

BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE

THE FEDERAL FUNDING PROCESS: WHAT NEW AND SEASONED APPLICANTS SHOULD CONSIDER

BJA Grant Applicant Education Series
(Session 3 of 4)

Tara Kunkel, BJA
February 5, 2019



Agenda

1. Overview of OJP and BJA
2. Understanding the funding process
3. The peer review process/scoring
4. How to read a BJA solicitation
5. Key steps to completing your application
6. Question and answer session

Learning Objectives

- Educate prospective BJA applicants on the funding process and what a successful application should include.
- We will:
 - Review the OJP/BJA funding process.
 - Provide a summary of the peer review process.
 - Provide tips on how to effectively read a solicitation.
 - Review what should be included in an application and identify critical elements.

BJA Grant Applicant Education Series

To register for an upcoming webinar or to access previous webinar recordings, transcripts, and slides visit: <https://www.bja.gov/funding/webinars.html>.

Funding Opportunities for Your Community in 2019: An Overview of What's Ahead

- January 28, 2019 at 1 p.m. EST

The First Steps to Applying, Prepare Now

- January 31, 2019 at 1 p.m. EST

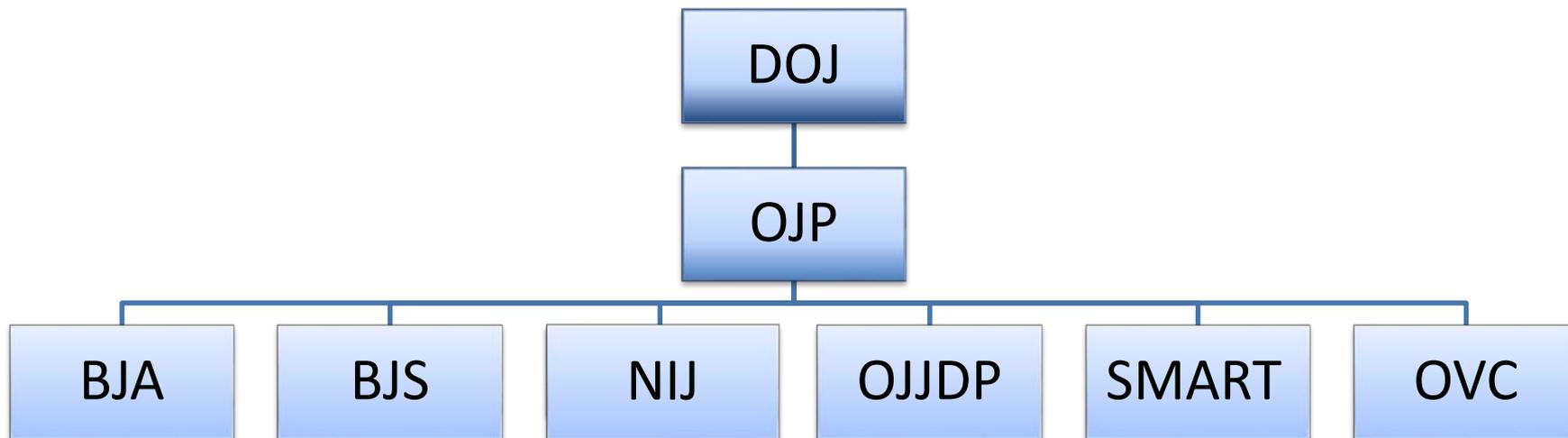
Submitting Your Application: Avoid These Common Mistakes

- February 7, 2019 at 1 p.m. EST

What is the Office of Justice Programs (OJP)?

- OJP provides grant funding, training, research, and statistics to the criminal justice community.
- OJP is one of three grant-making components of the Department of Justice.
 - Office on Violence Against Women (OVW)
 - Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS)

OJP Bureaus and Offices

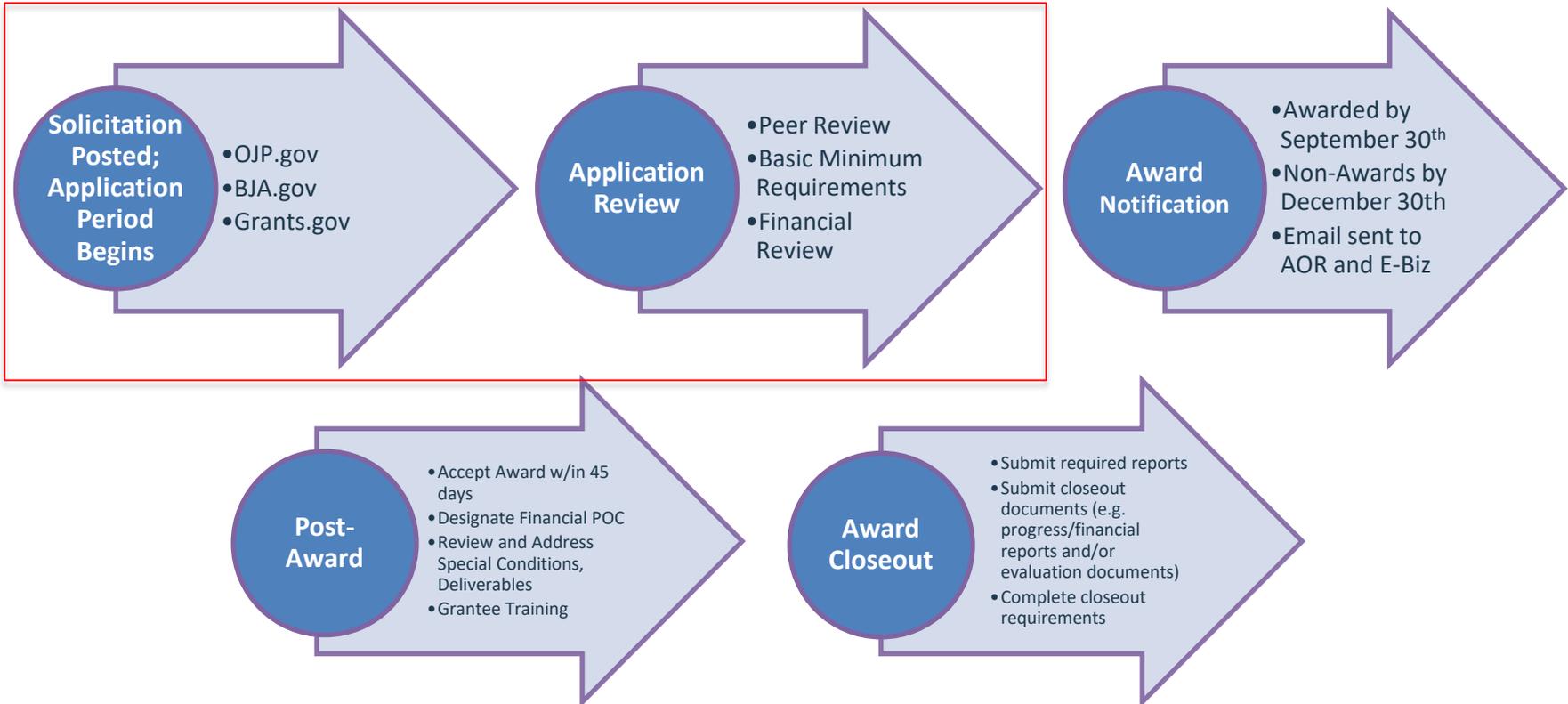


Bureau of Justice Assistance

BJA helps to make American communities safer by strengthening the nation's criminal justice system: Its grants, training and technical assistance, and policy development services provide state, local, and tribal governments with the cutting edge tools and best practices they need to reduce violent and drug-related crime, support law enforcement, and combat victimization.

To learn more about BJA, visit www.bja.gov, or follow us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/DOJBJA/>) and Twitter (@DOJBJA). BJA is part of the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs.

The Life of a Grant



Understanding the Peer Review Process

- Applications are typically reviewed by three peer reviewers who score your application against the review criteria.
- The review criteria tell you how the applications will be scored and the weight of each section.

Tip: Think about the scoring when you are deciding how many pages to devote to each section. A section worth 10 percent of the points should not be 10 pages of your 20-page application.

E. Application Review Information

Review Criteria

Applications that meet basic minimum requirements will be evaluated by peer reviewers using the following review criteria. The following six criteria will be used to evaluate each application, with the different weight given to each based on the percentage value listed after each individual criterion. For example, the first criterion, "Statement of the Problem," is worth 15 percent of the entire score in the application review process

1. Statement of the Problem (15 percent)



All applicants

- Clearly identify the community, state, or region that is included in the proposed program.
- Describe the nature and scope of the problem providing local, state, or regional data to support the discussion.
- Identify each partner agency that has demonstrated commitment to this effort via an interagency agreement or letter of support.
- Identify existing strategic plans relevant to the program and describe how the proposed initiative aligns with the existing plan.
- Explain the inability to fund the proposed program without federal assistance and describe any existing funding or resources that are being leveraged to support the proposed program.

Reading the Solicitation

Step 1: Ensure your agency is eligible to apply or you have a partner agency you can apply with that is eligible. Eligibility is listed on the first page of a solicitation.

Step 2: Ensure you have enough time to develop your application. The due date is also listed on the first page. Take into account the time to register to apply, prepare the application, gather the required attachments, and any local, state, or tribal review processes.

Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Site-based Program FY 2018 Competitive Grant Announcement Applications Due: June 18, 2018

Eligibility

Eligible applicants are those that meet the following criteria for the six categories:

Category 1: First Responder Partnerships – Applicants are limited to units of local government and federally recognized Indian tribal governments (as determined by the Secretary of the Interior). Jurisdictions without a county- or local government-based addiction service system may designate the [State Administering Agency \(SAA\)](#) to serve as the primary applicant and subgrant funds to providers at the county level.

Category 2: Technology-assisted Treatment Projects – Applicants are limited to state agencies. State agencies include state administrative offices, state criminal justice agencies, and other state agencies involved with the provision of substance abuse treatment services to individuals who come in contact with the criminal justice system such as the SAA, the Administrative Office of the Courts, and the State Alcohol and Substance Abuse Agency.

Category 3: System-level Diversion Projects – Applicants are limited to units of local government and federally recognized Indian tribal governments (as determined by the Secretary of the Interior). Jurisdictions without a county- or local government-based addiction service system may designate the SAA to serve as the primary applicant and subgrant funds to providers at the county level. BJA recognizes that there are at least 41 cities around the country that are not within a county system, which are also eligible to apply.

Category 4: Statewide Planning, Coordination, and Implementation Projects – Applicants are limited to the SAA responsible for directing criminal justice planning or the State Alcohol and Substance Abuse Agency.

Reading the Solicitation

Step 3: Read the program-specific section to understand how funds can be used and the intent of the funding agency.

Step 4: Read the rest of the application in its entirety.

Mandatory Project Components and Deliverables for Category 1

All applicants under Category 1 must:

- Establish a coordinated multi-disciplinary response team that includes law enforcement and other first responders, treatment providers, and/or peer recovery specialists. Other team members may include child welfare providers, public health providers, hospital-based program providers, prosecutors, the courts, etc.
- Establish pre-arrest or post-arrest diversion programs for individuals who commit low level, non-violent offenses to community-based substance abuse and behavioral health services. There are a variety of recognized pathways to diversion. This includes self-referral, active outreach, naloxone plus, officer prevention, and officer intervention. Examples of diversion programs that reflect these different pathways include Police Assisted Addiction and Recovery Initiative (PAARI), Quick Response Teams (QRT), Drug Abuse Response Teams (DART), Stop, Triage, Engage, Educate and Rehabilitate (STEER), and Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD). BJA supports all models of diversion. As directed by Congress, a minimum of 2.5 million in COAP funds will be used to support communities seeking to replicate the LEAD model. Jurisdictions seeking to replicate the [LEAD model](#) should familiarize themselves with the goals and core principles of LEAD and reflect these concepts in their application.
- Identify a project coordinator who dedicates a portion of their time beyond their normal job duties to manage the day-to-day operations of the initiative during the planning and implementation phases. No less than 50 percent of the project coordinator's time should be spent on BJA-funded project activities. The project coordinator will work closely with the selected training and technical assistance (TTA) provider to:
 - Identify the needs of the community, including collecting and analyzing administrative and overdose data.
 - Work with project staff to design an appropriate outreach and prevention strategy based on the data.

Reading the Solicitation

Step 5: Determine if your agency has the capacity to do the work or if you need additional resources built into the project to successfully manage the project.

Identify if you need project partners and, if so, reach out to them as soon as possible.

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 - Identify the needs of the community, including collecting and analyzing administrative and overdose data.
 - Work with project staff to design an appropriate outreach and prevention strategy based on the data.

Planning and Organizing Your Writing

Step 1: Read the application a second time and develop a timeline and a checklist for yourself. The application checklist is a good resource to get organized.

Think about the steps you need to do first or steps that will take the most time and do those first.

- Registrations
- Letters of support/MOUs
- Inviting partners to a planning meeting

Appendix A Application Checklist FY 2018 Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Site-based Program

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 (see page 40)
- ___ Acquire or renew registration with SAM (see page 41)

To Register with Grants.gov:

- ___ Acquire AOR and Grants.gov username/password (see page 41)
- ___ Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Biz POC (see page 41)

To Find Funding Opportunity:

- ___ Search for the Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov (see page 41)
- ___ Select the correct Competition ID (see page 41)
- ___ Access Funding Opportunity and Application Package (see page 42)
- ___ Sign up for Grants.gov email [notifications](#) (optional) (see page 39)
- ___ Read [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#)
- ___ Read OJP policy and guidance on conference approval, planning, and reporting available at ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/PostawardRequirements/chapter3.10a.htm (see page 25)

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

- ___ (1) application has been received,
- ___ (2) application has either been successfully validated or rejected with errors

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

- ___ contact the NCJRS Response Center regarding experiencing technical difficulties

Overview of Post-Award Legal Requirements:

Planning and Organizing Your Writing

Step 2: Read the review criteria section carefully. Develop an outline for the program narrative based on the questions you have to answer.

The biggest mistake applicants make is not answering every question.

DO NOT change the order in which you answer the questions! Follow the order of the review criteria.

E. Application Review Information

Review Criteria

Applications that meet basic minimum requirements will be evaluated by peer reviewers using the following review criteria. The following six criteria will be used to evaluate each application, with the different weight given to each based on the percentage value listed after each individual criterion. For example, the first criterion, "Statement of the Problem," is worth 15 percent of the entire score in the application review process

1. Statement of the Problem (15 percent)

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- Explain the inability to fund the proposed program without federal assistance and describe any existing funding or resources that are being leveraged to support the proposed program.

Example of an Outline from the Review Section

Statement of the Problem

Clearly identify the community, state, or region that is included in the proposed program.

[Insert text to answer this question]

Describe the nature and scope of the problem providing local, state, or regional data to support the discussion.

[Insert text to answer this question]

Identify each partner agency that has demonstrated commitment to this effort via an interagency agreement or letter of support.

[Insert text to answer this question]

Identify existing strategic plans relevant to the program and describe how the proposed initiative aligns with the existing plan.

[Insert text to answer this question]

Tip: Leave the questions in red until you have others review your draft. Once you are confident every question has been answered, remove the questions in red and check your page count.

Planning and Organizing Your Writing

Step 3: Make sure you understand and follow the instructions about page limits for the program narrative.

Tip: A table can be single spaced and can be put in an attachment if it is not a required component of the program narrative.

i. **Program Narrative**

The Program Narrative must be double-spaced, using a standard 12-point font (Times New Roman is preferred); have no less than 1-inch margins; and must not exceed 20 pages. Pages should be numbered “1 of 20,” “2 of 20,” etc.

If the program narrative fails to comply with these length-related restrictions, BJA may consider such noncompliance in peer review and in final award decisions.

The following sections should be included as part of the program narrative⁶:

- a. Statement of the Problem
- b. Project Design and Implementation
- c. Capabilities and Competencies
- d. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation’s Performance Measures

Planning and Organizing Your Writing

Step 4: Draft your budget very early in the process before you make commitments. Make sure you carefully read and understand any required budget expenses detailed in the application – especially required grantee meetings. Also make sure you carefully read to understand any caps on expenses or expenses that are not allowed.

Resource: DOJ Grants Financial Guide

<https://ojp.gov/financialguide/doj/index.htm>

There is a combined budget and budget narrative template for your use that is linked to in the solicitation.

Tip: Within the Budget Detail Worksheet there is a sample worksheet that has been included as a resource. Please refer to the tab labeled Example Budget Detail Worksheet.

Example of a Budget Narrative

Item	Rate	Cost
(1) Telephone/Internet Service	1 line x \$50 per line X 12 months	\$600
(1) Cell phone service	1 phone x \$50/month x 12 months	\$600
	TOTAL	\$1200

Justification:

- (1) The telephone/internet service is necessary to operate the program and coordinate with clients. The monthly costs reflect the % of effort for the personnel listed in this application.
- (2) The staff will use the cell phone to be available to the participants in the program for emergency/crisis calls after hours and weekends. The cell phone will also enable the staff to spend more time in the field directly engaging with participants. The cost is based on prior purchase of the utility.

Budgets and the Budget Narrative

- The budget narrative should relate directly to the project design.
 - There should be no expenses in the budget that are not referenced in the project/program narrative (e.g. don't ask for drug testing supplies if you have not included drug testing in your project description as being a component of your project).
- Personnel costs should relate to the key personnel for the project.
- The role of contracted services should be clearly stated in the project/program narrative.
- The budget should include adequate funding to fully implement the project.
- The budget narrative should leave no questions for a peer reviewer about the purpose of the requested funds.

Planning and Organizing Your Writing

Step 5: Don't forget about the required attachments when you are preparing your application!

Make sure you triple check your checklist and make sure you have everything.

9. Additional Attachments

a. Letters of Support and/or Memoranda of Understanding/Agreement (Required)

Applicants should attach letters of support and/or an interagency agreement between the partner agencies and offices to show commitment for participation in the project.

Category 1 applicants must attach letters of support and/or an interagency agreement from the proposed team members. The letters or interagency agreement should clearly articulate the level of involvement each agency will have in the proposed project.

Category 2 applicants must submit letters of support and/or an interagency agreement from the [State Administering Agency](#) (SAA) responsible for directing criminal justice planning and coordination and the [Single State Agency](#) (SSA) for Substance Abuse Services indicating that they have agreed to partner on this project. The letters or interagency agreement should clearly articulate the level of involvement each agency will have in the proposed project.

Category 3 applicants must attach letters of support and/or an interagency agreement from the proposed team members. The letters or interagency agreement should clearly articulate the level of involvement each agency will have in the proposed project.

Category 4 applicants must submit letters of support and/or an interagency agreement from the [State Administering Agency](#) (SAA) responsible for directing criminal justice planning and coordination and the [Single State Agency](#) (SSA) for Substance Abuse Services indicating that they have agreed to partner on this project. If additional partners are included in Category 4, submit letters from the other parties. The letters or interagency agreement should clearly articulate the level of involvement each agency will have in the proposed project.

b. Project Timeline (Required)

Attach a Project Timeline (with an estimated start date of October 1, 2018) with each project objective, activity, expected completion date, and responsible person or organization.

Before You Submit Your Application...

- Check the application checklist one last time and make sure you didn't miss anything!
- The checklist is typically found in the appendix of the solicitation.

Appendix A
Application Checklist
 FY 2018 Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Site-based Program

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Overview of Post-Award Legal Requirements:

Submitting Your Application

- Pay attention to the rules about naming files – the file naming rules are in the solicitation or under "How To Apply" in the 2019 Grant Applicant Resource Guide (<https://ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/Grant-App-Resource-Guide.htm>).
- Try to submit your application 2 days in advance of the due date in case you have challenges submitting it.

Adding Attachments

- Grants.gov has two categories of files for attachments: "mandatory" and "optional."
 - OJP receives all files attached in both categories.
 - Do not embed "mandatory" attachments within another file.
- An applicant must use the **Add Attachment** button to attach a file to its application.
 - Do not click the paperclip icon to attach files. This action will not attach the files to the application.
 - After adding an attachment, select the View Attachment button to confirm you attached the correct file.
 - To remove the file, select the Delete Attachment button.
- Attachments should have a proper file names (e.g. Program Narrative, Budget Narrative, MOU, Letter of Support, etc.)

Attachments: Checking for Errors

- An application can be checked for errors via the Check Application button on the Forms tab of the Manage Workspace page.
 - The button is active if the set of forms in the workspace matches those required in the application package.
 - If you receive a Cross-Form Errors message after clicking the Check Application button, refer to the Cross-Form Errors help article for more detailed information about this validation error.

Unforeseen Technical Issues

- An applicant that experiences unforeseen Grants.gov technical issues beyond its control that prevent it from submitting its application by the deadline must email the National Criminal Justice Reference Service Response Center (Response Center) at grants@ncjrs.gov **within 24 hours after the application deadline** to request approval to submit its application after the deadline.
- For more information on reporting technical issues, refer to "How to Reply" in the 2019 OJP Grant Application Resource Guide at:
<https://ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/Grant-App-Resource-Guide.htm>

What if you have questions?

Questions about the solicitation or submitting your application:

- Listen to the applicant webinar (recordings and transcripts may also be available), review any solicitation FAQs or program webpages.
- For technical assistance, please contact Grants.gov. Applicants needing assistance with any other requirement may contact NCJRS – contact information is found in the first 2 to 3 pages of the solicitation.

Contact Information

For technical assistance with submitting an application, contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726 or 606-545-5035, at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html>, or via email to support@grants.gov. The Grants.gov Support Hotline hours of operation are 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays.

An applicant that experiences unforeseen Grants.gov technical issues beyond its control that prevent it from submitting its application by the deadline must email the contact identified below **within 24 hours after the application deadline** to request approval to submit its application after the deadline. Additional information on reporting technical issues appears under "Experiencing Unforeseen Grants.gov Technical Issues" in the [How To Apply](#) section.

For assistance with any unforeseen Grants.gov technical issues beyond an applicant's control that prevent it from submitting its application by the deadline, or any other requirement of this solicitation, contact the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) Response Center: toll-free at 800-851-3420; via TTY at 301-240-6310 (hearing impaired only); email grants@ncjrs.gov; fax to 301-240-5830; or web chat at <https://webcontact.ncjrs.gov/ncjchat/chat.jsp>. The NCJRS Response Center hours of operation are 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. eastern time, Monday through Friday, and 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. eastern time on the solicitation close date.

FY 2019 Resources for Funding Opportunities

For information on funding opportunities, publications, and initiatives, visit **BJA's website** at <https://www.bja.gov>

2019 OJP Grant Applicant Resource Guide

<https://ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/Grant-App-Resource-Guide.htm>

Office of Justice Programs – FY2019 Program Plan Initiatives: The 2019 Program Plan

<https://www.grantsnet.justice.gov/programplan/html/Solicitations.htm>

FY 2019 Resources for Funding Opportunities

Grants.gov

- Provides information on available federal funding opportunities for various federal agencies
- <http://www.grants.gov/>

National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS)

- Links to all current OJP funding opportunities,
- Subscribe to receive email notifications of new opportunities
- <https://www.ncjrs.gov>

NIJ's CrimeSolutions.gov

- Web-based clearinghouse of programs and practices that have been rated in terms of effectiveness in addressing different criminal justice issues.
- <https://www.CrimeSolutions.gov>

FY 2019 Resources for Funding Opportunities

The [Department of Justice Program Plan](https://www.justice.gov/jmd/page/file/1039211/download)

<https://www.justice.gov/jmd/page/file/1039211/download>

is a tool to help applicants and grantees find funding opportunities (solicitations) that address their criminal, juvenile, and civil justice needs. The plan provides summary details on the funding opportunities that DOJ agencies are expecting to release in the current fiscal year.

Program Plan Priorities



Administering justice for and strengthening services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.	Advancing the practice of community policing by the nation's state, local, territorial, and tribal law enforcement agencies.	Implementing state of the art strategies for crime fighting, control, and prevention by law enforcement officers in states, cities, and neighborhoods.	Expanding research, training and technical assistance, and programs that enhance the criminal and juvenile justice systems and support services.
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Social Media

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DOJBJA>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/DOJBJA>
- RSS: <https://www.bja.gov/Connect.aspx>



For information on funding opportunities, publications, and initiatives, visit **BJA's website** – <https://www.bja.gov>.

National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) - <https://www.ncjrs.gov>

- Links to all current OJP funding opportunities
- Funding Notices 
 - Sign-up to receive the bi-weekly JUSTINFO newsletter as well as the weekly Funding News From NCJRS email.
 - Be sure to select “Grants/funding” as an area of interest in your NCJRS registration profile when you subscribe.

Questions?

Additional Questions?



Contact the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) Response Center,
<https://www.ncjrs.gov>

- email - grants@ncjrs.gov
- web chat - <https://webcontact.ncjrs.gov/ncjchat/chat.jsp>
- toll free at 800–851–3420
- TTY at 301–240–6310 (hearing impaired only)

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