



The [U.S. Department of Justice](#) (DOJ), [Office of Justice Programs](#) (OJP), [National Institute of Justice](#) (NIJ) is seeking applications to strengthen the medical examiner-coroner system. This program furthers the Department's mission by providing resources to improve medicolegal death investigations (MDI) in the United States.

Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program

Applications Due: June 12, 2019

Eligibility

Eligible applicants are agencies directly involved in medicolegal death investigations as part of their normal business, such as medical examiner offices and coroner offices, States (including territories), units of local government, federally recognized Indian tribal governments (as determined by the Secretary of the Interior) that perform law enforcement functions, non-profit and for-profit organizations (including tribal non-profit and for-profit organizations), institutions of higher education (including tribal institutions of higher education), and certain qualified individuals.

Eligible applicants for [Purpose Area 1, Forensic Pathology Fellowships](#) are limited to entities with programs that should meet or exceed the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME).¹

Eligible applicants for [Purpose Area 2, Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation](#) are limited to domestic medical examiner and coroner offices actively seeking accreditation through an independent accrediting organization, such as the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) and the International Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners (IACME), or other appropriate accrediting bodies.

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

NIJ welcomes 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).² The applicant must be the entity that would have primary responsibility for carrying out the award, including administering the funding and managing the entire program. Under this solicitation, only one application by any particular applicant entity will be considered.

¹ [ACGME Program Requirements for Graduate Medical Education in Forensic Pathology, 2017](#).

² For additional information on subawards, see "Budget and Associated Documentation" under [Section D. Application and Submission Information](#).

An entity may, however, be proposed as a subrecipient (subgrantee) in more than one application.

NIJ may elect to fund applications submitted under this FY 2019 solicitation in future fiscal years, dependent on, among other considerations, the merit of the applications and on the availability of appropriations.

Deadline

Applicants must register with Grants.gov at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html> prior to submitting an application. All applications are due by 11:59 p.m. eastern time on June 12, 2019.

To be considered timely, an application must be submitted by the application deadline using Grants.gov, and the applicant must have received a validation message from Grants.gov that indicates successful and timely submission. OJP urges applicants to submit applications at least 72 hours prior to the application due date, to allow time for the applicant 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.

OJP encourages all applicants to read this [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#).

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

Contact Information

For technical assistance with submitting an application, contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726, 606-545-5035, at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html>, or at support@grants.gov. The Grants.gov Support Hotline operates 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 NIJ 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 other requirements of this solicitation, contact the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) Response Center, by telephone at 1-800-851-3420; via TTY at 301-240-6310 (hearing impaired only), or by email at grants@ncjrs.gov. 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. General information on applying for NIJ awards can be found at www.nij.gov/funding/Pages/welcome.aspx. Answers to frequently asked questions that may assist applicants are posted at www.nij.gov/funding/Pages/faqs.aspx.

Grants.gov number assigned to this solicitation: NIJ-2019-15523

Release date: April 11, 2019

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| A. Program Description | 4 |
| Overview | 4 |
| Program Specific Information | 4 |
| Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables | 5 |
| Information Regarding Potential Evaluation of Programs and Activities | 7 |
| B. Federal Award Information..... | 7 |
| Type of Award..... | 7 |
| Financial Management and System of Internal Controls..... | 8 |
| Budget Information..... | 9 |
| Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement..... | 9 |
| Pre-agreement Costs (also known as Pre-award Costs) | 9 |
| Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation; Waiver | 9 |
| Prior Approval, Planning, and Reporting of Conference/Meeting/Training Costs | 10 |
| Costs Associated with Language Assistance (if applicable) | 10 |
| C. Eligibility Information..... | 10 |
| D. Application and Submission Information | 10 |
| What an Application Should Include | 10 |
| How To Apply..... | 25 |
| E. Application Review Information..... | 30 |
| Review Criteria..... | 30 |
| Review Process | 34 |
| F. Federal Award Administration Information | 36 |
| Federal Award Notices | 36 |
| Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements | 36 |
| General Information about Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements | 37 |
| G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s) | 38 |
| H. Other Information..... | 38 |
| Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552 and 5 U.S.C. 552a) | 38 |
| Provide Feedback to OJP | 39 |
| Appendix A: Performance Measures Tables | 40 |
| Appendix B: Application Checklist | 43 |

Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program

(CFDA No. 16.560)

A. Program Description

Overview

With this solicitation, NIJ seeks proposals to strengthen the medical examiner/coroner (ME/C) system in the United States. Through this program, NIJ will support grants in two focus areas by:

- (1) Supporting forensic pathology fellowships; and
- (2) Providing resources necessary for medical examiner and coroner offices to achieve accreditation.

Statutory Authority: Department of Justice Appropriations Act, 2019 (Public Law 116-60).

Program Specific Information

The National Science and Technology Council's Fast-Track Action Committee on Strengthening the Medicolegal-Death-Investigation System's (FTAC-SMDIS) report titled *Strengthening the Medicolegal-Death-Investigation System: Improving Data Systems* notes that death investigations performed by ME/C offices are vital to criminal justice by investigating violent deaths. Of the estimated 2.6 million deaths annually, ME/C offices investigate nearly 500,000 cases in approximately 2,400 jurisdictions. FTAC-SMDIS found that the ME/C community lacks adequate personnel and resources to address the country's medicolegal death investigation (MDI) needs. In addition, FTAC-SMDIS reports that there are systemic issues with death investigation data quality and infrastructure, inadequate facilities, and inconsistent expertise levels.³ Other reports such as [Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Through NIJ-funded Programs: 2018 Medicolegal Death Investigation Stakeholders' Meeting](#) have also asserted a need to address deficient facilities, equipment, staffing, education, and training for MDI.⁴

NIJ's Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System is a competitive program designed to support the enhancement of MDI services, and increase the supply of forensic pathologists nationwide. NIJ is seeking proposals in two purpose areas:

³ White House National Science and Technology Council report on Strengthening the Medicolegal Death Investigation System: Improving Data Systems. September 2016. https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/NSTC/strengthening_the_medicolegal_death_investigation_system_final.pdf.

⁴ U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, Office of Investigative and Forensic Sciences. *FINAL REPORT: Strengthening the Medical Examiner – Coroner System through NIJ-Funded Programs*. Washington, DC: NIJ Forensic Technology Center of Excellence, 2018. <https://rti.connectsolutions.com/pvmowt95qx7z/>.

- [Purpose Area 1: Forensic Pathology Fellowships.](#)
- [Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation.](#)

Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables

The goals of the Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System program are to:

- 1) Increase the supply of qualified forensic pathology practitioners; and
- 2) Strengthen the quality and consistency of ME/C services.

Proposals are expected to clearly identify the purpose area to which they are applying.

The Goals, Objectives and Deliverables are directly related to the performance measures that demonstrate the results of the work completed, as discussed in [Section D. Application and Submission Information](#), under Program Narrative.

Purpose Area 1: Forensic Pathology Fellowships

Competition ID: NIJ-2019-15526

Background: There is an extreme shortage of board-certified forensic pathologists in the United States⁵ as underscored in the 2009 report issued by the National Academies of Sciences on strengthening forensic science in the United States.⁶ This call was reaffirmed by several recent reports, developed through national initiatives dedicated to improving the quality and practice of forensic sciences. Both the National Commission on Forensic Science⁷ and the Office of Science and Technology Policy, Fast-Track Action Committee on Strengthening the Medicolegal Death Investigation System⁸ recommended investments in workforce development initiatives for forensic pathologists, in order to increase their quantity and thereby support the medicolegal death investigation needs of our nation.⁹

Board-certified forensic pathologists are physicians who have completed, at a minimum, four years of medical school, and three-to-four years of medical specialty training in anatomical pathology or anatomical and clinical pathology, followed by an accredited fellowship year in forensic pathology. Forensic pathology fellowships provide specialized training in autopsies and death scene investigations under direct supervision by a board-certified forensic pathologist, as

⁵ National Commission on Forensic Science *Increasing the Number, Retention, and Quality of Board-Certified Forensic Pathologists*, August 2015. <https://www.justice.gov/ncfs/file/641646/download>.

⁶ National Research Council. *Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2009. doi:10.17226/12589. <https://www.nap.edu/catalog/12589/strengthening-forensic-science-in-the-united-states-a-path-forward>.

⁷ DOJ National Commission on Forensic Science. <https://www.justice.gov/ncfs>. (Last accessed October 25, 2017).

⁸ Views on Increasing the Number, Retention, and Quality of Board-Certified Forensic Pathologists. DOJ National Commission on Forensic Science. August 11, 2015. <https://www.justice.gov/ncfs/file/787356/download>.

⁹ White House National Science and Technology Council report on Strengthening the Medicolegal Death Investigation System: Improving Data Systems. September 2016. https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/NSTC/strengthening_the_medicolegal_death_investigation_system_final.pdf.

well as general training in courtroom testimony, criminalistics, anthropology, odontology, toxicology, research techniques, and other forensic science-related specialties.¹⁰

Through this funding opportunity, applications are being solicited from institutions with current ACGME-accredited **forensic pathology** fellowship programs to recruit quality candidates who have completed all necessary medical education and pathology residency requirements. This program will strengthen the ME/C system by increasing the number and quality of board-certified forensic pathologists.

Agencies that are awarded funds under this purpose area will be required to provide information to NIJ, generally in the form of semi-annual progress reports, throughout the duration of the award. These reports should describe all relevant progress, including any issues encountered and/or successes achieved. Awardees are encouraged to report to NIJ any additional information about the fellowship program that may assist NIJ to better serve the MDI community.

Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation

Competition ID: NIJ-2019-15506

Background: Accreditation provides an independent measure of quality assurance by assessing that an office maintains written policies and procedures; as well as adequate staff, equipment, training, and suitable physical facilities to produce a forensically-documented, accurate, and credible death investigation product.^{11,12} Examples of accrediting bodies that publish professional standards on procedures for conducting autopsies and medicolegal death investigations are the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME)¹³ and the International Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners (IACME).¹⁴

Through this funding opportunity, applications are being solicited from ME/C agencies seeking accreditation through an appropriate ME/C accrediting agency such as, but not limited to, those listed above. Final determination of the appropriateness of an accrediting body for the purposes of this solicitation will be made by NIJ. This program will strengthen the quality of ME/C services in the United States by ensuring that agencies performing postmortem examinations are in compliance with industry and professional standards and performance criteria. Funds may not be used to maintain existing accreditation.

Agencies that are awarded funds under this purpose area will be required to provide information to NIJ, generally in the form of semi-annual progress reports, throughout the duration of the award. NIJ is interested in, among other things, understanding the advantages and challenges that arise with implementing an accreditation program, especially when resources and policies vary among jurisdictions. Reports should address progress made in achieving accreditation and,

¹⁰ National Research Council, 256.

¹¹ Recommendation on the Accreditation of Medicolegal Death Investigation Offices. DOJ National Commission on Forensic Science. January 30, 2015. <https://www.justice.gov/archives/nctfs/page/file/787236/download>.

¹² National Research Council. p.258.

¹³ National Association of Medical Examiners. Inspection and Accreditation. <https://netforum.avectra.com/eweb/DynamicPage.aspx?Site=name&WebCode=Accred> (Last accessed October 25 2017).

¹⁴ International Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners. Accreditation. <http://www.theiacme.com/accreditation>. (Last accessed October 25, 2017).

for example, costs, benefits, and other technical, administrative, policy, or legal gaps that support, sustain, or limit the achievement of accreditation.

Information Regarding Potential Evaluation of Programs and Activities

The Department of Justice has prioritized the use of evidence-based programming and deems it critical to continue to build and expand the evidence informing criminal and juvenile justice programs to reach the highest level of rigor possible. Therefore, applicants should note that the Office of Justice Programs may conduct or support an evaluation of the programs and activities funded under this solicitation. Recipients and sub-recipients will be expected to cooperate with program-related assessments or evaluation efforts, including through the collection and provision of information or data requested by OJP (or its designee) for the assessment or evaluation of any activities and/or outcomes of those activities funded under this solicitation. The information or data requested may be in addition to any other financial or performance data already required under this program.

B. Federal Award Information

Total funding for this solicitation and the number of awards made will depend on the availability of funds, the quality of the applications, and other pertinent factors. NIJ expects to award up to \$4 million under the Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program to institutions that administer an accredited forensic pathology fellowship program, and to state and local ME/C offices actively seeking accreditation. NIJ expects to make up to ten (10) forensic pathology fellowship awards of \$100,000 each under [Purpose Area 1](#) of this solicitation. Funds may be used toward a salary/stipend for the fellow and related costs that may include fringe benefits (if applicable), at the applicant institution's discretion. Up to \$25,000 of the \$100,000 may be used for other related direct or indirect costs. Related costs may include any combination of the fellow's fees, project costs, professional society membership fees, or conference travel, among other allowable expenses incurred during the award period of performance. Under [Purpose Area 2](#), NIJ expects to make awards to support ME/C office accreditation, with an estimated total amount awarded of up to \$3 million. NIJ expects to make awards for a 24-month period of performance, to begin on January 1, 2020.

All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and to any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law.

Type of Award

NIJ expects to make any award under this solicitation in the form of a grant. See [Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements](#), under [Section F. Federal Award Administration Information](#), for a brief discussion of important statutes, regulations, and award conditions that apply to many (or in some cases, all) OJP grants.

Financial Management and System of Internal Controls

Award recipients and subrecipients (including recipients or subrecipients that are pass-through entities¹⁵) must, as described in the Part 200 Uniform Requirements¹⁶ as set out at 2 C.F.R. 200.303:

- (a) Establish and maintain effective internal control over the Federal award that provides reasonable assurance that [the recipient (and any subrecipient)] is managing the Federal award in compliance with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award. These internal controls should be in compliance with guidance in “Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government” issued by the Comptroller General of the United States and the “Internal Control Integrated Framework”, issued by the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO).
- (b) Comply with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the Federal awards.
- (c) Evaluate and monitor [the recipient’s (and any subrecipient’s)] compliance with statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of Federal awards.
- (d) Take prompt action when instances of noncompliance are identified including noncompliance identified in audit findings.
- (e) Take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other information the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity designates as sensitive or [the recipient (or any subrecipient)] considers sensitive consistent with applicable Federal, state, local, and tribal laws regarding privacy and obligations of confidentiality.

To help ensure that applicants understand the applicable administrative requirements and cost principles, OJP encourages prospective applicants to enroll, at no charge, in the DOJ Grants Financial Management Online Training, available at <https://onlineqfmt.training.ojp.gov/>. (This training is required for all OJP award recipients.)

Also, applicants should be aware that OJP collects information from applicants on their financial management and systems of internal controls (among other information) which is used to make award decisions. Under [Section D. Application and Submission Information](#), applicants may access and review a questionnaire – the [OJP Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire](#) – that OJP requires **all** applicants (other than an individual applying in his/her personal capacity) to download, complete, and submit as part of the application.

¹⁵ For purposes of this solicitation, the phrase “pass-through entity” includes any recipient or subrecipient that provides a subaward (“subgrant”) to a subrecipient (subgrantee) to carry out part of the funded award or program. Additional information on proposed subawards is listed under [What an Application Should Include](#), Section D of this solicitation.

¹⁶ The “Part 200 Uniform Requirements” means the DOJ regulation at 2 C.F.R. Part 2800, which adopts (with certain modifications) the provisions of 2 C.F.R. Part 200.

Budget Information

Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

This solicitation does not require a match. However, if a successful application proposes a voluntary match amount, and OJP approves the budget, the total match amount incorporated into the approved budget becomes mandatory and subject to audit.

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

Pre-agreement costs are costs incurred by the applicant prior to the start date of the period of performance of the federal award.

OJP does **not** typically approve pre-agreement costs; an applicant must request and obtain the prior written approval of OJP for all such costs. All such costs incurred prior to award and prior to approval of the costs are incurred at the sole risk of the applicant. (Generally, no applicant should incur project costs *before* submitting an application requesting federal funding for those costs.) Should there be extenuating circumstances that make it appropriate for OJP to consider approving pre-agreement costs, the applicant may contact the point of contact listed on the title page of this solicitation for the requirements concerning written requests for approval. If approved in advance by OJP, award funds may be used for pre-agreement costs, consistent with the recipient's approved budget and applicable cost principles. See the section on Costs Requiring Prior Approval in the DOJ Grants Financial Guide at <https://ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/index.htm> for more information.

Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation; Waiver

With respect to any award of more than \$250,000 made under this solicitation, a recipient may not use federal funds to pay total cash compensation (salary plus cash bonuses) to any employee of the recipient at a rate that exceeds 110 percent of the maximum annual salary payable to a member of the federal government's Senior Executive Service (SES) at an agency with a Certified SES Performance Appraisal System for that year.¹⁷ The 2019 salary table for SES employees is available at the Office of Personnel Management website at <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/salary-tables/19Tables/exec/html/ES.aspx>. Note: A recipient may compensate an employee at a greater rate, provided the amount in excess of this compensation limitation is paid with non-federal funds. (Non-federal funds used for any such additional compensation will not be considered matching funds, where match requirements apply.) If only a portion of an employee's time is charged to an OJP award, the maximum allowable compensation is equal to the percentage of time worked times the maximum salary limitation.

The Assistant Attorney General for OJP may exercise discretion to waive, on an individual basis, this limitation on compensation rates allowable under an award. An applicant that requests a waiver should include a detailed justification in the budget narrative of its application. An applicant that does not submit a waiver request and justification with its application should anticipate that OJP will require the applicant to adjust and resubmit the budget.

¹⁷ OJP does not apply this limitation on the use of award funds to the nonprofit organizations listed in Appendix VIII to 2 C.F.R. Part 200.

The justification should address, in the context of the work the individual would do under the award, the particular qualifications and expertise of the individual, the uniqueness of a service the individual will provide, the individual's specific knowledge of the proposed program or project, and a statement that explains whether and how the individual's salary under the award would be commensurate with the regular and customary rate for an individual with his/her qualifications and expertise, and for the work he/she would do under the award.

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

OJP strongly encourages every applicant that proposes to use award funds for any conference-, meeting-, or training-related activity (or similar event) to review carefully—before submitting an application—the OJP and DOJ policy and guidance on approval, planning, and reporting of such events, available at www.ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/PostawardRequirements/chapter3.10a.htm. OJP policy and guidance (1) encourage minimization of conference, meeting, and training costs; (2) require prior written approval (which may affect project timelines) of most conference, meeting, and training costs for cooperative agreement recipients, as well as some conference, meeting, and training costs for grant recipients; and (3) set cost limits, which include a general prohibition of all food and beverage costs.

Costs Associated with Language Assistance (if applicable)

If an applicant proposes a program or activity that would deliver services or benefits to individuals, the costs of taking reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to those services or benefits for individuals with limited English proficiency may be allowable. Reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to services or benefits may include interpretation or translation services, where appropriate.

For additional information, see the "Civil Rights Compliance" section under "[Overview of Legal Requirements Generally Applicable to OJP Grants and Cooperative Agreements – FY 2018 Awards](#)" in the OJP Funding Resource Center at <https://ojp.gov/funding/index.htm>.

C. Eligibility Information

For eligibility information, see title page.

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

D. Application and Submission Information

What an Application Should Include

This section describes in detail what an application should include. An applicant should anticipate that if it fails to submit an application that contains all of the specified elements, it may negatively affect the review of its application; and, should a decision be made to make an award, it may result in the inclusion of award conditions that preclude the recipient from accessing or using award funds until the recipient satisfies the conditions and OJP makes the funds available.

Moreover, an applicant should anticipate that an application that OJP determines is nonresponsive to the scope of the solicitation, or that OJP determines does not include the application elements that NIJ has designated to be critical, will neither proceed to peer review, nor receive further consideration. For this solicitation, NIJ has designated the following application elements as critical: Program Narrative, Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative, and resumes/curriculum vitae of key personnel.

NOTE: OJP has combined the Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative in a single document collectively referred to as the Budget Detail Worksheet. See “Budget Information and Associated Documentation” below for more information about the Budget Detail Worksheet and where it can be accessed.

OJP strongly recommends that applicants use appropriately descriptive file names (e.g., “Program Narrative,” “Budget Detail Worksheet,” “Timelines,” “Memoranda of Understanding,” “Resumes”) for all attachments. Also, OJP recommends that applicants include resumes in a single file.

Please review the “Note on File Names and File Types” under [How To Apply](#) to be sure applications are submitted in permitted formats.

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

The SF-424 is a required standard form used as a cover sheet for submission of pre-applications, applications, and related information. Grants.gov and the OJP Grants Management System (GMS) take information from the applicant’s profile to populate the fields on this form. When selecting “type of applicant,” if the applicant is a for-profit entity, select “For-Profit Organization” or “Small Business” (as applicable).

To avoid processing delays, an applicant must include an accurate legal name on its SF-424. On the SF-424, current OJP award recipients, when completing the field for “Legal Name” (box 8a), should use the same legal name that appears on the prior year award document (which is also the legal name stored in OJP’s financial system.) Also, current recipients should enter the Employer Identification Number (EIN) in box 8b exactly as it appears on the prior year award document. An applicant with a current, active award(s) must ensure that its GMS profile is current. If the profile is not current, the applicant should submit a Grant Adjustment Notice updating the information on its GMS profile prior to applying under this solicitation.

A new applicant entity should enter its official legal name in box 8a, its address in box 8d, its EIN in box 8b, and its Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number in box 8c of the SF-424. A new applicant entity should attach official legal documents to its application (e.g., articles of incorporation, 501(c)(3) status documentation, organizational letterhead) to confirm the legal name, address, and EIN entered into the SF-424. OJP will use the System for Award Management (SAM) to confirm the legal name and DUNS number entered in the SF-424; therefore, an applicant should ensure that the information entered in the SF-424 matches its current registration in SAM. See the [How to Apply](#) section for more information on SAM and DUNS numbers.

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.”)

2. Project Abstract

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

- Written for a general public audience.
- Submitted as a separate attachment with “Project Abstract” as part of its file name.
- Single-spaced, using a standard 12-point font (such as Times New Roman) with 1-inch margins.

The project abstract is an important part of the application and serves as an introduction to the proposed project. If the application is funded, the project abstract typically will become public information and be used to describe the project.

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

3. Program Narrative

The program narrative section of the application should not exceed 15 double-spaced pages in 12-point font with 1-inch margins. If included in the main body of the program narrative, tables, charts, figures, and other illustrations count toward the 15-page limit for the narrative section. The project abstract, table of contents, appendices, and government forms do not count toward the 15-page limit.

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

The following sections should be included as part of the program narrative.¹⁸

a. Title Page (not counted against the 15-page program narrative limit)

The title page should include the title of the project, submission date, funding opportunity number, name and complete contact information (that is, address, telephone number, and e-mail address) for the applicant organization and purpose area ([Purpose Area 1: Forensic Pathology Fellowships](#) or [Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation](#)).

b. Main Body

The main body of the program narrative should describe the proposed project in depth, and how funds will be used to improve ME/C services and strengthen the ME/C system in the United States. The following sections should be included as part of the program narrative:

¹⁸ For information on subawards (including the details on proposed subawards that should be included in the application), see "Budget and Associated Documentation" under [Section D. Application and Submission Information](#).

- Statement of the Problem.
 - Explain the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress in the field that the proposed project addresses.
 - Explain the criminal justice significance of the problem.
- Project Design and Implementation.
 - Describe the overall strategy, methodology, and plan of activities to accomplish the specific aims of the project.
- Potential Impact.
 - Explain the criminal justice significance of the proposed project.
 - Explain how the application will strengthen the ME/C system and improve ME/C services.
- Capabilities and Competencies.
 - Describe each senior/key personnel's' role in the project and why the individual is well-suited for that role.
- Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures.

Within these sections, the narrative should address:

- Purpose, goals, and objectives.
- Review of relevant literature.
- Any planned products (e.g. guidelines, protocols, and operational documents).
- Implications for criminal justice policy and practice in the United States.
- Management plan and organization.
- Any plans for disseminating information to broader audiences (if applicable to the proposed project).

OJP will require each successful applicant to submit regular performance data that demonstrate the results of the work carried out under the award (see [“General Information about Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements”](#) in [Section F. Federal Award Administration Information](#)). The performance data directly relate to the goals, objectives, and deliverables identified under "Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables" in [Section A. Program Description](#).

Applicants should visit OJP's performance measurement page at www.ojp.gov/performance for an overview of performance measurement activities at OJP.

Performance measures for this solicitation are listed in [Appendix A: Performance Measures Table](#).

The application should demonstrate the applicant's understanding of the performance data reporting requirements for this grant program and detail how the applicant will gather the required data should it receive funding.

Please note that applicants are **not** required to submit performance data with the application. Performance measures information is included as an alert that successful applicants will be required to submit performance data as part of the reporting requirements under an award.

In addition to the performance metrics, awardees under [Purpose Area 1](#) will be required to provide to NIJ details about the impact and progress of the fellowship program in a narrative report. The agency should include any details about the number of fellowship applications prior to implementing the NIJ program and any changes noted in the number of fellowship applications received. Outreach efforts to increase the fellowship applicant pool as well as the results of these efforts should also be described.

Awardees under [Purpose Area 2](#) will be required to provide to NIJ details about the impact and progress of the accreditation efforts in a narrative report in addition to the performance metrics. The report should include information on the level of effort provided towards accreditation processes and the progress made including the level of staffing and amount of time provided. Successes and pitfalls as well as any information NIJ can use towards the learning of ME/C accreditation processes, issues, and results should also be provided.

Award recipients will be required to provide the relevant data by submitting semi-annual performance metrics through semi-annual reports in GMS.

Note on Project Evaluations

An applicant that proposes to use award funds through this solicitation to conduct project evaluations should be aware that certain project evaluations (such as systematic investigations designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge) may constitute "research" for purposes of applicable DOJ human subjects protection regulations. However, project evaluations that are intended only to generate internal improvements to a program or service, or are conducted only to meet OJP's performance measure data reporting requirements, likely do not constitute "research." Each applicant should provide sufficient information for OJP to determine whether the particular project it proposes would either intentionally or unintentionally collect and/or use information in such a way that it meets the DOJ definition of research that appears at 28 C.F.R. Part 46 ("Protection of Human Subjects").

"Research," for purposes of human subjects protection for OJP-funded programs, is defined as "a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge." 28 C.F.R. 46.102(d).

For additional information on determining whether a proposed activity would constitute research for purposes of human subjects protection, applicants should consult the decision tree in the “Research and the protection of human subjects” section of the “[Requirements related to Research](#)” webpage of the “[Overview of Legal Requirements Generally Applicable to OJP Grants and Cooperative Agreements – FY 2018 Awards](#),” available through the OJP Funding Resource Center at <https://ojp.gov/funding/index.htm>.

Every prospective applicant whose application may propose a research or statistical component also should review the “Data Privacy and Confidentiality Requirements” section on that webpage.

- c. Appendices (not counted against the 15-page program narrative limit) include:
 - i. Bibliography/references.
 - ii. Timelines and project plans with milestones.
 - iii. Any tools/instruments, questionnaires, tables/charts/graphs, or maps pertaining to the proposed project that are supplemental to such items included in the main body of the narrative.
 - iv. For [Purpose Area 1: Forensic Pathology Fellowships](#) — Forensic Pathology Fellowship Program Accreditation Documentation:
 - o Acceptable types of documentation of current accreditation include: an electronic (scanned) copy of the current accreditation certificate(s), a digital photograph of the current accreditation certificate(s), or a letter from the accrediting body that includes the certificate number. Additionally, if a certificate references another document that contains key information on the type or scope of the accreditation, provide a copy of that supplemental documentation. Independent accrediting or certifying organizations may include the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education or other appropriate accrediting bodies.
 - v. For [Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation](#) — Forensic Laboratory Accreditation Documentation, if applicable:
 - o Acceptable types of documentation of current accreditation include: an electronic (scanned) copy of the current accreditation certificate(s), a digital photograph of the current accreditation certificate(s), or a letter from the accrediting body that includes the certificate number. Additionally, if a certificate references another document that contains key information on the type or scope of the accreditation, provide a copy of that supplemental documentation. Independent accrediting or certifying organizations may include the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) and the International Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners (IACME), or other appropriate accrediting bodies. *If the office is not currently accredited, applicants may provide supporting documentation that demonstrate activities seeking achievement of accreditation.*

- vi. Organizational chart of the applicant agency and all proposed collaborators involved in the project. Include project-related staffing plans and narratives for each organizational chart, proposed new hires, and any anticipated staffing changes related to the Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program funding if received.
- vii. Curriculum vitae or resumes of the all key personnel. In addition, curriculum vitae, resumes, or biographical sketches of all known others who will be significantly involved in substantive aspects of the project.
- viii. List (to the extent known) of all proposed project staff members, including those affiliated with the applicant organization or any proposed subrecipients organization(s), any proposed consultant(s) and contractors (whether individuals or organizations), and any proposed members of an advisory board for the project (if applicable). The list should include, for each individual and organization: name, title (if applicable), employer or other organizational affiliation, and roles and responsibilities proposed for the project.

Applicants should use the “Proposed Project Staff, Affiliation, and Roles” form available at www.nij.gov/funding/documents/nij-project-staff-template.xlsx to provide this listing.

- ix. List of any previous and current NIJ awards to applicant organization, including the NIJ- assigned award numbers and a brief description of any products that resulted in whole or in part from work funded under the NIJ award(s).
- x. Letters of cooperation/support or administrative agreements from organizations collaborating in the project, such as law enforcement and correctional agencies (if applicable).
- xi. List of other agencies, organizations, or funding sources to which this proposal has been submitted (if applicable).

4. Budget and Associated Documentation

The Budget Detail Worksheet and the Budget Narrative are now combined in a single document collectively referred to as the Budget Detail Worksheet. The Budget Detail Worksheet is a user-friendly, fillable, Microsoft Excel-based document designed to calculate totals. Additionally, 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.** If an applicant does not have access to Microsoft Excel or experiences technical difficulties with the Excel version, then the applicant should use the 508-compliant accessible Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) version.

Both versions of the Budget Detail Worksheet can be accessed at <https://ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Forms/BudgetDetailWorksheet.htm>.

a. Budget Detail Worksheet

The Budget Detail Worksheet should provide the detailed computation for each budget line item, listing the total cost of each and showing how it was calculated by the applicant. For example, costs for personnel should show the annual salary rate and the percentage of time devoted to the project for each employee paid with grant funds. The Budget Detail Worksheet should present a complete itemization of all proposed costs.

For questions pertaining to budget and examples of allowable and unallowable costs, see the DOJ Grants Financial Guide at <https://ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/index.htm>.

b. Budget Narrative

The budget narrative should thoroughly and clearly describe every category of expense listed in the Budget Detail Worksheet. OJP expects proposed budgets to be complete, cost effective, and allowable (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities).

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

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

c. Information on Proposed Subawards (if any), and on Proposed Procurement Contracts (if any)

Applicants for OJP awards typically may propose to make *subawards*. Applicants also may propose to enter into procurement *contracts* under the award.

Whether an action – for federal grants administrative purposes – is a subaward or procurement contract is a critical distinction as significantly different rules apply to subawards and procurement contracts. If a recipient enters into an agreement that is a subaward of an OJP award, specific rules apply – many of which are set by federal statutes and DOJ regulations; others by award conditions. These rules place particular responsibilities on an OJP recipient for any subawards the OJP recipient may make. The rules determine much of what the written subaward agreement itself must require or provide. The rules also determine much of what an OJP recipient must do both before and after it makes a subaward. If a recipient enters into an agreement that is a procurement contract under an OJP award, a substantially different set of federal rules applies.

OJP has developed the following guidance documents to help clarify the differences between subawards and procurement contracts under an OJP award and outline the compliance and reporting requirements for each. This information can be accessed online at <https://ojp.gov/training/training.htm>.

- [Subawards under OJP Awards and Procurement Contracts under Awards: A Toolkit for OJP Recipients.](#)
- [Checklist to Determine Subrecipient or Contractor Classification.](#)
- [Sole Source Justification Fact Sheet and Sole Source Review Checklist.](#)

In general, the central question is the relationship between what the third-party will do under its agreement with the recipient and what the recipient has committed (to OJP) to do under its award to further a public purpose (e.g., services the recipient will provide, products it will develop or modify, research or evaluation it will conduct). If a third party will provide some of the services the recipient has committed (to OJP) to provide, will develop or modify all or part of a product the recipient has committed (to OJP) to develop or modify, or will conduct part of the research or evaluation the recipient has committed (to OJP) to conduct, OJP will consider the agreement with the third party a *subaward* for purposes of federal grants administrative requirements.

This will be true **even if** the recipient, for internal or other non-federal purposes, labels or treats its agreement as a procurement, a contract, or a procurement contract. Neither the title nor the structure of an agreement determines whether the agreement — for purposes of federal grants administrative requirements — is a *subaward* or is instead a procurement *contract* under an award. The substance of the relationship should be given greater consideration than the form of agreement between the recipient and the outside entity.

1. Information on proposed subawards

A recipient of an OJP award may not make subawards ("subgrants") unless the recipient has specific federal authorization to do so. Unless an applicable statute or DOJ regulation specifically authorizes (or requires) subawards, a recipient must have authorization from OJP before it may make a subaward.

A particular subaward may be authorized by OJP because the recipient included a sufficiently-detailed description and justification of the proposed subaward in the Program Narrative, Budget Detail Worksheet, and Budget Narrative as approved by OJP. If, however, a particular subaward is not authorized by federal statute or regulation, and is not approved by OJP, the recipient will be required, post-award, to request and obtain written authorization from OJP before it may make the subaward.

If an applicant proposes to make one or more subawards to carry out the federal award and program, the applicant should-- (1) identify (if known) the proposed subrecipient(s), (2) describe in detail what each subrecipient will do to carry out the federal award and federal program, and (3) provide a justification for the subaward(s), with details on pertinent matters such as special qualifications and areas of expertise. Pertinent information on subawards should appear not only in the Program Narrative, but also in the Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative.

Information on proposed procurement contracts (with specific justification for proposed noncompetitive contracts over \$250,000¹⁹)

Unlike a recipient contemplating a subaward, a recipient of an OJP award generally does not need specific prior federal authorization to enter into an agreement that -- for purposes of federal grants administrative requirements -- is considered a procurement contract, **provided that** (1) the recipient uses its own documented procurement procedures and (2) those procedures conform to applicable federal law, including the Procurement Standards of the (DOJ) Part 200 Uniform Requirements (as set out at 2 C.F.R. 200.317 – 200.326). The Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative should identify proposed procurement contracts. (As discussed above, subawards must be identified and described separately from procurement contracts.)

The Procurement Standards in the Part 200 Uniform Requirements, however, reflect a general expectation that agreements that (for purposes of federal grants administrative requirements) constitute procurement “contracts” under awards will be entered into on the basis of full and open competition. All noncompetitive (sole source) procurement contracts must meet the OJP requirements outlined at <https://ojp.gov/training/subawards-procurement.htm>. If a proposed procurement contract would exceed the Simplified Acquisition Threshold — currently, \$250,000 -- a recipient of an OJP award may not proceed without competition unless and until the recipient receives specific advance authorization from OJP to use a non-competitive approach for the procurement. An applicant that (at the time of its application) intends – without competition – to enter into a procurement contract that would exceed \$250,000 should include a detailed justification that explains to OJP why, in the particular circumstances, it is appropriate to proceed without competition.

If the applicant receives an award, sole source procurements that do not exceed the Simplified Acquisition Threshold (currently \$250,000) must have written justification for the noncompetitive procurement action maintained in the procurement file. If a procurement file does not have the documentation that meets the criteria outlined in 2 C.F.R. 200, the procurement expenditures may not be allowable. Sole source procurement over the \$250,000 Simplified Acquisition Threshold must have prior approval from OJP using a Sole Source Grant Adjustment Notice (GAN). Written documentation justifying the noncompetitive procurement must be submitted with the GAN and maintained in the procurement file.

d. Pre-Agreement Costs

For information on pre-agreement costs, see [Section B. Federal Award Information](#).

¹⁹ Consistent with the provisions of Office of Management and Budget memorandum, OMB M-18-18, dated June 20, 2018, and entitled, “Implementing Statutory Changes to the Micro-Purchase and the Simplified Acquisition Thresholds for Financial Assistance,” DOJ will allow recipients (and any subrecipients) of awards made under this solicitation to use a simplified acquisition threshold of \$250,000 and a micro-purchase threshold of \$10,000, for federal grants administrative purposes.

5. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)

Indirect costs may be charged to an award only if:

- (a) The recipient has a current (unexpired), federally-approved indirect cost rate; or
- (b) The recipient is eligible to use, and elects to use, the “de minimis” indirect cost rate described in the Part 200 Uniform Requirements, as set out at 2 C.F.R. 200.414(f).

An applicant with a current (unexpired) federally-approved indirect cost rate is to attach a copy of the indirect cost rate agreement to the application. An applicant that does not have a current federally-approved rate may request one through its cognizant federal agency, which will review all documentation and approve a rate for the applicant entity, or, if the applicant’s accounting system permits, applicants may propose to allocate costs in the direct cost categories.

For assistance with identifying the appropriate cognizant federal agency for indirect costs, please contact the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) Customer Service Center at 1-800-458-0786 or at ask.ocfo@usdoj.gov. If DOJ is the cognizant federal agency, applicants may obtain information needed to submit an indirect cost rate proposal at <https://www.ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/IndirectCosts.pdf>.

Certain OJP recipients have the option of electing to use the “de minimis” indirect cost rate. An applicant that is eligible to use the “de minimis” rate that wishes to use the "de minimis" rate should attach written documentation to the application that advises OJP of both-- (1) the applicant’s eligibility to use the “de minimis” rate, and (2) its election to do so. If an eligible applicant elects the “de minimis” rate, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. The "de minimis" rate may no longer be used once an approved federally-negotiated indirect cost rate is in place. (No entity that ever has had a federally-approved negotiated indirect cost rate is eligible to use the "de minimis" rate.) For the “de minimis” rate requirements (including information on eligibility to elect to use the rate), see the Part 200 Uniform Requirements, at 2 C.F.R. 200.414(f).

6. Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable)

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

7. Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (including applicant disclosure of high-risk status)

Every OJP applicant (other than an individual applying in his or her personal capacity) is required to download, complete, and submit the OJP Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (Questionnaire) at <https://ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/FinancialCapability.pdf> as part of its application. The Questionnaire helps OJP assess the financial management and internal control systems, and the associated potential risks of an applicant as part of the pre-award risk assessment process.

The Questionnaire should only be completed by financial staff most familiar with the applicant's systems, policies, and procedures in order to ensure that the correct responses are recorded and submitted to OJP. The responses on the Questionnaire directly impact the pre-award risk assessment and should accurately reflect the applicant's financial management and internal control system at the time of the application. The pre-award risk assessment is only one of multiple factors and criteria used in determining funding. However, a pre-award risk assessment that indicates that an applicant poses a higher risk to OJP may affect the funding decision and/or result in additional reporting requirements, monitoring, special conditions, withholding of award funds, or other additional award requirements.

Among other things, the form requires each applicant to disclose whether it currently is designated "high risk" by a federal grant-making agency outside of DOJ. For purposes of this disclosure, high risk includes any status under which a federal awarding agency provides additional oversight due to the applicant's past performance, or other programmatic or financial concerns with the applicant. If an applicant is designated high risk by another federal awarding agency, the applicant must provide the following information:

- The federal awarding agency that currently designates the applicant high risk.
- The date the applicant was designated high risk.
- The high-risk point of contact at that federal awarding agency (name, phone number, and email address).
- The reasons for the high-risk status, as set out by the federal awarding agency.

OJP seeks this information to help ensure appropriate federal oversight of OJP awards. An applicant that is considered "high-risk" by another federal awarding agency is not automatically disqualified from receiving an OJP award. OJP may, however, consider the information in award decisions, and may impose additional OJP oversight of any award under this solicitation (including through the conditions that accompany the award document).

8. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

Each applicant must complete and submit this information. An applicant that expends any funds for lobbying activities is to provide all of the information requested on the form Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) posted at

<https://ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/Disclosure.pdf>. An applicant that does not expend any funds for lobbying activities is to enter “N/A” in the text boxes for item 10 (“a. Name and Address of Lobbying Registrant” and “b. Individuals Performing Services”).

9. Applicant Disclosure of Pending Applications

Each applicant is to disclose whether it has (or is proposed as a subrecipient under) any pending applications for federally-funded grants or cooperative agreements that (1) include requests for funding to support the same project being proposed in the application under this solicitation, and (2) would cover any identical cost items outlined in the budget submitted to OJP as part of the application under this solicitation. The applicant is to disclose applications made directly to federal awarding agencies, and also applications for subawards of federal funds (e.g., applications to State agencies that will subaward (“subgrant”) federal funds).

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

Each applicant that has one or more pending applications as described above is to provide the following information about pending applications submitted within the last 12 months:

- The federal or State funding agency.
- The solicitation name/project name.
- The point of contact information at the applicable federal or State funding agency.

| Federal or State Funding Agency | Solicitation Name/Project Name | Name/Phone/Email for Point of Contact at Federal or State Funding Agency |
|---|--|--|
| DOJ/Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) | COPS Hiring Program | Jane Doe, 202/000-0000; jane.doe@usdoj.gov |
| Health and Human Services/Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration | Drug-Free Communities Mentoring Program/ North County Youth Mentoring Program | John Doe, 202/000-0000; john.doe@hhs.gov |

Each applicant should include the table as a separate attachment to its application. The file should be named “Disclosure of Pending Applications.” The applicant’s Legal Name on the application must match the entity named on the disclosure of pending applications statement.

Any applicant that does not have any pending applications as described above is to submit, as a separate attachment, a statement to this effect: “[Applicant Name on SF-424] does not

have (and is not proposed as a subrecipient under) any pending applications submitted within the last 12 months for federally-funded grants or cooperative agreements (or for subawards under federal grants or cooperative agreements) that request funding to support the same project being proposed in this application to OJP and that would cover any identical cost items outlined in the budget submitted as part of this application.”

10. Applicant Disclosure and Justification - DOJ High Risk Grantees²⁰ (if applicable)

An applicant that is designated as a DOJ High Risk Grantee is to submit in GMS, as a separate attachment to its application, information that OJP will use, among other pertinent information, to determine whether it will consider or select the application for an award under this solicitation. The file should be named “DOJ High Risk Grantee Applicant Disclosure and Justification.” (See, also, “Review Process,” below, under Section E. Application Review Information, for a brief discussion of how such information may be considered in the application review process.)

OJP constantly seeks to optimize its investments in criminal- and juvenile justice-focused programs and activities, increase program effectiveness, and maximize the return – and program impact – from limited programmatic resources. Therefore, OJP may remove from consideration or not select for award a “DOJ High Risk Grantee” applicant that is determined to pose a substantial risk of program implementation failure. In making such determinations, OJP will consider one or more of the following factors: the applicant’s lack of sufficient progress in addressing required corrective actions necessary for removal of the DOJ High Risk Grantee designation; the nature and severity of the issues leading to or accompanying the applicant’s DOJ High Risk Grantee designation; or the applicant’s expected ability to manage grant funds and achieve grant goals and objectives.

In this attachment, the applicant is to provide any additional information or justification – especially with regard to corrective actions yet to be implemented (as of the application date) – that may help demonstrate how the applicant has addressed or otherwise mitigated such uncorrected matters, such that any negative impact on the proposed program and its implementation would be immaterial or would be significantly reduced or eliminated. (To the extent that the applicant believes that any of the information provided pursuant to this disclosure may be confidential in nature, the applicant should specifically identify it.)

11. Additional Attachments

a. Potential Environmental Impact Coversheet and Checklist

Each applicant is to submit an NIJ Programmatic Coversheet and Checklist with its application to assist NIJ in assessing the potential environmental impacts of the activities proposed for funding by the applicant. Specifically, the applicant is expected to:

- Carefully read the [Programmatic Environmental Assessment](#);

²⁰ A “DOJ High Risk Grantee” is a 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.

- Complete the [Cover Sheet and the attached the Programmatic Checklist](#); and
- Attach the completed documents to the grant application.

The applicant should also submit a Cover Sheet and NIJ Programmatic Checklist for any organization identified in the Budget Detail Worksheet that will receive grant funds through a sub-award or procurement contract to perform any of the following activities: new construction or renovations that change the basic prior use of a facility or significantly change the size; research and/or technology development that could be expected to have an effect on the environment; or implementation of programs involving the use of chemicals.

b. Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity

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 must demonstrate independence and integrity regarding both this proposed research and/or evaluation, and any current or prior related projects.

Each application should include an attachment that addresses **both** i. and ii. below.

- i. For purposes of this solicitation, each applicant is to document research and evaluation independence and integrity by including one of the following two items:
 - a. A specific assurance that the applicant has reviewed its application to identify any actual or potential apparent conflicts of interest (including through review of pertinent information on the principal investigator, any co-principal investigators, and any subrecipients), and that the applicant has identified no such conflicts of interest – whether personal or financial or organizational (including on the part of the applicant entity or on the part of staff, investigators, or subrecipients) – that could affect the independence or integrity of the research, including the design, conduct, and reporting of the research.

OR

- b. A specific description of actual or potential apparent conflicts of interest that the applicant has identified – including through review of pertinent information on the principal investigator, any co-principal investigators, and any subrecipients – that could affect the independence or integrity of the research, including the design, conduct, or reporting of the research. These conflicts may be personal (e.g., on the part of investigators or other staff), financial, or organizational (related to the applicant or any subrecipient entity). Some examples of potential investigator (or other personal) conflict situations are those in which an investigator would be in a position to evaluate a spouse’s work product (actual conflict), or an investigator would be in a position to evaluate the work of a former or current colleague (potential apparent conflict). With regard to potential organizational conflicts of interest, as one example, generally an organization would not be given an award to evaluate a project, if that organization had itself provided substantial prior technical assistance to that specific project or a location implementing the project (whether funded by OJP or other sources), because the organization in such an

instance might appear to be evaluating the effectiveness of its own prior work. The key is whether a reasonable person understanding all of the facts would be able to have confidence that the results of any research or evaluation project are objective and reliable. Any outside personal or financial interest that casts doubt on that objectivity and reliability of an evaluation or research product is a problem and must be disclosed.

- ii. In addition, for purposes of this solicitation, each applicant is to address possible mitigation of research integrity concerns by including, at a minimum, one of the following two items:
 - a. If an applicant reasonably believes that no actual or potential apparent conflicts of interest (personal, financial, or organizational) exist, then the applicant should provide a brief narrative explanation of how and why it reached that conclusion. The applicant also is to include an explanation of the specific processes and procedures that the applicant has in place, or will put in place, to identify and prevent (or, at the very least, mitigate) any such conflicts of interest pertinent to the funded project during the period of performance. Documentation that may be helpful in this regard may include organizational codes of ethics/conduct and policies regarding organizational, personal, and financial conflicts of interest. There is no guarantee that the plan, if any, will be accepted as proposed.

OR

- b. If the applicant has identified actual or potential apparent conflicts of interest (personal, financial, or organizational) that could affect the independence and integrity of the research, including the design, conduct, or reporting of the research, the applicant is to provide a specific and robust mitigation plan to address each of those conflicts. At a minimum, the applicant is expected to explain the specific processes and procedures that the applicant has in place, or will put in place, to identify and eliminate (or, at the very least, mitigate) any such conflicts of interest pertinent to the funded project during the period of performance. Documentation that may be helpful in this regard may include organizational codes of ethics/conduct and policies regarding organizational, personal, and financial conflicts of interest. There is no guarantee that the plan, if any, will be accepted as proposed.

OJP will assess research and evaluation independence and integrity based on considerations such as the adequacy of the applicant's efforts to identify factors that could affect the objectivity or integrity of the proposed staff and/or the applicant entity (and any subrecipients) in carrying out the research, development, or evaluation activity; and the adequacy of the applicant's existing or proposed remedies to control any such factors.

How To Apply

Applicants must register in and submit applications through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), a primary source to find federal funding opportunities and apply for funding. Find complete instructions on how to register and submit an application at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html>. Applicants that experience technical difficulties during this process should call the Grants.gov

Customer Support Hotline at **800-518-4726** or **606-545-5035**, which operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays.

Registering with Grants.gov is a one-time process; however, **processing delays may occur, and it can take several weeks** for first-time registrants to receive confirmation of registration and a user password. OJP encourages applicants to **register several weeks before** the application submission deadline. In addition, OJP urges applicants to submit applications at least 72 hours prior to the application due date, in order to allow time for the applicant 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.

OJP strongly encourages all prospective applicants to sign up for Grants.gov email notifications regarding this solicitation at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/manage-subscriptions.html>. If this solicitation is cancelled or modified, individuals who sign up with Grants.gov for updates will be automatically notified.

Browser Information: Grants.gov was built to be compatible with Internet Explorer. For technical assistance with Google Chrome, or another browser, contact Grants.gov Customer Support.

Note on Attachments: Grants.gov has two categories of files for attachments: “mandatory” and “optional.” OJP receives all files attached in both categories. Attachments are also labeled to describe the file being attached (e.g., Project Narrative, Budget Narrative, Other). Please ensure that all required documents are attached in the correct Grants.gov category and are labeled correctly. 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.

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.

Note on File Names and File Types: Grants.gov only permits the use of certain specific characters in the file names of attachments. Valid file names may include only the characters shown in the table below. Grants.gov rejects any application that includes an attachment(s) with a file name that contains any characters not shown in the table below. Grants.gov forwards successfully-submitted applications to the OJP Grants Management System (GMS).

| Characters |
|--------------------|
| Upper case (A – Z) |
| Lower case (a – z) |
| Underscore (_) |
| Hyphen (-) |
| Space |
| Period (.) |

| Special Characters | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Parenthesis () | Curly braces { } | Square brackets [] |
| Ampersand (&)* | Tilde (~) | Exclamation point (!) |
| Comma (,) | Semicolon (;) | Apostrophe (') |
| At sign (@) | Number sign (#) | Dollar sign (\$) |
| Percent sign (%) | Plus sign (+) | Equal sign (=) |

*When using the ampersand (&) in XML, applicants must use the “&” format.

GMS does not accept executable file types as application attachments. These disallowed file types include, but are not limited to, the following extensions: “.com,” “.bat,” “.exe,” “.vbs,” “.cfg,” “.dat,” “.db,” “.dbf,” “.dll,” “.ini,” “.log,” “.ora,” “.sys,” and “.zip.” GMS may reject applications with files that use these extensions. It is important to allow time to change the type of file(s) if the application is rejected.

All applicants are required to complete the following steps:

Unique Entity Identifier (DUNS Number) and System for Award Management (SAM)

Every applicant entity must comply with all applicable SAM and unique entity identifier (currently, a DUNS number) requirements. SAM is the repository for certain standard information about federal financial assistance applicants, recipients, and subrecipients. A DUNS number is a unique nine-digit identification number provided by the commercial company Dun and Bradstreet. More detailed information about SAM and the DUNS number is in the numbered sections below.

If an applicant entity has not fully complied with the applicable SAM and unique identifier requirements by the time OJP makes award decisions, OJP may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and may use that determination as a basis for making the award to a different applicant.

Applying as an Individual

An individual who wishes to apply in his/her personal capacity should search Grants.gov for funding opportunities for which individuals are eligible to apply. Use the Funding Opportunity Number (FON) to register. (An applicant applying as an individual must comply with all applicable Grants.gov individual registration requirements.)

Enter the FON at <https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/IndCPRRegister> to complete the registration form and create a username and password for Grants.gov. (An applicant applying as an individual should complete all steps below except 1, 2, and 4.)

Registration and Submission Steps

- 1. Acquire a unique entity identifier (currently, a DUNS number).** The Office of Management and Budget requires every applicant for a federal award (other than an individual) to include a "unique entity identifier" in each application, including an application for a supplemental award. Currently, a DUNS number is the required unique entity identifier.

This unique entity identifier is used for tracking purposes, and to validate address and point of contact information for applicants, recipients, and subrecipients. It will be used throughout

the life cycle of an OJP award. Obtaining a DUNS number is a free, one-time activity. Call Dun and Bradstreet at 866-705-5711 to obtain a DUNS number or apply online at <https://www.dnb.com/>. A DUNS number is usually received within 2 business days.

2. **Acquire or maintain registration with SAM.** Any applicant for an OJP award creating a new entity registration (or updating or renewing a registration) in SAM.gov must submit an original, signed notarized letter appointing the authorized Entity Administrator within thirty (30) days of the registration activation. **Notarized letters must be submitted via U.S. Postal Service Mail.** Read the Alert at sam.gov/SAM/ to learn more about what is required in the notarized letter, and read the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) at www.gsa.gov/samupdate to learn more about this process change. All applicants for OJP awards (other than individuals) must maintain current registrations in the SAM database. Applicants will need the authorizing official of the organization and an Employer Identification Number (EIN). Information about SAM registration procedures can be accessed at sam.gov/SAM/.

An application cannot be successfully submitted in Grants.gov until Grants.gov receives the SAM registration information. Once the SAM registration/renewal is complete, **the information transfer from SAM to Grants.gov can take as long as 48 hours.** OJP recommends that the applicant register or renew registration with SAM as early as possible.

3. **Acquire an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and a Grants.gov username and password.** Complete the AOR profile on Grants.gov and create a username and password. An applicant entity's "unique entity identifier" (DUNS number) must be used to complete this step. For more information about the registration process for organizations and other entities, go to <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>. Individuals registering with Grants.gov should go to <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>.
4. **Acquire confirmation for the AOR from the E-Business Point of Contact (E-Biz POC).** The E-Biz POC at the applicant organization must log into Grants.gov to confirm the applicant organization's AOR. The E-Biz POC will need the Marketing Partner Identification Number (MPIN) password obtained when registering with SAM to complete this step. Note that an organization can have more than one AOR.
5. **Search for the funding opportunity on Grants.gov.** Use the following identifying information when searching for the funding opportunity on Grants.gov. The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number for this solicitation is 16.560, titled "National Institute of Justice Research, Evaluation, and Development Project Grants," and the funding opportunity number is NIJ-2019-15523.
6. **Select the correct Competition ID.** Some OJP solicitations posted to Grants.gov contain multiple purpose areas, denoted by the individual Competition ID. If applying to a solicitation with multiple Competition IDs, select the appropriate Competition ID for the intended purpose area of the application.

1. [Purpose Area 1: Forensic Pathology Fellowships](#) — NIJ-2019-15526

2. [Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation](#) — NIJ-2019-15506

7. **Access Funding Opportunity and Application Package from Grants.gov.** Select “Apply for Grants” under the “Applicants” column. Enter your email address to be notified of any changes to the opportunity package before the closing date. Click the Workspace icon to use Grants.gov Workspace.
8. **Submit a valid application consistent with this solicitation by following the directions in Grants.gov.** To preview the application prior to (or after) submitting, go to the **View Application** tab in Workspace. For additional information, review the [View Application Tab](#) help article and [Attachments Tab](#) help article. Within 24-48 hours after submitting the electronic application, the applicant should receive two notifications from Grants.gov. The first will confirm the receipt of the application. 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. It is possible to first receive a message indicating that the application is received, and then receive a rejection notice a few minutes or hours later. Submitting an application well ahead of the deadline provides time to correct the problem(s) that caused the rejection. **Important:** 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. Applications must be successfully submitted through Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. eastern time on June 12, 2019.

Go to <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html> for further details on DUNS numbers, SAM, and Grants.gov registration steps and timeframes.

Note: Application Versions

If an applicant submits multiple versions of the same application, OJP will review only the most recent system-validated version submitted.

Experiencing Unforeseen Grants.gov 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 contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html> or the SAM Help Desk (Federal Service Desk) at <https://www.fsd.gov/fsd-gov/home.do> to report the technical issue and receive a tracking number. The applicant must email the NIJ contact identified in the Contact Information section on the title page **within 24 hours after the application deadline** to request approval to submit its application after the deadline. The applicant's email must describe the technical difficulties, and must include a timeline of the applicant's submission efforts, the complete grant application, the applicant's DUNS number, and any Grants.gov Help Desk or SAM tracking number(s).

Note: OJP does not automatically approve requests to submit a late application. After OJP reviews the applicant's request, and contacts the Grants.gov or SAM Help Desks to verify the reported technical issues, OJP will inform the applicant whether the request to submit a late application has been approved or denied. If OJP determines that the untimely application submission was due to the applicant's failure to follow all required procedures, OJP will deny the applicant's request to submit its application.

The following conditions generally are insufficient to justify late submissions:

- Failure to register in SAM or Grants.gov in sufficient time (SAM registration and renewal can take as long as 10 business days to complete. The information transfer from SAM to Grants.gov can take up to 48 hours.)
- Failure to follow Grants.gov instructions on how to register and apply as posted on its website.
- Failure to follow each instruction in the OJP solicitation.
- Technical issues with the applicant's computer or information technology environment, such as issues with firewalls or browser incompatibility.

Notifications regarding known technical problems with Grants.gov, if any, are posted at the top of the OJP Funding Resource Center at <https://ojp.gov/funding/index.htm>.

E. Application Review Information

Review Criteria

Applications that meet basic minimum requirements will be evaluated by peer reviewers using the following review criteria.

Review Criteria for [Purpose Area 1 – Forensic Pathology Fellowships](#)

1. Statement of the Problem/Description of the Issue (Understanding of the problem and its importance) — 15%
 - a. Demonstrated understanding of the problem that exists in the ME/C system in the United States.
 - b. Demonstrated awareness of the current state of ME/C issues.
 - c. Impact of funding on the ME/C system and ME/C services in the United States.
2. Project Design and Implementation (Quality and technical merit) — 15%
 - a. Awareness of the state of ME/C system and ME/C services in the United States. Soundness of methods and approach to addressing the stated objectives of the proposed project. The overall strategy should be well reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the goals of the project.
 - b. Feasibility of proposed project.
 - c. Awareness of pitfalls of the proposed project design and actions to minimize and/or mitigate them.
 - d. Innovation and creativity (when appropriate).

3. Expected Outcomes/Potential Impact — 30%
 - a. Description of the expected outcome(s) of the project. Anticipated forensic pathology fellowships to be completed and anticipated forensic pathology fellowship processes to be initiated and/or assisted through the program.
 - b. Potential for significantly improved understanding of the stated problem. If the goals of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or MDI practice in the criminal justice system be improved?
 - c. What is the likelihood that the project will exert a sustained, powerful influence on the MDI field(s) as related to criminal justice?
 - d. Potential for innovative solution to address (all or a significant part of) the stated criminal/justice problem. How will successful completion of the project change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, or services that drive MDI as it relates to criminal justice? How will a successful project address the identified ME/C problem and associated critical barriers to progress?
 - e. Potential to increase the awareness of best practices for the ME/C community.
4. Capabilities and Competencies — 15%
 - a. Qualifications and experience of proposed project staff (including all individuals and organizations identified in the application who will be significantly involved in substantive aspects of the proposal).
 - b. Demonstrated ability of the applicant organization to manage the effort.
 - c. Relationship between the capabilities/competencies of the proposed project staff (including the applicant organization) and the scope of the proposed project.
 - d. Strength of the environment (e.g., institutional and jurisdictional support, equipment and other physical resources, or collaborative arrangements) in which the work will be done and its contribution to the probability of success. Does the program meet or exceed ACGME-accredited forensic pathology fellowship requirements?
 - e. Affordability and cost-effectiveness of proposed approach.
5. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures — 15%
 - a. Demonstrated plan for collection of the performance measure data as described in the solicitation.
6. Budget — 10%: complete, cost effective, and allowable (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities). Budget narratives should demonstrate generally how applicants will maximize cost effectiveness of grant expenditures. Budget narratives

should demonstrate cost effectiveness in relation to potential alternatives and the goals of the project.²¹

- a. Total cost of the project relative to the perceived benefit (cost effectiveness).
- b. Appropriateness of the budget relative to the level of effort.
- c. Use of existing resources to conserve costs.
- d. Proposed budget alignment with proposed project activities.

Review Criteria for [Purpose Area 2 – Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation](#)

1. Statement of the Problem/Description of the Issue (Understanding of the problem and its importance) — 15%
 - a. Demonstrated understanding of the problem that exists in the ME/C system in the United States.
 - b. Demonstrated awareness of the current state of ME/C issues.
 - c. Impact of funding ME/C accreditation activities on the ME/C system and ME/C services in the United States.
2. Project Design and Implementation (Quality and technical merit) — 15%
 - a. Awareness of the state of ME/C accreditation on the ME/C system and ME/C services in the United States.
 - b. Soundness of methods and approach to addressing the stated objectives of the proposed project. The overall strategy should be well reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the goals of the project.
 - c. Feasibility of proposed project.
 - d. Awareness of pitfalls of the proposed project design and actions to minimize and/or mitigate them.
 - e. Innovation and creativity (when appropriate).
3. Expected Outcomes/Potential Impact — 30%
 - a. Description of the expected outcome(s) of the project. Anticipated accreditation processes to be completed and anticipated accreditation processes to be initiated or assisted through the program.

²¹ Generally speaking, a reasonable cost is a cost that, in its nature or amount, does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the costs.

- b. Potential for significantly improved understanding of the stated problem. If the goals of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or MDI practice be improved?
 - c. What is the likelihood that the project will exert a sustained, powerful influence on the MDI field(s) as related to criminal justice?
 - d. Potential for innovative solution to address (all or a significant part of) the stated criminal justice problem. How will successful completion change the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, or services that drive MDI as it relates to criminal justice? How will a successful project address the identified ME/C problem and associated critical barriers to progress?
 - e. Potential to increase the awareness of best practices for the ME/C community.
 - f. Potential to improve the understanding of scientific rationale underpinning existing ME/C practices.
 - g. Potential for innovative protocols to increase the efficiency, accuracy, reliability or cost- effectiveness of medicolegal death investigations.
4. Capabilities and Competencies — 15%
- a. Qualifications and experience of proposed project staff (including all individuals and organizations identified in the application who will be significantly involved in substantive aspects of the proposal).
 - b. Demonstrated ability of the applicant organization to manage the effort.
 - c. Relationship between the capabilities/competencies of the proposed project staff (including the applicant organization) and the scope of the proposed project.
 - d. Strength of the environment (e.g., institutional and jurisdictional support, equipment and other physical resources, or collaborative arrangements) in which the work will be done and its contribution to the probability of success.
 - e. Affordability and cost-effectiveness of proposed approach.
5. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures — 15%
- a. Demonstrated plan for collection of the performance measure data as described in the solicitation.
6. Budget — 10%: complete, cost effective, and allowable (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities). Budget narratives should demonstrate generally how applicants will maximize cost effectiveness of grant expenditures. Budget narratives

should demonstrate cost effectiveness in relation to potential alternatives and the goals of the project.²²

- a. Total cost of the project relative to the perceived benefit (cost effectiveness).
- b. Appropriateness of the budget relative to the level of effort.
- c. Use of existing resources to conserve costs.
- d. Proposed budget alignment with proposed project activities.

Review Process

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

Peer reviewers will review the applications submitted under this solicitation that meet basic minimum requirements. For purposes of assessing whether an application meets basic minimum requirements and should proceed to further consideration, OJP screens applications for compliance with those requirements. Although specific requirements may vary, the following are common requirements applicable to all solicitations for funding under OJP programs:

- The application must be submitted by an eligible type of applicant.
- The application must request funding within programmatic funding constraints (if applicable).
- The application must be responsive to the scope of the solicitation.
- The application must include all items designated as “critical elements.”
- The application, if submitted by an applicant that is a DOJ High Risk Grantee,²³ or is designated “high risk” by a federal grant-making agency outside of DOJ, must not have been determined by the Director/Administrator to pose a substantial risk of program implementation failure, based on 1) the applicant’s lack of sufficient progress in addressing required corrective actions necessary for removal of the DOJ High Risk Grantee (or non-DOJ high risk) designation, 2) the nature and severity of the issues leading to or accompanying the DOJ High Risk Grantee (or non-DOJ high risk) designation, and/or 3) the applicant’s expected ability to manage grant funds and achieve grant goals and objectives.

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

²² Generally speaking, a reasonable cost is a cost that, in its nature or amount, does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the costs.

²³ See “Applicant Disclosure and Justification – DOJ High Risk Grantees” under “What an Application Should Include,” above, for a definition of “DOJ High Risk Grantee.”

Peer review panels will evaluate, score, and rate applications that meet basic minimum requirements. NIJ may use internal peer reviewers, external peer reviewers, or a combination, to assess applications on technical merit using the solicitation's review criteria. An internal reviewer is a current DOJ employee who is well-versed or has expertise in the subject matter of this solicitation. An external peer reviewer is an expert in the subject matter of a given solicitation who is not a current DOJ employee. Peer reviewers' ratings and any resulting recommendations are advisory only, although reviewer views are considered carefully. Other important considerations for NIJ include geographic diversity, strategic priorities, and available funding, as well as the extent to which the Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative accurately explain project costs that are reasonable, necessary, and otherwise allowable under federal law and applicable federal cost principles.

Pursuant to the Part 200 Uniform Requirements, before award decisions are made, OJP also reviews information related to the degree of risk posed by the applicant. Among other things to help assess whether an applicant that has one or more prior federal awards has a satisfactory record with respect to performance, integrity, and business ethics, OJP checks whether the applicant is listed in SAM as excluded from receiving a federal award.

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

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

The evaluation of risks goes beyond information in SAM, however. OJP itself has in place a framework for evaluating risks posed by applicants for competitive awards. OJP takes into account information pertinent to matters such as —

1. Applicant financial stability and fiscal integrity.
2. Quality of the applicant's management systems, and the applicant's ability to meet prescribed management standards, including those outlined in the DOJ Grants Financial Guide.
3. Applicant's history of performance under OJP and other DOJ awards (including compliance with reporting requirements and award conditions), as well as awards from other federal agencies.
4. Reports and findings from audits of the applicant, including audits under the Part 200 Uniform Requirements.
5. Applicant's ability to comply with statutory and regulatory requirements, and to effectively implement other award requirements.

Note on applicants with a "high risk" designation: Risks associated with DOJ High Risk Grantees, or applicants designated as "high risk" by a federal grant-making agency outside of DOJ, are taken into account during the review process, and each applicant with such "high risk"

designations will be considered for funding on a case-by-case basis, depending on the nature and severity of the issues that led to the DOJ High Risk Grantee (or non-DOJ high risk) designation, status of progress in addressing corrective actions, and expected ability to manage grant funds and achieve grant goals and objectives. A “high risk” designated applicant is to submit disclosure and justification documentation consistent with the requirements specified, above, under “What an Application Should Include” in Section C. Application and Submission Information.

Absent explicit statutory authorization or written delegation of authority to the contrary, all final award decisions will be made by the Assistant Attorney General, who may take into account not only peer review ratings and NIJ recommendations, but also other factors as indicated in this section.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

Federal Award Notices

Award notifications will be made by September 30, 2019. OJP sends award notifications by email through GMS to the individuals listed in the application as the point of contact and the authorizing official (E-Biz POC and AOR). The email notification includes detailed instructions on how to access and view the award documents, and steps to take in GMS to start the award acceptance process. GMS automatically issues the notifications at 9:00 p.m. eastern time on the award date.

For each successful applicant, an individual with the necessary authority to bind the applicant will be required to log in; execute a set of legal certifications and a set of legal assurances; designate a financial point of contact; thoroughly review the award, including all award conditions; and sign and accept the award. The award acceptance process requires a physical signature on the award document by the authorized representative. The fully-executed award document must then be scanned and submitted to OJP.

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, as well as all applicable requirements of federal statutes and regulations (including applicable requirements referred to in the assurances and certifications executed in connection with award acceptance). OJP strongly encourages prospective applicants to review information on post-award legal requirements and common OJP award conditions **prior** to submitting an application.

Applicants should consult the [“Overview of Legal Requirements Generally Applicable to OJP Grants and Cooperative Agreements – FY 2018 Awards,”](#) available in the OJP Funding Resource Center at <https://ojp.gov/funding/index.htm>. In addition, applicants should examine the following two legal documents, as each successful applicant must execute both documents before it may receive any award funds. (An applicant is not required to submit these documents as part of an application.)

- [Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements.](#)
- [Certified Standard Assurances.](#)

The webpages accessible through the [“Overview of Legal Requirements Generally Applicable to OJP Grants and Cooperative Agreements – FY 2018 Awards”](#) 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 FY 2019. Individual OJP awards typically also will include additional award conditions. Those additional conditions may relate to the particular statute, program, or solicitation under which the award is made; to the substance of the funded application; to the recipient's performance under other federal awards; to the recipient's legal status (e.g., as a for-profit entity); or to other pertinent considerations.

Awards under this solicitation will include a condition (the specific terms of which will govern the award) related to verification of employment eligibility. The condition will, generally speaking, require the recipient (and any subrecipient) that accepts the award to verify the employment eligibility of any individual hired under the award, consonant with 8 U.S.C. § 1324a(1).

Awards under this solicitation will include a condition (the specific terms of which will govern the award) related to competition requirements set forth at 2 C.F.R. § 200.319. The condition will, generally speaking, prohibit recipients (and any subrecipients) from procuring goods and services with award funds by means of any competition that disadvantages or excludes vendors on the basis of their having (or their having had) a prior or existing contractual relationship with the federal government.

OJP will include as appropriate an award condition (the specific terms of which will govern the award) requiring recipients of OJP grant funding that will support projects that involve or serve minors under the age of 18 to develop and implement written screening procedures (consistent with pertinent federal, state, and local law) for individuals who will interact in a staff or volunteer capacity with minors involved in the grant-funded programs.

General Information about 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 the following reports and data.

Required reports. 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.)

Awards that exceed \$500,000 will include an additional condition that, under specific circumstances, will require the recipient to report (to FAPIIS) information on civil, criminal, and administrative proceedings connected with (or connected to the performance of) either the OJP award or any other grant, cooperative agreement, or procurement contract from the federal government. Additional information on this reporting requirement appears in the text of the award condition posted on the OJP webpage at <https://ojp.gov/funding/FAPIIS.htm>.

Data on performance measures. In addition to required reports, each award recipient also must provide data that measure the results of the work done under the award. To demonstrate program progress and success, as well as to assist DOJ in fulfilling its responsibilities under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA), Public Law 103-62, and the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010, Public Law 111-352, OJP will require any award recipient, post award, to provide performance data as part of regular progress reporting. Successful applicants will be required to access OJP's performance measurement page at www.ojp.gov/performance for an overview of performance measurement activities at OJP.

Performance measures are also listed as [Appendix A](#).

G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

For questions directed to the Federal Awarding Agency, see NCJRS contact information on the title page.

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

H. Other Information

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

All applications submitted to OJP (including all attachments to applications) are subject to the federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and to the Privacy Act. By law, DOJ may withhold information that is responsive to a request pursuant to FOIA if DOJ determines that the responsive information either is protected under the Privacy Act or falls within the scope of one of nine statutory exemptions under FOIA. DOJ cannot agree in advance of a request pursuant to FOIA not to release some or all portions of an application.

In its review of records that are responsive to a FOIA request, OJP will withhold information in those records that plainly falls within the scope of the Privacy Act or one of the statutory exemptions under FOIA. (Some examples include certain types of information in budgets, and names and contact information for project staff other than certain key personnel.) In appropriate circumstances, OJP will request the views of the applicant/recipient that submitted a responsive document.

For example, if OJP receives a request pursuant to FOIA for an application submitted by a nonprofit or for-profit organization or an institution of higher education, or for an application that involves research, OJP typically will contact the applicant/recipient that submitted the application and ask it to identify -- quite precisely -- any particular information in the application that the applicant/recipient believes falls under a FOIA exemption, the specific exemption it believes applies, and why. After considering the submission by the applicant/recipient, OJP makes an independent assessment regarding withholding information. OJP generally follows a similar process for requests pursuant to FOIA for applications that may contain law-enforcement sensitive information.

Provide Feedback to OJP

To assist OJP in improving its application and award processes, OJP encourages applicants to provide feedback on this solicitation, the application submission process, and/or the application review process. Provide feedback to OJPSolicitationFeedback@usdoj.gov.

IMPORTANT: This email is for feedback and suggestions only. OJP does **not** reply from this mailbox to messages it receives in this mailbox. Any prospective applicant that has specific questions on any program or technical aspect of the solicitation **must** use the appropriate telephone number or email listed on the front of this document to obtain information. These contacts are provided to help ensure that prospective applicants can directly reach an individual who can address specific questions in a timely manner.

If you are interested in being a reviewer for other OJP grant applications, please email your resume to ojpprsupport@usdoj.gov. (Do not send your resume to the OJP Solicitation Feedback email account.) **Note:** Neither you nor anyone else from your organization or entity can be a peer reviewer in a competition in which you or your organization/entity has submitted an application.

Appendix A: Performance Measures Tables

Performance Measures for [Purpose Area 1: NIJ Forensic Pathology Fellowships](#)

| Objective | Performance Measure(s) | Data Recipient Provides |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Increase the capacity of ME/C services through the addition of qualified forensic pathologists.</p> | <p>The number of forensic pathology fellowship participants who completed fellowship training.</p> | <p>The number of participants who completed forensic pathology fellowship training under the Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program.</p> <p>The number of forensic pathology fellowship participants funded through NIJ's Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program.</p> <p>The number of overall forensic pathology fellowship participants.</p> |
| | <p>Percentage of death investigations performed by forensic pathology fellows through Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program</p> | <p>Total number of deaths investigated by ME/C office six (6) months prior to award start date.</p> <p>Total number of deaths investigated by ME/C office during each reporting period.</p> <p>Total number of deaths investigated by NIJ-funded forensic pathology fellow(s) during the reporting period.</p> <p>Total number of deaths investigated by ME/C office during entire project.</p> <p>Total number of deaths investigated by NIJ-funded forensic pathology fellow during the entire project.</p> |
| | <p>Percentage of autopsies performed by forensic pathology fellows through Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program.</p> | <p>Total number of autopsies performed by ME/C office during the six (6) month period prior to the award start date.</p> <p>Total number of autopsies performed by ME/C office during each reporting period.</p> <p>Total number of autopsies performed by NIJ-funded forensic pathology fellow(s) during each reporting period</p> <p>Total number of autopsies performed by ME/C office during entire project.</p> <p>Total number of autopsies performed by NIJ-funded forensic pathology fellow(s) during the entire project.</p> |

Performance Measures for [Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation](#)

| Objective | Performance Measure(s) | Data Recipient Provides |
|---|---|---|
| Increase the quality of ME/C services in the United States through accreditation and certification. | Provide accreditation documentation that meets expectations. | Provide accreditation documentation for each agency/organization that applied from appropriate accrediting body. |
| | Percent increase in the number of certified individuals in ME/C agencies. | <p>Number of individuals at ME/C agency or organization in medicolegal death investigation supporting positions.</p> <p>Number of certified individuals at ME/C agency or organization in medicolegal death investigation supporting positions.</p> <p>Number of individuals seeking certification with Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program funding.</p> <p>Number of individuals who achieved certification with Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program funding during the project period.</p> |
| | Percent decrease in death investigation cases backlog. | <p>Number of deaths investigated six (6) months prior to award start date.</p> <p>Number of deaths investigated during the reporting period.</p> <p>Total number of deaths investigated during the entire project.</p> <p>Average number of days to produce a final death investigation report prior to award start date.</p> <p>Average number of days to produce a final death investigation report during each reporting period.</p> <p>Average number of days to produce a final death investigation report at the end of the project period.</p> |
| | Percent decrease in autopsy cases backlog. | <p>Number of autopsies performed during the six (6) month period prior to the award start date.</p> <p>Number of autopsies performed during each reporting</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | | <p>period.</p> <p>Total number of autopsies performed during the entire project.</p> <p>Average number of days to produce a final autopsy report prior to award start date.</p> <p>Average number of days to produce a final autopsy report during each reporting period.</p> <p>Average number of days to produce a final autopsy report at the end of the project period.</p> |
|--|--|---|

Appendix B: Application Checklist

Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program, FY 2019

This application checklist has been created as an aid in developing an application.

What an Applicant Should Do:

Prior to Registering in Grants.gov:

- _____ Acquire a DUNS Number (see page 27)
- _____ Acquire or renew registration with SAM (see page 28)

To Register with Grants.gov:

- _____ Acquire AOR and Grants.gov username/password (see page 28)
- _____ Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Biz POC (see page 28)

To Find Funding Opportunity:

- _____ Search for the Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov (see page 28)
- _____ Select the correct Competition ID (see page 28)
- _____ Access Funding Opportunity and Application Package (see page 29)
- _____ Sign up for Grants.gov email [notifications](#) (optional) (see page 26)
- _____ 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 10)

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 (see page 29)

If No Grants.gov Receipt, and Validation or Error Notifications are Received:

- _____ contact NIJ regarding experiencing technical difficulties (see page 2)

Overview of Post-Award Legal Requirements:

- _____ Review the "[Overview of Legal Requirements Generally Applicable to OJP Grants and Cooperative Agreements – FY 2018 Awards](#)" in the OJP Funding Resource Center at <https://ojp.gov/funding/index.htm>.

Scope Requirement:

- _____ The federal amount requested is within the allowable limit(s) of for each Purpose Area.

Eligibility Requirement: See cover page.

What an Application Should Include:

- _____ Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) (see page 11)
- _____ Project Abstract (see page 12)
- _____ Program Narrative (critical element) (see page 12)
- _____ CVs/Resumes (critical element) (see page 16)
- _____ Budget Detail Worksheet (critical element) (see page 17)
- _____ Budget Narrative (critical element) (see page 17)
- _____ Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable) (see page 20)

- _____ Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable) (see page 20)
- _____ Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (see page 21)
- _____ [Disclosure of Lobbying Activities \(SF-LLL\)](#) (see page 21)
- _____ Applicant Disclosure of Pending Applications (see page 22)
- _____ Applicant Disclosure and Justification – DOJ High Risk Grantees (if applicable)
(see page 23)
- _____ Additional Attachments
 - _____ Potential Environmental Impact Coversheet and Checklist (see page 23)
 - _____ Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity, (if applicable)
(see page 24)
- _____ Request and Justification for Employee Compensation; Waiver (if applicable)
(see page 9)