

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
National Institute of Justice



NIJ FY 2022 Invited to Apply - Forensic Technology Center of Excellence

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Overview

The [U.S. Department of Justice](#) (DOJ), [Office of Justice Programs](#) (OJP), [National Institute of Justice](#) (NIJ) seeks applications for funding for Forensic Technology Center of Excellence. This program furthers the Department's mission by improving the safety and effectiveness of criminal justice technology and providing better access to this technology for law enforcement and other criminal justice agencies.

This solicitation incorporates the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) by reference. The OJP Grant Application Resource Guide provides guidance to applicants to prepare and submit applications for funding. **If this solicitation expressly modifies any provision in the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide, the applicant is to follow the guidelines in this solicitation as to that provision.**

Solicitation Categories

This solicitation does not include Solicitation Categories.

Eligible Applicants:

Other

Other

In general, OJP expects that a prospective applicant that is sent an OJP Invitation Letter will be eligible to receive funding as described in the invitation. (Under certain circumstances, however, OJP ultimately may determine that an invited applicant is not, in fact, legally eligible to receive an award.)

To advance Executive Order 13929 Safe Policing for Safe Communities, the Attorney General determined that all state, local, and university or college law enforcement agencies must be certified by an approved independent credentialing body or have started the certification process to be eligible for FY 2022 DOJ discretionary grant funding. To become certified, the law enforcement agency must meet two mandatory conditions: (1) the agency's use-of-force policies adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws and (2) the agency's use-of-force policies prohibit chokeholds except in situations where use of deadly force is allowed by law. The certification requirement also applies to law enforcement agencies receiving DOJ discretionary grant funding through a subaward. For detailed information on this certification requirement, please visit <https://cops.usdoj.gov/SafePolicingEO> to access the Standards for Certification on Safe Policing for Safe Communities, the Implementation Fact Sheet, and the List of Designated Independent Credentialing Bodies.

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

The National Institute of Justice will consider applications under which two or more entities would carry out the federal award; however, only one entity may be the applicant. Any others must be proposed as subrecipients (subgrantees). For additional information on subawards, see the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Contact Information

For technical assistance with submitting the Application for Federal Assistance standard form (SF-424) and a Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form (SF-LLL) in Grants.gov, contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726, 606-545-5035, at [Grants.gov customer support](#), or support@grants.gov. The Grants.gov Support Hotline operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays.

For technical assistance with submitting the **full application** in DOJ's Justice Grants System (JustGrants), contact the JustGrants Service Desk at 833-872-5175 or JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov. The JustGrants Service Desk operates 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. EST Monday - Friday and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Sunday, and Federal holidays.

For assistance with any other requirements of this solicitation, contact the Response Center by telephone at 800-851-3420 or TTY: 301-240-6310 (hearing impaired only) or by email at grants@ncjrs.gov. Response Center hours of operation are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET Monday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET on the solicitation close date.

Submission Information

Applications will be submitted to DOJ in two steps.

Step 1: The applicant must submit by the Grants.gov deadline the required Application for Federal Assistance standard form (SF)-424 and a Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) form when they register in Grants.gov at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>. To register in Grants.gov, the applicant will need to ensure that its System for Award Management (SAM) registration is current.

Step 2: The applicant must then submit the **full application**, including attachments, in JustGrants at [JustGrants.usdoj.gov](https://www.justgrants.usdoj.gov). To be considered timely, the full application must be submitted in JustGrants by the JustGrants application deadline. OJP encourages applicants to review the "How to Apply" section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) and the [JustGrants website](#) for more information, resources, and training.

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Program Description

Overview

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

With this solicitation, NIJ seeks proposals from qualified applicants to establish and operate a Forensic Technology Center of Excellence (FTCOE) to support NIJ's research, development, testing, and evaluation (RDT&E) process and technology transition activities in all areas of forensic science. The FTCOE should focus on specific efforts to include, but not be limited to:

- Providing scientific and technical support to NIJ's forensic science research, development, and technology transition efforts.
- Facilitating demonstration, testing, evaluation, transfer, and adoption of appropriate technology into practice by crime laboratories, medical examiner/coroner offices, law enforcement, and other criminal justice agencies and forensic science service providers.
- Providing technology transition assistance, knowledge transfer, and support to forensic science researchers and practitioners.
- Developing and providing access to resources for research dissemination, education, and evidence-based best practices in the forensic science and criminal justice communities.
- Working closely with NIJ program managers to assess and communicate the impact of forensic science RDT&E, evidence-based best practices, and systems-based approaches for the criminal justice system.
- Develop national forensic science library services to identify, curate, and make available scholarly literature relevant to the forensic science research and practitioner community.

Statutory Authority: Title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (sections 201 and 202); the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (sections 231-233, 235); and 28 U.S.C. 530C.

Specific Information

NIJ is the federal government's lead agency for forensic science research, development, and evaluation. The mission of NIJ's Office of Investigative and Forensic Sciences (OIFS) is to improve the quality and practice of forensic science through innovative solutions that support research and development, testing and evaluation, technology, information exchange, and the development of resources for the criminal justice community.

Forensic science is a multidisciplinary field that incorporates the investigation, analysis, and prosecution of crime (including violent crime). It includes methods and tools for collecting, preserving, and examining evidence, as well as related resources to build capacity and quality practices for implementing forensic practice in a timely, cost-effective, and efficient manner. The FTCOE will coordinate and facilitate the transition of forensic technology, particularly the current and emerging products from NIJ's research and development portfolios to state and local criminal justice agencies. Through these efforts, the FTCOE will increase the capabilities of these agencies to effectively and efficiently serve the public in matters involving forensic science.

Although Federal agencies are part of its constituency, NIJ's primary focus is on the needs and activities of state and local agencies. Ideally, the FTCOE should have established collaborations with partners including, but not limited to, institutions of higher learning, agencies performing forensic science research, and public forensic science laboratories.

Note: For the purposes of this solicitation, higher education institutions are defined as colleges and universities recognized as accredited by the U.S. Department of Education (<https://www.ed.gov/accreditation>). Proposals will be strengthened by collaborations with institutions that have additionally obtained accreditation from the Forensic Science Education Programs Accreditation Commission (FEPAC) (<https://www.fepac-edu.org/>) or other institutions with a forensic science component.^[1]

As part of the program proposal, an applicant should designate a Center Director who has the knowledge, skills, experience, and vision to lead the FTCOE; and should outline an internal management structure capable of supporting the research, development, evaluation, education, technology transition, and outreach missions of the FTCOE.

Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Timeline

The FTCOE should support the dissemination and technology transition of the products of NIJ's forensic science RDT&E programs. The FTCOE and its partners will use their capabilities to advance forensic science practice through, but not limited to, the following goals, objectives, and deliverables:

Goals

- **Providing scientific and technical support to NIJ's forensic science research, development, and technology transition efforts.** The FTCOE will assist NIJ by identifying evidence-based knowledge and tools to meet the challenges of criminal justice. The FTCOE, in close coordination with NIJ program managers, will review the outcomes of NIJ forensic science R&D projects and facilitate the technology transition and implementation of these research products to operational environments. The FTCOE is expected to assist NIJ program managers in implementing NIJ R&D program objectives and assessing ongoing and completed R&D project outcomes. The FTCOE will identify and facilitate collaborations between NIJ-funded researchers, forensic practitioners, and technology developers. It will participate in national and regional groups, conferences, and symposia that support the adoption of technology, and will provide general logistical support for those meetings, as needed.
- **Facilitating demonstration, testing, evaluation, transfer, and adoption of appropriate technology into practice by crime laboratories, medical examiner/coroner offices, law enforcement, and other criminal justice agencies and forensic science service providers.** The FTCOE will facilitate the effective transfer into practice of new tools and technologies, including those funded by NIJ and others. In supporting these efforts, the FTCOE will, in close coordination with the relevant NIJ program managers, identify evidence-based technologies ready for transition, and identify key agencies, professional organizations, and individual researchers and practitioners that should participate. Efforts are to include introducing new tools and technologies to practitioners, introducing practitioner requirements to developers, and assisting developers in the commercialization of their products. Demonstrations and pilot projects must be designed to determine whether a technology meets all of the assessment criteria for a technology need area and develop guidelines for the adoption of the technology by other practitioners through increased coordination with stakeholders. To the greatest extent feasible, demonstrations should also be designed to assess implementation strategies and feasibility through evaluation research in collaboration with NIJ staff (from both the Office of Investigative and Forensic Sciences and the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Technology). Findings (including strategic implementation plans) will be disseminated through reports and scholarly articles, conferences, best practices, and technology assistance activities.

The FTCOE will facilitate and support NIJ working group activities (such as the Forensic Laboratory Needs Technology Working Group^[2]) and other efforts for the forensic science community and their stakeholders. These activities will focus on assessing current and future technology and technology transition needs and develop advice, guidance, and strategies to enhance the policy and practice and improve the reliability of forensic science to meet the increasing demands generated by the criminal justice system. These efforts may include participation from crime laboratories, medical examiner/coroner offices, researchers, law enforcement, forensic science service providers (supporting criminal justice applications), and other criminal justice agencies and relevant stakeholders. In supporting these efforts, the FTCOE will provide administrative and logistical support for meetings.

- **Providing technology transition assistance, knowledge transfer, and support to forensic science researchers and practitioners.** The FTCOE is expected to provide high-quality, specialized technology transition assistance. These efforts may include providing support to assist first-adopter law enforcement, crime laboratories, forensic science service providers and other criminal justice agencies with the use of new technologies or the adaptation of existing technologies to enhance their effectiveness, efficiency, and safety. The FTCOE will provide national expertise for the criminal justice community's ongoing efforts to continuously improve operations through the adoption of new tools and methods. The FTCOE will support related knowledge transfer activities and support the implementation of related policy and practice.

(Note: The FTCOE will not fund or provide assistance to agencies that are adopting technologies that are already widely established in practice.)

Appropriate assistance will be provided to all facets of the criminal justice community, including small, rural,

and tribal law enforcement, corrections, forensic service providers, school resource officers, or other state and local practitioner communities.

- **Developing and providing access to resources for research dissemination, education, and evidence-based best practices in the forensic science and criminal justice communities.** FTCOE efforts should include the development of evidence-based guides or best practices for crime laboratories, forensic science practitioners, law enforcement, and other appropriate criminal justice practitioners based on sound research and development and science. Topics for guides may be discussed with NIJ and initiated with its approval. FTCOE should also engage with forensic science academic programs, academic professional organizations, and professional accreditation and certification bodies to ensure that FTCOE resources, including information on new forensic innovations, emerging technologies, and operational approaches, are disseminated to develop current and future forensic science practitioners. In developing FTCOE electronic products as part of its dissemination activities (and consonant with Section 508), the recipient should seek to ensure accessibility to people with disabilities.^[3]
- **Working closely with NIJ program managers to assess and communicate the impact of forensic science RDT&E, evidence-based best practices, and systems-based approaches for the criminal justice system.** NIJ has made significant investments in social science research on forensic science, as well as research and evaluation for the testing and interpretation of physical evidence in publicly funded forensic laboratories. The Needs Assessment of Forensic Laboratories and Medical Examiner/Coroner Offices recommends that systems-based approaches be adopted to address workload challenges – “where law enforcement, laboratory personnel, medical examiners/coroners, and prosecutors collaborate on cases, are properly educated and trained in the science, and work together to serve justice in a timely and efficient manner.”^[4] NIJ is interested in assessing the impact of past research (both NIJ-funded and non-NIJ-funded) on the criminal justice system and the development of recommendations for improving the impact of such research. NIJ is also interested in the implementation of evidence-based best practices and systems-based approaches and disseminating such information in peer-reviewed, scholarly literature.

There have been studies by NIJ and others that look at the costs and efficiencies of various forensic analytical procedures applied to physical evidence and issues related to the cost-effectiveness of forensic evidence in criminal investigations. NIJ is interested in cataloging, synthesizing, and conducting meta-analyses of cost-benefit analyses related to forensic science, as cost/benefit analyses provide valuable and practical information for practitioners and policymakers that aids decision-making. Also, the FTCOE will be asked to assist in the facilitation of knowledge transfer from forensic science-related social science, operational and managerial research, and evaluation to crime laboratories and other criminal justice agencies.

- **Develop national forensic science library services to identify, curate, and make available scholarly literature relevant to the forensic science research and practitioner community.** Forensic science practitioners often find it challenging find and gain access to scientific research literature.^[5] In order to enhance access and promote the dissemination of forensic science research, the FTCOE will develop and facilitate an online library infrastructure to support the identification and management of research publications, citations, databases, foundational literature, reference materials, and other primary or secondary source materials. The FTCOE will identify and implement ways to proliferate research findings and best practices and to promulgate access of forensic science and other scientific literature to forensic science practitioners, particularly at the state and local levels. The FTCOE may also conduct literature reviews as part of these efforts. The FTCOE should seek ways to coordinate with the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS)^[6] and other appropriate services to avoid any duplicative efforts and develop strategies to provide open access for forensic science research within applicable copyright protections.

Objectives

Through established collaborations with partners such as institutions of higher learning, agencies performing forensic science research, and public forensic science laboratories, the FTCOE shall create avenues for the transition of technologies from development to application. These avenues may include, but not limited to, field-wide surveys of novel technologies, written guides for implementation of novel technologies, training webinars,

podcast, development of virtual application tools, and interactive reference websites.

Deliverables

Final Progress Report. Any recipient of an award under this solicitation will be expected to submit a final progress report.

Required Data Sets and Associated Files and Documentation. Any recipient of an award under this solicitation will be expected to submit to the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD) all data sets that result in whole or in part from the work funded by the award, along with associated files and any documentation necessary for future efforts by others to reproduce the project's findings and/or to extend the scientific value of the data set through secondary analysis.

In addition to these deliverables (and the required reports and data on performance measures), NIJ expects scholarly products to result from each award under this solicitation, taking the form of one or more published, peer-reviewed, scientific journal articles, and/or (if appropriate) law review journal articles, book chapter(s) or book(s) in the academic press, technological prototypes, patented inventions, or similar scientific products.

The Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables are directly related to the performance measures that show the completed work's results, as discussed in the Content of Application Submission section.

Evidence-Based Programs or Practices

OJP strongly encourages the use of data and evidence in policymaking and program development for criminal justice, juvenile justice, and crime victim services. For additional information and resources on evidence-based programs or practices, see the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Information Regarding Potential Evaluation of Programs and Activities

OJP may conduct or support an evaluation of the programs and activities funded under this solicitation. For additional information, see the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) section entitled "Information Regarding Potential Evaluation of Programs and Activities."

Federal Award Information

General Guidance for Federal Award

Total number of awards NIJ expects to make: 2
Maximum dollar amount for each award: One award will be \$300,00 and one award will be for \$4,000,000
Total amount to be awarded under solicitation: \$4,300,000
Period of performance start date: 03/01/2023
Period of performance duration: 12-month

Solicitation Categories

This solicitation does not include Solicitation Categories.

Awards, Amounts and Durations

Anticipated Total Amount to be Awarded Under Solicitation
\$4,300,000.00

Types of Awards

NIJ expects to make awards under this solicitation as cooperative agreements, which provide for OJP to have substantial involvement in carrying out award activities. See the "Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements" section of the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide for additional information](#).

Financial Management and System of Internal Controls

Award recipients and subrecipients (including recipients or subrecipients that are pass-through entities) must, as described in the Part 200 Uniform Requirements as set out at 2 C.F.R. 200.303, comply with standards for financial and program management. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

This solicitation does not require a match.

Pre-agreement Costs (also known as Pre-award Costs)

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on Pre-agreement Costs (also known as Pre-award Costs).

Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation: Waiver

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on the Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation; Waiver.

Prior Approval, Planning, and Reporting of Conference/Meeting/Training Costs

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on Prior Approval, Planning, and Reporting of Conference/Meeting/Training Costs.

Costs Associated with Language Assistance (if applicable)

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on Costs Associated with Language Assistance.

Eligibility Information

For eligibility information, see the solicitation cover page.

For information on cost sharing or matching requirements, see the Federal Award Information section.

Application and Submission Information

See the “Application Elements and Formatting Instructions” section of the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on what happens to an application that does not contain all the specified elements or is nonresponsive to the scope of the solicitation.

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

The SF-424 must be submitted in Grants.gov. It is a required standard form used as a cover sheet for submission of pre-applications, applications, and related information. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information on completing the SF-424.

In Section 8F of the SF-424, please include the name and contact information of the individual **who will complete the application in JustGrants**. JustGrants will use this information (*email address*) to assign the application to this user in JustGrants.

Intergovernmental Review: This solicitation (“funding opportunity”) **is not** subject to [Executive Order 12372](#). In completing the SF-424, an applicant is to answer question 19 by selecting the response that the “Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.”

Standard Applicant Information (JustGrants 424 and General Agency Information)

The Standard Applicant Information section of the JustGrants application is pre-populated with the SF-424 data submitted in Grants.gov. The applicant will need to review the Standard Applicant Information in JustGrants and make edits as needed. Within this section, the applicant will need to add: zip codes for areas affected by the

project; confirm its Authorized Representative; and verify and confirm the organization's unique entity identifier, legal name, and address.

Proposal Abstract

A proposal abstract (no more than 400 words) summarizing the proposed project, including the purpose of the project, primary activities, expected outcomes, the service area, intended beneficiaries and subrecipients (if known), will be completed in the JustGrants web-based form. This abstract should be written in the third person and will be made publicly available on the OJP website if the project is awarded.

Proposal Narrative

The proposal narrative should be submitted as an attachment in JustGrants. The attached document should be double-spaced, using a standard 12-point font; have no less than 1-inch margins; and should not exceed 30 pages. Pages should be numbered and submitted as an attachment. If the proposal narrative fails to comply with these length restrictions, NIJ may consider such noncompliance in final award decision.

The following sections must be included as part of the proposal narrative:

Title Page (not counted against the program narrative page limit) The title page should include:

- Project title.
- Submission date.
- Funding opportunity number.
- Principal Investigator (and any co-principal investigators).
- Unique author identifier (e.g., ORCID, ResearcherID, Scopus Author ID), if available. Key words, including forensic science focus areas.
- Contact information (that is, name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address) for both the applicant and the principal investigator.

Table of Contents and Figures (not counted against the program narrative page limit)

Main Body

Within this section, the narrative should address:

- Purpose, goals, and objectives. Review of relevant literature.
- Implications for criminal justice policy and practice in the United States.
- Management plan and organization.
- Plan for Dissemination to Broader Audiences (if applicable to the proposed project). Applicants should identify plans (if any) to produce or to make available to broader interested audiences – such as criminal/juvenile justice practitioners or policymakers. Applicants are expected to address Section 508 compliance in the Plan for Dissemination to ensure that FTCOE electronic products are accessible to people with disabilities.

This section should include:

a. Description of the Issue OR Statement of the Problem if research is involved

The description should address the need for activities in this area. Applicants should discuss current gaps in data, knowledge, and technology transition and implementation, including those for particular forensic science disciplines and justice sectors, and to answer questions relevant to current policy and practice needs and public interests. It is not uncommon for multiple problems to exist simultaneously (for example, there may be a criminal justice problem affecting public safety, a current technical challenge/need identified by forensic practitioners, as well as a scientific/technology gap between the current state of the art and a desired solution) and applicants should discuss each of these clearly and justify the importance of the separate issues. As part of this discussion, applicants should present a review of previous literature and discuss previous efforts or activities related to these problems.

b. Project Design and Implementation

Applicants should provide a detailed description of the strategies to implement the activities associated with this project. Design elements should follow directly from the project's goals and objectives and address the program-specific information noted in the solicitation. Applicants should describe the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project and address the feasibility of the proposed project activities.

Applicants should consider the rigor and soundness of the methodology and analytical and technical approaches for the proposed activities. Applicants should consider ways to measure the effectiveness or impact of adopting technologies, relevant cost/benefit analyses, and potential challenges or problems in carrying out the activities. Applicants should include how information will be collected, analyzed, evaluated and interpreted as well as the data archiving plan as appropriate.

c. Capabilities and Competencies

This section should describe the experience and capabilities of the applicant organization, key staff, and any proposed subgrantees (including consultants) that the applicant will use to implement and manage this project, its objectives, and the federal funds under this award, highlighting any previous experience implementing projects of similar scope, design, and magnitude. Applicants should address:

- Experience and capacity to support RDT&E processes and technology transition activities in the conduct of similar efforts.
- Experience and capacity to design and implement strategies to achieve program-specific goals and objectives.

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

Describe the process for measuring project performance. Identify who will collect the data; who is responsible for performance measurements; and how the information will be used to guide and evaluate the project's impact. Describe the process to accurately report data.

Note: The applicant is not required to submit performance data with the application. Rather, performance measure information is included as an alert that each successful applicant will be required to submit performance data as part of each award's reporting requirements.

OJP will require each successful applicant to submit regular performance data that show the completed work's results. The performance data directly relate to the goals, objectives, and deliverables identified in the "Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables" discussion. The applicant can also visit OJP's performance measurement page at www.ojp.gov/performance for an overview of performance measurement activities at OJP.

NIJ will require award recipients to submit performance measure data and performance reports in JustGrants. NIJ will provide further guidance on the post-award submission process, if selected for award.

Note on Project Evaluations

An applicant that proposes to use award funds through this solicitation to conduct project evaluations must follow the guidance in the "Note on Project Evaluations" section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Timeline

Applicants will submit the Forensic Technology Center of Excellence goals, objectives, deliverables and timelines in the JustGrants Web-based form.

Budget and Associated Documentation

Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative (attachment)

Applicants will complete the budget attachment and submit it by uploading it as an attachment in JustGrants. See

the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)

The applicant will submit its indirect cost rate agreement by uploading it as an attachment in JustGrants. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Financial Management Questionnaire (including applicant disclosure of high-risk status)

The applicant will download the questionnaire, complete it, and submit it by uploading it as an attachment in JustGrants. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information and the link to the questionnaire.

Disclosure of Process Related to Executive Compensation

If applicable, the applicant will submit a description of the process used to determine executive compensation by uploading the document as an attachment in JustGrants. See the “Application Attachments” section of the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information.

Additional Application Components

The applicant will attach the requested documentation in JustGrants.

Tribal Authorizing Resolution

An application in response to this solicitation may require inclusion of tribal authorizing documentation as an attachment. If applicable, the applicant will submit the tribal authorizing documentation by uploading it as an attachment in JustGrants. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on tribal authorizing resolutions.

Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity Statement

If an application proposes research (including research and development) and/or evaluation, the applicant must demonstrate research/evaluation independence and integrity, including appropriate safeguards, before it may receive award funds. The applicant will submit documentation of its research and evaluation independence and integrity by uploading it as an attachment in JustGrants. For additional information, see the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Human Subjects Protection

If an application proposes activities that includes human subjects, Human Subjects Protection paperwork must be completed and submitted as a separate attachment (documentation and forms related to Institutional Review Board [IRB] review). See <https://nij.ojp.gov/funding/human-subjects-protection>. Note: Final IRB approval is not required at the time an application is submitted.

Disclosures and Assurances

The applicant will address the following disclosures and assurances.

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

Complete and submit the SF-LLL in Grants.gov. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

DOJ Certified Standard Assurances

Review and accept the DOJ Certified Standard Assurances in JustGrants. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Applicant Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items

Complete the JustGrants web-based Applicant Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items form. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

DOJ Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements

Review and accept the DOJ Certified Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; Drug-Free Workplace Requirements; and Law Enforcement and Community Policing in JustGrants. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Applicant Disclosure and Justification – DOJ High Risk Grantees (if applicable)

If applicable, submit the DOJ High Risk Disclosure and Justification as an attachment in JustGrants. A DOJ High Risk Grantee is an award recipient that has received a DOJ High Risk designation based on a documented history of unsatisfactory performance, financial instability, management system or other internal control deficiencies, or noncompliance with award terms and conditions on prior awards, or that is otherwise not responsible. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

How to Apply

Step 1: The applicant must submit the **SF-424** and an **SF-LLL** in Grants.gov at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>.

Step 2: The applicant must then submit the **full application**, including attachments, in JustGrants at JustGrants.usdoj.gov.

For additional information, see the “How to Apply” section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) and the [DOJ Application Submission Checklist](#).

Submission Dates and Time

The **SF-424** and the **SF-LLL** must be submitted in Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. eastern time on September 6, 2022.

The full application must be submitted in JustGrants by 8:59 p.m. eastern time on September 16, 2022.

OJP urges applicants to submit their Grants.gov and JustGrants submissions prior to the due dates to allow sufficient time to correct errors and resubmit by the submission deadlines if a rejection notification is received. To be considered timely, the **full application** must be submitted in JustGrants by the JustGrants application deadline.

Experiencing Unforeseen Technical Issues

An applicant that experiences unforeseen SAM.gov, Grants.gov, or JustGrants technical issues beyond its control that prevent application submission by the deadline, must demonstrate all efforts in requesting technical support in order to submit an application by the deadline. Technical support is available via phone and email to the applicable SAM.gov, Grants.gov, or JustGrants support centers or service desks in which an applicant received a ticket number for resolution. If an applicant misses a deadline due to unforeseen technical difficulties, the applicant may request a waiver to submit an application after the deadline. *Note: If an applicant does not submit all the required Grants.gov forms by the Grants.gov deadline, the applicant will not be able to proceed to the JustGrants portion of the application process.*

An applicant experiencing technical difficulties with the following systems must contact the associated support desk indicated below to report the technical issue and receive a tracking number:

- Grants.gov - contact the [Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline](#)
- SAM.gov - contact the [SAM Help Desk \(Federal Service Desk\)](#)

- JustGrants - contact the JustGrants Support Desk at JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov or 833-872-5175

An applicant requesting a waiver to submit a late application must document their request for technical assistance in an email to the OJP Response Center at grants@ncjrs.gov **within 24 hours after the application deadline** to request approval to submit its application after the deadline. If an applicant has technical issues with Grants.gov, the applicant must contact OJP Response Center within 24 hours of the Grants.gov deadline to request approval to submit after the deadline. Waiver requests to submit after the submission deadline must:

- Describe the technical difficulties experienced;
- Include a timeline of the applicant's submission efforts (e.g., what date and time did the error occur, what date and time was action taken to resolve the issue and resubmit; and what date and time did support representatives respond)
- Include an attachment(s) of the complete grant application and all required documentation and material; and
- Include the applicant's Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and any applicable SAM.gov tracking number(s), Grants.gov Help Desk, and JustGrants Support Desk Ticket Numbers.

OJP will review each request for late submission and required supporting documentation and notify the applicant whether the request has been approved or denied. For more details on the waiver process, OJP encourages applicants to review the "Experiencing Unforeseen Technical Issues" section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Application Review Information

Review Process

OJP reviews each application to make sure that the information presented is reasonable, understandable, measurable, and achievable, as well as consistent with the solicitation. For invited applications, OJP reviews for consistency with the invitation letter and invited applicant guidance. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on the application review process.

In addition, if OJP anticipates that an award will exceed \$250,000 in federal funds, OJP also must review and consider any information about the applicant that appears in the non-public segment of the integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently, the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System, FAPIIS).

Important note on FAPIIS: An applicant, at its option, may review and comment on any information about itself that currently appears in FAPIIS and was entered by a federal awarding agency. OJP will consider such comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in FAPIIS, in its assessment of the risk posed by the applicant.

Absent explicit statutory authorization or written delegation of authority to the contrary, the Assistant Attorney General will make all final award decisions.

Final award decisions for research and statistics programs will be made by the Director of the National Institute of Justice. For purposes of this Guidance for Invited Applications, this "[final] award decisions" provision expressly modifies the "final award decisions" provision in the "Application Review Information" section of the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Federal Award Administration Information

Federal Award Notices

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on award notifications and instructions.

Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements

If selected for funding, in addition to implementing the funded project consistent with the OJP-approved

application, the recipient must comply with all award conditions and all applicable requirements of federal statutes and regulations, including the applicable requirements referred to in the assurances and certifications executed in connection with award acceptance. For additional information on these legal requirements, see the “Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements” section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Information Technology (IT) Security Clauses

An application in response to this solicitation may require inclusion of information related to information technology security. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on information technology security.

General Information about Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements

In addition to the deliverables described in the “Program Description” section, all award recipients under this solicitation will be required to submit certain reports and data.

Required reports. Award recipients typically must submit quarterly financial reports, semi-annual 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.)

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information on specific post-award reporting requirements, including performance measure data.

Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

For OJP contact(s), see the solicitation cover page.

For contact information for Grants.gov and JustGrants, see the solicitation cover page.

Other Information

Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552 and 5 U.S.C. 552a)

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552 and 5 U.S.C. 552a).

Provide Feedback to OJP

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on how to provide feedback to OJP.

Application Checklist

NIJ FY 2022 Invited to Apply - Forensic Technology Center of Excellence

This application checklist has been created as an aid in developing an application. The [DOJ Application Submission Checklist](#) is another resource.

What an Applicant Must Do:

Prior to registering in Grants.gov

- Confirm your Entity's [System Award Management \(SAM\)](#) Registration Information (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

To register in Grants.gov:

- Acquire an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and Grants.gov username and password (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Business Point of Contact (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

To find the Funding Opportunity:

- Search for the Funding Opportunity in Grants.gov using the opportunity number, Assistance Listing or keyword(s)
- Access the Funding Opportunity and Application Package (see step 7 in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Sign up for Grants.gov email [notifications](#) (optional) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Read [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#)
- Read OJP policy and guidance on conference approval, planning, and reporting available at <https://www.ojp.gov/funding/financialguidedoj/iii-postaward-requirements#6g3y8> (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

Overview of Post-Award Legal Requirements:

- Review the "[Overview of Legal Requirements Generally Applicable to OJP Grants and Cooperative Agreements - FY 2022 Awards](#)" in the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#).

Review Scope Requirement:

- The federal amount requested is within the allowable limit(s).

Review Eligibility Requirement:

- Other - In general, OJP expects that a prospective applicant that is sent an OJP Invitation Letter will be eligible to receive funding as described in the invitation. (Under certain circumstances, however, OJP ultimately may determine that an invited applicant is not, in fact, legally eligible to receive an award.)

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Prepare to submit the Application for Federal Assistance standard form (SF)-424 and Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form (SF-LLL)

- Review Information to complete the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) in Grants.gov
- Complete Standard Applicant Information (SF-424 information from Grants.gov)
- Submit the **SF-424** and **SF-LLL** in Grants.gov

After the SF-424 and SF-LLL submission in Grants.gov, receive Grants.gov email notifications that:

- Submission has been received in Grants.gov
- Submission has either been successfully validated or rejected with errors (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

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

- Contact NIJ or the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726, 606-545-5035, at [Grants.gov customer support](#), or support@grants.gov regarding technical difficulties (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

Receive email notification to complete application in JustGrants

- Proceed to complete Application in JustGrants

Content of Application Submission

- Proposal Abstract
- Proposal Narrative

Budget and Associated Documentation

- Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative (attachment)
- Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Disclosure of Process related to Executive Compensation (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

Additional Application Components

- Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Request and Justification for Employee Compensation; Waiver (if applicable) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

Disclosures and Assurances

- [Disclosure of Lobbying Activities \(SF-LLL\)](#) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Applicant Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- DOJ Certified Standard Assurances (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- DOJ Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Applicant Disclosure and Justification – DOJ High Risk Grantees (if applicable) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

Submit application in JustGrants:

- Application has been successfully submitted in JustGrants

If no JustGrants application submission validation or if error notifications are received:

- Contact JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov or 833-872-5175 regarding technical difficulties.

Endnotes

[1] National Institute of Justice, (2019). Report to Congress: Needs Assessment of Forensic Laboratories and Medical Examiner/Coroner Offices, Appendix C. Report prepared for U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C. Retrieved from <https://www.justice.gov/olp/page/file/1228306/download>.

[2] Supporting Crime Lab Directors and the Formation of the Forensic Laboratory Needs Technology Working Group, <https://nij.ojp.gov/speech/supporting-crime-lab-directors-and-formation-forensic-laboratory-needs->

[technology-working](#) Forensic Laboratory Needs Technology Working Group — Opening a New Channel to Improve Forensics, <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/forensic-laboratory-needs-technology-working-group-opening-new-channel-improve>.

[3] Section 508 Home Page, U.S. Department of Justice. <https://www.justice.gov/crt/section-508-home-page-0>

[4] National Institute of Justice, (2019). Report to Congress: Needs Assessment of Forensic Laboratories and Medical Examiner/Coroner Offices, Report prepared for U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C. Retrieved from <https://www.justice.gov/olp/page/file/1228306/download>.

[5] Ibid, 135-138.

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