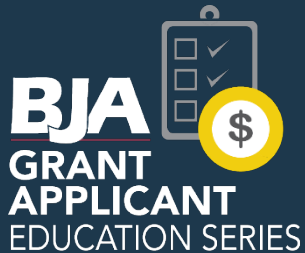


BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE

SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION: AVOID THESE COMMON MISTAKES

**BJA Grant Applicant Education Series
(Session 4 of 4)**



**Andre Bethea, BJA
February 7, 2019**



BJA
Bureau of Justice Assistance
U.S. Department of Justice



Agenda

- Overview of OJP and BJA
- Timely registration
- Understanding the solicitation requirements
- Effectively writing a proposal
- Understanding the financial requirements
- Submitting a complete application
- Question and answer session

Learning Objectives

- Educate prospective BJA applicants on the most common mistakes applicants make when applying for funding.
- We will –
 - Review the OJP/BJA funding process.
 - Discuss proactive registration steps.
 - Provide tips on how to identify the critical elements.
 - Provide tips on how to write a strong program narrative.
 - Review steps for including attachments.

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

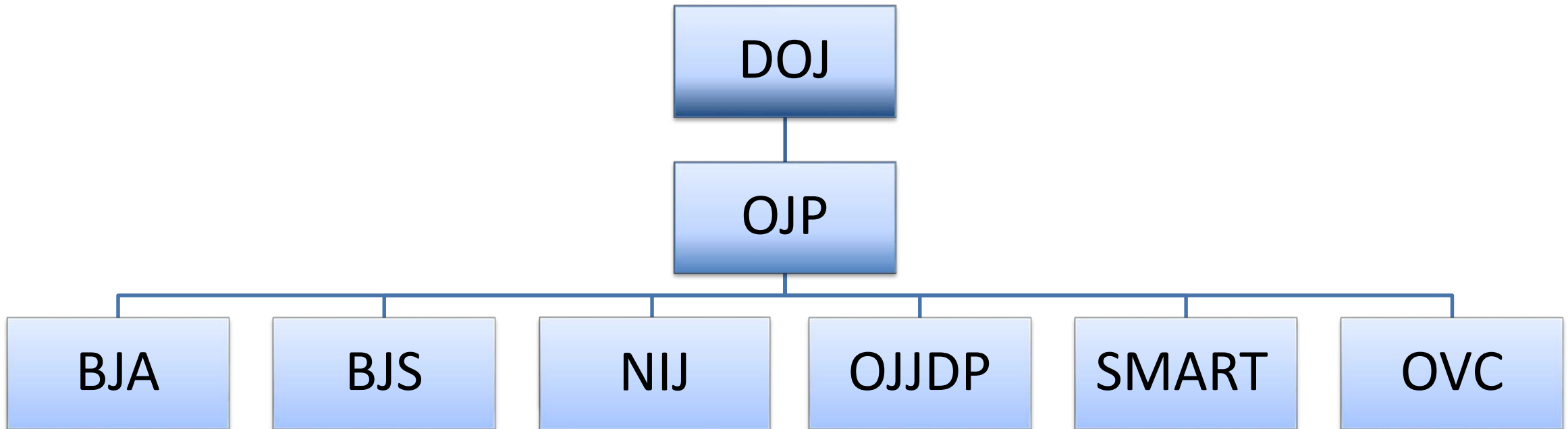
The Federal Funding Process: What New and Seasoned Applicants Should Consider

- February 5, 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.

Consider these Questions

- Refer to page 1 of the solicitation; is your agency an eligible entity?
- Have you received the required authorization(s) to submit an application on behalf of your organization?
- Does your agency have a program currently or a proposed program or a request for funding that fits the intent of the funding agency?
- Does your agency have the capacity to manage the scope of work and the ability to complete the required deliverables?
- Does your agency have an understanding of the financial requirements to manage a federal award?

Tip: Read the solicitation in its entirety at least two times.

Register Early!

The registration process may take 10-14 business days.

There are **4 steps** in registering as an organization applicant in Grants.gov.

To register you will need all of the information listed below:

- Name of organization
- Organization address
- Name of the chief executive officer (CEO) or organization owner
- Legal structure of the organization (e.g., corporation, partnership, proprietorship)
- Year the organization started
- Primary type of business

Tip: Refer to the Registration and Submission section of the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide at <https://ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/Grant-App-Resource-Guide.htm> for instructions on How to Apply.

Review the Legal Requirements

- Each recipient of an OJP grant or cooperative agreement must comply with all federal statutes and regulations applicable to the award as well as the particular award conditions included in the award document.
- The webpages accessible at the links listed below are intended to give applicants for OJP awards a **general overview** of important statutes, regulations, and award conditions that apply to many (or in some cases, all) OJP grants and cooperative agreements awarded in 2018.
- Every recipient is expected to review and understand each condition included in the award document.
 - ["General Conditions" for OJP Awards in FY 2018](#)
 - [Financial Requirements](#)
 - [Organizational Requirements](#)
 - [Civil Rights Requirements](#)
 - [Requirements related to Research](#)
 - [Reporting Requirements and Certain Other Requirements](#)

*Tip: OJP strongly encourages prospective applicants to review information on post-award legal requirements and common OJP award conditions **prior** to submitting an application. See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide at: <https://ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/Grant-App-Resource-Guide.htm> for additional information on administrative, national policy, and other legal requirements.*

Understand Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements

- In addition to the deliverables described in Section A. Program Description, any recipient of an award under this solicitation will be required to submit certain reports and data.
- Required reports Recipients typically must submit quarterly financial reports, semiannual progress reports, final financial and progress reports, and, if applicable, an annual audit report in accordance with the Part 200 Uniform Requirements or specific award conditions. Future awards and fund drawdowns may be withheld if reports are delinquent. (In appropriate cases, OJP may require additional reports.)

Tip: See the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide at: <https://ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/Grant-App-Resource-Guide.htm> for additional information on specific post-award reporting requirements, including performance measures data.

Another useful document is the OJP Post Award Instructions Manual. That manual is online at <https://ojp.gov/funding/Implement/Resources/PostAwardInstructions.pdf>.



Understand the Review Criteria

- Section E. Application Review Information in the solicitation describes the review criteria.
- The review criteria are how applications will be scored and the weight of each section.
- Becoming familiar with the criteria prior to writing your proposal will help you identify what elements are the most important to the reviewers.

Develop a Plan for Writing

- Identify the lead writer(s) within your organization. BJA recommends a collaborative approach to writing a proposal.
- Create an outline of the requirements.
- Identify the steps that will require the most time and do those first.
 - Registrations.
 - Identify partners.
 - Schedule planning meetings.
 - Compile résumés.
 - Obtain letters of support/memorandums of understanding (MOUs).

Program Narrative – Avoid these Mistakes

- Not using the review criteria to write how an organization will accomplish the purpose, objectives, and deliverables.
- Not addressing every stated element in the review criteria.
- Changing the order or structure of the review criteria when developing a program narrative.

Program Narrative – Avoid these Mistakes

- Exceeding the stated page limitations.
- Not adhering to the formatting guidelines.
- Inadequately addressing the review criteria.
 - Using the scoring for each section, determine how many pages to devote to them.

Tip: A section worth 10 percent should not be 10 pages of a 20-page application.

Budget Development – Avoid these Mistakes

- Waiting too long to begin developing the budget.
- Not understanding the required budget expenses detailed in the solicitation.
- Lack of familiarity with allowable and unallowable expenses.

Budget Development – Avoid these Mistakes

- Including expenses in the budget that are not referenced in the program narrative.
- Not clearly stating the activities of any contracted services.
- Differentiating between supplementing and supplanting federal funds.
- Lack of understanding of match requirements and the applicant's responsibility for ensuring availability of matched dollars.

Tip: Refer to the OJP Applicant Resource Guide section on Cost Sharing or Match Requirement at: <https://ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/Grant-App-Resource-Guide.htm#costSharing>.

Budget Detail Worksheet

- The Budget Detail Worksheet and the Budget Narrative are a single document collectively referred to as the “Budget Detail Worksheet.”
- The Budget Detail Worksheet should include a thorough and clear description of **every** cost listed in the "Narrative" section for each budget category.
- OJP expects proposed budgets to be complete, cost effective, and allowable (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities).

Tip: The Budget Summary at the end of the Budget Detail Worksheet should match the amounts entered into the SF 424 with regard to the total federal amount requested and the match requirement (if applicable).

Budget Narrative – Avoid these Mistakes

- Not including a thorough and clear description of every cost listed in the Narrative section for each budget category.
- Not demonstrating in the Narrative how an applicant will maximize cost effectiveness of award expenditures, in particular, to justify the proposed costs in relation to potential alternatives to achieving the same project purpose and objectives.

Budget Planning – Resources

- The *DOJ Grants Financial Guide* (the “*Guide*”) serves as the primary reference manual to assist OJP, OVW, and COPS Office award recipients in fulfilling their fiduciary responsibility to safeguard grant funds and ensure funds are used for the purposes for which they were awarded.

The DOJ Grants Financial Guide: <https://ojp.gov/financialguide/doj/index.htm>

Budget Planning – Resources

OJP Budget Detail Worksheet

- The Budget Detail Worksheet is a user-friendly, fillable, Microsoft Excel-based document designed to calculate totals.
- The Excel workbook contains worksheets for multiple budget years that can be completed as necessary.
- All applicants should use the Excel version when completing the proposed budget in an application, except in cases where the applicant does not have access to Microsoft Excel or experiences technical difficulties.

OJP Budget Detail Worksheet: <https://ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Forms/BudgetDetailWorksheet.htm>

Critical Elements

- Address every critical element listed in the solicitation.
- The critical elements are listed in Section D. Application and Submission Information, What an Application Should Include.
- Omitting a critical element will result in an application not proceeding to peer review and it will not receive further consideration.

Tip: Refer to the Applicant Checklist to ensure that you have included all the critical elements with your submission.

Submission Process

- Don't wait until the deadline date to submit your application!
- OJP urges each applicant to submit its application **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.
- Within 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.
 - The second will state whether the application has been validated and successfully submitted, or whether it has been rejected due to errors, with an explanation.
- If an applicant submits multiple versions of the same application, OJP will review **only** the most recent system-validated version submitted.

Submission Process – Attachments

Grants.gov

- 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.

Need Assistance?

Questions about the solicitation or submitting your application:

- For technical assistance, please contact Grants.gov.
- Applicants needing assistance with any other requirement may contact National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) Response Center: toll free at 800–851–3420; via TTY at 301–240–6310 (hearing impaired only); email to grants@ncjrs.gov; fax to 301–240–5830; or web chat at <https://webcontact.ncjrs.gov/ncjchat/chat.jsp>.

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.

Grants.gov number assigned to this announcement: BJA-2018-13607

FY 2019 Resources for Funding Opportunities

For information on funding opportunities, publications, and initiatives, visit **BJA's website** - <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

The [Department of Justice Program Plan](#) 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 of the funding opportunities that DOJ agencies are expecting to release in FY 2019.

Program Plan Priorities



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

Stay Connected!!


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)

The NCJRS Response Center hours of operation are 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. eastern time, Monday through Friday.