and outcomes resulting from the changes. The awardee will collect data, interview incarcerated parents, their families, and jail and prison staff to develop a well-rounded picture of how the implementation of these family strengthening policies are being received and implemented. This process evaluation will assist other correctional organizations in planning for and integrating the model family strengthening policies into correctional practice including strategies organizations can employ to smoothly and quickly make changes. This process evaluation will also highlight the outcomes associated with implementing these policies. Based on the project evaluation, feedback from pilot sites, lessons learned through implementation, and input from NIC, partner agencies, and the SME committee, the awardee will finalize the training materials and present findings through webinars and/or conference workshops. The awardee will produce a final project report.

Stage three deliverables:

3.1: Process Evaluation

3.2: Final draft of training materials

3.3: Delivery of technical assistance for selected pilot sites
3.4: Conference, workshop presentations and webinars

3.5: Draft project report

3.6: Final project report

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: All technical or programmatic questions concerning this announcement should be directed to Gregory Crawford, Correctional Program Specialist, National Institute of Corrections who may be reached by email at gscrawford@bop.gov. In addition to the direct reply, all questions and responses will be posted on NIC's website at www.nicic.gov for public review (the names or affiliations of those submitting questions will not be posted). The website will be updated regularly and postings will remain on the website until the closing date of this cooperative agreement solicitation.

Evidence-based programs or practices. NIC strongly emphasizes the use of data and evidence in policy making and program development.

- improving the quantity and quality of evidence NIC generates;
- integrating evidence into program, practice, and policy decisions within NIC and the field; and
- improving the translation of evidence into practice.

NIC considers programs and practices to be evidence-based when their effectiveness has been demonstrated by causal evidence, generally obtained through one or more outcome evaluations. Causal evidence documents a relationship between an activity or intervention (including technology) and its intended outcome, including measuring the direction and size of a change, and the extent to which a change may be attributed to the activity or intervention. Causal evidence depends on the use of scientific methods to rule out, to the extent possible, alternative explanations for the documented change. The strength of causal evidence, based on the factors described above, will influence the degree to which NIC considers a program or practice to be evidence-based.

B. Federal Award Information

NIC expects to make one award for as much as **\$1,125,000.00** for a 12-month project period, beginning on **September 1, 2016**.

Type of award. NIC expects to make an award from this solicitation in the form of a cooperative agreement which is a particular type of grant used when NIC expects to have ongoing substantial involvement in award activities. Substantial involvement includes direct oversight and involvement with the grantee organization in implementation of the grant but does not involve day-to-day project management. See [Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements](#), under Section [F. Federal Award Administration](#), for details regarding the federal involvement anticipated under an award from this solicitation.

Financial management and system of internal controls. If selected for funding, the award recipient must:

- (a) Establish and maintain effective internal control over the federal award that provides reasonable assurance that the nonfederal entity is managing the federal award in compliance with federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the federal award. These internal controls should be in compliance with guidance in “Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government” issued by the Comptroller General of the United States and the “Internal Control Integrated Framework”, issued by the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO).
- (b) Comply with federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the federal awards.
- (c) Evaluate and monitor the nonfederal entity's compliance with statute, regulations, and the terms and conditions of federal awards.
- (d) Take prompt action when instances of noncompliance are identified, including noncompliance identified in audit findings.

Take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other information the federal awarding agency or pass-through entity designates as sensitive or the nonfederal entity considers sensitive consistent with applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding privacy and obligations of confidentiality.

Budget Information

Pre-Agreement Cost Approvals. NIC does not typically approve pre-agreement costs; an applicant must request and obtain the prior written approval of NIC for all such costs. If approved, pre-agreement costs could be paid from grant funds consistent with a grantee's approved budget, and under applicable cost standards. However, all such costs prior to award and prior to approval of the costs are incurred at the sole risk of an applicant.

Generally, no applicant should incur project costs *before* submitting an application requesting federal funding for those costs. Should there be extenuating circumstances that appear to be appropriate for NIC's consideration as pre-agreement costs, the applicant should contact the point of contact listed on the title page of this announcement for details on the requirements for submitting a written request for

approval.

Limitation on use of award funds for employee compensation; waiver. With respect to any award of more than \$250,000 made under this solicitation, recipients may not use federal funds to pay total cash compensation (salary plus cash bonuses) to any employee of the award 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. The 2015 salary table for SES employees is available at the Office of Personnel Management [website](#). Note: A recipient may compensate an employee at a greater rate, provided the amount in excess of this compensation limitation is paid with non-federal funds. (Any such additional compensation will not be considered matching funds where match requirements apply.)

C. Eligibility Information

For additional eligibility information, see the title page.

Cost sharing or match requirement. For additional information on cost sharing or match requirement, see Section [B. Federal Award Information](#).

Limit on number of application submissions. If an applicant submits multiple versions of the same application, NIC will review only the most recent system-validated version submitted. For more information on system-validated versions, see [How To Apply](#).

D. Application and Submission Information

What an Application Should Include

Applicants should anticipate that if they fail to submit an application that contains all of the specified elements, it may negatively affect the review of their application; and, should a decision be made to make an award, it may result in the inclusion of special conditions that preclude the recipient from accessing or using award funds pending satisfaction of the conditions.

Moreover, applicants should anticipate that applications that are determined to be nonresponsive to the scope of the solicitation, do not request funding within the funding limit, or that do not include the application elements that NIC has designated to be critical, will neither proceed to peer review nor receive further consideration. Under this solicitation, NIC has designated the following application elements as critical: Program Narrative, Budget Detail Worksheet or Budget Narrative.

Applicants should review the "Note on File Names and File Types" under [How To Apply](#) to be sure that they submit their applications in the permitted formats.

NIC strongly recommends that applicants use appropriately descriptive file names (e.g., "Program Narrative," "Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative," "Timelines," "Memoranda of Understanding," "Résumés") for all attachments. Also, NIC recommends that applicants include résumés in a single file.

Information to Complete the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)

The SF-424 is a required standard form used as a cover sheet for submission of pre-applications, applications, and related information. This form can be found on Grants.gov and NIC's website www.nicic.gov.

Intergovernmental review. This funding opportunity (program) **is not** subject to [Executive Order 12372](#). (In completing the SF-424, applicants are to make the appropriate selection in response to question 19 to indicate that the "Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.")

Project Abstract

Applications should include a high-quality project abstract that summarizes the proposed project in 400 words or less. Project abstracts should be—

- written for a general public audience;
- submitted as a separate attachment with "Project Abstract" as part of its file name; and
- single-spaced, using a standard 12-point font (Times New Roman) with 1-inch margins.

As a separate attachment, the project abstract will **not** count against the page limit for the program narrative.

The abstract should briefly describe the project's purpose, the population to be served, and the activities that the applicant will implement to achieve the project's goals and objectives. The abstract should describe how the applicant will measure progress toward these goals.

Program Narrative

Applicants must submit a program narrative that presents a detailed description of the purpose, goals, objectives, strategies, design, and management of the proposed program. The program narrative should be double-spaced with 1-inch margins, not exceeding 30 pages of 8½ by 11 inches, and use a standard 12-point font, preferably Times New Roman. Pages should be numbered "1 of 30," etc. The tables, charts, pictures, etc., including all captions, legends, keys, subtext, etc., may be single-spaced and will count in the 30-page limit. Material required under the Budget and Budget Narrative and Additional Attachments sections will not count toward the program narrative page count. Applicants may provide bibliographical references as a separate attachment that will not count toward the 30-page program narrative limit. If the program narrative fails to comply with these length-related restrictions, NIC may consider such noncompliance in peer review and in final award decisions.

The program narrative should address the following selection criteria: (1) statement of the problem; (2) goals, objectives, and performance measures; (3) program design and implementation; and (4) capabilities/competencies. The applicant should clearly delineate the connections between and among each of these sections. For example, the applicant should derive the goals and objectives directly from the problems to be addressed. Similarly, the project design section should clearly explain how the program's structure and activities will accomplish the goals and objectives identified in

the previous section.

The following sections should be included as part of the program narrative:

a. Statement of the problem.

Applicants should describe any research or evaluation studies that relate to the problem and contribute to the applicant's understanding of its causes and potential solutions. While NIC expects applicants to review the research literature for relevant studies, they should also explore whether unpublished local sources of research or evaluation data are available.

b. Goals, objectives, and performance measures. Applicants should describe the goals of the proposed training and technical assistance program and identify its objectives. When formulating the program's goals and objectives, applicants should be cognizant of the performance measures that NIC will require successful applicants to provide.

Goals. Applicants should describe the program's intent to deliver training and technical assistance, as described in the previous section and outline the project's goals.

Program objectives. Applicants should explain how the program will accomplish its goals. Objectives are specific, quantifiable statements of the project's desired results. They should be clearly linked to the training and technical assistance strategy identified in the preceding section and measurable.

Performance measures. NIC requires all applicants to submit quarterly progress reports demonstrating progress towards completion of the work proposed under this solicitation. The performance measures for this solicitation are:

Objective	Performance Measure(s)	Description	Data Grantee Provides
SME committee (10-15) representing corrections, child welfare is identified and onboard throughout project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Committee represents corrections (programming, leadership, security); child welfare experts; individual impacted by parental incarceration. -SME actively involved developing/reviewing deliverables through collaboration with BJA/NIC/awardee -all perspectives are represented 	Developing a committee of subject matter experts to help guide/inform the awardee/federal partners throughout the project.	List of various categories, agencies SME committee was recruited from.
National model of family strengthening polices (low cost, high impact) to be implemented by jails, state prisons is developed and publically available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Draft policies developed, reviewed, revised after piloting - Pilot sites adopt policies and create internal capacity to implement 	Developing model policies that will inform corrections professionals who work in local jails and state prisons about family strengthening policies.	Note Research materials used to develop policies.
Training materials that will inform and support correctional policy in family strengthening activities for justice involved individuals are developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -SME/awardee/NIC decide upon training material content and delivery strategies -Process for developing materials implemented and final products are approved through collaborative process -Training materials are made publically available -Sites are utilizing materials 	Developing training materials that will inform corrections professionals who work with incarcerated parents about family strengthening policies. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -downloadable webinars with PP's, video, participant/instructor guides 	Note Research materials used to develop training materials.
Pilot site solicitation and selection process (up to 5) is developed and circulated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -solicitation drafted, reviewed by SME -solicitation advertised -sites chosen and notified 	Develop solicitation language that will help guide the selection process for pilot sites.	Criteria used to determine eligibility and site selection

<p>Research/evaluation protocol to track implementation of model policies and intermediate outcomes is designed and implemented</p>	<p>-Draft protocol developed, reviewed, revised, finalized -Solicitation for pilot sites is circulated -Collaborative process reviews, selects sites and notifies sites.</p>	<p>Develop research/process evaluation protocol that will assess implementation of various elements of model policies, identify barriers and recommendations to improve practice.</p>	<p>Research/evaluation methods used to track implementation of model policies.</p>
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NIC does not require applicants to submit performance measures data with their application. Performance measures are included as an alert that NIC will require successful applicants to submit specific data as part of their reporting requirements. For the application, applicants should indicate an understanding of these requirements and discuss how they will gather the required data, should they receive funding.

c. Project design and implementation. Applicants should detail how the project will operate throughout the funding period and describe the strategies that they will use to achieve the goals and objectives identified in the previous section. Applicants should describe how they will complete the deliverables stated in the Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables section on page 5. NIC encourages applicants to select evidence-based practices for their programs.

Logic model. Applicants should include a logic model that graphically illustrates how the performance measures are related to the project's problems, goals, objectives, and design. Applicants should submit the logic model as a separate attachment, as stipulated in Additional Attachments.

Timeline. Applicants should submit a milestone chart that indicates major tasks associated with the goals and objectives of the project, assigns responsibility for each, and plots completion of each task by month or quarter for the duration of the award, using "Year 1," "Month 1," "Quarter 1," etc., not calendar dates.

Applicants should submit the timeline as a separate attachment, as stipulated in Additional Attachments, page 19. On receipt of an award, the recipient may revise the timeline, based on training and technical assistance that NIC will provide.

d. Capabilities and competencies. This section should describe the experience and capability of the applicant organization and any contractors or subgrantees that the applicant will use to implement and manage this effort and its associated federal funding, highlighting any previous experience implementing projects of similar design or magnitude. Applicants should highlight their experience/capability/capacity to manage subawards, including details on their system for fiscal accountability. Management and staffing patterns should be clearly connected to the project design described in the previous section. Applicants should describe the roles and responsibilities of project staff and explain the program's organizational structure and operations. Applicants should include a copy of an organizational chart showing how the organization operates, including who manages the finances; how the organization manages subawards, if there are any; and the management of the project proposed for funding.

Letters of Support/Memoranda of Understanding. If submitting a joint application, as described under Section C: Eligibility Information, page 1, applicants should provide signed and dated letters of support or memoranda of understanding for all key partners that include the following:

- expression of support for the program and a statement of willingness to participate and collaborate with it;
- description of the partner's current role and responsibilities in the planning

process and expected responsibilities when the program is operational; and

- estimate of the percentage of time that the partner will devote to the planning and operation of the project.

Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative

Applicants should provide a budget that (1) is complete, allowable, and cost-effective in relation to the proposed activities; (2) shows the cost calculations demonstrating how they arrived at the total amount requested; and (3) provides a brief supporting narrative to link costs with project activities. The budget should cover the entire award period.

- a. Budget Detail Worksheet.** Applicants that submit their budget in a different format should include the budget categories listed in the sample budget worksheet. The Budget Detail Worksheet should be broken down by year.
- b. Budget Narrative.** The budget narrative should thoroughly and clearly describe every category of expense listed in the Budget Detail Worksheet. NIC expects proposed budgets to be complete, cost effective, and allowable (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities).

Applicants should demonstrate in their budget narratives how they will maximize cost effectiveness of grant expenditures. Budget narratives should generally describe cost effectiveness in relation to potential alternatives and the goals of the project. For example, a budget narrative should detail why planned in-person meetings are necessary, or how technology and collaboration with outside organizations could be used to reduce costs, without compromising quality.

The narrative should be mathematically sound and correspond with the information and figures provided in the Budget Detail Worksheet. The narrative should explain how the applicant estimated and calculated all costs, and how they are relevant to the completion of the proposed project. The narrative may include tables for clarification purposes but need not be in a spreadsheet format. As with the Budget Detail Worksheet, the Budget Narrative should be broken down by year.

- c. Noncompetitive procurement contracts in excess of simplified acquisition threshold.** If an applicant proposes to make one or more non-competitive procurements of products or services, where the noncompetitive procurement will exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (also known as the small purchase threshold), which is currently set at \$150,000, the application should address the considerations outlined in the Financial Guide.
- d. Preagreement cost approvals.** For information on pre-agreement costs, see Section [B. Federal Award Information](#).

Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)

Indirect costs are allowed only if the applicant has a current federally approved indirect cost rate. (This requirement does not apply to units of local government.) Attach a copy of the federally approved indirect cost rate agreement to the application. Applicants that do not

have an approved rate may request one through their cognizant federal agency, which will review all documentation and approve a rate for the applicant organization, or, if the applicant's accounting system permits, costs may be allocated in the direct cost categories.

Tribal Authorizing Resolution

Tribes, tribal organizations, or third parties proposing to provide direct services or assistance to residents on tribal lands should include in their applications a resolution, letter, affidavit, or other documentation, as appropriate, that certifies that the applicant has the legal authority from the tribe(s) to implement the proposed project on tribal lands. In those instances when an organization or consortium of tribes applies for a grant on behalf of a tribe or multiple specific tribes, the application should include appropriate legal documentation, as described above, from all tribes that would receive services or assistance under the grant. A consortium of tribes for which existing consortium bylaws allow action without support from all tribes in the consortium (i.e., without an authorizing resolution or comparable legal documentation from each tribal governing body) may submit, instead, a copy of its consortium bylaws with the application.

Applicant Disclosure of High Risk Status

Applicants are to disclose whether they are currently designated high risk by another federal grant making agency. This includes any status requiring additional oversight by the federal agency due to past programmatic or financial concerns. If an applicant is designated high risk by another federal grant making agency, you must submit the following information to at the time of application submission:

- the federal agency that currently designated the applicant as high risk;
- date the applicant was designated high risk;
- the high risk point of contact name, phone number, and email address, from that federal agency; and
- reasons for the high risk status.

NIC seeks this information to ensure appropriate federal oversight of any grant award. Unlike the Excluded Parties List, this high risk information does not disqualify any organization from receiving an NIC award. However, additional oversight may be included, if necessary, in award documentation.

Additional Attachments

Applicants should submit the following information, as stipulated in the cited pages, as attachments to their applications. While the materials listed below are not assigned specific point values, peer reviewers will, as appropriate, consider these items when rating applications. For example, reviewers will consider résumés and/or letters of support/ memoranda of understanding when assessing "capabilities/competencies." Peer reviewers will not consider any additional information that the applicant submits other than that specified below.

Applicant disclosure of pending applications. Applicants are to disclose whether they have pending applications for federally funded grants or subgrants (including cooperative agreements) that include requests for funding to support the same project being proposed under this solicitation and will cover the identical cost items outlined in the budget narrative and worksheet in the application under this solicitation. The disclosure

should include both direct applications for federal funding (e.g., applications to federal agencies) and indirect applications for such funding (e.g., applications to state agencies that will subaward federal funds).

NIC seeks this information to help avoid any inappropriate duplication of funding. Leveraging multiple funding sources in a complementary manner to implement comprehensive programs or projects is encouraged and is not seen as inappropriate duplication.

Applicants that have pending applications as described above are to provide the following information about pending applications submitted within the last 12 months:

- the federal or state funding agency;
- the solicitation name/project name; and
- the point of contact information at the applicable funding agency.

Federal or State Funding Agency	Solicitation Name/ Project Name	Name/Phone/E-mail for Point of Contact at Funding Agency
DOJ/COPS	COPS Hiring Program	Jane Doe, 202/000-0000;
HHS/ Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration	Drug Free Communities Mentoring Program/ North County Youth Mentoring Program	Jane.doe@usdoj.gov John Doe, 202/000-0000; john.doe@hhs.gov

Applicants should include the table as a separate attachment, with the file name "Disclosure of Pending Applications," to their application. Applicants that do not have pending applications as described above are to include a statement to this effect in the separate attachment page (e.g., "[Applicant Name on SF-424] does not have pending applications submitted within the last 12 months for federally funded grants or subgrants (including cooperative agreements) that include requests for funding to support the same project being proposed under this solicitation and will cover the identical cost items outlined in the budget narrative and worksheet in the application under this solicitation.").

- Logic model (see examples [here](#)).
- Timeline or milestone chart.
- Résumés of all key personnel.
- Job descriptions outlining roles and responsibilities for all key positions.
- Letters of support/memoranda of understanding from partner organizations.
- Evidence of nonprofit status, e.g., a copy of the tax exemption letter from the Internal revenue Service, if applicable.
- Evidence of for-profit status, e.g., a copy of the articles of incorporation, if applicable.

Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire

In accordance with 2 *CFR* 200.205, federal agencies must have in place a framework for evaluating the risks posed by applicants before they receive a federal award. To facilitate part of this risk evaluation, **all** applicants (other than an individual) are to download, complete, and submit this form.

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

All applicants must complete this information. Applicants that expend any funds for lobbying activities are to provide the detailed information requested on the form Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL). Applicants that do not expend any funds for lobbying activities are to enter “N/A” in the text boxes for item 10 (“a. Name and Address of Lobbying Registrant” and “b. Individuals Performing Services”).

How To Apply

Applicants must register in and submit applications through Grants.gov, a “one-stop storefront” to find federal funding opportunities and apply for funding. Find complete instructions on how to register and submit an application [here](#). Applicants that experience technical difficulties during this process should call the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at **800-518-4726** or **606-545-5035**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except federal holidays. Registering with Grants.gov is a one-time process; however, **processing delays may occur, and it can take several weeks** for first-time registrants to receive confirmation and a user password. NIC encourages applicants to **register several weeks before** the application submission deadline. In addition, NIC urges applicants to submit applications 72 hours prior to the application due date to allow time to receive validation messages or rejection [notifications](#) from Grants.gov, and to correct in a timely fashion any problems that may have caused a rejection notification.

NIC strongly encourages all prospective applicants to sign up for Grants.gov email notifications regarding this solicitation. If this solicitation is cancelled or modified, individuals who sign up with Grants.gov for updates will be automatically notified.

Note on file names and file types. Grants.gov only permits the use of certain specific characters in names of attachment files. Valid file names may include only the characters shown in the table below. Grants.gov is designed to reject any application that includes an attachment(s) with a file name that contains any characters not shown in the table below.

Characters	Special Characters		
Upper case (A – Z)	Parenthesis ()	Curly braces { }	Square brackets []
Lower case (a – z)	Ampersand (&)	Tilde (~)	Exclamation point (!)
Underscore (_)	Comma (,)	Semicolon (;)	Apostrophe (')
Hyphen (-)	At sign (@)	Number sign (#)	Dollar sign (\$)
Space	Percent sign (%)	Plus sign (+)	Equal sign (=)
Period (.)	When using the ampersand (&) in XML, applicants must use the “&amp;,” format.		

All applicants are required to complete the following steps:

NIC may not make a federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the federal awarding agency is ready to make a federal award, the

federal awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant.

- 1. Acquire a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number.** In general, the Office of Management and Budget requires that all applicants (other than individuals) for federal funds include a DUNS number in their applications for a new award or a supplement to an existing award. A DUNS number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and differentiating entities receiving federal funds. The identifier is used for tracking purposes and validating address and point of contact information for federal assistance applicants, recipients, and sub-recipients. The DUNS number will be used throughout the grant life cycle. Obtaining a DUNS number is a free, one-time activity. Call Dun and Bradstreet at 866-705-5711 to obtain a DUNS number or apply [online](#). A DUNS number is usually received within 1-2 business days.
- 2. Acquire registration with the System for Award Management (SAM).** SAM is the repository for standard information about federal financial assistance applicants, recipients, and subrecipients. NIC requires all applicants (other than individuals) for federal financial assistance to maintain current registrations in the SAM database. Applicants must be registered in SAM to successfully register in Grants.gov. Applicants must **update or renew their SAM registration annually** to maintain an active status.

Applicants cannot successfully submit their applications until Grants.gov receives the SAM registration information. **The information transfer from SAM to Grants.gov can take as long as 48 hours.** NIC recommends that the applicant register or renew registration with SAM as early as possible.

Access information about SAM registration procedures [here](#).

- 3. Acquire an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and a Grants.gov username and password.** Complete the AOR profile on Grants.gov and create a username and password. Applicant organizations must use their DUNS number to complete this step. For more information about the registration process, go [here](#).
- 4. Acquire confirmation for the AOR from the E-Business Point of Contact (E-Biz POC).** The E-Biz POC at the applicant organization must log into Grants.gov to confirm the applicant organization's AOR.
- 5. Search for the funding opportunity on Grants.gov.** Use the following identifying information when searching for the funding opportunity on Grants.gov. The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number for this solicitation is 16.585, titled "Juvenile Drug Courts Training and Technical Assistance Program" and the funding opportunity number is NIC – **16CS17**.
- 6. Submit a valid application consistent with this solicitation by following the directions in Grants.gov.** Within 24-48 hours after submitting the electronic application, the applicant should receive two notifications from Grants.gov. The first will confirm the receipt of the application and the second will state whether the application has been successfully validated, or rejected due to errors, with an explanation. It is possible to first receive a message indicating that the application is received and then receive a rejection notice a few minutes or hours later. Submitting well ahead of the deadline provides time to correct the problem(s) that caused the rejection. **Important:** NIC urges applicants to submit applications **at least 72 hours prior** to the application due date to allow time to receive validation messages or rejection notifications from Grants.gov, and to correct in a

timely fashion any problems that may have caused a rejection notification.

Click [here](#) for further details on DUNS, SAM, and Grants.gov registration steps and timeframes.

Note: Duplicate applications. If an applicant submits multiple versions of the same application, NIC will review only the most recent system-validated version submitted. See Note on File Names and File Types under [How To Apply](#).

Experiencing Unforeseen Grants.gov Technical Issues

Applicants that experience unforeseen Grants.gov technical issues beyond their control that prevent them from submitting their application by the deadline must contact the Grants.gov [Customer Support Hotline](#) or the [SAM Help Desk](#) to report the technical issue and receive a tracking number. The applicant must e-mail the Response Center at BOP-NIC/General@bop.gov **within 24 hours after the application deadline** and request approval to submit their application. The e-mail must describe the technical difficulties, and include a timeline of the applicant's submission efforts, the complete grant application, the applicant's DUNS number, and any Grants.gov Help Desk or SAM tracking number(s). **Note: NIC does not automatically approve requests.** After the program office reviews the submission and contacts the Grants.gov or SAM Help Desks to validate the reported technical issues, NIC will inform the applicant whether the request to submit a late application has been approved or denied. If NIC determines that the applicant failed to follow all required procedures, which resulted in an untimely application submission, NIC will deny the applicant's request to submit their application.

The following conditions are generally insufficient to justify late submissions:

- failure to register in SAM or Grants.gov in sufficient time;
- failure to follow Grants.gov instructions on how to register and apply as posted on its website;
- failure to follow each instruction in the NIC solicitation; and
- technical issues with the applicant's computer or information technology environment, including firewalls.

Notifications regarding known technical problems with Grants.gov, if any, are posted on [NIC's web page](#).

E. Application Review Information

Selection Criteria

The following three (3) selection review criteria will be used to evaluate each application, with the different weight given to each based on the percentage value listed after each individual criteria. For example, the first criteria, Programmatic Review, is worth 40 percent of the entire score in the application review process.

1. Programmatic Review (40)
 - a. Project tasks adequately discussed?
 - b. Clear statement of how each task will be accomplished?
 - c. New approaches, techniques, or design aspects to enhance the project?
2. Organizational Review (35)

- a. Skills of the proposed project members.
 - b. Organizational capacity to complete all project tasks.
 - c. Realistic and sufficient project and management plans to complete within the time frame.
3. Management/Administrative Review (25)
- a. Identification of reasonable objectives.
 - b. Reasonable justification for inclusion of consultants or partnerships if used.
 - c. Realistic budget proposed.

See section What an Application Should Include for the criteria that the peer reviewers will use to evaluate applications.

Review Process

NIC is committed to ensuring a fair and open process for awarding grants. NIC reviews the application to make sure that the information presented is reasonable, understandable, measurable, and achievable, as well as consistent with the solicitation.

Peer reviewers will review the applications submitted under this solicitation that meet basic minimum requirements. For purposes of assessing whether applicants have met basic minimum requirements, NIC screens applications for compliance with specified program requirements to help determine which applications should proceed to further consideration for award. Although program requirements may vary, the following are common requirements applicable to all solicitations for funding under NIC grant programs:

- Applications must be submitted by an eligible type of applicant.
- Applications must request funding within programmatic funding constraints (if applicable).
- Applications must be responsive to the scope of the solicitation.
- Applications must include all items designated as “critical elements”.
- Applicants will be checked against the General Services Administration’s Excluded Parties List.

For a list of critical elements, see “What an Application Should Include” under [Section D. Application and Submission Information](#).

NIC may use internal peer reviewers, external peer reviewers, or a combination, to assess applications meeting basic minimum requirements on technical merit using the solicitation’s selection criteria. An external peer reviewer is an expert in the subject matter of a given solicitation who is not a current DOJ employee. An internal reviewer is a current NIC employee who is well-versed or has expertise in the subject matter of this solicitation. A peer review panel will evaluate, score, and rate applications that meet basic minimum requirements. Peer reviewers’ ratings and any resulting recommendations are advisory only, although their views are considered carefully. In addition to peer review ratings, considerations for award recommendations and decisions may include, but are not limited to, underserved populations, geographic diversity, strategic priorities, past performance under prior NIC and NIC awards, and available funding.

NIC reviews applications for potential discretionary awards to evaluate the risks posed by applicants before they receive an award. This review may include but is not limited to the following:

1. Financial stability and fiscal integrity.
2. Quality of management systems and ability to meet the management standards prescribed in the Financial Guide.
3. History of performance.
4. Reports and findings from audits.
5. The applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities.
6. Proposed costs to determine if the Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative accurately explain project costs, and whether those costs are reasonable, necessary, and allowable under applicable federal cost principles and agency regulations.

Absent explicit statutory authorization or written delegation of authority to the contrary, all final award decisions will be made by the NIC Director, who may consider factors including, but not limited to, peer review ratings, underserved populations, geographic diversity, strategic priorities, past performance under prior NIC awards, and available funding when making awards.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

Federal Award Notices

NIC award notification will be sent from NIC's Office via FedEx or USPS within 45 days of the announcements close.

Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements

If selected for funding, in addition to implementing the funded project consistent with the agency-approved project proposal and budget, the recipient must comply with award terms and conditions, and other legal requirements, including but not limited to OMB or other federal regulations that will be included in the award, incorporated into the award by reference, or are otherwise applicable to the award. NIC strongly encourages prospective applicants to review the information pertaining to these requirements **prior** to submitting an application.

As stated above, NIC anticipates that it will make any award from this solicitation in the form of a cooperative agreement. Cooperative agreement awards include standard "federal involvement" conditions that describe the general allocation of responsibility for execution of the funded program. Generally-stated, under cooperative agreement awards, responsibility for the day-to-day conduct of the funded project rests with the recipient in implementing the funded and approved proposal and budget, and the award terms and conditions.

Responsibility for oversight and redirection of the project, if necessary, rests with NIC. NIC's role will include the following tasks:

- reviewing and approving major work plans, including changes to such plans, and key decisions pertaining to project operations;
- reviewing and approving major project-generated documents and materials used in the provision of project services; and
- providing guidance in significant project planning meetings and participating in project

sponsored training events or conferences.

In addition to any “federal involvement” condition(s), NIC cooperative agreement awards include a special condition specifying certain reporting requirements required in connection with conferences, meetings, retreats, seminars, symposium, training activities, or similar events funded under the award, consistent with NIC policy and guidance on conference approval, planning, and reporting.

General Information about Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements

Recipients must submit quarterly financial reports, semi-annual progress reports, final financial and progress reports, and, if applicable, an annual audit report in accordance with 2 CFR 200. Future awards and fund drawdowns may be withheld if reports are delinquent.

Special Reporting requirements may be required by NIC depending on the statutory, legislative or administrative obligations of the recipient or the program.

G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

For Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s), see the title page.

For contact information for Grants.gov, see the title page.

H. Other Information

Provide Feedback to NIC

To assist NIC in improving its application and award processes, we encourage applicants to provide feedback on this solicitation, the application submission process, and/or the application review/peer review process. Provide feedback to BOP-NIC/General@bop.gov

IMPORTANT: This e-mail is for feedback and suggestions only. Replies are **not** sent from this mailbox. If you have specific questions on any program or technical aspect of the solicitation, **you must** directly contact the e-mail listed on the front of this solicitation document. These contacts are provided to help ensure that you can directly reach an individual who can address your specific questions in a timely manner.

Application Checklist

NIC FY 2016- Safeguarding Children of Incarcerated Parents: Developing and Implementing Family Strengthening Policies at Correctional Institutions at the Local and State level

This application checklist has been created to assist in developing an application.

What an Applicant Should Do:

Prior to Registering in Grants.gov:

- Acquire a DUNS Number
- Acquire or renew registration with SAM

To Register with Grants.gov:

- Acquire AOR and Grants.gov username/password
- Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Biz POC

To Find Funding Opportunity:

- Search for the Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov
- Download Funding Opportunity and Application Package
- Sign up for Grants.gov email notifications (optional)

After application submission, receive Grants.gov email notifications that:

- (1) application has been received,
- (2) application has either been validated or rejected

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

- contact NIC regarding experiencing technical difficulties

Scope Requirement:

- The federal amount requested is within the allowable limit(s) of **\$1,125,000.00**

Eligibility Requirement:

- Nonprofit or for-profit organization, including tribal nonprofit or for-profit organization.
- Institution of higher education, including tribal institution of higher education.

What an Application Should Include:

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
- Project Abstract
- Program Narrative
- Budget Detail Worksheet and Narrative
 - Employee Compensation Waiver request and justification
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)
- Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)
- Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable)
- Applicant Disclosure of High Risk Status
- Additional Attachments
 - Applicant Disclosure of Pending Applications
 - logic model
 - timeline or milestone chart
 - résumés of all key personnel
 - job descriptions outlining roles and responsibilities for all key positions
 - letters of support/memoranda of understanding from partner organizations
 - evidence of nonprofit status, e.g., a copy of the tax exemption letter from the Internal Revenue Service, if applicable.
 - evidence of for-profit status, e.g., a copy of the articles of incorporation, if applicable.
- Financial Management and System of Internal Controls